Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known According to Thomas Aquinas

Andrew Murray

Catholic Institute of Sydney
Strathfield

2013
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**.......................................................................................................................... 3

**PREFACE**................................................................................................................................................... 5

**WORKS OF THOMAS CITED**.................................................................................................................... 6

**WORKS OF ARISTOTLE CITED**................................................................................................................ 9

**GENERAL INTRODUCTION**.................................................................................................................. 11

**CHAPTER ONE: THE COMMENTARY ON THE SENTENCES**..................................................................... 15
  Introduction.................................................................................................................................................. 15
  Arguments for Species................................................................................................................................. 16
  Alternatives to Ordinary Human Knowledge ......................................................................................... 18
    God’s Knowledge.................................................................................................................................... 18
    Angelic Knowledge................................................................................................................................. 19
    Christ’s Knowledge................................................................................................................................. 20
  Human Knowledge of God in the Next Life.............................................................................................. 21
  Knowledge as Act and Union .................................................................................................................. 25
    Act......................................................................................................................................................... 25
    Form...................................................................................................................................................... 26
    Union................................................................................................................................................... 26
  Knowledge as Passion............................................................................................................................... 31
    Limitation............................................................................................................................................... 31
    Passion.................................................................................................................................................. 32
    Habit..................................................................................................................................................... 36
  *Esse Material* and *Esse Spirituale*....................................................................................................... 37
  Knowledge as Mediated............................................................................................................................. 40
    Medium.................................................................................................................................................. 40
    Object.................................................................................................................................................... 41
    Species as Having *Esse* in the Soul and as Similitude......................................................................... 43
    Similitude................................................................................................................................................ 46
  An Argument from Species....................................................................................................................... 49

**CHAPTER TWO: THE DISPUTED QUESTIONS ON TRUTH**....................................................................... 53
  Introduction................................................................................................................................................ 53
  Descriptions of the Act of Knowing......................................................................................................... 54
    The Sense of *Passio* Clarified............................................................................................................... 54
    Action and Causality............................................................................................................................... 55
    The Conception of the Intellect................................................................................................................ 58
    Relation in Knowledge............................................................................................................................ 59
    Knowing as Existing............................................................................................................................... 61
    Habitual Knowledge............................................................................................................................... 61
  The Central Problem: How Matter Affects Spirit...................................................................................... 66
    The Problem.......................................................................................................................................... 66
    Limited Being Knowing the Unlimited.................................................................................................. 67
    Angelic Knowledge of Material Beings................................................................................................. 68
    Angelic Knowledge of Other Angels..................................................................................................... 72
    The Being of the Rational Soul.............................................................................................................. 74
  *Esse Immaterialae* and Similitude......................................................................................................... 76
    Immateriality......................................................................................................................................... 76
    Distinctions............................................................................................................................................ 78
  Species and Modifications of the Identity Claim....................................................................................... 83

Andrew Murray © *Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known*, Page 3
CHAPTER THREE: THE SUMMA AND THE DE ANIMA

Introduction ........................................................................................................... 87

Summa Theologiae Questions 84 and 85 ................................................................. 90
  ST 1 q. 84, aa. 1-3 .................................................................................................. 91
  ST 1 q. 84, aa. 6-7............................................................................................... 96
  ST 1 q. 85, aa. 1-2 ............................................................................................. 100

Some Texts from the De anima Frequently Cited by Thomas................................. 104
  II, 5. (417a17-20). Assimilation ........................................................................ 105
  II, 5. (417a21-b1). Habit ..................................................................................... 107
  II, 12. (424a17-20) Receptive of Form without Matter .................................... 111
  Esse Intentionale ................................................................................................. 113
  III, 4. (429a27-28). A Place of Forms ............................................................... 116
  III, 4. (429b29-a2). A Tablet on Which Nothing is Written ............................. 117
  III, 4. (430a2-4). Intellect Understanding Itself ............................................... 118
  III, 5. (430a14-16). The Agent Intellect ............................................................. 120
  III, 7. (431a14-17). The Phantasm ..................................................................... 121
  III, 8. (431b28-a3). The Stone .................................................................... 122

GENERAL CONCLUSION .................................................................................. 125

APPENDIX ONE: A NOTE ON THE TERM SPECIES ......................................... 131

APPENDIX TWO: TEXTS RECOGNIZED ............................................................. 135

BIBLIOGRAPHY ........................................................................................................ 141

FURTHER BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................................................ 147
PREFACE

The contents of this volume comprised my doctoral dissertation, which was published in dissertation form in 1991. This edition has been updated and reformatted to be more readily available both in paper and in electronic formats. It will be freely available in the latter format.

The question that guided this study was one that had puzzled me from my first studies in philosophy. If one claims with Aristotle and Thomas that in the act of knowing the knower and the known are one, how can you allow a role for intermediary species or forms, which in some neo-scholastic accounts took on a life of their own? In other words, there seemed in the general Thomistic account to be a conflict between the metaphysics of knowing and the psychology of knowing. What I found was that there is indeed a tension in that account and that, although Thomas was attentive to it and avoided the more serious pitfalls, his teaching is open to inadequate interpretation.

In early modernity, ‘species’ morphed into ‘ideas’ such as are found in the teaching of Descartes and Locke. These present other problems and call for other solutions, which in many respects, these have been better met by phenomenological approaches to the question of knowing. The Aristotelian and Thomistic metaphysics of knowing is nevertheless eminently worth maintaining and synthesis between it and phenomenology can, I believe, be achieved.¹

I would like to thank again my dissertation directors at Catholic University of America – John Wippel, Thomas Prufer and Kurt Pritzl. Prufer and Pritzl unfortunately died before their time and their deaths were a great loss to the philosophical community and to the other communities in which they shared. I remain grateful to these men and to the School of Philosophy at Catholic University of America for the learning that they enabled and for a rich continuing relationship. I am also grateful to my colleagues at Catholic Institute of Sydney who have nourished my intellectual and spiritual life for more than twenty years. Finally, I would like to thank Elizabeth Mulcahy, Mia Moran, Mary Roddy and Paul Wei, who assisted in completing this edition.

Andrew Murray

19 October 2013

WORKS OF THOMAS CITED:
EDITIONS, ABBREVIATIONS, TRANSLATIONS

Works:

*Opera Omnia.* 50 vols. Rome: Leonine Commission, 1882-.


Syntheses:


Disputed Questions:

*Quaestiones de anima.* Edited by James H. Robb. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1968. (*Qq. disp. de anima*)


*Quaestiones disputatae.* Vol. II. Edited by P. Bazzi, M. Calcaterra, T. S. Centi, E. Odetto and P. M. Pession. Turin: Marietti, 1948. This volume contains the following:

*Quaestiones disputatae de potentia.* (*De pot.*)

*Quaestiones disputatae de spiritualibus creaturis.* (*De spir. creat.*)

*Quaestiones disputatae de virtutibus in communi.* (*De virt. in comm.*)

*Quaestiones Quodlibetales.* Edited by R. M. Spiazzi. Turin: Marietti, 1956. (*Quodl.*)
Aristotelian Commentaries:


Other Commentaries:

The Division and Methods of the Sciences. Translated by A. A. Maurer. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1953.

Scriptum super libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi. 4 vols. Edited by P. Mandonnet (Bk 1-2) and M. F. Moos (Bk 3-4). Paris: Lethielleux, 1929-47. (In Sent.)


Opuscula:


Unless otherwise noted, translations are my own. However, where translations exist, they have been consulted.
WORKS OF ARISTOTLE CITED


The Latin De anima existed in three versions with which Thomas was familiar: the translatio vetus of James of Venice, the translatio nova of William of Moerbeke (1267-68), and the translation accompanying Averroes’ Long Commentary on the De anima which Thomas referred to as the Arabic version. They are found, in turn in the following editions:


GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Any standard exposition of Thomas Aquinas’s theory of knowledge would read something like this. Knowledge is an identity between the knower and the known. What is known is somehow in the knower, and the knower somehow becomes the known.

This identity is achieved by means of species—intentional, representational, or intermediary forms—, which are received by the knower and which bring it into the act of knowing. These species belong, in one sense, to what is known, but they are not that which is known. Rather, they are that by which knowledge comes about and that by which what is known is in the knower. In another sense, species belong to the knower and constitute it in its act as a knower.

Human knowledge is complex and comes about in a number of distinct powers or faculties of the soul. The higher faculties are dependent on the lower, and species must inform each and all. And so colour exists naturally in a physical object. A species of colour exists in the medium (the transparency) between that object and the eye that sees it. The medium, in turn, impresses a species on the sense. The sense receives this species and is actualized by it.

There are five external senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. There are also four internal senses: the common sense, the cogitative power, the imagination, and the memory. The common sense collates and judges what is known by each of the five external senses and forms images or phantasms, which are stored in the imagination.

Intellectual knowledge, which is of universals and is unimpeded by the particularity of matter, occurs when the agent intellect illumines phantasms in the imagination and abstracts from them intelligible species, which are received by the possible intellect. This reception initiates the act of intellectual cognition. (The agent intellect is purely actual; the possible intellect is purely potential.) Further activities take place in the possible intellect—forming definitions, making judgements, enunciating propositions. Each is underpinned by a species, which might be called a conception or a concept.

Species are qualities that exist in the medium and in the various faculties of the soul. They do not, however, have the same kind of existence as ordinary sensible qualities like colour or taste or heat. They have a weaker mode of being, which is variously called immaterial, spiritual, or intentional. (Qualities in bodies, on the other hand, have material or natural being.) Nor are species received in the same way as natural qualities are received. Rather, they are received immaterially or spiritually or intentionally. Further, vigorous distinction is made between the being in the soul that species have as intentional forms and their cognitive role as representations or vicars of the objects of knowledge.

The theory is fundamentally Aristotelian in origin and hinges on such famous statements as, “for it is not the stone which is in the soul, but its form.” But the theory of species comprises a substantial development of anything that is to be found in Aristotle. Yves Simon puts it this way. “The theory of cognitive ‘forms,’ which, in Aristotle involves much obscurity, has been greatly clarified by St. Thomas and his commentators.” The major commentators were Cajetan and John of Saint Thomas.

The English word “species” presents certain problems. It is both a translation and a transliteration of the Latin species, which can mean a look or an appearance, but which is also a synonym for forma. In Latin, forma and species were used somewhat indiscriminately. Four Greek words—eidos, morphe, idea, and schema—carry the sense of “form.” In the early Latin translations they too were somewhat indiscriminately translated by forma and species, but William of Moerbeke in his 1267 translation of the De anima established a one-to-one correspondence between eidos and species, morphe and forma, idea and idea, and schema and figura. Eidos is the word used by Aristotle for forms in respect of knowledge.

Various suggestions for an English term have been made. Jacques Maritain suggests representative form; Bernardo Bazán suggests representative form. And, of course, Augustin Dupin offered intentional species.

---


3 Aristote, De anima III, 8 (431b29). Hamlyn p. 65
form. Yves Simon argues strongly for the word idea and the term has some merit. However, it involves two confusions. First, Thomas, in common with most medieval theologians, used idea in another sense—that of divine exemplary forms. Second, idea has been much used by the early modern philosophers, who, while rejecting the notion of species intentionales, posited ideas which took on some characteristics of the scholastic sense of species yet transformed them in various ways.

In this study we will accept species intentionales as a technical term and translate it consistently as “intentional species.” What might be the best English expression for a general exposition of the theory of knowledge will be left undetermined for the moment.

Thomas himself was aware of difficulties with the theory of intentional species. As we have noted and as we shall see in more detail, he was forced to make subtle though critical distinctions. Species are the means by which knowledge takes place, they are not what is actually known. Although species exist as qualities in the soul, it is their representational role rather than the being they have in the soul that is significant for knowledge. Still again, according to Thomas species do not exist materially. Rather they exist immaterially or spiritually.

But a greater tension lies between two competing claims. On the one hand, knowledge is said to consist in a complete and perfect identity or union between the knower and what is known. On the other hand, this identity is said to take place by means of intermediary species—forms that are neither themselves known directly nor what is known. The tension is shown up if one considers two passages from a modern Thomistic writer on knowledge.

The unity effected between the knowing subject and the object known is far more intimate than the union between matter and form. Matter never becomes form, nor form matter; but they unite as intrinsic coprinciples in the formation of a composite. In cognition, the knowing subject intentionally becomes and is the object known. In the act of knowing the thing and the thought are not merely united, they are one.

The species in knowledge is thus not the very thing which is the object of the act of knowing, but a similitude of that object, by which the object is known more or less completely, and more or less distinctly according to the inner richness of the species. The species is the measure of the degree of the knowledge of the object, for the species is the inner cause of the act of knowing. It is more or less adequate, but none the less a thoroughly accurate likeness of the thing, which is attained by means of the species.

The theory of intentional forms has long been criticized. A vigorous debate on the matter raged throughout the latter part of the thirteenth century and well into the fourteenth century. Katherine Tachau has traced part of this debate in a recent work. She begins with the work of Roger Bacon (ca. 1220-1292) and deals with John Duns Scotus (1266-1308), Peter Aureol (d. 1322), and William of Ockham (1285-1350), as well as with a number of lesser figures. She does not study Thomas Aquinas nor investigate the more theological debates.

Roger Bacon developed a theory of species based on the theories of light and optics of Avicenna and Alhazen. Ockham rejected species altogether and accounted for knowledge with his theory of intuitive cognition. Concerning sense knowledge he argued that, if there were species, we would have intuitive cognition of them. Concerning intellectual knowledge he claimed that there was no need to posit the existence of more things than were needed and that intuitive cognition could easily be explained by means of an intellect and of a thing that is known, without any recourse to species.

The early modern philosophers all took exception to the notion of intentional species. Their criticisms were often cynical and derisory. In Descartes (1596-1650), for instance, we read, “when I see a staff, it is not to be thought that intentional species fly off from it and reach the eye.” On the other hand, much of his Third...
Meditation and its critical discussion of whether ideas relate to anything apart from themselves could be taken as a serious though perverted attack on species.

Modern phenomenologists take issue with both ideas and species. They view both species and ideas as fictitious beings, posited not on the basis of any real evidence but as the result of argument. They see the need to hold to intermediaries between things and the mind and between the mind and language as a confusion arising from misunderstandings about how words work.

Four obstacles stand in the way of someone today attempting to understand what Thomas Aquinas taught about species. First, his works are voluminous, comprising some eight and a half million words, and what he has to say about species is spread throughout these works, often in contexts other than that of human knowledge. Second, modern accounts of Thomas’s thought tend to be very heavily influenced by the developments made by Cajetan (1468-1534) and by John of Saint Thomas (1589-1644). Third, modern Thomistic accounts of intentionality are often written in response to philosophical problems raised by Descartes and Kant. Fourth, Thomas has been misinterpreted by some of his own followers who have tended to concretize species and make them into something like the Democritean *eidola*.

The intention of this study is to make a close and detailed study of the texts of Thomas himself on the issues surrounding his theories of intentional species and of the identity between knower and known in the act of knowledge. It will be driven by five questions which are as follows:

1. What does Thomas mean by species?
2. What are Thomas’s reasons for requiring intentional species and, in particular, for requiring intelligible species distinct from the act of knowledge itself?
3. What is the nature of the identity between knower and known and what role do species play in achieving this identity?
4. What does Thomas mean by *esse immateriale* or *esse spirituale*?
5. How does he express and justify the two-fold role of species, namely an ontological role whereby they are qualities having *esse immateriale* in the soul, and a cognitive role whereby they are mediators of the form of another thing.

Thomas himself does not raise each of these questions in quite the same manner. Where he deals with the issues the discussions are complex and difficult. Each chapter will, therefore, be structured according to the thought and text which is under investigation rather than by the questions themselves. The questions, however, will not be far away.

Four of Thomas’s major works will be studied in detail. Chapters One and Two will comprise exhaustive analyses of the *Scriptum super IV libros Sententiarum* (1252-1256) and of the *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* (1256-1259) respectively. In Chapter Three selected and strategic texts from the *Summa theologiae* (1266-1273) and the *Sentencia libri De anima* (1267-1268) will be analyzed. Significant texts from other works will be listed in Appendix I and some of them will be noted in other discussions.

---


16 A quick survey of the notes of books on Thomistic theories of knowledge reveals this. See, for instance, John Peifer, *The Mystery of Knowledge*, and Yves Simon, *Metaphysics of Knowledge*.

17 Peifer, for instance, spends half of his first Chapter, “Statement of the Problem,” on the Cartesian and Kantian traditions. The revitalism of Thomism in this century owes much to Cardinal Mercier who in 1889 founded the *Institut Supérieur de Philosophie*. A primary concern of his *Criteriology* was a response to Kant. See his A *Manual of Modern Scholastic Philosophy*, vol. 1, translated by T. L. Parker and S. A. Parker (St. Louis: Herder, 1917).

CHAPTER ONE

THE COMMENTARY ON THE SENTENCES

Introduction

Thomas came to Paris at the age of twenty-seven in 1252 to commence his studies as a baccalarius Sententiarum in preparation for becoming a Master in the University. These studies would take him four years to complete. He was sent on the recommendation of Albert the Great although he was relatively young, in fact below the canonical age, and was to live amidst the severe turbulence of the anti-mendicant controversies. Under the direction of the Dominican Master, Elias Brunet, Thomas lectured on the Sentences of Peter Lombard and prepared a written text which was to be submitted to the stationers as Scriptum super Sententias.

Peter Lombard (ca. 1100-1160) composed his Sentences in 1152. They were "a systematic collection of patristic texts intended to probe more deeply into the mysteries of faith,"21 "a well-ordered, selected, digested, wisely assimilated patristic inheritance."22 Four books were arranged around the major themes of the Creed: "the Trinity, creation and creatures, Christ and the virtues, and finally the sacraments and the four last things."23 Early in the thirteenth century the work had become the major text for bachelors of theology in Paris. Although it was divided into chapters, commentators used a division of distinctions, questions, articles and "small questions" to examine theological issues of the day in detail after a brief exposition of Lombard’s text.24

Thomas’s work is extremely theological, being intended that way, and taking its structure from Lombard. However, as we shall see, for instance in In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 1, Thomas does rely heavily on philosophical discussions and these can be abstracted. He was already very familiar with Aristotle, particularly through Avicenna and Averroes. He had studied Aristotle’s natural philosophy and probably the Metaphysics at Naples (1239-44) and had studied at least the Ethics under Albert. Still it was to be the 1260’s before Thomas was to see the new translations of Aristotle by Moerbeke. His own commentaries on Aristotle would be written between 1267 and 1273.

The Commentary on the Sentences is of interest to us as Thomas’s earliest major work and one of his most extensive. It is predated only by small works, notably the De ente et essentia and the De principiis naturae25 and comprises some million and a half words making it just 75,000 words shorter than the Summa theologiae. As an early work, it shows that Thomas’s main principles and positions were clear but that some development was to take place in his thought.26 It is particularly interesting because of its comprehensive nature and the objections and replies that are far more numerous and detailed than, for instance, in the Summa theologiae. In the Sentences we also see Thomas in something of a “raw” state where he is working out many positions and distinctions for the first time. While Thomas does not address issues of ordinary human knowledge in direct questions and in their own right, he says much about them in other discussions. The Sentences are often

---

21 Weisheipl, p. 67.
22 Chenu, p. 267.
23 Weisheipl, p. 67.
24 Thomas was reasonably faithful to the order of Lombard’s collection. Fourteenth century commentators, while maintaining his name, ceased to bear much resemblance to Lombard’s original arrangement.
26 See Weisheipl pp. 76-77, Chenu pp. 272-76.
27 This, of course, makes the task of finding all the relevant texts somewhat difficult. The first step was a survey of the questions in each of the articles of the Sentences. Gonçalo de Mattos, “Recherches sur la théorie de la connaissance,” (Ph. D. Dissertation, L’Université Catholique de Louvain, 1940), pp. 161-79, listed a great number of texts. Other secondary sources were helpful. Robert Busa, Index Thomisticus, lists some 10,000 entries under the various forms of the word species. Although the whole seems impossible to deal with, careful use of words combined with species revealed new texts.
neglected but are rich in content as “a general exposé of his entire thought on all theological subjects then under discussion.”

The purpose of this chapter is to make a detailed exposition of how Thomas speaks about knowledge in the Sentences. It will be pursued from the perspective of seeking Thomas’s answers to our questions about species and identity in knowledge. The treatment has to be somewhat exploratory as we find the basic structures of the theory.

The chapter will fall into seven sections. The first two sections will show how Thomas generally talks about knowledge in the Sentences, the first by examining what may be taken as arguments for species, the second by setting out the major discussions that occur. The next two sections will examine the nature of knowledge itself, first considered as act, second, considered as an affection or a passion in some sense. Thomas found it necessary to draw various distinctions about knowledge. These will be investigated in the fifth section in terms of the distinction between esse materiale and esse spirituale and in the sixth section under the rubric of the mediation that takes place in knowledge. The final section will show how Thomas used species in his arguments against Averroes’s views that there is one possible and one agent intellect for all men.

Arguments for Species

There are in the Commentary on the Sentences three texts that may be taken as arguments for the existence of species. Brief though they are, consideration of them will open up a number of issues that will need to be examined if one is to come to an understanding of what Thomas took species to be.

The first text is III Sentences d. 31, q. 2, a.4, where Thomas considers scientia in the next life

and begins: “It seems that the scientia which we have in this life is to be completely destroyed.” At issue are the effects of separation of soul and body, particularly the soul’s loss of access to phantasms.

Responding, Thomas distinguishes three ways in which scientia in this life must be considered: as act, habit, and mode of acting. The act of scientia is knowledge of conclusions whereby they are resolved into first principles. A habit is a certain quality that habituates man to act in this way. The mode of acting is to understand by means of phantasms for which he quotes Aristotle, De anima III, 7. (431a16-17) Paraphrasing Aristotle, he continues,

the soul would in no way understand without a phantasm, not only with respect to acquiring knowledge, but also with respect to considering those things that someone already knows; because the phantasms are related to the intellect just as sensibilia are to sense.

Thomas then takes a closer look at the mode of acting, which, he says, is such for two reasons. First, the human soul is the last in the order of intellects. “Hence its possible intellect is related to all intelligibles just as prime matter [is related] to all sensible forms. Because of this it cannot flow into act before it receives species, which happens through sense and imagination.” Second, the soul is the form of the body so that its act is the act of the whole man. “And so in that place the body shares [in this] not as an instrument through which the soul acts but by representing the object, namely the phantasm.” From this he concludes that the soul needs a phantasm even to understand things it has previously known.

At the core of the argument is the recognition that knowledge is an act that takes place in a power or faculty, namely a sense or the intellect. The human possible intellect is the most potential or possible of all intellectual beings and therefore requires a form or species from outside itself to complete its actualization. Thomas also raises in this text the notions of the object of knowledge, of sensibles and of the phantasm.

Habitus autem est quaedam qualitas hominem habilitans ad hunc actum
Modus autem intelligendi praeditus accidit humanae animae ex duobus. Uno modo ex hoc quod anima humana est ultima secundum naturae ordinem in gradibus intellectus. Unde se habet intellectus ejus possibilis ad omnia intelligibilia, sicut se habet materia prima ad omnes formas sensibiles; propiter hoc non potest in actum exire prius quam recipiat species: quod fit per sensum et imaginationem. Alio modo ex hoc quod est forma corporis. Unde oporet quod operatio ejus sit operatio totius hominis. Et ideo communicat ibi corpus non sicut instrumentum per quod operatur, sed sicut repraesentans objectum, scilicet phantasma. Et inde contingit quod anima non potest intelligere sine phantasmate etiam ca quae prius novit.”
The second text is III Sentences d. 3, q. 3, a. 3 ad 1 where Thomas argues in a similar way for species. The question under consideration is whether angels understand particulars. An objector says that since angelic and human intellectual natures are similar, angels, no more than men, are able to understand singulars. Thomas first discusses human understanding pointing out that, since the human intellect is the lowest of the intellectual substances, it has in it the greatest receptivity (possibilitas) to other intellectual substances. And so the intelligible light it receives from God is weaker and “is not sufficient for determining proper knowledge of a thing except through species received from things, which must be received in it formally according to its mode.” He goes on to explain that the human intellect understands singulars not simply in intelligible species that are universal but by a reflection on imagination and sense, that is, by applying the universal species to the individual form preserved in the imagination. An angel, on the other hand, has proper knowledge of singulars.

Here again we see emphasis on the receptivity of the intellect and on its need to be determined in its act of knowledge by the thing that it knows. This happens by means of species, which are received formally, that is, without matter and according to the intellect’s own manner of reception.

The third text is III Sentences d. 3, q. 3, a. 1 and here Thomas asks whether an angel knows things through its essence. The point of the question is that as an immaterial substance an angel is in itself intelligible. Is, then, its own form or essence sufficient to bring its intellect to knowledge or does it need some other form?

In answering Thomas distinguishes between the divine intellect and the human intellect and states that the angelic intellect is a midway between the two, both in power and in mode of knowing. In God “the similitude of the thing understood is the very essence of the one who understands, which essence is the exemplary and efficient cause of things.” On the other hand, in the human intellect the similitude of the thing understood is other than the substance of the intellect and is like its form. Whence from the intellect and the similitude of the thing is effected a perfect one, which is the intellect understanding in act. And the similitude of this [thing] is received from the thing.

In the angelic intellect, Thomas maintains that as in man the similitude of the thing is other than the substance of the understanding but that like divine knowledge the similitude is not received from things. Nor, he says, does faith allow that the angelic similitude is the cause of things. Rather “it is infused from God for the purpose of knowing.”

