

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT AQUINAS'S CONCEPTION OF TRUTH AS ADEQUATION

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Abstract: While Aquinas's primary notion of truth as adequation is applied to God and man in somewhat different ways, it is apparent that it is not applicable to the angels, at least not in the same way. However, since truth is a transcendental, and as transcendentals are convertible, one may claim that the transcendental systems that apply to various beings differ. In order to consolidate the universality of the transcendental system, the study aims to show the manner truth as adequation can be applied to the angels.

In the first section, the chapter examines Aquinas's understanding of truth as adequation. This is an introductory examination based upon the excellent studies of Jan Aertsen, John Wippel and others which aims to equip the reader with the basic knowledge needed to address the problem this study presents. The second section is an analysis of the relationship between the angelic intellect and the innate species through which the angels think their objects. Based upon that analysis, conclusions are drawn regarding the manner in which truth as adequation is applied to the angels.

I

In this part a brief analysis of Aquinas's concept of truth will be presented. It is important to note that Aquinas notion of truth is broader than is discussed here, however, since this chapter is not primarily concerned with truth but rather with the transcendental system, this section is limited to the following two key texts that will be dealt with briefly: 1. The derivation of truth as a transcendental as it appears in *De Veritate*. 2. Truth as adequation as explored in Aquinas's treatment of Truth in *De Veritate* and his commentary on the first book of the *Sentences* d.19, q.5.¹

Abbreviations: *QDV* = *Questiones Disputatae de Veritate*, Henry Regnery Company 1952-4, trans. Mulligan, McGlynn and Schmidt; *ST* = *Summa Theologiae*, Benziger Bros. edition, 1947, Trans. Fathers of the English

The Transcendental Conception of Truth: De Veritate q.1, a.1

In *De Veritate*, Aquinas's primary text on truth, he begins from that which is first conceived by the intellect – *Being (ens)*, and arrives at truth after he delineates the relationship between the various *first conceptions* of the intellect – what we now call the transcendentals.² Aristotle taught us that since all things have being, it follows that nothing can be added to being from the outside.³ Thus the discussion of the transcendentals originates from consideration of the ways in which being can be considered in a non-exterior way. There are two modes on which we can predicate being. In the first mode, predicated in a particular manner, a specific being can be predicated as being big or small, white or black. This mode predicates being through the categories and results in the contraction of being as a specific thing. The second mode is a common predication which acts on every being and transcends all the categories. This mode of predication applies to what was subsequently referred to as the transcendentals. When *Being* is considered in itself it can be addressed according to its whatness, i.e., as a *thing*. As a *this Being* which possesses a unity, *Being* is considered according to its *undividedness* or as its *oneness* of being. *Being* can also be considered not in itself but as being in relation to another, i.e., as *something*. *Being* in relation to another entity can also be considered according to the manner of its correspondence. The correspondence is founded upon the soul which 'is such that it agrees with every being' and it is for this reason that Aquinas, drawing upon Aristotle, says that the soul 'in some way is all things.' The two powers of the soul, the appetitive and cognitive powers, establish two sorts of correspondence. *Good* expresses the correspondence of the appetitive power to being as 'that which all desire' and *True* expresses the correspondence of the knowing power to being as the assimilation

Dominican Province; *CT* = *Compendium Theologiae*, B. Herder Book Co., 1947, trans. Vollert. *QDA* = *Quaestiones Disputatae de Anima*, B. Herder Book Co., 1949, trans. Rowan. *Meta.* = *Sententia libri Metaphysicae*, 1961, trans. Rowan. *SCG* = *Summa contra Gentiles*, Hanover House, 1955-57, trans. Anderson.

¹ See J.A. Aertsen, "Truth as Transcendental in Thomas Aquinas," *Topoi* 11, no. 2 (1992); *Medieval Philosophy and the Transcendentals: The Case of Thomas Aquinas*, Studien Und Texte Zur Geistesgeschichte Des Mittelalters (Brill, 1996), ch.6; J.F. Wippel, "Truth in Thomas Aquinas," *The Review of Metaphysics* (1989); "Truth in Thomas Aquinas, Part II," *The Review of Metaphysics* (1990).

² See J.A. Aertsen, "What Is First and Most Fundamental? The Beginnings of Transcendental Philosophy," in *What Is Philosophy in the Middle Ages?*, ed. JA Aertsen and Andreas Speer, *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* (De Gruyter, 1998); *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought: From Philip the Chancellor (Ca. 1225) to Francisco Suárez*, vol. 107, Studien Und Texte Zur Geistesgeschichte Des Mittelalters (Brill, 2012)..

