Aquinas on Being’s Being Created
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In this paper I expand upon Aquinas’ remarks on the origin of metaphysics in the first question of his treatment of creation in the *Summa theologiae*. In *Prima* 44.2, Aquinas argues for creation’s being *ex nihilo* by offering a thumbnail sketch of the history of philosophy, which culminates in the emergence of metaphysics. The heart of his argument for creation’s being *ex nihilo* is that the metaphysical perspective on being demands a first cause of the very existing of matter or of any other potency for existing. I submit that Aquinas offers one of his most distinctive formulations of the object proper of metaphysics in this passage, and that it is no accident that he does so in laying out a metaphysics of creation. He in effect shows that the object proper of metaphysics is identical with the object proper of creation.

My lecture is divided into three parts. Part I begins with a consideration of the fourth way in *Prima* 3, with a view to the groundwork Aquinas lays for his metaphysics of creation in *Prima* qu. 44. Part II focuses on the four articles of *Prima* 44, with a view to Aquinas’s formulation of the subject, object, and end of metaphysics. I conclude that in Aquinas’s view the object proper of creation is identical with the object proper of metaphysics.

In Part III I argue that metaphysics proper begins when recognition of the complete existence of the complete being incites a search for its complete cause. For metaphysics to recognize the complete being’s complete existence and to ask for its complete cause is in effect for it to recognize being as created and to seek its creator. Since the creationist viewpoint gives the proper object as well as the proper end of metaphysics, metaphysics proper is in its very conception creationist. I hope by the end of the paper to remove any scandal in this thesis for the theologian and any absurdity for the philosopher.