Thomas then gives an argument which he attributes to Averroes. The distance between the intellect and the understood species is proportional to the degree of simplicity of the separated natures.

---

De div. nom. Nec tamen est causa rei secundum fidem, sed est influxa a Deo ad cognoscendum. Et ratio hujus sumi potest ex verbis Commentatoris, in XI Metaph. Ipse enim dicit quod secundum ordinem simplicitatis naturarum separat arum est ordo distantiae speciei intellectae ab intellectu; unde in prima essentia, cui non admiscetur potentia aliqua, est omnino idem intelligens et intellectum; in aliis autem secundum quod plus admiscetur de potentia, est major distantia inter speciem intellectam et intellectum. Cujus ratio est quia nihil operatur, nisi secundum quod est in actu; unde illud cujus essentia est purus actus, intelligit sine receptione alijus pericientis, quod sit extra essentiam ejus; illud vero in quo est potentia, non poterit intelligere nisi perfectur in actu per aliquem receptum ab extrinsecus; et hoc est lumen intellectivum naturale, quod a Deo in substantias intellectivas emititur. Et quia unumquodque recipitur in aliquo per modum recipientis; lumen illud quod in Deo est simplex, recipitur in mente angelorum et divinitatum et multiplicatum: omnis enim potentia receptiva de se divisi lorem habet secundum quod non est terminata ad unum, quod fit per actu terminantes; et ideo dicitur in libro De causis, ubi supra, quod sicut in natura inferiori multiplicantur singularia, ita et species intelligibiles in intelligentiis; utrumque enim est proprie multiplicabilitatem potentiae; et istae sunt species per quas angeli cognoscunt.

He cites Dionysius, The Divine Names, chapter 7.
And so, in God, who is without any potency, the understanding and the understood are completely one. But in other intellects the greater the degree of potency, the more the distance between the intellect and the species understood. And he gives a reason.

The reason for this is that nothing acts except in so far as it is in act. Whence that whose essence is pure act understands without reception of any perfecting [agent] that is outside its essence. But that in which there is potency will not be able to understand unless it is perfected in act by something received from outside. And this is natural intellective light, which is emitted from God into intellective substances.

Thomas then quotes the principle, whatever is received is received in the mode of the recipient, to show how this light, which is simple in God, is multiplied in angels and becomes the species through which they understand.

In this text we see explicit reference to two principles: “Nothing acts except in so far as it is in act” and “whatever is received is received in the manner of the recipient.” There is a differentiation of knowledge as had by divine, angelic, and human beings. The word “similitude” is used somewhat interchangeably with the term “species”. Mention is made of the unity that is achieved in the act of knowledge and the role of potency is reinforced. These matters will be examined in more detail and with reference to other texts throughout this chapter.

Alternatives to Ordinary Human Knowledge

Human knowledge, as we have seen, comes about either as sense knowledge through the reception of sensible species from sensible objects or by means of the abstraction of intelligible species from phantasms; in both cases this occurs through the union of the species with the relevant cognitive power. Thomas does not raise a specific question about ordinary human knowledge in the Sentences but he does speak about a variety of other kinds of knowledge which we will now review. In addition to the issues they raise, these questions show what were Thomas’s main interests in the area of cognition in the Sentences.

God’s Knowledge

In a text quoted above, Thomas says, “in the divine intellect the similitude of the thing understood is the very essence of the one who understands, which essence is the exemplary and efficient cause of things.”

The form which completes God’s act of knowledge is His own essence by means of which he knows himself and every other being. Thomas discusses God’s knowledge at length in the first book of the Sentences, distinctions 35, 36, and 38, but unfortunately does not develop the notion of God’s knowing through his essence in its own right. Nevertheless he uses it constantly in elucidating further characteristics of God’s knowledge. “The essence of God through which he knows himself is also the similitude through which he knows all created things.”

Two discussions from distinctions 35-38, are significant for our purposes. In the first Thomas

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 18
asks, “Is the scientia of God universal?” He bluntly asserts “that none of the above pertain to divine scientia except only that it is always in act.” His reason for this is that the conditions of a science are established by the medium of knowledge, in this case, God’s own essence. He goes on to draw out some of the implications. God’s essence cannot be called universal because that would imply that it would be open to receive some added determination and so be somehow potential and imperfect. Nor can God’s knowledge be particular because that would imply some relationship to matter or to something taking the place of matter. In the same way, his essence is free from all passive or material potency “since it is pure act.” Thomas rejects there being a habit in God because habit is not the ultimate perfection but rather operation or activity (operatio) is. Finally he reaffirms that God’s “knowledge can be called neither universal nor particular nor potential not habitual, but only actual.”

The question of the second text is: “Does God know singulars?” In a long article Thomas expounds and rejects the views of Averroes and Avicenna. He reduces their errors to the denials, first, that God acts immediately in all things and, second, that God creates matter as well as inducing form in things. Thomas affirms both of these propositions. “Therefore through his essence, as through a cause, he knows the whole of what is in a thing both formal and material: whence he does not only understand things according to universal natures, but in so far as they are individuated by matter.” His example is of a builder who, were he by his art to conceive both the matter and form of a house, would know it in its particularity. But since a human builder conceives only the form, his knowledge of the particular house must come through his senses.

Angelic Knowledge

Thomas discusses angelic knowledge in the second book of the Sentences, distinction 3, question 3. The key text is article one which we have already examined in detail. Nevertheless, let us repeat the central point. “But in the angelic intellect the similitude of the thing understood is other than the substance of the intelligence, nor, however, is it acquired from the thing . . . but it is infused by God for the purpose of knowing.” Angels, therefore, know by means of intelligible species that come to them directly from God.

In article three of the same question, Thomas asks, “Do angels understand particular things?” Again he canvasses several accounts of how they might and rejects them before settling on his own account. Two of these are interesting. In the first the view is expressed that angels know only universal causes from innate forms but that they receive forms from the things that they know. Thomas rejects this because even if a form is received from a thing, it does not lead to knowledge of the singular unless it is known with the individuating conditions of matter. And he says “this cannot be unless by means of species existing in a bodily organ such as in sense and in imagination.” This is impossible for angels.

The second view is that universal forms are able to come together in such a way that they contain a set of accidents proper to only one individual. Thomas rejects this on similar grounds. “Individualation of forms is not unless from matter,” and so a collection of forms always remains a collection so that “when a collection of forms of this kind are known, Socrates or Plato is not known.”

---

37 In I Sent. d. 3, q. 1, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 832. “Sed quia nos ponimus Deum immediate operantem in rebus omnibus, et ab ipso esse non solum principia formalia, sed etiam materiam rei; ideo per essentiam suam, sicut per causam, totum quod est in re cognoscit, et formalia et materialia; unde non tantum cognoscit res secundum causam universalis, sed etiam non est suficient: quia formae individuatio non est reperire in alio. Sed haec producta cognoscunt. Sed hoc non videtur conveniens: quia illud quod est acceptum a re est influxa a Deo ad cognoscendum.”
38 In II Sent. d. 3, q. 3, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 113. “Sed in intellectu angelico similitudo rei intellectae est aliquid a substantia intelligentis, non tamen est acquisita a re . . . sed est influxa a Deo ad cognoscendum.”
39 In II Sent. d. 3, q. 3, a. 3. Mandonnet pp. 119-120. “Quidam enim dicit quod angeli per formas innatas solum causas universales cognoscunt: sed ex rebus ipsis accipiunt, unde singularia ex causis universalibus producta cognoscunt. Sed hoc non videtur conveniens: quia illud quod est accipiunt a re singulari, non ducit in cognitionem singularitatis ejus, nisi quandu servantur in eo conditiones materiales individuantes illud; quod non potest esse nisi specie existente in organo corporali, ut in sensu et imaginacione. Unde cum angeli organo corporali careant, etiamsi a rebus species abstraherent, non possent per huiusmodi species singularium cognitionem habere.”
40 In II Sent. d. 3, q. 3, a. 3. Mandonnet pp. 120-121. “Alio vero dicit quod ex conjunctio universalium quae cognoscunt, resultat cognitionio particularis, secundum quod ex pluribus formis congrugatis resultat quaedam collectio accidentium, quam non est reperire in alio. Sed haec etiam non est sufficienti: quia formae individuatio non est nisi ex materia; unde quantumcumque formae
Thomas concludes by agreeing with those who say that “cognition of singulars has the same basis in God and in angels.” This we have already seen. God as the cause of both matter and form knows things both universally and particularly. “Moreover, the forms which are in the mind of an angel are most similar to the ideate principles existing in the divine mind, as if derived immediately and exemplarily from them (and) individuating as do the reasons (rationes) or ideas of things existing in the divine mind.”

In article four Thomas asks whether angels know many things at once. Quoting Algazel he explains that since in knowledge the intellect is

aggregatur, semper remanet collectio illa communicabilis multis, quosque intelligatur per materiam individuada; unde cognitio in sensu individuada, non cognitio corporis vel Socrates vel Plato.” This view is a second or even third-level refinement of the theory of Avicenna with which Thomas began.

In II Sent. d. 3, q. 3, a. 3. Mandonnet p. 121. “Et ideo aliter dicendum quod eadem ratio est cognitio singularium in Deo et in angelis; unde considerandum est qualiter Deus singularia cognoscat. Oportet enim illam virtutem quae cognoscit singularia habere apud se rei similitudinem, quantum ad conditiones individuantes et haec est ratio quaere per speciems quae est in sensu cognosce et singularum et non per speciem quae est in intellectu. Oportet autem ut apud artificem sit similitudo rei per artem conditae secundum totum illud quod ab artifice producit: et propter hoc eadem species per artem cognoscit formam domum quam in materiis in anima; unde autem haec domum vel illam, nisi sit in speciem a sensu accept; quia ipsa materiam non facit; sed Deus est causa rei, non solum quantum ad formam, sed etiam quantum ad materiam, quae est principium individuationis; unde idea in mente divina est similitudo rei quantum ad urturnque, scilicet materiam et formam; et ideo eadem cognoscitur non tantum in universali, sed etiam in particulari. Formae autem quae sunt in mente angelorum sunt similiae rationibus ideaebus in mente divina existentibus, sicut deductae, immediate exemplari et eis individuantes sicut rationes vel ideae rerum existentium in mente divina. Unde per eas angelis cognoscere possunt rerum singularia, quia sunt similitudines rerum etiam quantum ad dispositiones materiales individuantes, sicut et rationes vel ideae rerum existentium in mente divina.” Thomas here uses the notion of divine ideas. He treats them fully as in In I Sent. d. 36, q. 2 and in art. 2 defines them in this way: “...et ex hoc sunt plures rationes ideales, secundum quod Deus intelligit essentiam suam ut imitabilem per hunc vel per illum modum.” Mandonnet p. 842.

In II Sent. d. 3, q. 3, a. 4. Mandonnet p. 123. “Respondeo dicendum quod causa quae non possunt plura simul intelligi in actu, haec est quam Algazel assignat, quia oportet semper intellectum configurari actu secundum speciem rei intelligibilis, quam apud se habet, rei intellectae in actu, ut sit assimilatio utriusque quae exigitur ad cognitionem rei. Sicut autem impossibile est corpus secundum eadem partem diversis modo figurari diversis figuris, ita impossibile est unum intellectum diversi simul speciebus ad diversa intelligenda actu informari; ...”

assimilated to the thing understood, so long as it understands different things by different species it cannot understand both at once. He gives the example that the same part of a body cannot be shaped differently at the same time. He then says that an angel knows things in two ways. “In one way through many species, which are in its intellect; and so it is necessary that it does not know many things at once, except in so far as they are reduced to one species, through which they are known.” The other kind of knowledge is had in the Word who is the cause of things and here they are able to know all things at once. We will look at knowledge in Verbo shortly and simply note here that he calls it “as it were formal in respect of the proceeding kind from which they are never freed.”

Christ’s Knowledge

Thomas deals with knowledge had by Christ in distinction 14 of III Sentences. The issue is a decidedly theological one, but a brief discussion will serve two purposes for us. First, it will reveal another dimension of the reception of form by the intellect. Second it will serve as an introduction for a number of texts which we will eventually draw from distinction 14.

The problem is that in Christ two natures, divine as Second Person of the Trinity, in the Word, and human, as Jesus of Nazareth, come together in one person. What kind of knowledge does this person exercise? In article one Thomas indicates that the kind of knowledge experienced pertains not to person but to nature and in Christ to both natures so that he has both divine and human knowledge. He further distinguishes Christ’s human knowledge into that by which he knows the Word and things in the Word and that by which he knows things in the ordinary human manner.

41 In II Sent. d. 3, q. 3, a. 4. Mandonnet pp. 123-124. “Sed intellectus angelii cognoscit res dupliciter. Uno modo per species plures, quae in intellectu ejus sunt; et sic oportet quod plura non simul cognoscant, nisi inquantum reducantur ad unam speciem, per quam cognoscuntur. Allo modo cognoscunt res in uno quod est causa earum, et hoc est Verbum; et sic possunt esse simul in actu cognitionis omnium. Haec autem cognitio est quasi formalis respectu praecedentis, a qua nunquam absolvuntur.”

42 In III Sent. d. 14, a. 1, qc. 1. Moos p. 434.


Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 20
The point of knowledge in the Word (in Verbo) is that the human soul is potential to any intelligible form. The Word who is God is most totally intelligible and so is able to inform the intellect as a kind of medium. Thomas allows this kind of knowledge to angels and to the saints as well as to Christ but he holds that, unlike others, Christ, because of his perfection, can see all that is to be seen in the Word and that he can know all these things at once because they are seen in one species, namely the Word. At the same time Thomas does not allow that Christ according to ordinary human knowledge sees all things. Such knowledge uses a different medium, namely, the similitudes of things, and these cannot contain all that was seen in the Word.

**Human Knowledge of God in the Next Life**

In distinction 49 of Book Four of the Sentences, Thomas asks, “Can the human intellect come to see God through His essence?” The context is human knowledge of God in the next life, in theological terms, the beatific vision. The discussion is long but interesting for us on three grounds. First, Thomas talks specifically about human knowledge but in an extreme limiting case. Second, he explicitly treats the question both theologically and philosophically. Indeed, the most powerful case for the existence of this kind of knowledge is made in theological terms; but the working out of how it can come about is done within the traditions of philosophy. Third, the text shows how Thomas deals with a complex of issues surrounding knowledge and the notion of form.

In the first place Thomas entertains the major objection of those who maintain that this kind of knowledge is impossible. “They are moved,” he says, “by the distance between our intellect and the divine essence.” “For since the intellect in act is somehow one with the intelligible in act, it seems difficult that a created intellect in some way becomes the uncreated essence.” He does not here

---

46 In III Sent. d. 14, a. 2, qc. 2. Moos p. 447. “... cum res videntur in Deo, Deus est quasi medium cognoscendi illas res.”

47 In III Sent. d. 14, a. 2, qc. 2. Moos pp. 447-48. Thomas here includes everything that “was, is or will be not only made but thought or said” but excludes things that could be but were not or will be. The difference is that in God there are proper ideas for the former but God knows the latter only through simple intelligence of his own power.


49 In III Sent. d. 14, a. 3, qc. 1. Moos p. 456. “Dicendum ad primam quaestionem quod cognitio rerum in proprio genere et cognitio rerum in Verbo different, non quantum ad res cognitas, sed quantum ad medium cognoscendi quod est id in quo res cognoscitur; quia cognitio quae est rerum in Verbo, habet medium cognoscendi ipsum Verbum; cognitio autem rerum in proprio genere, habet medium cognoscendi similitudines rerum quae sunt in intellectu.”

50 In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 683. “Utrum intellectus humanus possit pervenire ad videndum Deum per essentiam.” The whole of this text is provided in footnote form. It is broken up to follow the main text. It begins: “Respondo dicendum, quod sicut secundum fidem ponimus finem ultimum humanae vitae esse visionem dei; ita philosophi posuerunt ultiam hominis felicitatem esse intelligere substantias separatas a materia secundum esse; et ideo circa hanc quaestionem eadem difficulatas et diversitas inventur apud philosophos et apud theologos.” Note: where, for the latter part of Book IV, Busa’s edition is used, proper names and first letters of sentences will be capitalized in keeping with normal practice and that of Mandonnet and Moos. 51 In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 683. “Quidam enim philosophi posuerunt quod intellectus noster possibilis nunquam potest ad hoc pervenire ut intelligat substantias separatas, sicut Alfarabius in fines suae ethicae: quanvis contrarium dixerit in lib. De intellectu, ut commentator refert in 3 De anima. Et similiter quidam theologi posuerunt, quod intellectus humanus nunquam potest ad hoc pervenire quod deum per essentiam videat. Et utroque ad hoc movet distanti inter intellectum nostrum et essentiam divinam, vel alias substantias separatas. Cum enim intellectus in actu sit quodammodo unum cum intelligibili in actu, videtur difficile quod intellectus creatur aliquo modo fiat essentia increata; unde et Chrysostomus dicit: quomodo enim creatibile videt increabile? Et major difficultas in hoc est illis qui ponunt intellectum possibilem esse generabilem et corruptibilem, utpote virtutem a corpore dependentem non solum respectu visionis divinae, sed respectu visionis quorumcumque substantiarum separatarum. Sed haec posito omnino stare non potest. Primo quia repugnat auctoritati scripturae canonicae, ut Augustinus dicit in lib. De videndo deum. Secundo, quia cum intelligere sit maxime propriam operatio hominis, oportet quod secundum eam assignetur sibi sua beatitudine, cum haec operatio in ipso perfecta fuerit. Cum autem perfectio intelligentis inquantum hujusmodi, sit ipsum intelligibile; si in perfectissima operatione intellectus homo non perveniat ad videndum essentiam divinam, sed aliquid aliud, oportet dicere quod aliud aliud sit beatificans ipsum hominem quam Deus; et cum ultima perfectio cujuslibet sit in conjunctione ad suum principium, sequitur ut aliquid aliud sit principium effectivum hominis quam Deus; quod est absurdo secundum nos, et similiter est absurdo apud philosophos, qui ponunt animas nostras a substantias separatas emanare, ut in fine eas possimus intelligere. Unde oportet ponere secundum nos, quod intellectus noster quandoque perveniat ad videndum essentiam divinam, et secundum philosophos quod perveniat ad videndum essentiam substantiarum separatarum.”
answer the specifics of the objection but baldly states the repugnance of the view to the authority of Scripture and argues for this kind of knowledge from the fact that God is the ultimate end of man. He then goes on to consider two philosophical explanations of how this can come about, each of which he will reject. In the discussion he equates the theological doctrine of seeing God’s essence with the philosophical view of understanding the essence of a separate substance.

The first view which Thomas examines is that of Alfarabi and Avempace who, according to Thomas, hold that simply by understanding any intelligible object, the human intellect sees the essence of a separate substance. The discussion is significant because it raises issues about the nature and relationship of abstracted form, of the formal object of thought, and of immaterial or formal substantial beings. To show this they proceed in two ways.

According to the first, the form understood (forma intellecta) is not diversified (individuated) unless it is joined to different forms of the imagination so that when the intellect abstracts from these, the understood quiddity remains. This is one and the same in all knowers. Since this quiddity is of the same kind as separate substances, they say that in reaching this degree of abstraction the intellect knows the corresponding separate

52 In IV Sent d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 683. “Quomodo autem possit hoc accidere, restat investigandum. Quidam enim dixerunt, ut Alpharabius et Avempace, quod ex hoc ipso quod intellectus noster intelligit quaecumque intelligibilium, pertingit ad videndum essentiam substantiae separatae; et ad hoc ostendendum procedunt duobus modis. Quorum primus est, quod sicut materia specie non diversificatur in diversis individuis, nisi secundum quod conjungitur principiis individuantibus; ita forma intellecta hominis non diversificatur apud me et te, nisi secundum quod conjungitur diversus formas imaginaribilibus; et ideo quando intellectus separat formam intellectam a formis imaginationis, remanet quidditas intellecta, quae est una et eadem apud diversos intelligentes; et hujusmodi est quidditas substantiae separatae. Et ideo, quando intellectus noster pervenit ad summam abstractionem quidditatis intelligibilis cujuscumque, intelligit per hoc quidditatem substantiae separatae, quae est ei similis. Secundus modus est, quia intellectus noster naturam est abstrahere quidditatem ab omnibus intelligibilibus habentibus quidditatem. Si ergo quidditas quam abstrahit ab hoc singulari habente quidditatem, sit quidditas non habens quidditatem; intelligiendo eam, intelliget quidditatem substantiae separatae, quae est talis dispositionis, eo quod substantiae separatae sunt quidditates distinctas non habentes quidditates; quidditas enim simplicis est ipsum simplex, ut Avicenna dicit. Si autem quidditas abstracta ab hoc particulari sensibili sit quidditas habens quidditatem, ergo illum intellectus natus est abstrahere; et ideo, cum non sit abire in infinitum, erit devenire ad quidditatem non habentem quidditatem, per quam intelligitur quidditas separata.”

Thomas rejects this position with two arguments of his own.53 The first is that “the quiddity of a material substance which the intellect abstracts, is of the same kind (unius rationis) as the quiddities of separate substances.” Therefore knowledge of abstracted quiddities does not lead to knowledge of separate substances and much less to knowledge of the divine essence. In the second argument he allows counterfactually that the abstracted quiddity and the quiddity of a separate substance are of the same kind but says that even this would be insufficient because the unity of nature would be only in the remote genus of substance, which is inadequate for proper knowledge of a thing. By way of example, Thomas points out that this kind of knowledge would be weaker than knowing man simply as animal. It is only knowledge through effects “as if in a mirror.”

Thomas then expounds a second view, that was put forth by Avicenna.54 This is that “separate

53 In IV Sent d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 683. “Sed iste modus non videtur esse sufficiens. Primo, quia quidditas substantiae materialis quam intellectus abstrahit, non est unius rationis cum quidditatis separatarum substantiarum: et ita, per hoc quod intellectus noster abstrahit quidditates rerum materialium, et cognoscit eas, non sequitur quod cognoscat quidditatem substantiae separatae, et praecepta divinam essentiam, qua maxime est alterius rationis ab omni quidditate creatae. Secundo, quia dato quod esset unius rationis, tamen cognit a quidditate rei compositae, non cognosceretur quidditas separatae substantiae, nisi secundum genus remotissimum, quod est substantia: haec autem cognitio est imperfecta, nisi deveniat ad propriam rei. Qui enim cognoscit hominem solum inquantum est animal, non cognoscit eum nisi secundum quid, et in potentia; et multo minus cognoscit eum, si non cognoscat nisi substantiae naturam in ipsa. Unde sic cognoscere Deum vel aliam substantias separatas, non est videre essentiam divinam vel quidditatem substantiae separatae; sed est cognoscere per effectum, et quasi in speculo.”

54 In IV Sent d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 683-84. “Et ideo alius modus intelligendi substantias separatas ponitur ab Avicenna in sua Metaph., scilicet quod substantiae separatae intelliguntur a nobis per intentiones suarum quidditatum, quae sunt quaedam eorum similitudines non abstractae ab eis, quia ipsaem sunt immateriales, sed impressae ab eis in animabus nostris. Sed hic modus etiam non videtur nobis sufficere ad visionem divinam quam quærerimus. Constat enim quod omne quod recipit in aliquo, est in eo per modum recipientis: et ideo similium divinae essentiae impressa ab ipso in intellectu nostro erit per modum nostri.
In order, however, that sight know whiteness it is necessary that a similitude of whiteness is received in it according to the nature (ratio) of its species, although not according to the same mode of being. Because form has being of another kind in sense and in the thing outside the soul. For if the form of yellow were in the eye, it would not be said to see white. And similarly in order that the intellect understand some quiddity, it is necessary that a similitude arise in it of the same nature according to species, although perhaps the same mode of being is not on both sides. For form existing in intellect or sense is not the principle of cognition according to the mode of being that it has in each, but according to the nature (ratio) in which it shares with the exterior thing. He concludes that it is clear that no similitude is sufficient for seeing God immediately in his essence.

We pause for a moment from the exposition of the text to focus on a number of issues occurring in the text treated so far. Thomas has not used the term species in the sense of intentional species although he will use the term species intelligibilis once in the latter part of the question. He has used it in the sense of species or kind as opposed to genus. His preferred term has been similitudo although he has used forma twice, as well as forma intellecta and forma imaginabilis in discussing of the views of Alfarabi and Avempace, and intention in elucidating Avicenna’s view. These occur as synonyms for species intentionalis. At the same time he uses similitudo both in the sense of a form received or impressed and in the sense simply of likeness and its opposite dissimilitudo.

Thomas has distinguished four levels of similitude—specific and perfect (“secundum eundem perfectionis modum”), specific and imperfect, not specific but generic, and not generic but only analogical. From the text it would seem that either of the first two are adequate for proper human knowledge. That is, the similitude, in the sense of intentional form, must have a likeness to the thing known which is “secundum rationem suae speciei.”

Thomas’s ultimate reason for rejecting the Avicennian explanation is that a similitude is

---

"Defectus autem perfectae similitudinis potest tot modis accidere, quot modis dissimilitudo inventur. Uno enim modo est deficiens similitudo, quando participatur forma secundum eadem rationem speciei, sed non secundum eundem perfectionis modum; sicut est similitudo deficiens ejus qui habet parum de albedine, ad illum qui habet multum. Alio modo adhuc magis deficiens, quando non pervenitur ad eadem rationem speciei, sed tantum ad eadem rationem generis; sicut est similitudo inter illum qui habet colorum citrinum, et illum qui habet colorum album. Alio modo adhuc magis deficiens, quando ad rationem eadem generis [supply: non?] pertingit, sed solum secundum analogiam; sicut est similitudo albedinis ad hominem in eo quod utrumque est ens; et hoc modo est deficiens similitudo quae est in creatura recepta respectu divinae essentiae."