³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics* B.3, 998b22. See also Aquinas's *Meta.* §433.

of the knower into the known, i.e., as measured by that being. The *true* adds to being a conformity or adequation of thing and intellect. Hence, knowledge of a thing is based on the conformity/adequation of the thing and the knowing intellect; that is to say that knowledge is 'an effect of truth.'

On the Primary Usage of Truth

In the second article of the first question, Aquinas asks 'Is truth found principally in the intellect or in things?' Aquinas distinguishes between three notions of truth: 1. The ontological character of truth. Its representatives are Augustine ('The true is that which is'), Avicenna ('The truth of each thing is a property of the act of being') and Philip the Chancellor ('The true is the undividedness of the act of existence from that which is'). 2. Truth is the conformity or adequation between what one thinks a thing is and what a thing is. As representatives of this Aquinas quotes Isaac Israeli (whom he supposes to have said that 'truth is the conformity of thing and intellect') and Anselm ('truth is a rectitude perceptible only by the mind'). 3. Truth as the manifestation of being. Its representatives are Hilary ('the true is that which declares or manifests being') and Augustine ('truth is that whereby that which is shown'). This last definition is of less importance to the current discussion,

Aquinas explains that while the second conception of truth captures truth in the full sense, the first conception captures truth only analogically. To explain this, Aquinas exemplifies and distinguishes the uses of analogy using the example of 'health'. Health is said properly only of that in which health resides, e.g., in an animal. But we can also speak of medicine as healthy – as something which causes health. For this reason, we cannot properly attribute health to medicine, but refer to medicine as healthy only analogically.⁴ Truth therefore is spoken properly only when we speak of truth as the conformity of thing and intellect, and it is spoken analogically - as that which causes truth - of things as they are in themselves.

In *Sentences* I, d.19, q.5, aa.1-3, Aquinas employs the notion of truth as conformity/adequation to explain how reality and the human mind are adequated to the divine mind:

⁴ Aquinas, *QDV = Questiones Disputatae de Veritate*, Chicago: Henry Regnery Company 1952-4, trans. Mulligan, McGlynn and Schmidt, q.1, a.2, Reply.

1. Truth, in its full sense of truth as adequation, is 'assigned to the intellect insofar as the intellect's grasp of a thing corresponds to that thing as it is in itself.'⁵
2. The truth of the thing is truth in an imperfect and analogical way, since it is a truth only insofar as it has the potency to produce truth in the intellect. Truth in this second sense is therefore also a condition for the possibility of the primary sense of truth.
3. God, as the creator of things according to the divine exemplars, is the first measure of things and thus is the most perfect conception of truth.⁶

Truth is not the measurement itself but rather the adequation of the measure to the measured. The adequation of thing and intellect is the manner through which God's mind and the human mind are adequated. Truth thus carries a transitive property: while things are measured by the divine mind, the human mind is in turn measured by things. Wippel notes that truth as adequation can be applied both to the truth of things and the truth of the intellect, for 'things may be regarded as true both in relation to the divine intellect and in relation to a human intellect.'⁷ In the order of nature, the definition of truth as adequation applies to the relation between the thing and the divine intellect; it is only afterward that we can speak of an adequation of the human intellect to the thing. A natural thing is called true according to its adequation, either to the divine intellect or to the human intellect. It is called true if 'it fulfills the end to which it was ordained by the divine intellect.' A consequence of this account of adequation is that things 'cannot exist except by reason of the divine intellect which keeps bringing them into being'.⁸ In adequation with the human intellect, a thing is called true if it 'causes a true estimate about itself.' As a result, a thing's existence is not determined by the adequation of the human intellect to the thing. This existential difference is parallel to a distinction Aquinas makes, and subsequently uses, between archetype and image. Aquinas explains that every word is related either as an archetype or as an image. When the word causes a thing, it is an archetype and when it is caused, it is an image.⁹

⁵ Wippel, "Truth in Thomas Aquinas," 299.

⁶ See also William Wood, "Thomas Aquinas on the Claim That God Is Truth," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 51, no. 1 (2013).

⁷ Wippel, p.315.

⁸ *QDV* 1.4; *ST* 1.16.5.

⁹ *QDV* 4.4, ad.4.