In IV Sent d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 684. “Ad hoc autem quod visus cognoscat albedinem, oporet quod recipiat in eo similitudo albedinis secundum rationem suae speciei. Quamvis non secundum eundem modum essendi; quia habet alterius modi esse forma in sensu, et in re extra animam. Si enim fuerit in oculo forma citrini, non dictur videre albedinem; et similitur ad hoc quod intellectus intelligat aliquam quididadatem, oporet quod in eo fiat similitudo ejusdem rationis secundum speciem, quamvis forte non sit idem modus essendi utroque. Non enim forma existens in intellectu vel sensu, est principium cognitionis secundum modum essendi quem habet utroque, sed secundum rationem in qua communicat cum re exteriori.”

In IV Sent d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 684. “Et ita patet quod per nullam similitudinem receptam in intellectu creato potest sic dei intelligi quod essentia ejus videatur immediate. Unde etiam quidam ponentes divinam essentiam solum per hunc modum videri, dixerunt, quod ipsa essentia non videbitur, sed quidam fulgor, quasi radius ipsius. unde nec ille modus sufficit ad visionem divinam quam quae inimirus.”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 23
received according to the mode of the recipient. Human knowledge is always mediated by a form that has a mode of being different from the way in which it exists in nature. Knowledge viewed in this way is adequate to the ordinary experience of human knowing. As he says, form is the principle of cognition not in respect of its mode of being “but according to the ratio in which it communicates with the external thing.” In the case of knowledge of God “face to face” to which Thomas holds strongly on theological grounds, knowledge by way of similitude is too weak to satisfy the claims of Scripture.

In the final section of the reply to this question, Thomas takes up the views of Alexander and Averroes to show how knowledge of God in his essence can come about. He indicates a willingness to leave aside the question of knowledge of other separate substances, but insists that for the vision of God proper to the next life, the divine essence must be “conjoined to our intellect as form so that it itself is what is understood and that by which it is understood.”

He then qualifies his position saying that this “ought not be understood as if the divine essence were the true form of our intellect, or that from it and our intellect there were effected a one simply (unum simpliciter) as in material things from natural form and matter.” In the ensuing discussion Thomas explains that when two perfections are received into one recipient, the more perfect relates to the less perfect as form to matter. This is the relation of the divine essence to the intellect as both are received in the soul. This, he says, suffices for knowledge for the divine essence “for just as from a natural form by which something has being (esse) and matter is effected one being simply (an unum simpliciter), so from the form by which the intellect understands and from the intellect itself there is a one in the order of understanding.”

Thomas concludes the discussion by justifying how a subsistent being can be the form of the intellect. In all created things the obstacle to intelligibility and to the reception of a form is matter and potentiality. God, who is pure form and above all esse subsistens, has no potentiality in him nor anything besides what is in itself intelligible and so is able to be the form by which he is understood by the intellect.

intellectus intuitit, et ipso intellectu, fit unum in intelligendo.”

58 In IV Sent d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 684. “Et ideo accipienda est alius modus, quem etiam quidam philosophi posuerunt, scilicet Alexander et Averroes in 3 De anima. Cum enim in qualibet cognitione sit necessaria aliqua forma, qua res cosmiatur aut videatur; forma ista qua intellectus perfectit ad videndas substantias separatatas, non est quiditis quam intellectus abstrahit a rebus compositis, ut dicebat prima opinio; neque aliqua impressio relicta a substantia separata in intellectuo nostro, ut dicebat secunda; sed est ipsa substantia separata, quae coniungitur intellectu nostro ut forma, ut ipsa sit quod intelligitur, et qua intelligitur. Et quidquid sit de aliis substantiis separatatis, tamen istum modum oportet nos accipere in visione dei per essentiam: quia quacumque alia forma informaretur intellectui nostro, non posset per eam duci in essentiam divinam,...”

59 In IV Sent d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 684. “...quod quidem non debet intelligi quasi divina essentia sit vera forma intellectus nostri, vel quod ex ea et intellectu nostro efficiatur unum simpliciter, sicut in naturalibus ex forma et materia naturali; sed quia proportio essentiae divinae ad intellectum nostrum est sicut proportio formae ad materiam. Quandocumque enim aliqua duo, quorum unum est perfectius altero, recipiuntur in eodem receptibili, proportio unius duorum ad alterum; scilicet magis perfectis ad minus perfectum, est sicut proportio formae ad materiam; sicut lux et color recipiuntur in diaphano, quorum lux se habet ad colorum sicut forma ad materiam; et ita cum in anima recipiatur vis intellectiva, et ipsa essentia divina inhabitans, licet non per eundem modum, essentia divina se habebat ad intellectum sicut forma ad materiam. Et quod hoc sufficient ad hoc quod intellectus per essentiam divinam possit videre ipsam essentiam divinam, hoc modo potest ostendi. Sicut enim ex forma naturali qua aliquid habet esse, et materia, efficitur unum ens simpliciter; ita ex forma qua

60 Thomas’s explanation of this point is clearer in SCG III, cap. 51, n. 2287. Marietti vol. 3, p. 70. “Manifestum est igitur quod essentia divina potest comparari ad intellectum creatum ut species intelligibilis qua intelligit: quod non contingit de essentia aliquus alterius substantiae separatae. Nec tamen potest esse forma alterius rei secundum esse naturale: sequeretur enim quod, simul cum alio iuncta, constitueret unam naturam; quod esse non potest, cum essentia divina in se perfecta sit in sui natura. Species autem intelligibilis, unita intellectui, non constituit aliquam naturam, sed perficit ipsum ad intelligendum: quod perfectione divinae essentiae non repugnat.”

61 In IV Sent d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 684. “In rebus autem naturalibus res per se subsistens non potest esse forma aliquis materiae, si illa res habeat materiam in partem sui; quia non potest esse ut materia sit forma aliquis; sed si illa res per se subsistens sit forma tantum, nihil prohibet eam efficu formam aliquius materiae, et fieri quod est ipsius compositi, sicut patet de anima. In intellectum autem oportet accipere ipsum intellectum in potentiia quasi materialit, et speciem intelligibilis quasi formam; et intellectus in actu intelligentis erit quasi compositum ex utroque. Unde si sit aliqua res per se subsistens quae non habet aliquid in se praeter id quod est intelligibile in ipsa, talis res per se poterit esse forma qua intelligitur. Res autem quaelibet est intelligibilis secundum id quod habet de actu, non secundum id quod habet de potentia, ut patet in 9 Metaph.; hujus signum est, quod oportet formam intelligibilium abstrahere a materia, et omnibus proprietatibus materiae: et ideo, cum essentia divina sit actus purus, poterit esse forma qua intellectus intelligit; et hoc erit visio beatiificans: et ideo magister dicit in 1 dist., 2 Sent., quod unio animae ad corpus est quoddam exemplum illius beatae unionis qua spiritus uneutur Deo.”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 24
This concludes our treatment of the major integral discussions of knowledge in the *Sentences*. They have appeared either as arguments for species or as enquiries into kinds of knowing other than that of ordinary human knowledge. The discussions have displayed the broad scope of Thomas’s thought and contain at least seminally its most important aspects. The remaining sections of this chapter will develop the details and implications of his positions.

**Knowledge as Act and Union**

**Act**

While the notion of act is central to Thomas’s theory of knowledge he, in fact, gives the general theory of act only minimal development in the passages of the *Sentences* dealing with knowledge. The implication is that he is using a metaphysics that is already worked out, articulated, and known to the audience of the *Sentences*. It is, of course, the metaphysics of act and potency developed by Aristotle. In this chapter we will for the most part restrict the discussion to what is available in the *Sentences*.

---

Footnotes:

62 There are other discussions which we will not take up here but which will work when appropriate. For instance, *In II Sent.* d. 23, q. 2, a. 1 asks, “Utrum Adam viderit Deum per essentiam.” In this text Thomas lists three ways of knowing God: through his essence, through species left in the intellect and through natural reason or faith. He compares each to a mode of sensitive knowledge, namely, light seen through its essence, a stone seen through a species and seeing something in a mirror. (Mandonnet pp. 571-573.) *In IV Sent.* d. 50, q. 1 deals with knowledge had by a soul separated from its body. *In IV Sent.* d. 44, q. 3, a. 3 asks whether the powers of sense remain in a separated soul.

63 Aristotle develops the notion of act first in *Physics III* in relation to physical motion and change. In *Metaphysics* IX he extends it to the act of a substance and then to the acts of various accidents. The correlative to act is potency. In his distinction between essence and existence, Aquinas extends the notion of act to esse. Esse is found in a pure way only in God whose essence is his being but is received in creatures through participation. Cf. George P. Klubertanz, *Introduction to the Philosophy of Being.* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963), pp. 122-41.


65 Most of the major references to the act of knowledge have already been cited, and their implications can be summarized quickly. According to *III Sentences* d. 31, q. 2, a. 4, knowledge is indeed act. The text sets out a proportion between the human possible intellect and intelligibles and prime matter and sensible or material forms. Because of this, says Thomas, the intellect does not move into act except by the reception of species. *II Sentences* d. 3, q. 3, a. 1, links the notion of act with those of form and of union. We will take up discussion of these notions momentarily.

According to *I Sentences* d. 35, q. 1, a. 5, in his being God is always in act and knowledge in God is only actual. God is the ultimate realization of the primacy and priority of act over potency. At the same time, this degree of perfection does not belong to any other being so that human knowledge will have to be viewed also in its limitation and imperfection. The human knower is, indeed, first a potential knower.

According to *II Sentences* d. 3, q. 3, a. 1, “nothing acts except in so far as it is in act.” In the text Thomas used this principle to show that for angelic knowledge to take place something must come to the angelic intellect from outside. A text from another context makes this even clearer. “Nothing acts except in so far as it is in act; moreover nothing is in act except in so far as it has some form or perfection. . . .” Form is the principle of action.

In a text not yet discussed Thomas brings an important precision to the notion of action. It is the distinction between actions that “pass over into external matter” and actions that “do not pass over into external matter.” Later scholastics called

---

Footnotes:

65 For an exposition of this principle and for discussions linking it with the principles “every agent acts for the sake of an end” and “every agent effects something similar to itself” see Jan Aertsen, *Nature and Creature: Thomas Aquinas’s Way of Thought,* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), pp. 263-6, 276-8, 354-6.

66 *In II Sent.* d. 34, q. 1, a. 3. Mandonnet pp. 878-879. The question is “Utrum bonum sit causa mali?” Thomas begins his reply, “Responeo dicendum, quod nihil agit nisi secundum quod est in actu; nihil autem est in actu nisi secundum quod formam vel perfectionem aliquam habet; . . .”

67 *In I Sent.* d. 40, q. 1, a. 1 ad 1. Mandonnet p. 942. The question is: “Utrum praedestinatio sit aliquid in praedestinato.” Thomas’s position is to deny this. The objection states that predestination is an action of God and every action infers a reception, therefore. Thomas replies as follows. “Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod, ut Philosophus tradit in IX *Metaphys.*, text 16, [1050a25] actionem quaedam transuest in exteriorem materiam circa quam aliquem effectum operantur, ut patet in actionibus naturalibus, sicut ignis calefacit lignum, et in artificialibus, sicut aedificator facit domum
them transitive action and immanent action although Thomas himself did not use these terms. 68

In the first kind of action, which is what we most readily call action, as, for instance, a fire heating water or a man building a house, the action belongs to one substance and is received in another. A fire acts to heat water and a builder acts to bring a house into being.

Thomas gives vision as an example of the second kind of action, which, he says, is more properly called operation (operatio). A man sees a stone. It is the man who acts and also the man who is changed. The stone neither acts nor is effected “for although the eye sees the stone, the stone nevertheless is seen only in so far as it is in the eye through its similitude.” 69 This kind of action takes place in the agent and although something outside the agent specifies the act, this happens, not by this outsider’s acting, but through the presence of its likeness in the agent.

Form

The role of form is spelled out in I Sentences d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, where Thomas shows that scientia is appropriate to God. The proof is based on God’s immaterial and subsistent nature. At the heart of the argument we find this passage:

However, just as the principle of particularity is matter, so intelligibility is owing to form, so that form is the principle of cognition. Whence it is proper that every form existing per se separated from matter is of intellectual nature: and if indeed it is subsisting per se it will also be intelligent. If, however, it is not per se subsisting but is as it were the perfection of some subsisting thing, it will not be intelligent but will be a principle of understanding, just as any form not subsisting per se does not operate but is a principle of operation, as heat in fire.

The text tells us two things. First, what makes a knower to be such is that it exists in its own right and is free from matter. God and angels are clearly such beings. The human soul is also intelligent in so far as it is separable from matter and in so far as its intellectual faculties exist without mixture with matter. Second, form is the principle of intellectual operation. So just as fire comes into operation through heat, which is its form, an intellectual being acts intelligently in so far as it is or possesses form.

In another text Thomas broadens the scope of this discussion. “Moreover the principle (ratio) of knowing is the form of the thing in so far as it is known, because through it actual knowing comes into being.” 72 The word used for knowing is cognitio which includes both intellectual and sensitive knowledge. Sense knowledge is knowledge of particulars and is therefore involved with matter both at the level of the knowing faculty and of the form received. Still form remains the principle of sensing. An analysis of what modifications are required of the general principle in the case of sense knowledge will depend on further texts.

Union

By the reception of form a cognitive power is brought into act, and union is achieved between the power and the form. This is the union or identity that is part of Thomas’s definition of knowledge.

——

69 See n. 49 above for that text. The example is Aristotle’s, De anima III, 8 (431b30). “… for it is not the stone which is in the soul, but its form (cidos).” Hamlyn trans. p. 65.
70 Thomas does however call the thing known the cause of knowledge. “In illa ergo cognitione quae fit per formas a rebus acceptas, ipsae res per suam actionem sunt cognitionis causa.” In IV Sent. d. 50, q. 1, a. 3. Busa vol. 1, p. 704. “Utrum anima separata singularia cognoscat.”
71 In I Sent. d. 35, q. 1, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 809. “Sicut autem particulationis princiopus est materia, ita formae debetur intelligibilitas: unde forma principium cognitionis est; unde oportet quod omnis forma per se existens separata a materia, sit intellectualis naturae: et si quidem sit per se subsistentis, erit et intelligens; si autem non sit per se subsistentis, sed quasi perfectio alijuis subsistentis, non erit intelligens, sed principium intelligendi: quemadmodum omnis forma non in se subsistentis non operatur, sed est operationis principium, ut validitas in igne.”
72 In III Sent. d. 14, a. 1, q. 4. Moos p. 439. “Ratio autem cognoscendi est forma rei inquantum est cognit, quia per eam fit cognitione in actu.” The question concerns the appropriateness of habitual knowledge for the Word. The context of this question is complex and will bear further examination.
We have already seen texts expressing it.

Whence from the intellect and the similitude of the thing is effected a perfect one which is the intellect understanding in act.

For just as from the natural form, by which something has being (esse) and matter there is effected one being in the unqualified sense, so from the form by which the intellect understands and the intellect itself there is a one in understanding.

A further text, not yet cited, gives more detail.

The human intellect, which is sometimes in potency and sometimes in act, is not the same when it understands in potency as the intelligible in potency, which is something existing outside the soul. But for it to understand in act it is necessary that the intelligible in potency become intelligible in act through this that its species is freed from all appendages of matter by the power of the agent intellect. And it is necessary that this species, which is understood in act, perfect the intellect in potency. From this conjunction a perfect one is produced, which is the intellect in act, just as from the soul and body is effected one thing, which is a human being having human operations. Whence just as the soul is not other than man, so the intellect in act is not other than the intellect understanding in act but the same. Not, however, so that the species becomes the substance of the intellect or a part of it, except a formal part, as the soul does not become the body.

What is the unity thus achieved? The three texts seem straightforward. From the intellect that is in potency and a similitude or form by which or species a unity is achieved that is variously called “the intellect in act,” “one in understanding,” “a perfect one . . . which is the intellect in act.” The achievement of knowledge is compared to generation: of natural bodies through union of matter and form, and of an active human being by the conjunction of soul and body. Let us examine each of these points in turn.

The intellect is both one term of the union and the seat of the achievement which is knowledge. As a potency it resembles matter although as a power of the soul it is something already existing. In terms of its proper activity, it is sometimes in potency and sometimes in act. In fact it is brought into act only by the presence of the form of some intelligible thing.

Thomas uses three different words for the form which activates knowledge. He seems to use them interchangeably although it will be necessary to examine the nuances of each in the course of this study. At first sight a similitude is a likeness and conveys that sense. Although different from the things from which it is derived, some aspect of its nature, and, in fact, the operative aspect, is specified by them. Similitude is primarily viewed in terms of this specification. The form by which is simply the form that inheres in the intellect. It stands in contrast to the form that is understood, namely, the thing that is understood considered formally. Thomas refers to these as the id quo and the id quod. In the last text the species is referred to as that “which is understood in act.” A thing is only potentially intelligible until it is made actually intelligible.

This occurs when a species is abstracted from a phantasm in the imagination and “freed of all appendages of matter.” This species, which is received in the possible intellect, is the understood in act. So far Thomas has claimed only that this species exists during the act of intellection. Its relationship to the thing that is known is that of actual intelligible to potential intelligible.

Thomas uses two examples to emphasise the intimate nature of the unity achieved in knowledge.

---

73 In III Sent. d. 3, q. 3, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 113. “. . . unde ex intellectu et similitudine rei efficitur unum completum, quod est intellectus in actu intelligens.” C.f. p. 17 above.


75 In I Sent. d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3. Mandonnet p. 812. The question is whether scientia is appropriate to God. Thomas is answering an objection that the plurality of scientia, scien and scitum would imply plurality in God. His answer hinges on God always being in total act. “Intellectus enim humanus, qui aliquando est in potentia, et aliquando in actu, quando est in potentia intelligens, non est idem cum intelligibili in potentia, quod est aliqua res existens extra animam; sed ad hoc quod sit intelligens in actu, oporpet quod intelligibile in potentia fiat intelligibile in actu per hoc quod species ejus denudatur ab omnibus appenditiis materiae per virtutem intellectus agentis; et oporpet quod haec species, quae est intellecta in actu, perficit intellectum in potentia: ex quorum conjunctione, efficitur unum perfectum quod est intellectus in actu, sicut ex anima et corpore efficitur unum, quod est homo habens operationes humanas. Unde sicut anima non est aliud ab homine, ita intellectus in actu non est aliud ab intellectu intelligente actu, sed idem: non tamen ita quod species illa fiat substantia intellectus vel pars ejus, nisi formalis, sicut nec anima fit corpus.”

76 Thomas calls the possible intellect a passive potency as distinguished from an active potency. Cf. In I Sent. d. 36, q. 2, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 839.

77 Thomas does use the term representation. “. . . sed cognitio praedicta perficitur ex hoc solo quod formae in anima existentes representaunt res quae sunt extra animam; . . .” In IV Sent. d. 50, q. 1, a. 4. Busa vol. 1, p. 704. “Utrum localis distantia impediat cognitionem animae separatae.”


In the second text he compared the act of knowledge to the union of matter and form in a single being. Matter and form are not parts of a substance but rather principles. They cannot be separated without destroying the substance. Thomas wants to say that the union achieved in knowledge is that strong. The act of knowledge does not, of course, bring new substance into being; nor does the intellect radically alter its nature to become something else simply; nor is a third thing formed. Intellection is, rather, an act which is the proper achievement of an already existing power inhering in a substance. It remains a union, however, because the knowing power, which is purely potential, is actuated only by a form, which is specified from outside the power.

In the example in the third text Thomas compared the union of species and intellect to the union of soul and body. This carries with it other difficulties. The first is textual. The text established by Mandonnet reads:

Unde sicut anima non est aliud ab homine, ita intellectus in actu non est aliud ab intellectu intelligente actu, sed idem.

Busa, relying on the 1856 Parma edition, reads “... et ideo intellectum in actu. ...” Mandonnet does not note any variation in his apparatus.

The Mandonnet reading implies that the intellect in act is not other than the intellect actually understanding and the intellect is not actually understanding until it is brought into act by a species. Such a rendering supports the claim of identity between the intellect and its object or between knower and known. On the other hand, the Mandonnet reading implies that the intellect in act is not other than the intellect understanding in act, that is to say that the whole being of the intellect as actual is to understand. The sense of this reading is subtle but it is tenable since the purpose of the discussion is to show that scientia does not imply any plurality in God.

The textual problem will be clarified by the forthcoming Leonine edition of the Sentences. In the meantime a case can be made for each of the readings. According to the Busa text, the soul informs the body to create a man but it is not other than that man. Likewise, the species informs the intellect to bring the intellect to actual understanding but is not other than the intellect actually understanding. According to the Mandonnet text, the intellect in act is not other than the intellect actually understanding.

The second difficulty is addressed by Thomas himself and involves a qualification. Although the union of species and intellect is likened to the union of soul and body in man, this is not to be understood to mean “that the species becomes the substance of the intellect or a part of it, except a formal part, just as the soul does not become the body.” In part, he is saying what we have said in relation to the first example. No new substance is generated by the union of intellect and species. He goes further, however, in denying that the species becomes part of the substance of the soul “except as a formal part.” The example of the soul not becoming the body relies on Thomas’s teaching that the soul is both the form of the body and a substance able to exist in its own right.

What Thomas is getting at is made clearer by a further text. In it he is defending the proposition that a separated human soul can know God in his essence. It had been objected that, because among immaterial beings the understander and the understood are one and the same, such knowledge would imply that the soul would become the uncreated essence. Thomas replies as follows.

To the tenth it must be said that a substance separated from matter understands itself and understands other things; and in both ways the truth of the cited authorities can be confirmed. For since the very essence of a separate substance is through itself intelligible in act, it is clear that when a separate substance which is separated from matter understands itself, understander and understood are altogether the same. For it does not understand itself through some intention abstracted from itself, as when we understand material things and this seems to be the understanding of the Philosopher in III De anima as is clear through the Commentator on the same. However in so far as it understands other things, the understood in act becomes one with the intellect in act in so far as the form of the understood...

---

80 See In II Sent. d. 17, q. 2, a. 1 ad 4. Mandonnet p. 430. “... et ideo intellectum possibilibi necesse est habere naturam determinatam; sed ante intelligere, quod est per receptionem speciei, non habet in natura sua aliquid eorum quae a sensibilibus recipiunt: ...”

81 In I Sent. d. 35, q. 1, a. 1 ad 3. Busa vol. 1, p. 91.
becomes the form of the intellect according as it is the intellect in act. Not that it is the very essence of the intellect as Avicenna proves in VI De naturalibus because the essence of the intellect remains one under two forms in so far as it understands two things successively in the way in which prime matter remains one under diverse forms. Whence the Commentator in III De anima also compares the possible intellect in this respect to prime matter. And so in no way does it follow that our intellect [in] seeing God becomes the very divine essence but [it follows] that the essence itself is compared to it as if perfection and form.

A separate substance is by nature both intellectual and intelligible. That is to say that once it has being its nature is to think and that as form without any part of matter it is immediately intelligible to itself and to any intellect that has the capacity to receive it. When a separate substance understands itself, therefore, knower and known are altogether one. There is only a conceptual distinction to be made between them. Form is self-actualizing. When one separate substance knows another, however, it is not the case that knower and known are “altogether one.” If it were, the heavenly beings would be constantly coalescing and dividing. Rather, as Thomas says, unity is achieved “in so far as the form of the understood becomes the form of the intellect according as it is the intellect in act.”

The union then is not a union of distinct substances nor does it change the essence of the one understanding. Avicenna’s example shows that the one intelligence maintains its essential identity through many successive cognitive identifications. Union rests solely in the facts that the act of knowledge receives its total specification from the form of the thing that it knows and that the intellect comes into act only by receiving such a form. Form comes to the intellect as a perfection and moves it from potentiality to actuality, thus constituting the intellect in its proper operation or perfection.

So far we have looked only at texts that view knowledge in terms of act and as a union between the intellect and the form which inheres in it. Thomas, however, also speaks of the known being in the knower and of knowledge as an assimilation of the knower and known.

The reason for this is that knowledge does not happen except in so far as the known is in the knower.

Every cognition is by means of a form through which the knower is assimilated to the things known.

Joseph Owens uses the first text as the starting point for his claim that knowledge is to be viewed primarily in terms of existence. The known is in or exists in the knower. The knower acts but

85 It is clear from the texts that substance is neither generated nor essentially changed in the act of knowledge. What kind of an act is knowledge and what kind of effect does it have? Obviously it must be accidental and that is the common position. “But except for God activity in all things is an accident really distinct from the nature acting and from its existence.” (Yves Simon, The Metaphysics of Knowledge, p. 62.) What kind of accident is it? The question must be left open for the moment. We have already seen the distinction between what have been called immanent and transitive action. More distinctions have yet to be made. Another question may also be entertained. The structure of substance and accidents was developed primarily for the analysis of real being. Is it strained by its application to intentional activity? It seems that in examining intentional activity Thomas stays within the substance-accident and act-potency structures but does he take them to the limit of their usefulness?

86 In I Sent. d. 38, q. 1, a. 2. Mandonnet p. 901. “Cujus ratio est, quia cognitio non fit nisi secundum quod cognitum est in cognoscente.” We will look more closely at the whole of this text in the next section. The question is: “Utrum scientia Dei sit uniformiter de rebus scitis.”