II

As Harm Goris asserts, '[t]he doctrine of angels is not currently one of the most studied parts of Aquinas's thought, ... Angelology is often seen as an outstanding example of the barren metaphysical speculations.' Yet, 'angels offered to medieval scholars an important clue for their reflections both on God and on human beings. ... Angelology makes up a kind of philosophical laboratory to carry out thought experiments in which angelic knowledge will serve either as contrasting counterexamples or as idealized forms of human knowledge and human will.'¹⁰ The present discussion of the angels is not a theological one but rather aims to be focused on what is relevant to the following question: Does the concept of truth as adequation apply to the angels, immaterial intelligible beings,¹¹ in the same way it applies to man? The answer to that, I will claim, is definitely in the negative.

It is not a typical approach to consider the angels from the point of view of truth as adequation, to say the least. Aquinas wrote extensively on the Angels, yet if one examines his inquiry, one will not find much to work with regarding the concept of truth as it applies to the angels.¹² There are a great many questions and articles that concern themselves with issues such as the knowledge of the angels,¹³ how they move and act, their relation to place and so forth.¹⁴ Aquinas repeatedly says that the angels know the truth of things, but, as noted earlier, having true knowledge of things is not truth as adequation, which is the primary notion of truth. One could

¹⁰ Harm Goris, "The Angelic Doctor and Angelic Speech: The Development of Thomas Aquinas's Thought on How Angels Communicate," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 11, no. 01 (2003).

¹¹ A good review on Aquinas's conception of *materiality* and *immateriality* see M.J. Barker, "Aquinas on Internal Sensory Intentions," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (2012): 210-3. Whereas intentionality is considered as immaterial in regard to the human soul, the immateriality of the angels is different and designates a substantial difference. See also J.F. Wippel, "Metaphysical Composition of Angels in Bonaventure, Aquinas, and Godfrey of Fontaines," in *A Companion to Angels in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Tobias Hoffman, *Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2012).

¹² Important studies have been published recently, but these studies are primarily concerned with different topics regarding the angels, such as their knowledge, language, sin, place, etc. and do not address the way truth is applied to the angels for the simple reason that Aquinas does not say anything on the matter. See Tobias Hoffmann, *A Companion to Angels in Medieval Philosophy*, vol. 35(Brill, 2012). Tiziana Suarez-Nani, *Connaissance Et Langage Des Anges: Selon Thomas D'aquin Et Gilles De Rome*, Etudes De Philosophie Medievale (Vrin, 2002). James Daniel Collins, "The Thomistic Philosophy of the Angels" (Dissertation, Catholic University of America Press, 1947).

¹³ See Suarez-Nani (2002) and Goris's paper in *A companion to Angels*

¹⁴ See Cross's "Angelic Time and Motion: Bonaventure to Duns Scotus" in *A Companion to Angels* and Tiziana Suarez-Nani, "Angels, Space, and Place: The Location of Separate Substances According to John Duns Scotus," in *Angels in Medieval Philosophical Inquiry: Their Function and Significance*, ed. Isabel Iribarren and Martin Lenz, *Studies in Medieval Philosophy* (Ashgate, 2008).

expect, since truth as adequation applies differently to God than to man, that Aquinas might have attempted to find a middle position to apply truth as adequation to the angels. Yet such a treatment is not to be found. For example, in *De Veritate*, Aquinas's designated treatise on truth, we find him turning to the angels in his 8th and 9th questions. But instead of inquiring into the application of truth to the angels, he labels the 8th question 'The Knowledge of Angels' and the 9th question 'The Communication of Angelic Knowledge.'¹⁵ One might say that to ask Aquinas for an explanation of the manner in which the concept of truth is applied to the angels is redundant since the conclusions of the first article of *de Veritate* must apply to the angels as well. But considering the two types of adequations that constitute truth, it seems that neither of them applies to the angels. Unlike man who knows through imperfect species which he abstracts through the senses, the angels hold within them innate and perfect species, given to them directly by God: 'from the truth of the divine intellect there flows into the angelic intellects those intelligible species by which angels know all things.'¹⁶ While the intelligible species of man are produced by the agent intellect, the intelligible species of the angels are produced and placed within them by God. From this it is clear that neither of these types of adequations can be applied to the angels. For unlike man, the angels hold perfect knowledge of things; and unlike God, they are not the cause of the species. The question therefore is: What kind of truth, if any, applies to the angels?

A comparison between angels' innate species and things of reality reveals a similarity. The innate species, just like things of reality, are adequated to the divine mind and as a result they hold a similar type of truth, i.e., ontological truth which is truth only by analogy. Moreover, it seems that the flow of species into the angel's intellect is made by the same act that brings things into being. Aquinas writes:

Angels acquire knowledge of things through an influx of divine light; in the same way that things themselves come forth into being from God, representations or likenesses of things are imprinted on the angelic intellect by God.¹⁷

¹⁵ See also ST 1.53-58, 1.106-7 and *Sentences*, 1.37.3; 2.3.3.

¹⁶ *QDV* 1.4. Also *ST* 1.57.1.

¹⁷ *CT* ch.216. *QDV* 2.14: "angels' knowledge, however, is not caused by things and is not the cause of things, but both the things which the angels know and their knowledge are from one cause; for in the same way that God communicates universal forms to things, making them subsist, He communicates likenesses of things to the minds of angels so that the angels can know them."; See also *ST* 1.56.2.

From this it follows that the flow of species from God to the angels is an act which constitutes existence according to an idea God holds within him. As seen at the end of the first part, this idea on which the thing's existence is dependent is also a type of word that Aquinas calls an archetype.¹⁸ But what is the nature of this actuation by which 'things themselves come forth into being'? In *De Veritate* Aquinas says:

Just as from the eternal archetypes existing in the mind of God come the material forms by which things subsist, so also do the forms of all things come from God to the minds of angels in order that they may know things.¹⁹

The Word of God is then the archetype or idea which causes the actualization in both things and angels. But it seems that this actualization is actuated in two different modes. Aquinas explains that since the intelligible archetypes in God constitute causal relationship to things, this causal relation must relate not just to the things' pure form but also to their specific materiality. Consequently, the innate species that God forms in the angels must hold, besides the things' form, also an immaterial relation to the specific materiality of the things, i.e., an intelligible representation of the specific matter in which the form resides.²⁰ However, since angels are immaterial beings we must understand the actualization of things' form in a different manner. Aquinas writes:

Just as from the truth of the divine intellect there flows into the angelic intellects those intelligible species by which angels know all things, so does the truth of the first principles

¹⁸ *QDV* 4.4, ad.4.

¹⁹ Also *QDV* 8.9.

²⁰ This, which seems to contradict Aquinas's "standard epistemological model," is supported in several places, e.g.: "Because the forms received in an angelic intellect are more immaterial than those in our intellect [and] represent a thing not only according to its formal, but also according to its material principles"; and "the intelligible archetypes existing in God have a causal relation not only to things' forms but also to their matter. Hence, they are likenesses of things in both respects. For this reason, God knows a thing through them not only in its universal nature by knowing the form, but also in its singularity by knowing its matter." (*QDV* 8.11); "through the species imparted to them do the angels know things, not only as to their universal nature, but likewise in their individual conditions, in so far as they are the manifold representations of that one simple essence." (*ST* 1.57.2). See also Harm Goris, *Free Creatures of an Eternal God: Thomas Aquinas on God's Infallible Foreknowledge and Irresistible Will*, Thomas Instituut Utrecht (Peeters Publishers, 1996), 214. Goris (2012), 160 and Robert Pasnau, "Form and Matter," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Robert Pasnau (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 639.

by which we judge everything proceed from the truth of the divine intellect as from its exemplary cause.²¹

The forms which exist in the angels are, on the one hand, manifestations of God's ideas just as things are, but on the other hand they exist immaterially, just like the soul's first principles. But while the soul's first principles are logical principles without any positive content, and therefore without any positive knowledge of things, the forms of the angels are of the things themselves and therefore hold positive knowledge of things. An angel's species is an intelligible reflection of reality and this is probably why he compares their intellect to a mirror whereas the human intellect is like a *tabula rasa*:

Our intellect may be compared to a tablet on which nothing has been written, but that of an angel, to a painted tablet or to a mirror in which the intelligible characters of things shine forth.²²

This reflection metaphor of the angel's species does not imply that they are of secondary reality to the corporeal world but rather that the material world and the species of the angels are both two sides of the same coin.²³ Both the things of reality and the innate species of the angels are reflections of the divine ideas, i.e., they are both measured by the same archetype which causes them to shine forth into being in two different modes: as things in reality and as species of the angelic intellect. Aquinas explains:

The angels were created at the same time as corporeal creatures. For the angels are part of the universe: they do not constitute a universe of themselves; but both they and corporeal natures unite in constituting one universe.²⁴

²¹ *QDV* 1.4 ad 5. Also *QDV* 15.1: "the relation of our intellect to those [first] principles is similar to that which an angel has to all that he knows naturally... Consequently, just as we know principles by simple intuition without discourse, so do the angels know all they know in the same fashion."

²² *QDV* 8.9.

²³ See Collins, "The Thomistic Philosophy of the Angels," 178-9.