87 In IV Sent. d. 50, q. 1, a. 3. Busa vol. 1, p. 704. “Respondio dicendum, quod cognitum omnis cognitio sit per formas, quibus cognoscens rebus cognitionis assimilatur; . . . “Utrum anima separata singularia cognoscat.”

the thing known is in no way changed or affected. Rather it comes to be in a new way in the knower while maintaining its natural existence.

Such an analysis is based on the distinction between essence and existence. Anything apart from God is different from its existence and so its form or essence can exist in different ways. Its first existence is in the mind of God who creates beings according to the plan or form which is in his intellect. Its real existence is in the world of things as an individual substance. Its third existence is in the human mind which receives the form from the thing in its real existence.  

According to Owens the knower is the agent or efficient cause, but the act is specified by the form which comes from the thing known. In this act no third is formed. Rather, “the same individual which is the agent and which becomes the object is given new existence. The new form given the percipient must determine him to give existence not to a new individual that is specifically the same, but to the same individual in a new way of being.” This seems to be another way of describing what has been called immanent action. It is action which does not make a third or alter something outside the agent but is rather a perfection of the agent. However, it shifts attention to the object of knowledge, which in some sense maintains its own integrity but is able to exist in other ways.

In the second text, Thomas refers to knowledge as an assimilation. It is a term he often uses, and he clarifies its meaning in another text. The question concerns the scientia of God, and it had been objected that since scientia involves an assimilation it cannot be fittingly said of God. Thomas replies as follows.

To the fourth it must be said that all those words by which we say that scientia is an assimilation or apprehension or impression or something of this kind come from the consideration of the possible intellect, which does not know except through reception of some species in respect of which it is in potency and through which it is assimilated to the thing outside the soul. Whence where there is an intellect in act only, nothing of this is said properly but only according to the mode of understanding.

Again we see the human contrasted to the absolute, which is God. In God’s knowledge union is total. Any distinction of parts is purely conceptual and derives from a comparison with human knowledge. In human knowledge, an assimilation must take place. The knower and the known considered as beings are altogether distinct. The knower is in potency to be more than it is by way of act but that potency is activated only when the species of the thing is brought to it. By the reception of this species the knower is assimilated to the thing that it knows.

A final comment needs to be made about these two texts. Thomas seems to be equally comfortable in speaking of a union between intellect and species and of a union between knower and known. This raises two questions. Who acts? What is known? The first question does not pose great difficulty. Man is a whole but a complex whole. The composite acts but it acts through its proper parts. The second question is more difficult. What is known, the species or the thing? What is the object of the intellect? This will be dealt with in detail later.

In this section we have primarily viewed knowledge as an act and have endeavoured to explain something of the kind of act it is. We have examined the role of form in this act and various dimensions of the union which Thomas claims is achieved in the act. Frequently, the available texts have been about divine or angelic knowledge which are, in some way, paradigmatic of human intellectual knowledge especially when viewed from the side of formality or actuality. Thomas, however, has been careful to point out that human knowledge is limited and receptive. Now we turn

---

90 Joseph Owens, “Aquinas on Cognition as Existence,” p. 81

91 Apart from the discussion of divine ideas, in the Sentences attempts to define knowledge in terms of existence are not so obvious. They will become more apparent in the De veritate (2, 2; 2, 5 ad 15) but whether it is the only or primary way to view knowledge remains problematic. In the Physics Thomas refers to knowledge as a relation. In VII Phys. lect. 6, n. 923. Marietti p. 475. “Sciens maxime dicitur ad aliquid, scilicet ad scibile, cuius assimilatio in sciente, scientia est.”

92 In I Sent. d. 35, q. 1, a. 1 ad 4. Mandonnet p. 812-813.

“Ad quartum dicendum, quod omnia ista vocabula, quibus dicimus scientiam esse assimilationem vel apprehensionem, vel impressionem, vel aliquid hujusmodi, veniunt ex consideratione intellectus possibili: qui non cognoscit nisi per receptionem aliquid speciei, respectu cujus est in potentia: per quam assimilatur rei extra animam. Unde ubi est intellectus in actu tantum, nihil horum proprie dicitur, sed secundum modum intelligendi tantum.” The question deals with the scientia of God.
to examine knowledge from the point of view of limitation and receptivity.

Knowledge as Passion

Limitation

Thomas frequently speaks of the limitations of human knowledge. In *III Sentences* d. 31, q. 2, a. 4 he makes two points. First, he says that “the human soul is the lowest according to the order of nature in the degrees of intellects.” The implication is that the human intellect is the least actual of all intellects and is receptive (*possibilis*) to all intelligibles. He compares it to the way in which prime matter is receptive to sensible or material form. This is reiterated in another text where Thomas says “the human intellect is the last in the grade of intellectual substances and so there is in it the greatest passivity (*possibilitas*) in respect of other intellectual substances.” Second, he says that “the human soul is the form of the body.” Here the implication is that the whole man acts so that the body has an integral part to play and a special role in the achievement of even intellectual knowledge.

The importance of the fact of the limitation of human existence for any discussion of human knowledge is made still clearer in another text.

Indeed the mode of the known is not the mode of knowledge but the mode of the knower as Boethius says in *V De consolatione*. And this is clear because knowledge of the same thing is had in sense with the conditions of matter because sense is a power in matter. However, because it is immaterial, in the intellect knowledge of the same thing is without the appendages of matter. The reason for this is that knowledge does not happen except in so far as the known is in the knower.

While much of the discussion of knowledge in the *Sentences* is rather heady—divine knowledge, angelic knowledge, human knowledge of God in his essence—Thomas shows that he is sensitive to the implications of human limitation in knowing. In *I Sentences* d. 34, q. 3, a. 3, he expounds on the fittingness of describing God with images taken from corporeal things. An objector argues to the contrary on the grounds that the intellect is immaterial and more able to know God with divine than with bodily images. Thomas acknowledges that by a certain assimilation of nature the human intellect is closer to God than to the senses. But he then points out that what is required for human knowledge is an assimilation through information. “This information cannot happen in our intellect according to the natural order except through species abstracted from sense.”

Much of this is brought together by a text from *III Sentences* d. 14, a. 1, q.c. 2 ad 2. There, after speaking about the agent intellect which makes things intelligible he continues:

But since the essence of the soul is limited it cannot be assimilated through [the agent intellect] to all the quiddities of understood things. Whence it is necessary that that assimilation is achieved by its receiving something from elsewhere. And therefore the power by which this is perfected is as it were passive in so far as every reception (*recipere*) is

93 *In III Sent.* d. 31, q. 2, a. 4. Moos pp 996-97. “Uno modo ex hoc anima humana est ultima secundum naturae ordinem in gradibus intellectus.” and “Alio modo ex hoc quod est forma corporis. Unde oportet quod operatio ejus sit operatio totius hominis.” The article, “videtur quod scientia quam modo habemus, totaliter tolletur,” has already been examined.

94 *In II Sent.* d. 3, q. 3, a. 3 ad 4. Mandonnet p. 121. “... intellectus humanus est ultimus in gradu substantiarum intellectualium; et ideo est in eo maxima possibilitas respectu aliarum substantiarum intellectualium...” “Utrum angeli intelligent particularia.” This text has been used above.

95 James Robb, “The Unity of Adequate Knowing in St. Thomas Aquinas,” *Monist* 69 (1986) : 447-457, explores the implications of the fact that the human soul is the lowest of intellectual beings and that it is both something subsisting in its own right and the form of a body. He pays particular attention to knowledge.


97 *In I Sent.* d. 34, q. 3, a. 1 ad 4. Mandonnet p. 799. “Haec autem inmutatione non potest fieri in intellectu nostro secundum viam naturae, nisi per species abstractas a sensu: quia, sicut dicit Philosophus, III De anima, text. 18, sicut se habet color ad visum, ita phantasmata ad intellectum; et ideo constat quod hoc modo intellectus magis potest assimilari sensibilibus quam divinis.”
called suffering (\textit{patl}) and it is called the possible intellect which works by means of some habit.\footnote{In III Sentences d. 14, a. 1, q. 2 ad 2. Moos pp. 437-438.} We will look now more closely at the manner in which the soul is said to suffer or undergo.

\section*{Passion}

The act of knowledge involves a reception and Thomas uses various words to express this. The soul is in some way potential, receptive, possible, possible, able to suffer or undergo. His analysis of this kind of potentiality relies on two Aristotelian structures: substance and accidents (the categories), and act and potency. These had been developed primarily to deal with real being so that they are applied to intentional being analogously and only with relevant distinctions.\footnote{See In III Phys., lect. 5; and In V Metaph., V, lect. 9. See also John F. Wippel, “Thomas Aquinas’s Derivation of the Aristotelian Categories (Predicaments),” Journal of the History of Philosophy 25 (1987): 12-34.) There are four species of quality: states and conditions (habits), powers or capacities, affective qualities and affections, and form and shape (Categories 8).}

The categories in question are the second species of quality, namely, power or capacity, the third species of quality, which is affective quality, and action and affection (passion). A power or potency is the innate ability to do something easily. Thomas tends to discuss this category more in terms of act and potency.\footnote{In II Sent. d. 17, q. 1, a. 2 ad 2. Mandonnet p. 89. “Quaedam autem passiones sunt quae non sunt purae passiones, sed simil sunt et passiones et operationes quaedam, . . .” “Utrum passio possit esse peccatum.” The fuller discussion of this question brings significant clarification to this question and should be considered along with the two texts with which we will now deal.} The discussions of affection or passion and suffering (\textit{passio}, \textit{patl}) are more difficult. At times Thomas refers to cognitive reception simply as \textit{passio}. At other times he qualifies this. They “are not pure passions but are at once both passions and operations.”\footnote{In II Sent. d. 3, q. 1, a. 1 ad 3. Mandonnet p. 89. “. . . unde etiam Philosophus, ibidem, text. 14, dicit quod intelligere pati quoddam est, sed communiter et aequivoce dicitum; . . .” For a more detailed discussion of the various meanings of \textit{passio} see In V Metaph., lect. 20, nn. 1065-1068. (Aristotle, Metaphysics V. 20.) Marietti pp. 277-278. See also In II Sent. d. 17, q. 1, a. 2 ad 2.}

We will first examine a text in which Thomas calls cognitive reception a passion simply and then examine other texts in which he makes the relevant qualifications.

In III Sentences d. 14, a. 1, q. 2, Thomas explains the nature of passive potency. The article concerns whether Christ’s knowledge is only actual or whether he has habitual knowledge. Thomas distinguishes reception by way of passion and by way of habit or quality. He speaks easily of knowledge being a passion without seeming to need to qualify this.

To the second it must be said that no passive potency can come into act unless perfected by the form of its active principle through which it becomes in act; because nothing acts except in so far as it is in act.

Impressions however of active [principles] are able to be in passive [powers] in two ways. In one way through the mode of passion as when a passive potency is undergoing change. In another way through the mode of quality and form when the impression of an active principle already made is connatural to the passive principle itself just as the Philosopher distinguishes passion and possible quality. (Categories 8.)\footnote{In III Sent. d. 14, a. 1, q. 2. Moos pp. 435-436. “Ad secundum quaestionem dicerendum quod nulla potentia passiva potest in actum exire nisi completa per formam sui activi per quam fit in actu; quia nihil operatur nisi secundum quod est in actu. Impressiones autem activorum possunt esse in passivis dupliciter. Uno modo per modum passionis, dum scilicet...}
Here Thomas identifies the cognitive powers as passive potencies belonging to the second species of quality. He reiterates the principle that in order that it be actuated such a power must be informed by an active principle of some kind. From our previous discussion this is a form; and, in the case of knowledge, it has been called a species or similitude. Then he says that what is active can be impressed in two ways: that of passion and that of possible quality. We will concentrate on the notion of passion now and reserve discussion of possible quality or habit for the next section.

The text continues with an examination first of sense knowledge and then of intellectual knowledge.

Sense, moreover, is a passive potency because it is not able to be in act to all things to which its operation reaches through the nature of its power. For it cannot be something that actually has all colours. And therefore it is necessary that vision is a passive power which is activated only by the reception of a form and the corresponding assimilation to the source of that form. The same applies to the intellect in relation to being. Note again the comparison with God, who is always in act with respect to all being and hence has no need of a passive power. Finally, Thomas restates the nature of a passive power—it is one that has to be brought into act or moved by an active principle.

The last section of this text draws a distinction between sense and intellect in respect of their modes of reception.

But because sense does not sense except in the presence of the sensible thing therefore an impression by its active [principle] through the mode of passion alone suffices for its complete operation.

The perfection of the intellect, however, requires that the impression of its active [principle] be in it not only through the mode of passion but also through the mode of quality and of a connatural perfected form and we call this form a habit. 106 Sense is receptive only by way of passion. The argument is empirical. Sense is, in fact, only activated in the presence of its object and so is to be analysed in terms of passion and its correlative action. Intellectual knowledge, on the other hand, is enduring and takes place in the absence of its object. It takes place by way of passion but also involves a more permanent qualitative change in the knower, which Thomas calls habit.

In III Sentences d. 15, q. 2, a. 1, qc 2, Thomas draws the necessary qualifications of the senses in which knowledge is a passion. He asks whether the soul is possible or capable of suffering. The

potentia passiva est in transmutari; alio modo per modum qualitatis et formae, quando impressio activi jam facta est connaturalis ipsi passivo; sicut etiam Philosophus in Prædicamentis (c. 8. 9a28) distinguit passionem et passibilem qualitatem.” 104

In III Sent. d. 14, a. 1, qc 2. Moos pp. 435-436. “Sensus autem potentia passiva est; quia non potest esse in actu omnium ad qua se extendit sua operatio per naturam potentiae. Non enim potest esse aliquid quod actu habeat omnes colores. Et ideo oportet quod visus sit cognoscitivus omnium colorum, secundum quod est potentia omnes colores quodammodo, et sic patiendo a coloribus fit in actu et eis assimilatur et cognoscit eos. Similiter etiam intellectus est cognoscitivus omnium entium; quia ens et verum convertuntur, quod est objectum intellectus. Nulla autem creatura potest esse in actu totius entitatis, cum sit ens finitum; hoc enim est solius Dei, qui est totus omnium entium, omnium quodammodo in se præhabens, ut dicit Dionysius, De div. nom (c. 5, n. 1). Et ideo nulla creatura potest intelligere sine aliquo intellectu qui sit potentia passiva, ideo recepita. Unde nec sensus nec intellectus possibilis possunt operari, nisi per sua activa perficiantur vel moveantur.”

The argument in each case is similar. A sense cannot be actuated by all colours at once since this would involve a confusion of conflicting forms. Once a sense is actuated by a form it cannot be actuated again unless the first form is lost. 105 Yet it is able to see all colours at different times. Therefore its nature is to be a passive power which is activated only by the reception of a form and the corresponding assimilation to the source of that form. The same applies to the intellect in relation to being. Note again the comparison with God, who is always in act with respect to all being and hence has no need of a passive power. Finally, Thomas restates the nature of a passive power—it is one that has to be brought into act or moved by an active principle.


question is intended to provide a foundation for a more detailed discussion of the ways in which Christ could be said to suffer and to be subject to defect and follows a question on the suffering of bodies. First Thomas shows that properly speaking the soul does not suffer but that it does suffer per accidens.

To the second question it must be said that it can easily be clear from the aforesaid how passion can be in the soul. Because, since the soul is something incorporeal, to suffer does not properly belong to it except in so far as it is applied to the body. But it is applied to the body both according to its essence in so far as it is the form of the body, and according to the operation of its powers, in so far as it is the mover of them.

Moreover, in so far as it is joined to the body as form, in this way it is not considered as a thing subsisting but as coming to the other. Whence it does not suffer per se, but per accidents, just as other forms are moved when their composite subjects are moved.107

He continues that only the nutritive and sensitive powers are joined to the body in respect of operation. The nutritive powers, however, more properly act than suffer and so suffering really belongs to the sensitive powers. He then analyses the ways in which the senses can be said to suffer.

It remains therefore that to suffer properly belongs to the soul in its sensitive part as is said in VII Physics. But because powers of this kind do not subsist but are the forms of corporeal organs, they are not said to suffer per se, nor the soul in respect of them, but per accidents in so far as the composite suffers, as is said in I De anima.

But because the sensitive powers apprehend only in receiving species, which indeed are not received in sense by the mode of thing but by the mode of intention, in the operation of those powers there is indeed in some way a suffering, in so far as they are

material powers and in so far as something is received. And because of this it is said in II De anima that to sense is a certain suffering.

But because the sense is not moved by the sensible object according to the condition of the mover since the sensible form is not received in the sense according to material esse as it is in sensibles but according to spiritual esse, which is proper to sense,—whence it does not have contrariety to sense but is the perfection of it, except to the degree that it exceeds the proportion of sense,—therefore it is not properly said to suffer according to these powers except in so far as the excess of the sensibles corrupts sense or debilitates it.109

The reference to VII Physics is significant. In Chapter 2, Aristotle sets out to show that there is nothing between a mover and that which is moved. The discussion narrows to alteration, the second species of motion, and in Chapter 3 he demonstrates that alteration takes place in reference to only the third species of quality, namely, sensible quality. The text referred to by Thomas says that “alteration and being altered occur in sensible things and in the sensitive part of the soul and, except accidentally, in nothing else.”110 The passion involved in sensitive knowledge is alteration which for Aristotle occurs only in sensible things and in the sensitive part of the soul.111

107 In III Sent. d. 15, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 2. Moos p. 484. “Ad secundam quaestionem dicendum quod ex dictis de facili potest patre qualiter in anima possit esse passio. Quia cum anima sit quid incorporeum, sibi proprie non accidit pati, nisi secundum quod corpori applicatur. Applicatur autem corpore et secundum essentiam suam, secundum quod est forma corporea, et secundum operationem suarum potentiarum, prout est motor ejus. Secundum autem quod applicatur corpori ut forma, sic non consideratur ut quid subsistens, sed ut adveniens alteri. Unde sic non patitur per se, sed per accidens, sicut aliae formae moventur motis subjectis compositis.”

108 In III Sent. d. 15, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 2. Moos p. 485. “In viribus autem animae quantum ad operationem applicatur corpori solum vires partis sensitivae et partis nutritivae. Sed quia operatio virium nutritivae partis est in movere, non in moveri; ideo secundum eas anima non patitur, sed magis agit.”

109 In III Sent. d. 15, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 2. Moos p. 485. “Relinquitur ergo quod pati proprie sit animae secundum partem sensitivam, ut dicitur in VII Phys., (3. 248a6 sq.). Sed quia hujusmodi vires non sunt subsistentes, sed formae organorum corporalium, ideo non dicuntur pati per se, neque anima secundum eas, sed per accidens, inquantum compositum patitur, ut dicitur in I De anima (4. 408a30).

Sed quia potentiae apprehensivae sunt tantum in recipiendo speciem--qua quidem non recipitur in sensu per modum rei, sed per modum intentionis.--ideo in operatione harum virium est quidem aliquo modo pati, quantum ad hoc quod sunt vires materiales et quantum ad hoc quod aliquid recipitur. Et propter hoc dicitur in II De anima (11. 424a1) quod sentire est pati quoddam.

Sed quia sensus non movetur a sensibili secundum conditionem moventis, cum forma sensibilis non recipitur in sensu secundum esse materiale prout est in sensibili, sed secundum esse spiritualae, quod est primum sensui--unde non habet contrarietatem ad sensum, sed est perfecto ejus, nisi secundum quod excedit proportionem sensus--ideo non proprie dicitur pati secundum has vires, nisi secundum quod excellit sensibilium corruptit sensum, aut debilitat.”

110 Aristotle, Physics VII, 3 (248a6). Revised Oxford Translation, p. 414. Aristotle had earlier concluded that “for in a way even the senses undergo alteration, since actual perception is a motion through the body in the course of which the sense is affected in a certain way.” Physics VII, 2 (244b10), p. 411.

111 Thomas is not completely in agreement with Aristotle. Aristotle seems to allow that the sensitive part of the soul

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 34
Thomas accepts but then qualifies this statement by saying that since the powers do not subsist but are the forms of the sense organs, they do not suffer per se but only per accident when it is the composite that suffers. The text from De anima I to which he refers makes this point but only with respect to local motion, not alteration.

In the second paragraph of the last text quoted, Thomas recognizes that the sense powers apprehend only when they receive species and that they must therefore be said to suffer or to be affected in some way even though this is not in the normal manner in which things are affected.

In the third paragraph, he shows how the act of sensation is not, properly speaking, an affection or passion. First, a sensible form is received spiritually and not materially. We will examine this distinction more closely shortly, but briefly it means that the sense, although activated to know, for instance, “red,” does not become physically red. The second point flows from the first. Since there is no contrariety in sense—it is not changed from white to red—there is strictly no motion and hence no passion or affection. Rather the action belongs to and terminates in the sense. The sensible form is simply the perfection of the sense. This again is the kind of action that terminates in the agent and that the tradition has called immanent action.

Finally, Thomas recognizes that when a sensible form is so intense that it damages the sense organ, affection or passion does take place. For example, were a light so bright as to damage the organ of sight, the burning and destruction of the flesh of the organ would be an affection in the proper sense.

In the next part of the question, Thomas examines the sensitive appetitive powers and concludes that “those sensitive affections that are followed by sadness or that are with great vehemence, whether of joy or sadness, are more properly called passions because, in such a way, the soul is dragged outside its natural mode.” He then discusses intellectual knowledge.

But in the powers of the intellective part, although it is not properly passion, because they are immaterial, nevertheless there is there something of the nature of passion because in the apprehension of the created intellect there is reception; and according to this it is said in III De anima that to understand is a certain suffering.

Reception of species by the intellect is not an affection or passion. Yet as a reception it somehow resembles passion. Thomas concludes his response to the question with a discussion of the movement of the will.

In a final text from a context other than knowledge, Thomas makes it clear that he uses passio in two very different senses.

Passion is said in two ways. In one way commonly and so every reception is called a passion whether that which is received is fitting for the recipient and perfecting of it, or whether it is contrary and corrupting. . . . In another way, it is said strictly, which Damascene defines thus: a passion is motion beyond nature. Whence an immoderate motion of the heart is called a passion but a moderate motion is called an operation. The reason for this is that everything which suffers is drawn to the terminus of the agent because the agent assimilates the patient to itself. And therefore the patient as such is drawn outside of its proper termini in which it was.
Obviously, knowledge is called passion in the first or common sense. *Communiter* can refer to either analogous or equivocal use of terms but Thomas does not specify which he means here. In another text, however, he seems to imply that *to suffer* is said equivocally of the intellect understanding and of matter receiving form.

Where does this leave us? On one hand, knowledge involves reception and Thomas is clearly willing to call it a passion. It can therefore be investigated using the theoretical structures developed in physics and metaphysics. On the other hand, if *passio* is said only equivocally or at best analogically, those structures can apply only in the most formal sense. What then does the language tell us?

If *passio* is said only equivocally, it is simply a metaphor or an image. It is a tool which allows us to think about something for which we do not have adequate words. If it is said analogously, the language is at least able to point out the internal relationships of the various elements of the description. In either case, the distinctions which are made between the primary and derived senses of the words become most informative. We will examine another of these distinctions after a short section on habit.

### Habit

A habit, in the Aristotelian scheme of things, is a quality. In fact, it is the first species of quality and comprises a state or way of being of a human being in which a particular action becomes stable and permanent and in some way connatural. Because of this connaturality, the exercise of a habit is accompanied by pleasure.

If we turn back now to *III Sentences* d. 14, a. 1, qc. 2, Thomas there concludes with a discussion of habit and of its relationship to species.

However, it is necessary for the perfection of the intellect that the impression of its active principle be in it not only through the mode of passion but also through the mode of quality and perfect connatural form; and we call this form *habitus*. And because what is natural remains firmly and is ready to be used by man by his natural power and is pleasurable to him because it is fitting to [his] nature, therefore habit is moveable with difficulty like *scientia*. And man is able to use it when he wills and it renders his operation delightful.

But, just as in sense, vision there is a twofold active principle, one as it were the first agent and mover like light, the other as it were the moved mover like colour made actually visible through light, so in the intellect the light of the agent intellect is as it were the first agent, and the species made actually intelligible by it is the quasi moved mover. And therefore the habit of the intellective part is made the light and the intelligible species of those things which are known through the species.

---

116 *In II Sent.* d. 3, q. 1, a. 1 ad 3. Mandonnet pp. 88-89. The question is: “Ut rum angelus sit compositus ex materia et forma.” Thomas says no. The objector claims that to receive form is a property of matter. An angel receives form when it understands. “Ad tertium dicendum, quod, sicut dicit Commentator in III De anima, comm. 5 et 12, recipere, et omnia hujusmodi, dicuntur aequivoce de materia et intellectu: materia enim prima recipit formam non prout est forma simpliciter, sed prout est hoc, unde per materiam individuat; sed intellectus recipit formam inquantum est forma simpliciter, non individuans eam, quia forma in intellectu habet esse universale; unde etiam Philosophus, ibidem, text. 14, dicit, quod intelligere pati quoddam est, sed communiter et aequivoce dictum; unde ex hoc non ponitur compositio vel materialitas substantiae intellectualis.”

117 This short section on habit seems to be something of a deviation from the main argument. However, it does play an important part in Thomas’s scheme and will be discussed at greater length in Chapter 2. We will translate *habitus* by “habit” although there are problems with this. *Habitus* is far more dynamic than the English term has come to mean. For a discussion of this see Simon, *Metaphysics of Knowledge*, pp. 159-160.