²⁴ *ST* 1.61.3

As an angel is more perfect, he accordingly reflects the intelligibility of reality more perfectly and therefore holds more actuality of the intelligibility of the divine archetypes which reside in material things.²⁵

Since the innate species supply the angels with complete knowledge of things, the angels know the truth of things and in fact cannot err. This lack of possibility to err only emphasizes the question whether the full sense of truth as adequation is applicable to the angels. For lacking the possibility to err raises the question as to whether the angels can comprehend falseness, without which the meaning of adequation seems empty and lackluster. However, this lack of possibility to err is not really perfect. Aquinas leaves room for a very unique kind of mistake, in what we may call supernatural situations, where the angels can err. An example of that is Christ's rising from the dead. Aquinas explains that the angels could not have known that Christ, as a man who by definition was mortal, would come back to life.²⁶ One might feel somewhat uncomfortable with this explanation of how the angels could err. It may be claimed that in order to make room for supernatural events and to satisfy the Christian faith and dogmas, Aquinas ruins the elegance of his theory of angelic cognition. This is an important objection, for it reveals what seems to be a contradiction in Aquinas's understanding of the angel's innate species. Heretofore, we supposed that the angel had complete knowledge of things and of natural causes that govern things. But now it seems that at the very moment that God intervenes in the world, the synchronization between the things and the innate species is broken, for God interferes with what is meant to emanate from them naturally. This objection is indeed powerful and leaves us two options: either we accept this objection or we reinterpret the innate species in order to circumvent this seeming contradiction. Since the first option is unacceptable, we must turn to the second option.

Being innate, the angel's intelligible species seemed at first to hold all the information about the things they represent: past, present, and future. But as it is now evident that God can change

²⁵ *QDV* 8.10: "the more act and less potency there is in an angel, the fewer are the emanations he receives, and the stronger is his power to know. According to this principle, therefore, the higher angels know through forms more universal than those by which the lower know."

²⁶ *ST* 1.58.5: "no falsehood, error, or deception can exist of itself in the mind of any angel; yet it does so happen accidentally; but very differently from the way it befalls us. ... [for] through the (knowledge of the) essence of a thing they know everything that can be said regarding it. ... but they [demons] can be misled with regard to supernatural matters; for example, on seeing a dead man, they may suppose that he will not rise again, or, on beholding Christ, they may judge Him not to be God."

the course of events we must ask: Does God have to replace all the species of the angels at that moment? This seems to be too messy for God and for considerations of elegance we must reject this option. We need therefore to somehow ensure that the perfection of the innate species is incontrovertible and yet take into account the possibility that the angels could 'read' them incorrectly. This can be done by limiting the angel's ability to read the innate species by preventing their access to the knowledge of the future which remains safely ensconced within the species. The preventive measure is made up of two steps: first, we must claim that the angel's species reveal to the angels only the current state of the things they represent, so that they are reflections of reality at that particular instant. Secondly, since Aquinas makes it clear that the species reveal the complete knowledge of reality to the angel, we must therefore claim that the knowledge of the laws of nature is not a comprehensive knowledge of all that governs reality. In this way, it becomes possible to claim that even if the angel were to apply his perfect knowledge of the laws of nature to the current state of reality, which the angels know perfectly, this would still not guarantee a perfect prediction of the future.²⁷ This reinterpretation of the manner in which the angels apply their understanding of natural causes to the current state of things reveals that by affirming the perfection of the species, we allow for an imperfection in the angelic knowledge of that which governs reality. It follows that all the angels can do is to predict the future:

The angels do not know all future contingent things, for they know singulars through infused species inasmuch as they participate in these species. Hence future things, in whose species the angels do not yet participate, are not known by the angels inasmuch as they are future, but are known only inasmuch as they are present in their causes.²⁸

It seems therefore that the innate species are not in the angels, i.e., that the angels do not hold a complete representation of the things, but only an impression of their current situation. Putting it simply, they are like television viewers who just see what is broadcast to them at a particular moment, and like many spectators, they may be good at predicting who the killer is. But

²⁷ *QDV* 8.12: "The angels see the divine essence and, by means of innate forms, know all things and all natural causes. By their natural knowledge, therefore, they can foreknow by their innate forms only those future events which have determinate existence in a natural cause."

²⁸ *QDA* 20, ad.4.

this is only a partial explanation, for Aquinas insists that the innate species do hold within them the past, present and future of the things they represent and that they are indeed within the angels:

Although the species in the intellect of an angel, in so far as they are species, refer equally to things present, past, and future; nevertheless the present, past, and future do not bear the same relations to the species. Present things have a nature according to which they resemble the species in the mind of an angel: and so they can be known thereby. Things which are yet to come have not yet a nature whereby they are likened to such species; consequently, they cannot be known by those species.²⁹

Here it becomes clear that there is no need for God to replace the innate species when he intervenes in the world. It is now clear that although the angels can possess the species of things that do hold knowledge of their past, present and future, the possession of this knowledge does not encompass the knowledge of the future of things. All the angels can do is to make plausible predictions.³⁰ But why is it that the knowledge of the future is not accessible to the angels? What does Aquinas mean by saying that 'the present, past, and future *do not bear the same relations* to the species' which cause things which are yet to come not to have yet 'a nature whereby they are likened to such species'? In a somewhat similar passage Aquinas writes:

It should not occasion surprise if he [the angel] should know the present in a manner different from that by which he knows the future. For he knows them differently, not because he has a different relation to them, but because... they are differently related to him.³¹

This last passage reveals that the angel's ability to access the knowledge that lies within the species is not determined by the angel – his relation to the species – but rather the reverse, by the way the species are related to the angel. Aquinas explains that the reception of knowledge is a product of assimilation of the knower into the known. This flow of assimilation can occur in two

²⁹ *ST* 1.57.3.

³⁰ *QDV* 8.5: “an angelic intellect can know things both through their likenesses and through the divine essence. But the act of knowledge by which it knows things through their likenesses is other than the act by which it knows things through the Word.”

³¹ *QDV* 8.12. Also: “Species within an angelic intellect are not related equally to the present and future, because things that are present are actually similar to the forms existing within the angels and, consequently, can be known by their means. Things that are future, however, are not yet similar to these forms and thus, as explained earlier, cannot be known through them.”

ways, either through the movement of the knower, or through the movement of that which is to be assimilated in the knower. The first kind of movement is what happens with the human active intellect which moves toward the thing. The second kind of movement is characteristic of what happens with the angels. The angelic knowledge of the present is a result of the movement of their species toward them by which they are assimilated and become present in the angelic mind (It is important to note that this does not imply that the species themselves change but the shift occurs only in the relation between the species and the angelic intellect).³²

We can conclude therefore that the angels are passive in regard to their knowledge of the present. Aquinas's earlier quotation, that the 'angels acquire knowledge of things through an influx of divine light; in the same way that things themselves come forth into being from God,³³ becomes clear and significant. In the same way that a seed holds within it whatever will germinate from it, so the species already holds within it its own buds of knowledge. The influx of the divine light is not something that comes from without; it is the inner movement which unfurls the species revealing its expressions as they come forth to stand as present in the angel's intellect. Since the angels are not able to gain control of this movement of the species toward them, it follows that they do not possess the knowledge of the movement that governs the emergence of things into being and, consequently, lack the full knowledge of causality that governs reality. The angelic knowledge of the laws of nature is therefore an incomplete knowledge of that which governs reality and thus that God does not have to intervene in reality in an irrational manner. The opposite is true, for it is clear that all miracles, such as Christ's rising from the dead, are products of the emergence into being, which is innate both to reality and to the angelic species. **It is in this manner that we can speak of adequation that is applied to the angels: it is the adequation of the angel's thinking about a future outcome to the unfolding of the future.**

³² *QDV* 8.9: "A person will receive new knowledge of a thing in so far as he is assimilated to it in a new manner. This happens in two ways: either through his own motion or through the motion of another with respect to a form which he already possesses. Similarly, he begins to know something new in one way by newly receiving a form for the first time from an object which he now knows. This happens with us. Or the object known arrives for the first time at a form already in the knower; and this is how angels have new knowledge of present things that previously were future. For example, if a man did not yet exist, an angelic intellect would not yet be assimilated to him by means of the form of man which it has within itself; but, when he comes into existence, the angelic intellect begins to assimilate itself to him by means of this form, without any change being made within itself with respect to that object." Also *QDV* 9.9.

³³ *CT*, ch. 216.

Objection and Reply

At this point, it is important to address an objection that has been raised to the presented interpretation.³⁴ In line with Aquinas's words that, 'No falsehood, error, or deception can exist of itself in the mind of any angel. ... but they [deamons] can be misled with regard to supernatural matters',³⁵ I concluded that Aquinas leaves room for a very unique kind of mistake, in what we may call supernatural situations, where the angels can err. An example of that is Christ's rising from the dead. The objection holds that one should not consider supernatural events to be miraculous but rather events that are not caused by natural causality, i.e., contingent outcomes. This is supported by another text of Aquinas that was presented earlier:

The angels see the divine essence and, by means of innate forms, know all things and all natural causes. By their natural knowledge, therefore, they can foreknow by their innate forms only those future events which have determinate existence in a natural cause, whether this cause be merely one thing or a collection of many things – for an effect may be contingent with respect to one cause but necessary with respect to a concurrence of many.³⁶

The objection argues that since the angels have no knowledge of how contingent events might develop, though they hold perfect knowledge of reality and natural causality, they are in fact in a very similar situation to humans who are ignorant about how events will occur even in the next moment.