118 See Aristotle, *Categories* 8 (8b25-9a12). See also *Nicamachean Ethics* II. In the *Sentences* Thomas treats habits in a prelude to the discussion of virtue. *In III Sent.* d. 23, q. 1, a. 1 “Videtur quod habitis non indigent in operibus humanis.” and *In III Sent.* d. 23, q. 1, a. 2 “Videtur quod in nobis existens cognosci non possit.” Neither of these question includes a discussion of species.

119 *In III Sent.* d. 14, a. 1, qc. 2. Moos p. 436. “In intellectu autem requiritur ad ejus perfectionem quod impressio sui activi sit in eo non solum per modum passionis, sed etiam per modum qualitatis et formae connaturalis perfectae: et hane formam habitum dicimus. Et quia quod est naturale, firmiter manet, et in promptu est homini uti sua naturali virtute, et est eidem detectibile quod est naturae conveniens; ideo habitus est difficile mobilis, sicut scientia; et eo potest homo uti cum voluerit, et reddit operationem delectabilem. Sicut autem in sensu visus est duplex activum: unum quasi primum agentis et movens, sicut lux; aliud quasi movens motum, sicut color factus visibilis actu per
As well as receiving form in a way remotely similar to passion, the intellect is open to undergoing a qualitive change which becomes connatural to it and in some way permanent and difficult to move. This habit makes it easy and even enjoyable for the intellect to act in certain ways. In the text, Thomas indicates that habit involves both intellective light and species.

Thomas does not explain how the exercise of intellectual light becomes habitual, although, of course, the purpose of its action is still to make potentially intelligible forms actually intelligible. Intelligible species, however, remain in the intellect, not in a purely actual state, but midway between actuality and potentiality.

God does not have habits because he is pure act and “because habit is not the ultimate perfection but rather operation, which perfects habit, is.” Thomas is making a distinction to sensation and to the nature of light.

Angels do not need a habit in respect of light because they contain species that are actually intelligible. Thomas, however, refers to this containment as a habit. Because of their limited being angels require the species of things although they do not receive them from things but are “filled by forms.”

---

Esse Materiale and Esse Spirituale

We have already considered two ways in which Thomas attempts to spell out the difference between the kind of activity which knowledge is and ordinary actions which take place among things in the world. First, he called knowledge an operation in which action takes place inside the agent as a perfection of the agent (immanent action) and does not pass over into a second being (transitive action). Second, although he called the reception of species in knowledge a passion or affection, he also made it clear that passio is used equivocally when it is said both of a body receiving accidents and of the intellect receiving species.

Now we will examine a third way in which he attempts to define the same difference. It also brings us back to the discussion of the kind of being exercised in knowing and the kind of being which species have. The distinction is between esse materiale or naturale and esse immateriale or spirituale. We will consider two texts in which the distinction is made: the first in reference to passion and action; the second in reference to the inherence of accidents. Then we will examine applications of the distinction to sensation and to the nature of light.

In II Sentences d. 19, q. 1, a. 3, Thomas asks whether, before the fall, Adam’s body was passible. He replies in the negative, but an objector points out that to sense is to suffer in a certain way. Thomas replies as follows.

To the first therefore it must be said that passion is twofold. One which follows the action of nature, when, namely, the species of the agent is received in the patient according to material being (esse materiale), as when water is heated by fire. And the other follows action which is by the way of the soul, when, namely, the species of the agent is received in the patient according to spiritual being (esse spirituale), as a certain intention. And according to this mode the thing has esse in the soul just as the species of the stone is received in the pupil. And such passion is always for the perfection of the patient. Whence such passion is not excluded from the body of Adam.

---

120 See See In I Sent. d. 40, q. 1, a. 1 ad 1. Mandonnet p. 942. See also pp. 44-45 above.
126 See In II Sent. d. 44, q. 2, a. 1, q.c. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 640. See also In II Sent. d. 3, q. 1, a. 1 ad 3. Mandonnet pp. 88-99. See also pp. 69-71 above. Although we have had some hesitation about whether Thomas used passio equivocally or analogically in the two applications, later texts make it clear that he does use it equivocally.
123 In III Sent. d. 14, a. 1, q.c. 2 ad 1. Moos p. 437. “... exiguit autem secundum quod requiritur species rerum, propter hoc quia habent esse limitatum. Unde dicitur in libro De causis (I, 247; lect. 10) quod omnis intelligentia est plena formas.”
The distinction is between accidents that have *esse firmum in natura* and accidents that *non habent esse vere*. These latter are identified with species in the soul. The distinction seems to be that between *esse naturale* and *esse spirituale*, but the context of the objection forces Thomas to define *esse spirituale* negatively: as “not truly having being.”

The text is particularly interesting for the way in which it situates species as accidents. The third part of the distinction concerns those accidents that have being in nature. Certain of those accidents follow upon the nature of the individual, for example, black or white, and so follow from matter. The soul is not subject to such accidents. Other accidents follow “from the principles of the species” and properly inhere in the soul. The powers of the soul are such. The difference between the two is that those that follow upon the individual can vary from one individual to another, whereas those that follow upon the species are proper to the nature as such and are shared by all individuals. Returning to the second part of the distinction, species are accidents and inhere in the soul, but they do not have true being.

In *IV Sentences* d. 44, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 3, Thomas raises the question of whether impassibility materiam, per quam natura individuatur, sicut album et nigrum in homine; unde etiam non consequuntur totam speciem: et talibus accidentibus non potest subjici anima. Quaedam autem habent esse naturae, sed consequuntur ex principiis speciei, sicut sunt proprietates consequentes speciem; et talibus accidentibus potest forma simplex subjici; quae tamen non est suum esse ratione possibilitatis quae est in quidditate ejus, ut dictum est, et talia accidentia sunt potentiae animae; sic enim et punctus et unitas habent suas proprietates.”

In *IV Sent.* d. 44, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 3. Busa vol. 1, p. 640. “... unde cum primum activum in sensu exteriori sit res existens extra animam, et non intention ejus existens in imaginacione vel ratione; si organum sentiendi non moveatur a rebus extra, sed ex imaginatione, vel aliis superioribus viribus, non erit vere sentire. Unde non dicimus quod phrenetici et alii mente capti, in quibus superiores virtutis virtutis fit hujusmodi fluxus specierum ad organa sentiendi, vere sentiant, sed quod videtur eis quod sentient. Et ideo dicendum est cum aliis, quod sensus corporum gloriosorum erit per perceptionem a rebus quae sunt extra animam. Sed scieniam, quod organa sentiendi immutat a rebus quae sunt extra animam, dupliciter. Uno modo immutazione naturali, quando scilicet organum disponitur eadem qualitate naturali quasi disponitur res extra animam quae agit in ipsam; sicut cum manus fit calida et adusta ex tacto rei calidae, vel odorifer so ex tacto rei odoriferae. Alio modo immutazione spirituale, quando recipiur qualitas sensibilis in instrumento secundum esse spirituale, idest species sive intentio qualitatis, et non ipsa qualitas; sicut pupilla recipit speciem albedinis, et tamen ipsa non efficat alba. Prima ergo receptio non causat sensum per se loquendo, quia sensus est susceptivus specierum in materia praeter materiam, idest praeter esse materiam quo habebant extra animam, ut dictur in II *De

---

*Knower and Known*, Page 38

Andrew Murray © *Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known*.
excludes actual sensation from glorious bodies in heaven. In demonstrating that it does not, he provides a detailed analysis of how the distinction of esse materiale and esse spirituale applies to sensation.

First he makes it clear that the proper active principle (activum) in sensation is a thing existing outside the soul rather than any intention that might exist in the imagination or mind. He then shows how sense organs are affected by exterior things in two ways.

In one way, by natural change when, namely, the organ is disposed by the same natural quality by which the thing outside the soul which acts on it is disposed; just as when a hand becomes hot and burnt from the touch of a hot thing, or smelly from the touch of a smelly things.

In another way, by a spiritual change when a sensible quality is received in an organ (instrumentum) according to esse spirituale, that is, a species or intention of a quality and not the quality itself; just as a pupil receives the species of whiteness and nevertheless is not made white.

The first reception, he says, changes the nature of the organ because the quality is received materially. The second reception results in sensation. There the senses receive “species in matter apart from matter, i.e. apart from the material esse which they have outside the soul.”

Other texts expand this discussion. Different sensibilia are borne to sense in different ways. Colour comes in the mode of esse spirituale only, touch in the mode of esse materiale only, smell in both modes. In each case, however, the act of sensation occurs through a spiritual change. Of the sense of touch Thomas says:

The qualities that touch perceives are those from which the body of an animal is constituted. Whence through tangible qualities, the body of an animal in this present state [of life] is changed according to both a natural and a spiritual change by the object of touch; and so touch is said to be the most material among the other senses because it has more material change adjoined to it. But the material change does not relate to the act of sensing that is perfected by spiritual change, except per accident.

In II Sentences d. 13, q. 1, a. 3, Thomas discusses the nature of light. The manner of his treatment and the variety of opinions that he canvassed indicate that it was regarded as a difficult and perplexing issue. He deals with opinions which have to do with whether light is a body, or a substance, or an accident, or nothing more than colour itself and then comes to an opinion, which he views as exceedingly probable, that “light does not have firm and fixed being in nature but is only an intention.”

Thomas gives two reasons for accepting this position but then rejects it on other grounds. His first reason for acceptance is that if light gives esse spirituale to colour, it would seem to have to have esse spirituale itself. The second is that if sensible qualities having esse naturale are pushed up against the pupil they cannot be seen but light shone on the pupil is seen. It would seem therefore to have esse spirituale. Against this he recognizes that the light of the sun causes natural change in things, for instance heating; but, if it had only esse spirituale, it could effect only the soul.

Thomas then gives a final opinion to which he gives assent. This is that “light is an accidental...
form having fixed and firm esse in nature and is, like heat, an active quality of the sun itself.” He further accepts Avicenna’s theory that light is the medium by which superior bodies act on inferior bodies. And light can cause change “whether the alteration is according to esse naturale or according to sense,” that is, according to esse spirituale.

**Knowledge as Mediated**

**Medium**

That human knowledge is indeed mediated is a commonplace in the *Sentences*. Two main kinds of mediation take place. In the first, intellectual knowledge is mediated by the senses in so far as knowledge of things is first received in the senses and then abstracted from phantasms by the intellect. In the second, all human knowledge is mediated by the species which inform the various cognitive powers.

Thomas gives little attention to the first kind of mediation in the *Sentences*. However, two texts are important. In the first, he recognizes that human knowledge is comparative or assembled.

Because our intellect receives from phantasms, it follows in it that it has comparative knowledge in so far as from many sensations come one memory.

---

133 *In II Sent.* d. 13, q. 1, a. 3. Mandonnet pp. 334-335. “Et ideo dicunt ali, quibus consentiendum videtur mihi, quod lux est forma accidentalis, habens esse ratum et firmum in natura, et quo, sicut calor, est qualitas activa ignis, ita lex est qualitas activa [Busa: omits ignis, . . . activa] ipsius solis, et in aliis est secundum quod magis cum sole communicant, qui totius luminis est fons. Unde Avicenna dicit, *De caelo et mundo*, cap. XIV, quod nulla actio est a corporibus superioribus in inferioria, nisi mediante luce, sicut ignis etiam agit mediante calore: unde lux et lumen differunt, sicut calor in subjecto per se calido, et in calefacio. Et qua caelum est primum alterans, inde sequitur quod omnis alteratio quae est in inferioribus, perfectur per virtutem luminis, sive sit alteratio secundum esse naturale, sive secundum sensum: et ex hoc habet lux quod omnibus corporibus generationem conferat, ut dicit Dionysius: ex hoc etiam est quod coloribus esse spirituale conferit, secundum quod esse recipitur in medio et in organo; unde et ipsum lumen virtutem spiritualcm habet; et inde est etiam quod, secundum Augustinum, lib. VII *Super gen. ad lit.*, cap. XV, col. 363, t. III, lumen est medium in omni sensu, sed in visu primo et immediate: qualitates enim visibles sunt priores coeteris, prout secundum esse formale sunt inventae in corporibus inferioribus, secundum quod convenient cum corpore caelesti, ut patet in II *De anima*, text. 67, et in II *De generatione*, text. 36; sed aliorum sensuum mediantibus alius qualitibus.”

134 A third kind of medium, the external medium in sensation, is scarcely mentioned in the *Sentences* but see *De sensu et sensato*.

from many memories one experimentum and from many experimenta one universal principle from which it derives others.

Human intellectual knowledge is comparative in contrast to simple knowledge which, for instance, God has. God knows all things simply in his essence. Human intellectual knowledge, on the other hand, is abstracted from sense knowledge and gleaned out of many particulars. It is higher and nobler than sense knowledge in so far as it is universal and intelligible, but it knows individuals only by reflection on the phantasm. As we have seen, God knows individuals simply because he is the creator of the matter which is the principle of their individuation.

In the second text Thomas provides some rationale for the mediating role played by the senses.

It is not in the nature of the intellect to receive knowledge from sensible things immediately but by means of sensitive powers, since it is necessary for there to be a certain fittingness between recipient and received. Species, however, existing in the senses have a certain agreement both with the intellect in so far as they are without matter, and with material things in so far as they have the conditions of matter. Whence sense fittingly receives from material things and the intellect from the senses. The intellect, however, does not receive immediately from material things.

The underlying principle here is that among orders of beings, there must be a commensurability between a recipient and what is received. The...
senses which exist in material organs are affected by material objects. Sense knowledge is immaterial as knowledge but comes with the conditions of matter in so far as it is particular. In virtue of its immateriality sense knowledge is available to the intellect.

The second kind of medium is the species or similitude, which is the means by which knowledge takes place. This is the major object of our discussion. In I Sentences d. 36, q. 2, a. 1 ad 3, Thomas identifies as the same “that through which” knowledge occurs, the medium and the principle of knowledge. For knowledge to occur “that through which” must be united to the knower.

In another text he distinguishes the medium under which, the medium by which and the medium in which. The medium “under which” is the

For a more detailed discussion which includes knowledge of separate substances and of God, see In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 6 ad 3. Busa vol. 1, p. 688. See also In I Sent. d.3, q. 4, a. 3. Mandonnet p. 118. “Utrum una potentia oriatur ex alia.”

Thomas distinguishes the knower, the understood and that by which it is understood. See for instance In I Sent. d. 27, q. 2, a. 1 ad 4. Mandonnet p. 656. Speaking of God’s knowledge, Thomas says “... unde essentia se habet ut intelligens, et ut intellecta, et ut quo intelligitur.”


Reply: “Ad tertium dicendum, quod oportet illud per quod est cognitio rei, esse unum cognoscendi; unde essentia rerum creaturarum, cum sit separata a Deo, non potest esse medium cognoscendi ipsis res a Deo; sed cognoscit eas nobiliori medio, scilicet per essentiam suam; et ideo perfectius cognoscit et nobiliori modo; quia sic nihil nisi essentia ejus est principium suae cognitionis. Oportet enim quod esset alius, si per essentiam rerum quasi per medium cognoscet res, cum medium cognoscendi sibi cognitionis principium.”

In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 1 ad 15. Busa vol. 1, p. 684. “Ad quintumdecimum dicendum, quod medium in visione corporali et intellectuali inventur triplices. Primum est medium sub quo videtur; et hoc est quod perficit visum ad videndum in generali, non determinans visum ad aliquid speciale objectum, sicut se habet lumen corporale ad visum corporalem, et lumen intellectus agentis ad intellectum posseibilem. Secundum est medium quo videtur; et hoc est forma visibilis qua determinatur uteque visus ad speciale objectum, sicut per formam lapidis ad cognoscendum lapidem. Tertium est medium in quo videtur; et hoc est id per cujus inspectionem ducitur visus in aliem rem, sicut inspicienti speculum ducitur in ea quae in speculo repersentantur, et videndo imaginem ducitur in imaginatum; et sic etiam intellectus per cognitionem effectus ducitur in causam, vel e converso.”

For an examination of the notion of an object see L. M. Regis, Epistemology, pp. 176-192. For analysis of the object of the intellect see pp. 222-252.

Object

At first sight there seems to be some confusion in the Sentences about what is the object of the intellect. Thomas variously puts it as the phantasm, which is in the imagination, as the
intelligible species actuating the intellect, and as the essence of the thing understood. We will look at each of these in turn.

When saying that the phantasm is the object of the intellect, Thomas usually cites a text of Aristotle.

For it is necessary that in the definition of this act, which is to understand, there falls the phantasm which is its object, as is said in III De anima, which is presented to the intellect by means of an act of the imagination.

In other texts Thomas adds “because phantasms relate to the intellect as sensible to sense” or “as colours to vision.” The words of Aristotle are “To the thinking soul images serve as sense-perceptions.”

In each of the texts cited Thomas makes a connection between the action of the intellect and its being in a physical body and dependent on senses. In another text, he spells this out and makes it clear that in this life the intellect must turn to phantasm both in order to receive knowledge from the senses and in order to reactivate species that it already holds. He presents as evidence the effect of damage to the organ of imagination on intellectual activity. A phrenetic person can neither learn new things nor understand things that he understood before.

In another context, while discussing the scientia retained by the separated soul, Thomas says that the species is the per se object of the intellect. An objector has used the intellect’s need of a phantasm to preclude scientia from the separated soul. Thomas replies.

That way of knowing happens to scientia from the state of him in which it is. For the phantasm is not the near and proper object of the intellect, since it is intelligible in potency, not in act. But the species understood is its per se object.

This is to be understood as applying also to knowledge in this life. The crucial difference between the species and the phantasm is that the former is in act, the latter only in potency with respect to understanding. The proper or per se object of the intellect is, then, the species understood. The phantasm is a kind of material object that is formalized by the agent intellect to produce the intelligible species.

Thomas also states that the object of the intellect is the essence of the thing that is known.

What a thing is is known when its quiddity is grasped. And indeed sense does not grasp this but only sensible accidents, nor does imagination, but only images of bodies. But it is the proper object of the intellect as is said in III De anima. And therefore Augustine says that the intellect knows a thing through its essence because its object is the very essence of the thing.

The text of Aristotle is one of his early suggestions that the intellect is something other than the senses. “We judge what it is to be flesh and flesh itself either by means of something different or by the same thing differently disposed.”

It seems, then, that the intellect has two objects—the intelligible species and the essence of the thing. Thomas puts them in relationship in a knowledge of children prior to Adam’s Fall. See also In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 6 ad 3. Busa vol. 1, p. 688.

In III Sent. d. 31, q. 2, a. 4 ad 5. Moos p. 998. “Ad quinimum dicendum quod ille modus cognoscendi accidit scientiae ex statu ejus in quo est. Non enim phantasma est objectum propinquum et proprium intellectus, cum sit intelligibile in potentia, non actu; sed species intellecta est per se objectum ejus.”

See In II Sent. d. 20, q. 2, a. 2 ad 2. Mandonnet pp. 514-515. “Ad tertium dicendum, quod cum phantasma sit objectum intellectus possibilis, ut dictum est, secundum statum vitae, anima ad suum actum phantasmatis indigat, non solum ut ab eis scientiam accipiat secundum motum qui est a sensibus ad animam, sed etiam ut habitum cognitionis quam habet circa species phantasmatis, ponat secundum motum qui est ab anima ad sensum, ut sic inspicat in actu quod per habitum cognitionis tenet in mente. Unde etiam Dionysius dicit in Epistola ad Titum, col. 1103, t. I, quod illi qui intellectualia revelationes accipient, eum quisbusdam figuris circumponunt; unde laesa imaginatio per laesionem organi, ut est in pharaenticis, intellectus impeditur ad [Busa: ab] actuali consideracione etiam eorum quae prius sciebat.” The question concerns

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 42
discussion of intellectum—the understood, which is often translated into English as “the object of the intellect.” He explains that intellectum, like visum, is spoken in two ways. The first “seen” is “the species of the visible thing existing in the pupil,” and this is the principle of vision and the perfection of the one who sees. The second “seen” is “the thing outside the soul.”

Similarly the first thing understood is the similitude of the thing which is in the intellect. And the second thing understood is the thing itself which is understood through that similitude.

The reply to the first objection of the same question adds more.

What is first objected, that the thing understood is the perfection of the one understanding is true of the first intellectum but not of the second intellectum. For the stone which is outside the soul is not a perfection of the intellect, but the similitude of the stone which is in the soul is.

What is interesting here is that Thomas gives priority to the species over the thing outside the soul because it is the species which perfects the soul.

The problem is still how to get beyond the species or the primum intellectum so as to actually know things. Two short texts indicate where Thomas’s solution lies. In the first he says,

...that in which something is seen is the principle of knowing (ratio cognoscendi) that which is seen in it. The principle of knowing, moreover, is the form of the thing in so far as it is known because through it actual knowledge happens. Whence just as from matter and form one being is made, so the principle of knowing and the thing known are one known (cognitum).

The claim made here is for unity between the species informing the cognitive power and the thing from which the species originates. They are one known.

In the second text, Thomas insists that the principles of knowledge, the species and light, need not be known at all in an act of knowledge and are, in fact, known only by turning from the thing which is known to the principle of knowing."

Species as Having Esse in the Soul and as Similitude

Thomas, of course, does not want to be left saying that what we know are species. His strongest way of ensuring that this does not happen is to insist on the role of a species as a similitude or likeness in contrast to the kind of being which it exercises in the soul. This is the distinction between the species viewed as having being in the soul and viewed as a similitude or mediator of the thing which is known. The distinction has become known as that between the entitative and intentional roles of the species. Care is needed here, however, because the species even in its entitative role has already been described as having spiritual or intentional rather than natural or real being. We will examine five texts from the Sentences.

The first text sets the ground for the distinction. The question involves seeing God in his essence and an objector, referring to 1 Corinthians 13, has said that man will see God face to face and hence through a similitude and not through God’s essence. Thomas first discusses what it is to see something immediately. He says that immediate vision occurs when whatever is in a

oproteat alium habitum scientiae ponere quo cognoscit Verbum et quo cognoscit res in Verbo.” “Ad quartam quaestionem dicendum quod illud in quo aliquid videtur, est ratio cognoscendi illud quod in eo videtur... Ratio autem cognoscendi est forma rei inquantum est cognita, quia per eam fit cognitio in actu. Unde sicut ex materia et forma fit unum esse; ita ratio cognoscendi et res cognita sunt unum cognitum; et propter hoc humaeque, inquantum hujusmodi, est una cognitio secundum habitum et secundum actum. Et ideo non est alius habitus quo cognoscitur Verbum et ea quae in Verbo videntur; sicut loco alius habitus quo cognoscitur medium demonstrationis et conclusio, secundum quod medium ad conclusionem ordinatur.”

In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 7 ad 10. Busa vol. 1, p. 689. “Allo modo sicut perfections cognoscenent ad cognoscendum; sive sit forma, sicut species lapidis in ocule perficit oculum ad videndum; sive principium effectivum hujus formae, sive dictur quod oculus videt per solem; et hoc modo id quod aliquid cognoscitur, non oportet quod sit magis notum, imo possibile est quod non cognoscatur; cognoscitur enim per quamdam inflexionem intellectus ab objecto cognoscibili in id quod erat cognitionis principium.”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 43
thing that can be joined to the cognitive power is joined to it. In material things this is not their essence because it is bound up with matter but is, rather, their similitude. In direct vision of God, however, the divine essence can be joined directly to the human intellect.

He then focuses on the role of the species in knowledge.

And besides, the similitude of a bodily thing is received in vision according to the same *ratio* by which it is in the thing, although not according to the same mode of being. Therefore that similitude leads to that thing directly.

He concludes that such a similitude cannot lead directly to God and that the heavenly vision of God has to be treated quite differently from earthly vision of material things.

What is important for our discussion in this text is the identification of the sameness in *ratio* as the root of the species’ ability to effect an immediate knowledge of the thing under consideration. The reference to mode of being is cursory but refers to intentional rather than real being. It is to be noted that Thomas’s definition of immediate vision is sufficiently open so as to easily embrace whatever forms of mediation are deemed necessary by nature.

The distinction between a species viewed as having a certain kind of being in the soul and viewed as a mediating likeness in knowledge is elaborated in four passages in the Sentences. All four are presented together and are numbered.

The similitude of a thing that is in the soul is considered in two ways: either in so far as it is the similitude of the thing and so nothing is attributed to it except what is found in the thing; or in so far as it has being in the soul and so intelligibility or universality is attributed to it. For example, this is clear even in a corporeal image to which it is fitting to be stone from the viewpoint of that in which it is and not from the viewpoint of that of which it is a similitude. (Text 1a)

. . . for the intellect can be turned to a species which it has in it in two ways: either by considering it in so far as it is a certain being in the intellect and so it knows about it that it is intelligible or universal or something of this kind; or in so far as it is the similitude of a thing and so the consideration of the intellect does not stop in the species but crosses through the species to the thing of which it is a similitude. For example, the eye sees the stone through the species that is in the pupil. And similarly a stone image can be considered in so far as it is a certain thing or as it is the similitude of a thing. (Text 1b)

According to Avicenna the species understood can be considered in two ways: either according to the being that it has in the intellect and so it has singular being, or in so far as it is the similitude of such a thing understood in so far as it leads to knowledge of it; and from this side it has universality because it is not the similitude of this thing in so far as it is this thing but according to the nature in which it agrees with others of the same species. (Text 2a)

157 *In I Sent.* d. 36, q. 1, a. 3 ad 3. Mandonnet p. 837. “Ad tertium dicendum, quod similitudo rei quae est in anima, dupliciter consideretur: vel secundum quod est similitudo rei, et sic nihil attribuitur sibi nisi quod in re invenitur: aut secundum esse quod habet in anima, et sic attribuitur sibi intelligibilitas vel universalitas; sicut etiam patet in imagine corporali, cui convenit esse lapidem ex parte ejus in quo est, et non ex parte ejus cujus est similitudo.” The question asks whether things which are known by God are in God. The objection is that God knows by his essence which has light and life but that not all the things he knows have light and life.

158 *In II Sent.* d. 12, q. 1, a. 3 ad 5. Mandonnet p. 311. “. . . potest enim intellectus converti ad speciem quam apud se habet dupliciter; aut considerando ipsam secundum quod est ens quoddam in intellectu et sic cognoscit de ea quod est intelligibile, vel universalis, vel aliquid haussmodi; aut secundum quod est similitudo rei, et sic intellectus consideratio non sisset in specie, sed per speciem transit in rem, cujus similitudo est; sicut oculus per speciem quae est in pupilla videt lapidem: et est simile de imaginis lapideae, quae potest considerari secundum quod est res quaedam, vel similitudo rei.” The question asks whether the distinction of days is saved according to the exposition of Augustine. The objection is that Augustine divided time before the creation of the sun into morning and evening knowledge of angels. In morning knowledge the medium is the Word. In evening knowledge the medium is a species of the thing infused into the angel after the creation of the thing. But forms have being in God, in angels and in things; therefore there would seem to be three times. See also *De ver.* 8, 16; 8, 17.

159 *In IV Sent.* d. 49, q. 2, a. 1 ad 16. Busa vol. 1, p. 684. “Ad sextumdecimum dicendum, quod creaturae corporales non dicuntur immediate videri, nisi quando id quod in eis est conjungibile visum, et conjungitur: non sunt autem conjungibles per essentiam suam ratione materialitatis; et ideo tunc immediate videtur quando eorum similitudo intellectui conjungitur; sed Deus per essentiam conjungibilis est intellectui; unde non immediate videretur, nisi essentia sua conjungaretur intellectui; et haec visio immediata dicatur visio faciei. Et praeterea similitudo rei corporalis recipitur in visu secundum eadem rationem qua est in re, licet non secundum eundem modum essendi; et ideo similitudo illa duci in illam rem directe. Non autem potest hoc modo ducere aliquam similitudo intellectum nostrum in Deum, ut ex dictis patet; et propter hoc non est simile.”

---

156 In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 1 ad 16. Busa vol. 1, p. 684. “Ad sextumdecimum dicendum, quod creaturae corporales non dicuntur immediate videri, nisi quando id quod in eis est conjungibile visum, ei conjungitur: non sunt autem conjungibles per essentiam suam ratione materialitatis; et ideo tunc immediate videtur quando eorum similitudo intellectui conjungitur; sed Deus per essentiam conjungibilis est intellectui; unde non immediate videretur, nisi essentia sua conjungaretur intellectui; et haec visio immediata dicatur visio faciei. Et praeterea similitudo rei corporalis recipitur in visu secundum eadem rationem qua est in re, licet non secundum eundem modum essendi; et ideo similitudo illa duci in illam rem directe. Non autem potest hoc modo ducere aliquam similitudo intellectum nostrum in Deum, ut ex dictis patet; et propter hoc non est simile.”
The form that is received in the intellect can be considered in two ways: either by comparison to the thing of which it is a similitude, and so it has universality. For it is not the similitude of man according to individuating conditions but according to common nature. Or [it can be considered] through comparison to the intellect in which it has being, and so it is something individuated, just as is the intellect. And the species understood of man is numerically other in the intellect of Socrates and other in the intellect of Plato; . . . (Text 2b)

It is immediately obvious that there is not just one distinction being made in these texts. The basic terms are common but the import of the distinctions varies. For the most part the texts agree in the way in which they formulate the distinction. A species in the intellect can be considered in two ways, either in so far as it has being (esse) in the soul, or in so far as it is the similitude of the thing which is known. Text 1b which calls the species “a certain being in the intellect.” The species is referred to variously as “the similitude of a thing,” “the species in the intellect,” “the species understood,” and “the form which is received in the intellect”; but this does not seem to be a systematic variation.

The texts disagree in that texts 1a and 1b attribute universality to the species in respect of the being it has in the soul, whereas texts 2a and 2b attribute universality to the species when it is viewed as a similitude. Texts 2a and 2b also view the species according to the being it has in the soul as something singular or particular. The disagreement is not completely symmetrical, however, because, in texts 1a and 1b, neither universality nor singularity is attributed to the species in its role as a similitude. Rather it is depicted as having nothing in it other than what is found in the soul.

The contexts of the objections are noted in the footnotes to the texts. In none of the four is the question strictly concerned with the activity of human knowledge. In texts 2a and 2b the objections have to do with ontological implications of the individuation of species in an intellect, either angelic or human. Questions 1a and 1b are more theological but share the concern of whether divine or angelic knowledge can have attributes different from what is known.

In fact, two distinctions are operating. That found in texts 1a and 1b defends the ability of a knower to know something outside himself despite the mediation of species. That found in texts 2a and 2b is concerned rather with the question of the being of species and of the intellect in which they inhere.

The distinction of texts 1a and 1b is between attributes that belong to the species in so far as it has being in the soul and the single attribute that the species bears as a similitude, namely, to contain only what is found in the thing of which it is a similitude. Thomas uses a statue as an example. From one point of view the statue is a certain thing, a piece of stone. As a likeness, however, it represents something else and directs attention to it. This is spelt out more clearly in text 1b. The intellect in knowing does not stay with the species but rather crosses over into the thing. Here Thomas argues by way of Aristotle’s example. An eye sees a stone by means of the species in the pupil. It does not see the species nor is the stone in the eye.

What is curious about these texts is that, when he considers the species according to the being it has in the soul, Thomas attributes to it things like intelligibility and universality. According to Thomas, then, a species ensures knowledge of universals rather than of particulars because of its mode of being in the soul, not because of a difference in the nature of its representational relationship to what is known. This is a position that would seem to beg critical analysis. On the one hand, it is true that the very possibility of knowledge of universals is dependent on the nature of the knower and of the kind of being that it exercises. On the other hand, if knowledge is to be of things, universality needs to be explained as a development of knowledge of particulars or of the

---

160 In II Sent. d. 3 q. 1 a. 2 ad 3. Mandonnet p. 91. “Ad tertium dicendum, quod forma quae est recepta in intellectu, potest dupliciter considerari: vel per comparisonem ad rem cujus est similitudo, et sic habet universalitatem: non enim est similitudo hujus rei intellectae, prout ducit in cognitionem ejus, et ex hac parte habet universalitatem: quia non est similitudo hujus rei secundum quod haec res est, sed secundum naturam in qua cum aliis suae speciei convenit.” The question asks whether the intellective soul or intellect is one in all men. Thomas’s answer is no. The objection is that if species are individuated in individual intellects they will not be intelligible.

161 The distinction of texts 1a and 1b is better stated in De ver. q. 2, a. 5 ad 17. Leonine, Tome 22, Vol. 1, p. 65. That of texts 2a and 2b can be seen in Qq. disp. de anima q. 2 ad 5. Robb pp. 72-73.

162 Aristotle, De anima III, 8; 431b30. “. . . for it is not the stone which is in the soul, but its form.” Hamlyn p.65.
relationship which the knower has to those particulars.

The distinction of texts 2a and 2b which Thomas attributes to Avicenna applies to intellectual knowledge and not to sensible knowledge. Thomas’s reasons for making the distinction will become clearer in the last section of this chapter. According to the distinction, the species considered as having being in the intellect is something singular. It is individuated by the intellect in which it inheres so that the species by which Socrates knows the nature of man is numerically different from that by which Plato knows the same nature. When the species is considered as a similitude it is universal because it is not the likeness of an individual being but of a common nature shared by many individuals. Thomas does not say so in this text but obviously this species is the product of abstraction. The significance of this distinction is that by it Thomas makes it clear that the species is something individual in the soul. Can or should we put distinctions 1 and 2 together? To do so would display three levels of difference. First, a species is something individual inhering in the soul. Second, as a likeness in the soul it is stripped of the particularities of any single individual and corresponds to universal natures. Third, the similitude as similitude does not direct attention to itself but rather leads the cognitive faculty directly to knowledge of its object.

It may well be that there is a case for doing this. Still one should be careful. It is not acceptable that the examples of texts 1a and 1b involve sensible objects and that those of texts 2a and 2b involve intelligible objects. Thomas himself has not put the distinctions together. As well, they appear very infrequently in their full form and then only as part of a reply to an objection. It seems a matter that can well be reexamined in the light of Thomas’s later works.

**Similitude**

In its basic and most common usage, *similitudo* means a likeness or a resemblance. By extension Thomas also uses it as a synonym for *species* and even to mean a carved statue. In each of the four texts just treated, Thomas uses the word similitude to name the species considered in its mediating role. Such usage is common in the *Sentences*.

A discussion of the character imprinted on the soul by certain sacraments provides a closer analysis of the more proper meaning of *similitudo*.

Thomas says that all modern theologians agree that sacramental character implies a threefold relationship of sign, of distinctiveness, and of configuration. He then indicates differences in the views of the theologians.

They differ, however, because certain ones posit that no absolute accident underlies those relationships but that they are grounded immediately in the soul. But this cannot be, because a sign makes something come into knowledge by means of the form which it impresses on the senses or the intellect. Similarly also nothing is distinguished from another except through some form. Furthermore, similitude is a relation grounded on unity of quality as is said in V *Metaphysics*. Whence it is clear that any of those relations which character expresses requires some underlying form. And since it is not a substantial form because substantial form is not given in the sacraments, it follows that the underlying form is a certain quality, and unity of consignification of this [quality] makes similitude.

The text then examines opinions which set this quality in each of the four species of quality and concludes that the sacramental character belongs to the second species of quality, namely, power or capacity.

The text of Aristotle quoted by Thomas reads as follows:

---

164 *In IV Sent. d. 4, q. 1, a. 1. Moos pp. 149. “Respondeo. Dicendum, quod characterem in sacramentis quibusdam imprimi, omnes Moderni confitentur; sed in modo ponendi ipsum in anima partim differunt, et partim conveniunt. Conveniunt quidem in hoc quod omnes dicunt per characterem importari relationem tripliorem. Est enim character signum distinctivum et configurativum. Inquantum ergo est signum, importat relationem ad signatum; inquantum autem est distinctivum, importat relationem ad ea quibus distinguat; inquantum autem est configurativum, importat relationem ad ea quibus assimilat. Differunt autem in hoc, quia quidam ponunt istis relationibus non subesse aliquod accidentis absolutum, sed immediate in anima fundari istas relations. Hoc autem esse non potest, quia signum per formam quam sensibus vel intellectui imprimit, facit aliquod in cognitionem venire. Similiter etiam nihil distinguuntur ab alio nisi per aliquam formam. Similitudo etiam est relatio super unitate qualitatis fundata, ut dicitur in V Metaph. (V, 15; 1021a10). Unde patet quod qualelibet illarum relationum quam importat character, requirit aliquam formam substratam; et cum non sit forma substantialis, quia forma substantialis in sacramentis non datur, reliquitur quod forma substrata sit qualitas quaedam, cuius unitas consignificationis similitudinem facit.”*
Those things are the same whose substance is one; those are like whose quality is one; those are equal whose quantity is one; . . .

Thomas’s commentary on this text simply repeats Aristotle’s statement without elaboration.

This text advances our study in a number of ways. First, it establishes the primary sense of the word similitudo - it signifies a relation and that relation is one of likeness. Second, it clarifies what the relation of likeness or of the similar is, namely, unity of quality. Third it spells out the need for a foundation for the relationship. Fourth, it identifies that foundation as an accidental form or quality. In knowledge, of course, such a form enjoys only esse spirituale. Fifth, although the text is about sacramental character it encourages application of its analysis to knowledge by analysing similitude in the broadest terms and by using knowledge as an example during the discussion.

Two things make it difficult to maintain sight of the subtlety of the notion of similitude as relation. The first is Thomas’s use of the noun similitudo rather that the adjective similis. This may be a matter of Latin style; it may be Thomas’s own preference. Whatever is the case, it seems rather heavy and in contrast with, for instance, Aristotle’s usage, in which the adjectival form is more common. The second is the ease with which Thomas moves backwards and forwards between similitudo meaning likeness in a purely relational sense and similitudo being used in a more substantial sense as a synonym for the species. The difference is like that between praising the statue of Albert Einstein for achieving likeness to Einstein and calling it “the likeness of Einstein.”

This difficulty can be seen in two parts-sentences from a question in III Sentences. In the first, Thomas refers to “the species, which is the similitude of the known.” In the second, he says, “But the similitude of any thing received in one who sees does not make him see that thing unless it represents it perfectly.” In the second text it seems that similitudo can easily be taken in the sense of a synonym for species. But in the first, to do that would involve Thomas in a tautology. Is he saying the species is the mediating form of what is known? Or is he saying, partly by way of definition, that what marks the species as species is its likeness to what is known? These questions can, of course, be raised about the usage of similitudo in the second sentence and indeed about the meaning of species itself.

The delicate interplay between species and likeness, medium and object, and species and essence is seen in a text from IV Sentences.

For it is established that the medium by which a stone is understood is its species in the soul, which is not the very essence of the stone. But, by means of the likeness of the stone, [the intellect] is brought to know the very essence of the stone, because the object of the intellect is a “what”, that is, the essence or quiddity of the thing. But this does not happen in imaginary or corporeal vision because the object of the imagination or sense is not the essence of the thing but accidents which are outside it, like colour and figure and things of this kind.

166 In V. Metaph., lect. 17, n. 1022. Marietti p. 268.
167 Nam eadem sunt, quorum substantia est una. Similia, quorum qualitas est una. Aequalia, quorum quantitas est una.”
168 Douglas Flippen, “Immanence and Transcendence in Human Knowledge: The Illumination of a Problem in St. Thomas,” The New Scholasticism 53 (1979) : 324-346, begins his study from the point of view of the necessity of some foundation for the relation of the knower to the object of knowledge. He does not cite texts to this effect but in his discussion of species and intentional being he does cover several of the texts cited in this chapter or their parallels in later works of Thomas.
169 According to Douglas Flippen, the foundation of the relation in knowledge is the cognitive act which is specified by the species or form. See ibid, pp. 340-342. See also his “A Problem Concerning Relation in Sensation,” in Atti del congres de internationalé, Tommaso d’Aquino nel suo settimo centenario, IX, (Naples: Edizioni Domenicane Italiane, 1974), pp. 307-314.
169 A revelant discussion is found in In I Sent. d. 28, q. 2, a. 1, Mandonnet p. 678, where Thomas asks “Utram definitio imaginis: ‘imaginum est species indifferentes ejus rei ad quanm imaginatur.’ sit competens?”
170 In III Sent. d. 14, a. 1, q. 3. Moos p. 438. Thomas is discussing the role of habits in Christ’s knowledge. “In cognitionem autem qua Christi vel quaelibet alia, videt Verbum per essentiam, non potest esse habitus quantum ad speciem, quae sit similitudino cogniti.” And “Similitudo autem alicuius rei recepta in vidente non facit eum videre rem illam, nisi perfecte eam repraesentet; . . .”
171 In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 7 ad 6. Busa vol. 1, p. 689. “Constat enim quod medium quo intelligitur lapis, est species ejus in anima, quae non est ipsa lapidis essentia; sed per similitudinem lapidis pervenitur ad cognoscendum ipsam essentiam lapidis; quia objectum intellectus est quid, idest rei essentia, seu quidditas. Sed hoc non continet in visione imaginaria vel corporali; quia objectum imaginacionis vel sensus non est ipsa essentia rei, sed accidentia quae sunt extra, sicut color, et figura, et hujusmodi.” “Utram deus in statu viae possit per essentiam videri.” The objection quotes Augustine to the effect that intellective vision pertains to that which is in the soul by its essence.

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 47
The species which is received is not to be identified with the essence of the thing.\textsuperscript{172} It is rather a medium and something in the soul. But because of the species’ likeness to the thing, the intellect is able to grasp the essence or quiddity, which is its object. The basis of the claim for knowledge of essences is the relationship that the species has to things and the intellect’s own nature, which is to know essences.

Further light is thrown on the notion of similitude by seeing ways in which similitude can fail even when a species is present.

Because if a thing exceeds the similitude by which the intellect understands it, then the intellect does not attain to seeing the essence of that thing. Because as was said, through that similitude the intellect is determined to the known thing. Just as if an intelligible species should represent man in so far as he is sensible and not in so far as he is rational, for then the essence of man is not seen. For when anything is subtracted from the essential principles of a thing, an essence different in species remains.

This underlines the relevance of similitude as relation as a measure of the success of a cognitive act. In a text that we examined in detail above, Thomas spells out the main degrees of perfection of similitude. He listed three degrees of similitude which are deficient: sameness of species but not in perfection of mode; sameness of genus; and sameness by analogy only. For the act of knowledge to be successful, the intelligible species must achieve similitude “according to the ratio of its species.”\textsuperscript{175}

Parenthetically, it is noted that for Thomas all sorts of variations are involved in what is or is not in a species and what may or may not be seen in one. A weak intellect requires a greater number of species than a more powerful intellect in order to understand the same situation or thing. On the other hand, an angel, for instance, with more penetrating light can see more in a species of an inferior angel than that inferior angel can itself see. The superior angel can even assist the inferior to see things it otherwise would not see.

It is hard to know how to regard these discussions as most of them are about angels. Occasionally, however, Thomas does address ordinary situations of human knowledge dealing with similar principles. In IV Sentences, for instance, we read this.

For in one thing there are many intelligible aspects (rationes) to be considered such as its diverse properties and relations to other things. And it is possible that when the same thing is commonly known by two, one perceives more aspects than the other and one learns these aspects from the other.

\textsuperscript{172} See also in I Sent. d. 15, q. 5, a. 3 ad 3. Mandonnet p. 364. “Sed anima non conjungitur objecto suo essentialiter, sed tantum secundum similitudinem ipsius receptam in anima: quia lapis non est in anima, sed species lapidis, secundum Philosophum, III De anima, text. 38: cui etiam speciei, sive intentioni, conjungitur anima, non quantum ad esse primum, quod est substantiale, sed quantum ad esse secundum, quod est esse accidentale.”

\textsuperscript{173} Note that in Quodl. 8, 2, 2, Marietti p. 162, speaking in another context about the \textit{conceptio} which the intellect forms, Thomas say “Unde species intelligibilis est similidudo ipsius essentiae rei, et est quodammodo ipsa quidditas et natura rei secundum esse intelligibile, non secundum esse naturale, prout est in rebus.” Here we see Thomas’s need of the concept (called in this part of the text simply \textit{species intelligibilis}) which has not entered into our discussion so far. If the abstracted intelligible species is not the very essence of the thing known while at the same time the object of the intellect is that essence, the intellect itself must form a further species which is identical with that essence in nature if not in mode of being. For a discussion of knowledge of essences see In III Sent. d. 23, q. 1, a. 2. Moos pp. 701-703. See also In III Sent. d. 3, q. 5 ad 1. Mandonnet p. 124.

\textsuperscript{174} In III Sent. d. 14, a. 2, qc. 1. Moos pp. 445-446. “Quia si excedat res similitudinem intellectus qua ipsam intelligit, tunc intellectus non attingit ad videndum essentiam illius rei; quia, ut dictum est, per similitudinem illam intellectus determinatur ad rem cognitam. Sicut si species intelligibilis repraesentaret hominem inquantum est sensibilis et non inquantum est rationalis, tunc enim non videtur essentia hominis. Quocumque enim subtracto de essentialibus rei, remanet essentia alterius speciei.” The question discusses the proposition: “\textit{Videtur quod anima Christi Verbum videndo comprehendit.”}

\textsuperscript{175} In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 684. “Defectus autem perfectae similitudinis potest tot modis accedere, quot modis dissimilitudo inventur. Unam enim modo est deficiens similitudo, quando participatur forma secundum eandem rationem speciei, sed non secundum eandem perfectionis modum; sicut est similitudo deficiens ejus qui habet parum de albedine, ad illum qui habet multum. Alio modo adhuc magis deficiens, quando non pervenitur ad eandem rationem speciei, sed tantum ad eandem rationem generis; sicut est similitudo inter illum qui habet colorem citrinum, et illum qui habet colorum album. Alio modo adhuc magis deficiens, quando ad rationem eandem generis pertingit, sed solum secundum analogiam; sicut est similitudo inter illum qui habet colorem citrinum et illum qui habet colorem album. Alio modo adhuc magis deficiens, quando ad rationem eandem generis pertingit, sed eum modo est deficiens similitudo quae est in creatura recepta respectu divinae essentiae.”

\textsuperscript{176} Many texts discuss this sort of thing. See, for instance, In III Sent. d. 14, a. 2, qc. 2; In II Sent. d. 11, q. 2, a. 2; In II Sent. d. 3, q. 3, a. 3 ad 3; In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 5; In III Sent. d. 14, a. 3, qc. 4; In II Sent. d. 3, q. 3, a. 2.

\textsuperscript{177} In IV Sent. d. 49, q. 2, a. 5 ad 1. Busa vol. 1, p. 687. “In una enim re est multis rationes intelligibles considerare, sicut diversas eis proprietates et habitudines ad res alias; et possibile est quod eadem re scita communiter a duobus, unus alio plures rationes percepiat, et habet rationes unus ab alio accipiat...” “Utrum sancti...”
It is a pity that we do not find more sophisticated articulation of these finer structures of the experience of human knowing in Thomas. But such issues were not his focus.

An Argument from Species

We will conclude our treatment of species in the Sentences with an analysis of II Sentences d. 17, q. 2, a. 1 where Thomas asks, “Is the intellective soul or the intellect one in all men?” The import of the question is to ask whether the human agent and possible intellects are part of the human soul and individuated or whether there is just one agent and one possible intellect, each of which is a separate substance, immaterial and eternal, and which is shared by all human beings.

The question is too large to examine here in full detail. It was, however, for Thomas one of the main issues in the discussion of the soul. Starting from De anima III, 4 and III, 5, most Aristotelian commentators had posited a separate agent intellect, and many had posited a separate possible intellect. The latter conflicted with the Christian doctrine of the individuality and immortality of the human soul and so made the question one of great significance for Thomas. The text is interesting for us because in discussion of the question Thomas uses arguments that depend on his understanding of intentional species. It will also show up differences between Thomas and Averroes on the issue of species.

Thomas first deals with the position held by most philosophers that the agent intellect is separate and the lowest of the intelligences. He rejects it canonically on the grounds that God would want to bring reparation to men directly rather than through angels. Philosophically he argues that man must be able to exercise his highest power in his own right and not be dependent on intelligences or angels. He admits that some theologians had given God the role of illuminating the intellect but equates this with beatitude.

His treatment of the possible intellect is much longer. First, he deals with the opinions of those who say that the possible intellect is diverse in diverse human beings. The first of these is Alexander’s which claims “that the possible intellect is nothing other than a preparation that is in human nature for receiving the impression of the agent intellect.” Thomas recognizes this as a corporeal power. He rejects the opinion on the basis of Aristotle’s authority “that the possible intellect is receptive of intelligible species.” Preparation is not receptive but, in this case, a body or a power in a body. No power that is composed of the elements can be cognitive or receive intelligible forms.

The second opinion, which is Avempace’s, states that the possible intellect is nothing other than the imagination. Thomas again rejects this on the basis of an Aristotelian principle. “The phantasm that is in the imagination relates to the human intellect as colours do to vision.”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 49
reasons that the capacity which is in the possible intellect to understand is like the capacity in a recipient in potency to be an actual recipient. But the capacity which is in the imaginative power is rather like the capacity of an agent in potency to be an agent in act. And since it is not possible for something to be mover and moved or agent and patient at the same time (and in the same respect, we may assume), the imaginative power cannot be the possible intellect.

The third opinion is that of Avicenna, which Thomas himself accepts. “The possible intellect is diverse in diverse men, it is founded in the essence of the rational soul. It is not a corporeal power yet comes into being with the body, but does not finish with the body.”

Thomas next deals with two opinions which state that the possible intellect is one in all men. The first opinion is that of Themistius and Theophrastus and states that a single intellect, the intellect in habit, is eternal and one in all men. It is composed of the agent and possible intellects, which relate as form to matter. Species understood are also eternal. Thomas accepts Averroes’s criticism that if this is the case nothing distinguishes one man from another—neither first act nor ultimate act, neither being nor operation.

The second opinion is that of Averroes himself which Thomas expounds and refutes in considerable detail. The discussion is very significant. Thomas expresses Averroes’s position in this way.

And therefore he himself holds another way, that both the agent intellect and the possible intellect are eternal and one in all; but intelligible species are not eternal. And he holds that the agent intellect is not related to the possible intellect as its form but as an artisan to matter. And the species understood, abstracted from phantasms, are like the form of the possible intellect, and from these two is made the intellect in habit.

According to Thomas, Averroes still has to evade the impossibilities of Themistius’s position and he attempts this in two ways.

Averroes first argues that even though the agent and possible intellects are eternal, the intelligible species need not be eternal. He uses the distinction between esse spirituale and esse materiale and says that just as in sight the sensible species has a twofold subject, so too does the intelligible species. The sensible species has esse spirituale in sight and esse materiale in the coloured body. The intelligible species has esse materiale in the imagination and therefore is not eternal. But it has esse immateriale in the intellect and so is not generable or corruptible but rather eternal.