My response to this objection may be divided into two. 1. It will be claimed that although the objection seems to contradict the present author's interpretation of Aquinas, in fact it only qualifies it. I will argue that these two interpretations are not different in nature but differ in regard to how strict our reading of Aquinas should be. As a result the conclusion stands intact for both cases. 2. I will try to convey to the reader why the stricter interpretation is more plausible.

³⁴ I am grateful to the KU Leuven Philosophical Review Club, Jules Janssens, Can Laurens Löwe, Andrea Aldo Robiglio and Russell Friedman who pointed out the problem.

³⁵ ST Ia, q.58, a.5.

³⁶ QDV q. 8, a. 12, reply

With regard to the first part of the response, the objection's main argument is based upon whether the angels have knowledge of contingent events. As was explained above, Aquinas held that though all events are contingent by nature, at the moment of creation, God determined how history will unfold. Thus, though there is not necessarily causality between one event and what follows, they are determined by His will. It is important to emphasize that in either interpretation, to whatever degree reality is contingent and whether or not we have free will, the innate species must contain its entire outcome. This means that the interpretations, at least under the understanding of time that was presented here, do not disagree on whether the angels are unable to know future events because they have not yet occurred, but rather on whether the species grants the angels accessibility to contingent knowledge of future events. While the first interpretation holds that the angel possesses a very good understanding of the future, except with regard to supernatural events that are the product of supernatural causality, the other interpretation holds that since a part of reality is contingent, the angels' knowledge of reality and natural causality does not grant them a dramatic understanding of any future outcome since every event might follow a different path than the one they predicted. I argue that the two options are not radically different for, in both cases, the nature of adequation remains the same: adequation between the future outcome and the unfolding of the future. The difference however lies in the fact that the predication of the future in the first alternative is much denser and more far-reaching whereas the second one is much thinner and envisions only the immediate future. However, both bear a similar anticipation of the future.

My second point relates to my belief that there are good reasons to prefer my initial interpretation rather than the second one. Let us examine again the line quoted above: 'No falsehood, error, or deception can exist of itself in the mind of any angel. ... but they [deamons] can be misled with regard to supernatural matters; for example, on seeing a dead man, they may suppose that he will not rise again, or, on beholding Christ, they may judge Him not to be God'. If the objection is correct and by referring to supernatural matters Aquinas means contingent matters as opposed to necessary matters, then why does he refer to Christ's rising from the dead? Why should he turn to the most extreme possibility where he could simply have said that they could be misled with regard to contingent matters such as whether to drink Coca Cola or Pepsi? If reality is so radically contingent, as the objection holds, why should he mislead us into thinking that Christ's rising from the dead is so radically different from choosing to drink Coca Cola?

It is this conception of radical contingency that brings me to Duns Scotus's criticism of Aquinas's conception of Angelic thinking. For it is Scotus, the philosopher, who, more than any other, developed the understanding of radical contingency that attacked Aquinas's conception of innate species for not being able to cope with the radical contingency of reality. Scotus holds that if reality is radically contingent, it would not suffice for innate species to attain adequate knowledge of reality but additional mean, intuitive cognition would be required. In criticizing Aquinas's theory, Scotus argues that 'in order to know existents actually in themselves, it is necessary to have the objects themselves present so that they could be intuitively known and intuitively seen in themselves.'³⁷ Thus, and without further elaboration, it seems that Scotus's reading of Aquinas was very similar to the reading of the first alternative. This does not mean that the other alternative is impossible, but it does make the case that the first reading was fairly similar to how some important philosophers of the era understood Aquinas, or the problems that follow from his theory.

Last Remarks

Whereas this study has made a special effort to respect Aquinas's repeated claim that the species were placed within the angels at the moment of their creation and could not be modified in any way due to their innateness, Harm Goris's interpretation postulates that temporal fatalism, i.e., the notion that future events are predestined, is not acceptable. However his position seems contradictory for, on the one hand, he claims that: 1. 'The innate *species* through which the angels know, do not really change. They always remain the same. The real "change" occurs on the part of the future things. As soon as they come into existence, they get 'adapted' to the angelic *species* and are known by them.' 2. 'Future things do not exist, they do not have being. There is nothing to be known.'³⁸ For if the future is open then such adaptation to the unchanged species seems to contradict the openness of the future. Moreover it is not clear why the adaptation of things which come into being to the innate species (in whatever way such a thing could happen), has any

³⁷ Duns Scotus, *Ord.* 3.14.113. See also Allan B. Wolter, "Intuition, Memory, and Knowledge of Individuals," in *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, ed. Marilyn McCord Adams (Cornell University Press Ithaca New York, 1990), 115-16.

³⁸ Goris, *Free Creatures of an Eternal God: Thomas Aquinas on God's Infallible Foreknowledge and Irresistible Will*, 218-9.

implication for the angels ability to know the future since the angels know only through the unchanged species. There is no doubt that the philosophical endeavor to safeguard the non-determinateness of the future is a noble task, yet unfortunately Goris imposes his position on Aquinas writings which, as William Craig³⁹ shows in his thorough study of divine foreknowledge, clearly holds that God perceives at one instant and simultaneously the past, present and future, i.e., that the future is closed or what is known as the B-view of time. Goris's claim that Aquinas holds the A-view of time as an open future, is problematic since it is not based on what Aquinas says but rather on his own personal belief:⁴⁰ 'My basic reason to adopt an A-view is that common sense intuitively tends to it and I think that philosophy must first do its homework and present an airtight, non-circular argument before it may dismiss such an intuitive insight as mere illusion... Furthermore, on a B-theory temporal fatalism is not regarded as a problem anymore; one just accepts it as true.'⁴¹ Goris attempts to escape the B-view conception by saying that 'Craig doesn't ask the crucial question: are the truth-conditions of future-tense propositions yet fulfilled (or not)?' In response to that, Craig simply quotes Aquinas who says that:

In this commensuration or conformity of intellect and thing it is not necessary that each of the two actually exist. Our intellect can be in conformity with things that, although not existing now, will exist in the future. Otherwise, it would not be true to say that 'the Anti-Christ will be born.' Hence, a proposition is said to be true because of the truth that is in the intellect alone even when the thing stated does not exist.⁴²

³⁹ William L. Craig, *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents from Aristotle to Suarez*, Brill's Studies in Intellectual History (Brill, 1988), 99-126.. Also J.F. Wippel, "Divine Knowledge, Divine Power and Human Freedom in Thomas Aquinas and Henry of Ghent," in *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy* (Catholic University of America Press, 1984), 243-70.

⁴⁰ Though the past, present and future are known together by the divine mind, these events are still considered to be contingent: "when I see Socrates sitting down, my vision of this event, though certain, does not remove from the event its contingent character." Craig, *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents from Aristotle to Suarez*, 104. This does not support an A-view of time. According to Aquinas that the events are not caused or related by necessity does not imply that they are not fixed, for when these contingent events are conceived by the divine mind they cannot be prevented. Also Simo Knuuttila, "Medieval Commentators on Future Contingents in De Interpretatione 9," *Vivarium* 48, no. 1-2 (2010): 91; Wippel, "Divine Knowledge, Divine Power and Human Freedom in Thomas Aquinas and Henry of Ghent," 244-9, 62-3..

⁴¹ Goris (1996), 94-6.

⁴² QDV, 1.5

Moreover, Goris's explanation which holds that since 'future things do not exist, they do not have being', and thus they cannot be adequated by the mind, is refuted by Aquinas himself who says that:

Even before they come into being, He sees them as they actually exist, and not merely as they will be in the future and to know some future things. Contingent things, regarded as virtually present in their causes with a claim to future existence, are not sufficiently determinate to admit of certain knowledge about them; but, regarded as actually possessing existence, they are determinate, and hence certain knowledge is possible for His eternity is in present contact with the whole course of time, and even passes beyond time. We may fancy that God knows the flight of time in His eternity, in the way that a person standing on top of a watchtower embraces in a single glance a whole caravan of passing travelers.⁴³

Goris's position, whereby the species are somehow adapted to the open future as it comes to be, presupposes that the species are dependent upon things in reality. However, it was shown that the innate species and things in reality are two sides of the same coin: they are both measured by the same archetype which causes them to shine forth into being in two different modes: as things in reality and as species of the angelic intellect. Even the manner in which Goris tries to circumvent 'change' by 'adapting' seems problematic. As for the latter, I would only add that the unfolding of the species like seeds does not imply that they change; they simply continue their assimilation in the angelic intellect. They themselves remain the same while their relation to the angelic mind changes, just as the mountain does not change when the climber climbs it, only the scenery varies. (In this case, of course, it is the mountain that moves while the climber stands still).

⁴³ *CT* ch.133.