Thomas rejects Averroes’s argument in this way.

But that response seems null. For just as the species of colour that is in the wall and that which is in the eye are not numerically the same, so the species that is in the imagination and [that] in the possible intellect are not numerically the same. Whence thus far it follows that the species that is in the possible intellect has one subject only and that which is in the generable and corruptible imagination is numerically other. [This holds] unless perhaps it is said that [the species] are simply eternal but [then] not in respect of [an intellect] in which, from eternity, there are not phantasms whose similitudes are in the possible intellect. But nevertheless since no phantasms are

In ea formae quae fuerunt intellectae in actu; et haec est opinio Avempace. Sed hoc etiam est impossible: quia, secundum Philosophum, in III De anima, cap. 30, 31 et 32, [III, 7; 431a14-b2], phantasmata quae sunt in imaginativa, se habet ad intellectum humanum sicut colores ad visum: et ideo oportet quod phantasmata sint moventia intellectum possibilium, sicut color movet visum: unde aptitudo quae est in intellectu possibilii ad intelligendum, est similis aptitudini quae est in patiente in potentia, ut sit patient in actu: aptitudo autem quae est in imaginativa est sicut aptitudo agentis in potentia, ut sit agent in actu. Impossible autem est quod idem sit movens et motum, et agens et patientis. Ergo impossible est quod virtus imaginativa sit intellectus possibilis. Praeterea, adhuc sequeretur quod virtus recipiens intelligentia in actu, quae dictur intellectus possibilis, esset utens organo corporali, cum virtus imaginativa habeat determinatum organum."

In II Sent. d. 17, q. 2, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 425. “Et ideo ipse teten aliam viam, quod tandem intellectus agentum quan possibilis est aeternus et unus in omnibus; sed species intelligibilis non sunt aeternae; et ponit quod intellectus agentum non se habet ad possibilium tom formae ejus, sed ut artifex ad materiam, et species intellectae abstractae a phantasmatisbus sunt sicut forma intellectus possibilis, ex quibus duobus efficiitur intellectus in habitu.”

In II Sent. d. 17, q. 2, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 425-426. “Primo quidem ostendit quod non est necessarium quod si intellectus agentum est aeternum et recipiens aeternum, scilicet intellectus possibilis quod formae sint aeternae, scilicet species intelligibilis. Sic enim species visibilis habet duplex subjectum: unum in quo habet esse spirituale, scilicet visum; et alium in quo habet esse materiale, scilicet corpus coloratum; ita etiam species intelligibilis habet duplex subjectum: unum in quo habet esse materiale, scilicet ipsa phantasmata quae sunt in imagine, et secundum hoc esse istae species non sunt aeternae; alium est in qua habet esse immateriale, scilicet intellectum possibilium, et secundum hoc subjectum non habent quod sint generabilia et corruptibilia.”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 50
 eternal, so it would follow that those species that are from eternity in the possible intellect would not be abstracted from any phantasms, and this is against the intention and the words of the Philosopher.

It is in this text that Bernardo Bazán claims that Thomas has misrepresented Averroes. Specifically, says Bazán, “Saint Thomas identifies the Averroistic notion of intellectum speculativum with his own notion of species intelligibilis.” Averroes, himself, does not use the notion of species.

According to Bazán, “for the Arab Philosopher, the intellectum speculativum is the object known, the form or intentio which actualizes the material intellect and which constitutes the content of the act of knowledge.” This form is contained in the image in the imagination in an obscure way so that it needs to be abstracted by the agent intellect. It is not a species but rather the “intentional form” or “the universal essence of things.” “This essence, or form, or intention, while remaining the same, assumes diverse states according to the subject in which it is found.”

The strength of this position is that it is the one form which gives being and intelligibility to things. It is the principle of being and the object known. A species, on the other hand, is an intermediary and carries with it the notion of representation or reduplication.

Bazán applies this clarification to the argument of Thomas against Averroes which we have just seen, namely that since the form in the intellect and that in the imagination are numerically different, they do not constitute a link between the individual man and the intellect. According to Bazán the criticism works if the form is a species which “plays the role of a medium” and “in the framework of a psychological perspective where the characteristic of the species as a subjective accident is stressed.”

But Averroes is working in a metaphysical context and deals with the quiddity of a thing which exists in different states. Bazán points out that Thomas knows that a quiddity or essence can exist in different states—either in nature or in the knowing subject—and that it is the object of the intellect. Thomas is also aware that “Precisely because the same essence is found in the thing and in the subject, it can be said that in the act of thought ‘intellectus et intellectum sunt unum’.”

Finally, Thomas is aware that the intellect abstracts quiddities from images or phantasms and that it must return to these constantly. Bazán concludes that while Thomas’s argument works if it is about intelligible species, it does not work if understood on Averroes’ own terms.

For our purposes this discussion is very interesting. First, it demonstrates that Averroes was able to develop a full Aristotelian theory of knowledge without calling on the notion of intelligible species. Second, it shows a major problem that arose from this theory, namely, “the question of knowing whether the soul is the substantial form of man and whether it is multiplied according to the multiplicity of individuals.”

We now return to the text of the Sentences where, according to Thomas, in the second part of his argument Averroes “struggles to show that it does not follow from his position that there is one being (esse) and one operation in all men.”

---

187 In II Sent. d. 17, q. 2, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 426. “Sed ista responsio nulla videtur. Sicut enim non est eadem numero species coloris quae est in pariete et quae est in oculo, ita non est eadem numero species quae est in imaginazione et in intellectu possibili: unde adhuc remanet quod illa species quae est in intellectu possibili habeat unum subjectum tantum, et illa quae est in imaginazione generabilis et corruptibilis sit alia numero: nisi forte dicatur quod sunt aeternae simpliciter, sed non quoad eum in quo ab aeterno non sunt phantasmatas, quorum similitudines sunt apud intellectum possibilem. Sed tamen, cum nulla phantasmatas sint aeternae, adhuc sequeretur quod illae species quae sunt ab aeterno in intellectu possibili non essent abstractae ab aliquibus phantasmatibus; et hoc est contra intentionem et verba Philosophi.”


193 See De ente et essentia cap. 3. Leonine p. 374. See also In I Sent. d. 36, q. 2, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 839, and In II Sent. d. 12, q. 1, a. 3 ad 5. Mandonnet p. 311. See p.58, n. 71 above.


195 In II Sent. d. 17, q. 2, a. 1. Mandonnet p. 426. “Secundo autem nititur ostendere quod ex hac positione non sequitur quod omnia hominum sit unum esse et una operatio, secundum quam omnes sint aequaliter facientes. Dicit enim quod cum species intellecta se habeat ad intellectum possibilium quodammodo ut forma ad materiam, hoc modo quod ex eis quodammodo efficitur unum completum, conjunctio ejus ad nos est per id quod est formale in dicta conjunctione, scilicet per speciem intellectam, cujus unum subjectum dicit esse phantasma, quod est in nobis, et ad ipsum intellectum possibilium. Unde cum in diversis sint diversa phantasmatas, diversus hominibus conjungitur intellectus possibilis diversa conjunctione: et ex hoc homines habent esse diversum; ex hoc etiam unus scit quod alter ignorant, quia secundum unam speciem intellectam conjungitur unum secundum quam non conjungitur alteri, quamvis quaedam intentiones intellectae sint, ut primae conceptiones intellectus, secundum quas omnibus conjungitur, a quibus intellectus possibilis nunquam denudatur, hominibus ab...
Averroes argues that the species relates to the possible intellect as form to matter so as to bring about perfect unity. The conjunction of individual men to the possible intellect happens through what is formal, namely the species, which is present both in the phantasm and in the possible intellect. Because individual men have different phantasms they are joined differently to the possible intellect and so enjoy diverse being and understanding. After the death of the human body, however, there is no diversity of souls.

Thomas calls this argument frivolous and shows that it is so in three ways.

First, because, as was said, the species that is the form of the possible intellect, is not numerically the same in the phantasm and in the subject but is the similitude of that [phantasm]. Whence it follows that the intellect is in no way joined to us and so we do not understand by means of it.

Second, a conjunction by means of species would relate only to operation or second perfection and not to first perfection or the act of substantial being. The union of man with intellect would be accidental and mediated. Third, because operation is found in a power and not in its object, if the intellect is joined to man only when a species is in the imagination, then man does not understand but rather the intellect understands when man imagines.

non enim visibile videt, sed visus. Si ergo non conjungitur intellectus nobiscum, nisi per hoc quod species intellecta aliquo modo habet subjectum in nobis, sequitur quod hic homo, scilicet Socrates, non intelligat, sed quod intellectus separatius intelligat ea quae ipse imaginatur: et plura alia absurda non difficile est adducere."

According to Bazán, Averroes had to defend the unity of the intellect precisely because he identified the intellectum speculativum as the object of knowledge and not as the means of knowledge. If intellects, therefore, were to be multiplied so would objects. Thomas, on the other hand, by making the species a similitude or representation which transcends any particular instantiation of a quiddity, is able to allow that it is both individual as an accident and universal in its role of representation.

Thomas concludes the question with a statement of his own position on the intellect and also addresses the issue of how two intellectual powers can be rooted in one substance. His own position is that the possible intellect is multiplied in individuals and that it comes into being with the body but survives the body’s death. The agent intellect is also diverse in diverse beings. The two are irreducible to each other because one receives species and the other makes them intelligible in act. Actions that are reduced to contrary principles cannot be attributed to the one power.
CHAPTER TWO

THE DISPUTED QUESTIONS ON TRUTH

Introduction

Thomas incepted as Master at the University of Paris in 1256 during the height of the anti-mendicant controversies, which had become so vicious as to require papal and royal intervention. His inception was opposed as part of the dispute, and even after inception he was not admitted to the Guild of Masters for more than a year. Nevertheless, he occupied the Dominican chair for foreigners for the three academic years 1256-1259.

The functions of a Regent Master in theology were to lecture, to dispute, and to preach. While scripture was central to each, it was lecturing that consisted in the direct exposition of scripture and that was the Master’s primary duty. He was expected also to dispute on theological questions in front of the faculty several times a year.

It has proved difficult to date Thomas’s scripture commentaries definitively but it seems that at least the Commentary on Matthew was written during these first Paris years. It comes down to us as a reportatio taken down by a student and not as an ordinatio composed and written or dictated by the Master himself. It is clear, however, that the Quaestiones disputatae de veritate belong to this period and were composed in the three years 1256-1259. Quodlibetal Questions VII-XI were also conducted at this time. The other works known to date from the period are Thomas’s commentaries on Boethius’ De Trinitate and De hebdomadibus and his refutation of an attack on the mendicants, Contra impugnantes Dei cultum et religionem. It is likely that he also completed the last distinctions of the Sentences, which were not received by the stationer until 1257. He began the Summa contra gentiles in 1259 at the end of this first Paris Regency.

The disputed question was one of the major literary genres of the thirteenth century. Each written question originated from an actual disputation held by a Master and one or two of his bachelors before the faculty of the university on mornings when other classes were cancelled. It seems that the bachelor led the discussion on the first day and the Master gave his determination of the issue on the second day. The Master would then write up a formalized account of the dispute, sometimes at a much later date and certainly as a fresh activity, distinct from the actual disputation. In its written form the disputed question was composed of a statement of the question, arguments for one side and then for the other, a full response or determination, and replies to the initial arguments or objections.

Thomas’s Quaestiones disputatae de veritate are composed of twenty-nine questions, each of which is divided into between two and seventeen articles. Each article in turn follows the standard form of the genre. The series takes its name from the first question, which looks at the nature of a transcendental, truth. The first twenty questions are loosely associated around issues having to do with knowledge. Questions twenty-one to twenty-nine examine good, the will, and grace. The work is primarily theological although, as we shall see, Thomas draws much from the philosophers and conducts many of the discussions in a philosophical way.

The three most important questions for our purposes are question two, on God’s knowledge, question eight, on angelic knowledge, and question ten, on the mind. In the question on angelic knowledge, Thomas conducts long discussions about human knowledge. Of question ten it needs to be said that Thomas does not usually refer to the mind (mens), but rather to the intellect, or the intellective power, or simply to the soul. The preferential use of mens in this question arises from the first article, which investigates...

---

202 See James A. Weisheipl, Friar Thomas D’Aquino, pp. 93-112.
204 Weisheipl, Friar Thomas D’Aquino, p. 127.
205 Weisheipl, Friar Thomas D’Aquino, pp. 116-222.
206 For a detailed study of this genre see Bernardo C. Bazàn, John F. Wippel, Gérard Fransen, and Danielle Jacquart, Les questions disputées et les questions quodlibétales dans les facultés de théologie, de droit et de médecine, Brepols: Turnhout, 1985.
Augustine’s view that the mind is the image of the Trinity. Two other questions are also significant for our purposes. Question eighteen discusses the knowledge had by Adam in the state of innocence and question nineteen discusses knowledge had by the human soul after death. Texts will be drawn from other questions.

The disputed questions are not the work of a beginning theologian nor, like the Summa theologiae, are they written for beginners, educated though they be. Rather, they are the work of an established Master disputing at the level of his peers. They are not a treatise which covers every dimension of a topic but rather questions which examine the more central, difficult, or contentious issues of the day. This effects not only which questions are disputed but also the internal structure of the discussions. As M.-D. Chenu says, “The disputations held by Saint Thomas mark off in so impressively masterful a fashion the entire field of current conflicts that it is possible to follow in them the unfolding of controversies and the taking of positions.”

From the De veritate, then, we can expect treatment of questions in depth. On the other hand, while Thomas addresses a wide range of issues, he does not do so in comprehensive breadth. In contrast to the Sentences, he here writes on major issues for the second time. He does so in his own right and no longer under the direction of his Master, Elias Brunet, who was a strict Augustinian. As a Master he is able to choose the topics for disputation rather than follow a text such as Lombard’s Sentences. It is our sense that one finds in the De veritate greater clarity and simplicity of thought than in the Sentences. Issues already dealt with in the first have been rethought and more clearly organized. We can agree with Weisheipl: “The importance of Thomas’s disputed questions cannot be overestimated, for in his questions he reveals the genius of an outstanding master who allowed himself full rein to delve into the profundities of theological truth.”

Our project in this chapter is the exposition of what is found in the De veritate about species and identity in knowledge. We will not routinely repeat all that has already been found in the Sentences but will rather establish the main lines of the discussion in the text and then look for its most penetrating statements as well as for comparisons and contrasts with the earlier texts. Clearer formulation, changes, additions, deletions, and further resolution of the more difficult issues will be of particular interest.

The chapter will fall into four main sections. The first will examine the various descriptions of the act of knowing that are found in the De veritate. The second section will raise and deal with a central problem in Thomas’s theory of knowledge, namely, how material being can affect immaterial being; and it will do this mainly, as the texts suggest, from the perspective of angelic knowledge. The third section will look at the nature of immaterial being and at the distinction between a species’s mode of being and its representative role. The final section will suggest modifications to the claim of identity in knowledge and examine the impact of the theory of species on this claim.

Descriptions of the Act of Knowing

The Sense of Passio Clarified

In the De veritate, in contrast to the Sentences, Thomas shows no hesitation in declaring that knowing is not to be thought of in terms of the categories of action and passion.

To the third it must be said that understood and understander do not relate as agent and patient, but both relate as one agent, as is clear from the above-said, although according to a way of speaking they seem to be signified as agent and patient.

In question twenty-six of the De veritate Thomas disputes about the passions of the soul in ten articles, some of which parallel the question we discussed in the Sentences. In the first article, which asks how the separated soul suffers in hell, he makes clear what he takes passio to mean. Commonly and etymologically it means a reception of any kind. However, in the strict sense it refers only to motion and to motions between

210 De ver. 8, 6 ad 3. Leon. p. 239. “Ad tertium dicendum quod intellectum et intelligens non se habent ut agens et patiens, sed ambo se habent ut unum agens, ut patet ex dictis, quamvis quantum ad modum loquendi videantur ut agens et patiens significat.” See also De ver. 8, 7 ad cont. 6. Leon. p. 244. “Ad secundum dicendum quod cognoscens et cognitionem non se habent sicut agens et patiens, ut ex dictis patet, sed sicut duo ex quibus fit unum cognitionis principium; et ideo non sufficit ad cognitionem contactus inter cognoscens et cognoscibile sed oportet quod cognoscibile cognoscenti uniatur ut forma vel per essentiam suam vel per similitudinem suam.” See also De ver. 8, 8 ad 10.

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 54
contraries so that “properly taken, an agent is opposed to a patient and every passion casts away something from the substance.” A third broadened sense calls any impediment to action a passion.

Thomas is unambiguous in denying that in any proper sense the soul can be subject to passion.

Whence the soul, since it is incorporeal, cannot suffer in this way. For although it receives something, this does not happen through change from contrary into contrary but through a simple influence from the agent as air is illuminated by the sun.

At the same time, Thomas has to admit that, because every creature is mixed with potency and in some sense receptive, the soul is in the general sense subject to passion or able to suffer.

This position is not greatly different from the final position of the Sentences. It is, however, less ambiguous and is operative in all the discussions about the act of knowing. How, then, does Thomas speak of this act in the De veritate?

Action and Causality

One of the clearest discussions of the act of knowledge in the De veritate is found in question 8, article 6, where Thomas asks, “Does an angel know himself?” The argument falls into four sections: first, the determination that knowing is not properly an actio but rather an operatio; second, clarification of in what sense and where the notions of action and passion belong in knowledge; third, a discussion of act and potency; fourth, an argument for the necessity of intelligible form.

We have already seen the first distinction in the Sentences. Properly speaking, action “proceeds from an agent into an exterior thing which it changes.” An operation does not do this but “remains in the agent as its perfection.” The principles applying to action apply to both kinds of activity. In this text, Thomas says explicitly that both actio and operatio flow from some existing thing in so far as it is in act. In other texts, he applies the major principles dealing with actuality

---

213 De ver. 26, 1. Leon. p. 747-748. “Dicendum quod ad evidentiam huius quaestionis et sequentium scire operat quid proprie sit passio. Sciendo est igitur quod nomen passionis dupliciter sumitur: communiter et proprie. Communiter quidem dicitur passio receptus aliquis quomque modo et hoc sequendo significationem vocabuli, nam passio dictatur a patin graeco, quo est recipere. Proprie vero dicitur passio secundum quod actio et passio in motu consistunt, prout scilicet aliquid recipitur in patiente per viam motus; et quia omnis motus est inter contraria, operat illud quod recipitur in patiente, esse contrarium aliqui quod a patiente abicitur. Secundum hoc autem quod recipitur in paciente, patienti agenti assimilatur; et exinde est quod proprie accepta passio, agentes contrariatur patienti, et omnis passio abicit a substantia. Huiusmodi autem passio non est nisi secundum motum alterationis, nam in motu locali non recipitur aliquid in mobili, sed ipsum mobile recipit in aliquo loco. In motu autem augmenti et decrementi recipitur vel abicitur non forma sed aliquid substantiale, utpote alimento, ad eius additionem vel subtractionem sequitur quantitatis magnitudo vel parvitas. In generatione autem et corruptione non est motus nec contrarietas, nisi ratione alterationis praecedentis. Et sic secundum solam alterationem est propria passio secundum quam una forma contraria recipitur et alia expellitur. Quia ergo passio proprie accepta est cum quadam abiectione, prout patiens a pristina qualitate transmutatur in contrarium, ampliatur nomen passionis secundum usum loquentium, ut qualitercumque aliquid impeditur ab eo quod sibi competebat, patiT dicitur; sicut si dicamus grave pati ex hoc quod prohibetur ne deorsum moveretur, et honem pati si prohibeatur suam facere voluntatem. Passio igitur primo modo accepta inventur et in anima et in qualibet creatura, eo quod omnis creatura habet aliquid potentialitatibus admixtum ratione cuius omnis creatura subsistens est aliquis receptiva. Passio vero secundo modo accepta non inventur nisi ubi est motus et contrarietas. Motus autem non inventur nisi in corporeibus, et contrarietas formarum vel qualitatem in solis generalibus et corruptibilibus, unde sola huiusmodi proprie hoc modo pati possunt. Unde anima, cum sit incorporea, hoc modo pati non potest; eti enim aliquid recipiat, non tamam hoc fit per transmutationem a contrario in contrarium, sed per simplicem agentis influxum sicut aer illuminatur a sole. Tertio vero modo quo nomen passionis transumptive sumitur, anima potest pati eo modo quo eius operation operat impedire.”


215 De ver. 8, 6. Leon. p. 238. “Dicendum quod duplex est actio: una quae procedit ab agente in rem exteriorem quam transmutat, et haec est sicut illuminare, quae etiam proprie actio nominatur; alia vero actio est quae non procedit in rem exteriorem sed stat in ipso agente ut perfecto ipsius, et haec proprie dicitur operatio, et haec est sicut lucere. Hae autem duae actiones in hoc conveniunt quod utraque non progressit nisi ab existente in actu secundum quod est actu; unde corpus non lucet nisi secundum quod habet lucem in actu, et similiter non illuminat. Actio autem appetitus et sensus et intellectus non est sicut actio progradient in materia exteriore sed sicut actio consists in ipso agent ut perfectio eius; et ideo oportet quidem quod intelligens secundum quod intelligit sit actu, non autem oportet quod in intelligendo intelligens sit ut agens et intellectum ut passum, sed intelligens et intellectum, prout ex eis est effectum unum quid quod est intellectus in actu, sunt unum principium huius actus quod est intelligibile; et dico ex eis efficac unum quid, in quantum intellectum coniungitur intelligenti sive per essentiam suam sive per similitudinem.” See Chapter One, pp. 44-45 above and In I Sent. d. 40, q. 1, a. 1 ad 1. Mandonnet p. 942.
to the cognitive act. On the other hand, after identifying sensation and intellection as operations, he shows a difference between their operation and the actions of physical things.

And therefore it is indeed necessary that, in so far as it understands, the intellect is in act. It is not necessary, however, that in understanding the understander be like an agent and the understood like a patient. But understander and understood, in so far as from them one thing is effected which is the intellect in act, are one principle of this act, which is to understand. And I say one thing is effected from them in so far as the understood is joined to the understander either through its essence or through a similitude.

The identity or unity that is found in knowledge is a unity of act. It is a union of knower and known in so far as both act as one principle in an action that is not transitive but that is rather an operation or perfection of the knower. This operation is completed by means of a form, which is either a species or the essence of the thing known.218 As the principle of the act of knowledge, a species belongs both to the thing known, which it represents, and to the knower, from whom and in whom it has its being.

In the second part of the reply to De veritate 8, 6, Thomas again focuses on the notions of agent and patient and of act and passion.219 A knower can be considered as an agent or patient only accidently in so far as the union of the intelligible to the intellect requires action or passion. Action is required “in so far as the agent intellect makes species to be intelligible in act.” Passion is required “in so far as the possible intellect receives intelligible species.” Thomas concludes that “what it is to understand follows on this passion or action like an effect on a cause.”

Here Thomas seems to distinguish between what is involved in coming to knowledge and the act of understanding or of sensing itself. In the act of understanding there is not passion but rather perfection nor is there properly speaking action or agency but rather operation. However, in coming to know there is reception or passion in its general sense and there is agency in so far as the agent intellect makes species actually intelligible. The operation which is “to understand” follows on these two. By way of example, he says that “just as a lucid body shines when light is actually in it, so the intellect understands everything which is actually intelligible in it.”

In other words, the intellect in its operation is perfected by a species by means of which the intellect and the understood are one in act. Although the species does, in one aspect of its being, determine the intellect to knowledge of some particular thing, its first act is to perfect the intellect in its operation.

The understood is not the perfection of the understander according to that thing which is known for that thing is outside the knower but according to the similitude of the thing by which it knows because perfection is in the perfected. The stone, indeed, is not in the soul but the similitude of the stone.

216 See De ver. 2, 3. Leon. p. 51. “Sed oportet videre ulteriorius per quem modum creaturas cognoscit. Scientium est igitur quod cum omne agens agat in quantum est in actu, oportet quod illud quod per agentem efficitur aliquo modo sit in agente, et inde est quod omne agens agit sibi simile; omne autem quod est in alto est in eo per modum recipiens; unde si principium activum sit materiale effectus eius est in eo quasi materialiter quia velut in virtute quadrat materiali, si autem sit immateriale activum principium etiam effectus eius in eo immaterialiter erit.” See also De ver. 2, 6. Leon. p. 65. “Dicendum quod quaelibet actio sequitur condiconem formae agentis quae est principium actionis, sicut calefactio mensuratur secundum modum caloris; similitudo autem cogniti qua informatur potentia cognoscitiva est principium cognitionis secundum actum, sicut calor calefactionis, et ideo oportet ut quaelibet cognitio sit secundum modum formae quae est in cognoscente.”

217 De ver. 6, 6 above. “... et ideo oportet...” For a discussion of knowledge in which the essence of the thing known takes the role of the intermediary form see the section “Limited Being Knowing the Unlimited” below. Instances of this are God knowing himself, angels knowing themselves, beatific vision, and to some extent a human being’s knowledge of its own soul and of its intellectual habits.

218 De ver. 8, 6. Leon. p. 238. “Unde intelligens non se habet ut agens vel ut patiens nisi per accidens, in quantum scilicet ad hoc quod intelligibile uniatur intellectui requiritur aliqua actio vel passio: actio quidem,
This second section of 8, 6, has also raised the issue of causality in knowledge which seemed to be little used in the *Sentences*. Passages from other questions give more detail. In general, things are the cause of knowledge except in practical knowledge where knowledge is the cause of things.\(^{227}\) As Thomas says, “Forms which are in the speculative intellect come to be in us in a certain way through the action of the things themselves.”\(^{222}\) Such causality is necessary if knowledge is to be of things, and it plays a part in Thomas’s claim that knowledge is of things.

In sense knowledge this causality is somewhat direct. Sensation takes place only in the presence of a material object; and the sensible species, although received immaterially, still has the conditions of matter. Intellectual knowledge is more complex. It is mediated by phantasms, and its objects are truly immaterial. In this reception, says Thomas, “the phantasms serve as instrumental or secondary agent (cause), but the agent intellect as the principal and primary agent.”\(^{254}\) He adds that the effect of this action in the possible intellect is conditioned by both causes. From the side of the agent intellect, forms are actually intelligible. From the side of the phantasm they are “likenesses of determined things.”

In the third section of question 8, article 6, Thomas discusses grades of act and potency. Something can be in act in one respect and in potency in another. One being, namely God, is only actual. Another, prime matter, is purely potential. Everything else is somewhere in between. The same applies in the genus of intelligible beings. God always understands; the human possible intellect is purely potential to intelligibles.

This section is the theoretical basis for the argument of the next section, but it also shifts the tool of analysis of knowledge from the categories of real being to act and potency, which as principles of being divide all created being. The move is significant for the issues that we have been dealing with.

In the final section Thomas uses the foregoing discussion to show why intelligible (or sensible) species are necessary.

Therefore, just as prime matter is not able to perform any action unless perfected by form—and then that action is a certain emanation more of the form itself than of matter—, and since things existing in act can perform actions in so far as they are in act, so our possible intellect can know nothing before it is perfected by an intelligible phantasmata ut agens instrumentale vel secundarium, intellectus vero agens ut agens principale et primum; et ide effectus actionis reliquinquit in intellectu possibili secundum conditionem utriusque et non secundum conditionem alterius tantum; et ide intellectus possibilis recipit formas ut intelligibilis acta ex virtute intellectus agenti, sed ut similitudines determinatarum rerum ex cognitione phantasmatum, et sic formae intelligibiles in actu non sunt per se existentes neque in phantasia neque in intellectu agente, sed solum in intellectu possibili.” “Utrum mens humana cognitionem accipiat a sensibilibus.”\(^{225}\)

---

\(^{221}\) In human knowledge, even knowledge of singular things is dependent on the effect of the thing because the human artificer has not designed the matter but only the form of the thing. See *De ver.* 8, 7. p. 242.

\(^{222}\) *De ver.* 8, 11. Leon. p. 256. “Et ideo quarto modo probabilibus dicitur quod formae quae sunt in intellectu angeli, sunt efficaces ad causandum cognitionem non solum universalium sed etiam particularium, nulla applicatione praesupposita, quamvis non sit ita de formis nostri intellectus quae se habent ad res dupliciter: uno modo ut causae rerum, sicut formae practici intellectus; alio modo ut causatae a rebus, sicut formae intellectus speculativi quo naturalia speculamur. . . . Formae autem quae sunt in intellectu speculativo, siunt in nobis quodam modo ex actione ipsarum rerum.” “Utrum angelus congnoscat singularia.” See also *De ver.* 2, 3 ad 1. Leon. pp. 51-52.

\(^{223}\) *De ver.* 10, 4. Leon. p. 307. “In mente enim accipente scientiam a rebus, formae existunt per quandam actionem rerum in animam; omnis autem actio est per formam; unde formae quae sunt in mente nostra primo et principaliter respicient res extra animam existentes quantum ad formas earum.” “Utrum mens cognoscat res materiales.” In *De ver.* 8, 8. Leon. p. 246. Thomas links the notions of assimilation, likeness and causation. “Dicendum quod omnis cognitio est per assimilacionem; similitudo autem inter aliquas due est secundum conditionem in forma; cum autem unitas effectus unitatem causae demonstre et sic in genere causilibet formae ad unum primum principium illius formae redire oporteat, impossibile est aliquas duo esse ad invicem similia nisi altero duorum modorum; vel ita quod unum sit causa alterius, vel ita quod ambo ab una causa causentur quae eandem formam utrique imprimat.” “Utrum angelus res materiales cognoscat per formas aliquas an per essentiam sui cognoscensit.”

\(^{224}\) *De ver.* 10, 6 ad 7. Leon. p. 314. “Ad septimum dicendum quod in receptione qua intellectus possibilis species rerum accipit a phantasmatisbus, se habent
form in act. For then it understands the thing whose form it is.

**The Conception of the Intellect**

In our treatment of the *Sentences*, apart from theological discussions of the Trinity, we saw only the slightest hint of the need of a concept. It is the intention of this study to avoid detailed discussions of the concept and especially not to become involved in the theology of the Word. However, texts in the *De veritate* call for some recognition of this aspect of Thomas’s thought.

In *De veritate* 3, 2, during a discussion of whether there are many ideas in God, Thomas states that form can be in the intellect in two ways. In the first way, it is the principle of the

226 *De ver. 8, 6. Leon. p. 238*. “Sicut igitur materia prima non potest agere aliquam actionem nisi perficicatur per formam—et tunc actio illa est quaedam emanatio ipsius formae magis quam materiae—, res autem existentes actu possunt agere actiones secundum quod sunt actu, ita intellectus possibilis noster nihil potest intelligere antequam perficicatur forma intelligibilis in actu: tunc enim intelligit rem cuius est illa forma; nec potest se intelligere nisi per formam intelligibilem actu in se existentem. Intellectus vero angelii, quia habet essentiam suam quae est ut actus in genere intelligibilium sibi praesenter, potest intelligere id quod est intelligibile apud ipsum, id est essentiam suam, non per aliquam similitudinem sed per se ipsum.”

227 Thomas uses two words, *conceptus* and *conceptio*. It may be that the terms are often synonymous. However, in the texts we will examine, *conceptio* is used for any product of an act of the intellect. This is certainly far broader than the notion of a concept as the term of an act of simple apprehension. This problem was part of a discussion between Etienne Gilson and L.-M. Régis. See Etienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 2nd edition (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1952), pp. 216-227.

228 See ch. 1, p. 110, n. 155.

229 *De ver. 3, 2. Leon. p. 104*. “Forma enim in intellectu dupliciter esse potest. Uno modo ita quod sit principium actus intelligendi, sicut forma quae est intelligentis in quantum est intelligentis, et haec est similitudo intellecti in ipso; alio modo ita quod sit terminus actus intelligendi, sicut artifix intelligendo excogitat formam domus, et cum illa forma sit excogitata per actum intelligenti et quasi per actum effecta, non potest esse principium actus intelligendi ut sit primum quo intelligatur sed magis se habet ut intellectum quo intelligens aliquid operatur, nihilominus tamen est forma praedicta secundum quo intelligit quia per formam excogitatam artifex intelligit quid operandum sit; sicut etiam in intellectu speculativo videmus quod species qua intellectus informatur ut intelligat actum est primum quo intelligitur, ex hoc autem quod est effectus in actu per talem formam operari iam potest formando quiditates rerum et componendo et diviendo, unde ipsa quiditas formata in intellectu vel etiam compositio et divisio est qu commodum operatum ipsius, act of understanding. This form is the form “which is in the understander in so far as it is understanding and this is the similitude of the thing understood in it.” In the second way, it is the terminus of the act of understanding. Thomas illustrates this from practical knowledge. A craftsman builds a house according to a plan he has thought out. This plan is a product of understanding and hence cannot be its principle. Still it is what is understood and the means by which understanding takes place.

Thomas then applies this to speculative knowledge.

Just as also in the speculative intellect we see that the species by which the intellect is informed in order that it actually understand is the first *quo intelligitur*, nevertheless, because it is brought into act by such a form, it is now able to operate by forming quiddities of things and by composing and dividing. Whence that quiddity formed in the intellect or even composition or division is a certain product of it, through which, nevertheless, the intellect comes into knowledge of an exterior thing and so it is, as it were, a second *quo intelligitur*.

The *quo intelligitur* is the means by which understanding takes place, namely, a species or intentional form. The second *quo intelligitur* which Thomas in other places calls a conception, is the product of various acts of the mind. The intellect does not simply stand in a static kind of union once it is brought into act, but per quod tamen intellectus venit in cognitionem rei exterioris et sic est quasi secundum quo intelligitur.”

230 See *De ver. 2, 1. Leon. pp. 39-40*. See also those texts dealing with the *Verbum* especially *De ver. 4, 1-3. De ver. 4, 2. Leon. pp. 123-124*, is very explicit. “Unde ad huius notitiam sciemendum est quod verbum intellectus nostri, secundum cujus similitudinem loqui possimus de verbo divino, est id ad quod operatio intellectus nostri terminatur, quod est ipsum intellectum, quod dictur conceptio intellectus, sive sit conceptio significabilis per vocem incomplexam ut accidit quando intellectus format quiditates rerum, sive per vocem complexam ut accidit quando intellectus composcit et dividit. Omne autem intellectum in nobis est alicuius realiter progressi in aliter, vel sicut progressumur a principiis conceptionibus, vel sicut conceptiones quiditatum rerum posteriorum quia quiditatis priorum, vel saltem sicut conceptio actualis progresse ad habitualis cognitione, et hoc universaliter verum est de omni quod a nobis intelligitur, sive per essentiam intelligitur siue per similitudinem: ipsa enim conceptio est effectus actus intelligendi, unde etiam quando mens intelligit se ipsam, eius concepto non est ipsa mens sed alicuius expressum a notitia mentis. Ita ergo verbum intellectus in nobis duob habet de sua ratione, scilicet quod est intellectum et quod est ab alio expressum.” “Utrum verbum in divinis dicatur essentialiter vel personaliter tantum.”
rather works with what it knows. Each new understanding is underpinned, according to Thomas, by a species. The formation of quiddities is the apprehension of essences. A phantasm contains only sensible accidents of a known thing, and so the intellect must build its notion from complex information brought to it through abstracted intelligible species. Such a formation is already an articulation because it contains the definition, expressed in terms of genus and difference, of a thing. Composition and division are the formation of positive and negative propositions about things as a result of judgement. As these become more and more numerous and complex, they form the basis of a science. Elsewhere Thomas also speaks of universal conceptions, which serve as first principles of all knowledge and which are immediately known by the agent intellect.

Relation in Knowledge

Thomas discusses relation in De veritate 4, 5, where, while the question is about the relation between God and creatures, he uses knowledge as an illustration of certain relations.

The first distinction that he draws is that when two things relate in such a way that one depends on the other but not vice versa, there is a real relation in one and a relation of reason only in the other. Scientia, therefore, bears a real relation to the knowable, but the knowable has only a relation of reason to knowledge.

He draws a second distinction about names. Some names signify relations themselves, for instance similitudo. Others signify something on which the relation is based. Scientia, then, “implies, for the purpose of signifying, a certain quality upon which a certain relation follows.”

In a third distinction, he says that an absolute thing can relate to different others in different ways. Hence, “scientia is said in so far as it is scientia relatively to the knowable, but in so far as it is a certain accident or form it is referred to the knower.”

231 In De ver. 10, 5 (Leon. p.309) Thomas also describes continuing interaction between the intellect and the internal senses in coming to know singulars. “Sed tamen mens per accidens singularibus se immiscet in quantum continuatuar viribus sensitivis quae circa particularia versantur; quae quidem continuatuar est dupliciter: uno modo in quantum motus sensitivae partis terminatur ad mentem, sicut accidit in motu qui est a rebus ad animam; et sic mens singularis cognoscit per quandam reflexionem, prout scilicet mens cognoscendo objectum suum, quod est aliqua natura universalis, redit in cognitionem sui actus, et ulterior in speciem quae est sui actus principium, et ulterior in phantasma a quo species est abstracta; et sic aliqua cognitionem de singulari accipit. Aito modo secundum quod motus qui est ab anima ad res incipit a mente, et procedit in partem sensitivam prout mens regit inferiores vires, et sic singularibus se immiscet mediante ratione particulari quae est potentia quaedam sensitivae partis componens et dividens intentiones individuales, quae alio nomine dicitur cognitione, et habet determinatum organum in corpore, scilicet medium cellulam capitis: universalem enim sententiam quam mens habet de operabilibus non est possibile applicari ad particularum actum nisi per aliquam potentialiam medium apprehendat et singulare, ut sic fiat quidam syllogismos cuius maior autem singularis quae est apprehensio particularis rationis, conclusio vero electio singularis operis, ut patet per id quod habetur in III De anima [III, 11; 434a16].

232 See, for instance, De ver. 4, 1, where, speaking of language, Thomas distinguishes the vocal or spoken word, an interior word which is the image of the vocal word, and a word of the heart which is conceived by the intellect and uttered but not vocalized yet underlies the interior word.

233 In De ver. 10, 6. Leon. p. 313. “Et sic etiam in lumine intellectus agentis nobis est quodam modo originaliter omnis scientia indita mediastibus universalibus conceptionibus quae statim lumine intellectus agentis cognoscuntur, per quas sicut per universalia principia iudicamus de aliis et ea praecognocimus in ipsus, ut secundum hoc etiam illa opinio veritatem habeat quae ponit nos ea quae addiscimus ante in notitia habuisse.”

234 De ver. 4, 5. Leon. p. 131. “Dicendum quod quandocumque aliqua duo sic se habent ad invicem quod unum dependet ad alterum sed non e converso, in eo quod dependet ab altero est realis relatio, sed in eo ad quod dependet non est relatio nisi rationis tantum, prout scilicet non potest intelligi aliquid referri ad alterum quin conintelligatur etiam respectus oppositus ex parte alterius, ut patet in scientia quae dependet ad scibile sed non e converso: . . .”

235 De ver. 4, 5. Leon. p. 131. “In relativis autem invenimus quod quaedam nomina imponuntur ad significandum respectus ipsos, sicut hoc nomen similitudis, quaedam vero ad significandum aliquid ad quod sequitur respectus, sicut hoc nomen scientia imponitur ad significandum qualitatem quandam quam sequitur quidam respectus.”

236 De ver. 4, 5. Leon. p. 132. “Contingit autem ut aliqua res absoluta ad plura habere possit respectum, et inde est quod nomen illud quod imponitur ad significandum aliquid absolutum ad quod sequitur aliquis respectus, potest ad plura relative dici, secundum quod scientia dicitur in quantum est scientia relative ad scibile, sed in..."
Two short passages from other contexts add further notes. In the first, Thomas points out that human knowledge implies a relation to the object. However, “the act of knowing does not relate to the object as to the cognitive power, for it is concretized in its being by the cognoscitive power but not by the object, because the act is in the power, not in the object.” In the second passage, Thomas says that “the ratio of cause and effect is the ratio of knowledge only in as much as the effect bears some resemblance to its cause and vice versa.”

A very significant discussion about the meaning of *idea* in the context of divine ideas will draw much of this together. In other texts Thomas makes it clear that the word *idea* is from the Greek *eidos* and that it can be translated as either *forma* or *species*. This is important for our study because *eidos* is Aristotle’s preferred term for the form had in knowledge and because it shows that Thomas was alert to the various senses of the words he used and to their origins.

In *De veritate* 3, 3, Thomas quotes Augustine to the effect that properly speaking an *idea* is called a *form* but that if we attend to the thing itself it is a *ratio* or *similitudo*. He goes on to say that some quantum est accidens quoddam vel forma referatur ad scientiam.”

Simon argues that the English word, *idea*, is the best translation of the Latin, *species*. See also Robert Hanna, “How Ideas Became Meanings: Locke and the Foundations of Semantic Theory,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 44 (1991): 775-805. Although he does not examine medieval theories, Hanna expounds Locke’s theory of ideas. They have the “look” of species in Thomas’s theory but of species which have been materialized or de-materialized.

Thomas’s use of terms can now be summarized in the following way. Although *forma* is used generally of all forms, it properly refers to a form which is causal or constitutive of being. A *species* is a form which causes knowledge. It is a form, therefore, which is constitutive of the act of knowing but which also carries the relation of *ratio* or likeness (*similitudo*). *Similitudo* properly means a relationship of likeness although Thomas often uses it synonymously with *species* as a form which causes knowledge. The difference between a *species* and an *idea* is that *idea* carries with it the notion of exemplary cause.

**Knowing as Existing**

Two texts in the *De veritate* describe knowledge in terms of existence (*esse*). In question 2, article 2, Thomas asks, “Does God know or understand himself?” In the first part of the reply he discusses human knowledge as an enrichment of human being. In the second part of the reply, with which we will deal later, he examines the conditions of immateriality necessary for knowledge to take place.

Perfection is found in things in two ways. In the first way a thing has the perfection of its existence, which is defined by its proper species. Among created things, however, this perfection is limited by each specific act of being and appears as imperfect in the light of the totality of creation.

The remedy for this imperfection is the second kind of perfection whereby the perfection of one

being can be found in another. Thomas describes it in this way.

This is the perfection of the knower in so far as it is a knower because something is known by a knower by reason of this that the known itself is in some way in the knower. And therefore III *De anima* says “the soul is in some way all things” since its nature is to know all things. And in this way it is possible that the perfection of the whole universe exists in one thing.

This way of understanding knowledge is humanly and ethically rich, as Thomas goes on to point out. For the philosophers, the ultimate perfection of the soul is to have grasped “the whole order of the universe and its causes.” For the theologian, however, it is the vision of God in whom all is contained.

In the second text, Thomas describes operation, that is, the special kind of act which knowledge is, in terms of being.

No action of a cognitive power can be called transitive (*destilens*) as are the acts of natural powers which go from an agent into a patient, because knowledge does not signify an issue from the knower into the known as is in natural actions but rather it signifies the existence of the known in the knower.

**Habitual Knowledge**

In the discussion of the *Sentences* we touched only briefly on the theme of habitual knowledge. It does, however, play a significant role in Thomas’s theory of knowledge, and it is intricately bound up with the notion of species. We will now examine

et haec est perfectio cognoscens in quantum est cognoscebat quis secundum hoc a cognoscere aliquid cognitionem quo ipsum cognitum est aliquo modo apud cognoscens et ideo in III *De anima* [III.8; 431b21. See also III, 5; 43(ha14) dicitur <<anima esse quodam modo omnia>> quia nata est omnia cognoscere; et secundum hunc modum possibile est ut in una re totius universi perfectio existat; unde haec est ultima perfectio ad quam anima potest pervenire secundum philosophos ut in ea describatur totus ordo universi et causarum eius, in quo etiam finem ultimum hominis posuerunt, quod secundum nos erit in visione Dei quia secundum Gregorium <<quid est quod non videant qui videntem omnia vident!?>>.”

*De ver. 2, 5 ad 15. Leon. p. 64. “Et praeterea nulla actio cognitiva virtutis potest dici desiliiens sicut sunt actu virtutum naturalium qui procedunt ab agente in patientis, quia cognitio non dicit effluxum a cognoscente in cognitum sicut est in actionibus naturalibus sed magis dicit existentiam cogniti in cognoscante.” “Utrum Deus cognoscat singularia.” The word *desiliiens* literally meaning “thrown down” occurs in Thomas’s works only here and in *Qq. disp. de virt.* q. 4, a. 4 ad 2.
habitual knowledge more carefully and in greater detail. The *De veritate* contains several treatments of habitual knowledge, which provide a fairly exhaustive coverage of Thomas’s theory.

In *De veritate* 20, 2, Thomas explains why we need habits and what they are. A habit is something added to a power. Powers require additions in two circumstances. The first is when an activity is beyond the natural capacity of the power as, for instance, it is beyond human capacity to love God with a love of friendship. The habit of charity satisfies this need. The second situation is when powers are directed towards objects that they cannot possess perfectly. For example, sight is directed to colour but it cannot actually possess all colours. It must, therefore, receive the likeness of the colour that it is to see in each instance.

Thomas next distinguishes two ways in which something is received by a power. One way is in the manner of an affection (passio) when what is received does not remain in the recipient but is rather impressed by an agent and passes quickly away in the absence of the agent. The other kind of reception is in the manner of a habit when what is received becomes co-natural to the receiver. Thomas here follows Aristotle, *Categories* 8, in defining habit. He draws also from Book II of the *Nichomachean Ethics*.

And so it is that habit is called by the Philosopher a quality which is moveable with difficulty. Hence, indeed, operations proceeding from habit are pleasurable, readily undertaken and easily performed because they are, in a sense, connatural effects.

Thomas concludes that what is added to a sense power is received as an affection but that the intellect receives in the manner of a habit. This is because the senses follow instinct rather than directing themselves, whereas the intellect directs its own activities. If the intellect is to act spontaneously rather than merely under the impetus of some external influence, it must reside in a state of readiness to act.

In *De veritate* 10, 2, Thomas sets out to determine how habitual knowledge is able to take place. The explanation devolves around species. First, he explains Avicenna’s position and rejects it. Then he gives his own position.

According to Thomas, Avicenna had held that species are not retained in the intellect but are stored only in the imagination and memory. Species remain in the intellect only while they are actually under consideration. In order for the intellect to understand something that it has already known, a fresh intellegible species must flow from the agent intellect into the possible intellect. But this does not mean that new consideration implies relearning and rediscovering something that was once known. According to Avicenna, “a certain aptitude is left [in the knower] by which he more easily turns to the agent intellect in order to receive species flowing from it than he had done...

247 *De ver.* 10, 2, “Utrum in mente sit memoria”; *De ver.* 10, 8, “Utrum mens se ipsam per essentiam cognoscat aut per aliquam speciem”; *De ver.* 10, 9, “Utrum mens nostra cognoscat habitus in anima existentes per essentiam suam vel per aliquam similitudinem”; *De ver.* 20, 2, “Utrum anima Christi videat Verbum per aliquem habitum.”

248 *De ver.* 20, 2. Leon. p. 575. “Dicendum quod ad huius quaestonis evidentiam oportet scire quid est habitus et ad quid habitibus indigemus. Quantum igitur in primo aspectu appetit habitus significare videtur aliquid potentiae superadditum quo perfectitur ad suam operationem. Indiget autem aliqua potentia aliquo superadditio duplici ratione, et propter condicionem naturae et propter rationem ipsius potentiae; nec immerso, cum actio quae a potentia procedit, a natura etiam dependeat quae est potentiae origo. Ex parte quidem naturae indiget potentia aliquo superadditio ad operandum, quando scilicet operatio talis est quae facultatem et condicionem naturae excedit; sicut condicionem naturae humanae excedit ut ad Deum quasi sociali amore afficiatur, quasi hereditatis eius consors, unde ad hanc operationem indiget affectiva nostra potentia habitus cariatis. Ex parte autem potentiae, quando potentia est ad talia objecta ordinata quorum nullatenus ex se ipsa potest perfecte actu habere, sicut potentia visiva est ordinata ad cognoscendum omnes colores; non fuit autem possibile ut essent in organo visivo omnes colores in actu, et idem aliter est ordinatum, ut scilicet potentiae visiveae possit superaddiri similitudine cuitiibet coloris, et sic in actu progradiatur visio.”

249 *De ver.* 20, 2. Leon. p. 575. “Sciendum tamen est quod illud quod additur potentiae quandoque recipitur in ea per modum habitus quandoque autem per modum passionis. Per modum passionis quando recipit non immanet recipienti, neque efficitur qualitas eius sed quasi quodam contactu ab aliquo agente immutatur et subito transit, sicut dicit Philosophus in Praedicamentis ruborem passionem et non passibilem qualitatem quando quis propter verecundiam in ruborem subito immutat. Tunc vero recipitur per modum habitus quando illud recipit et efficit quasi connaturale recipi; et inde est quod habitus a Philosopho dictur qualitas difficile mobilis [*Categories* 8, 9ad]: inde est etiam quod operationes ex habitu procedentes delectabiles sunt et in promptu habentur et faciliter excentur, quia sunt quasi connaturales effectae [*Ethics* II, 3 et 4, passim].”

250 *De ver.* 20, 2. Leon. p. 575-576. “Ea igitur quae superadduntur in potentii sensitivis non superadduntur per modum habitus sed per modum passionis; in potentii vero intelligentiae animae per modum habitus, quia sensitiva pars animae agitur in eis quae sunt magis quam agat, intelligentiva autem pars est domina sui actus et ipse competit ei habere promptitudinem ad actus, ut possit operari cum libet.”
previously.” In Avicenna’s view this aptitude is the habit of science.\textsuperscript{251}

Thomas rejects Avicenna’s position on three grounds. First, since the intellect is of a more stable nature than the senses, it will more readily retain species. Second, presumably because it has no content of its own, the agent intellect is equally disposed to communicate all species. Hence any increased aptitude for the reception of species would apply to species of all the sciences and so by learning one science, one would know all sciences. Third, Aristotle himself had called the soul the place of species.\textsuperscript{252}

Thomas concludes with the view of “others”\textsuperscript{253} which he accepts. “Intelligible species remain in the possible intellect after actual consideration, and the orderly arrangement of these

\textsuperscript{251}De ver. 10, 2. Leon. p. 301. “Quomodo autem hoc possit contingere diversimode a diversi ponitur. Avicenna enim in VI De naturalibus [the Leonine editors cite De anima V, cap. 6] ponit quod hoc non contentious—quod anima habitualiter notitiat teneat aliquem rei quam actu non considerat—ex hoc quod aliquae species actu conserventur in parte intellectiva, sed vult quod species actualiter non consideratae non possunt conservari nisi in parte sensitiva, vel quantum ad imaginacionem quae est thersaurus formarum a sensu acceptarum, vel quantum ad memoriam quantum ad intentiones particulares non acceptas a sensibus. In intellectu vero non permanet species nisi quando actu consideratur, post considerationem vero in eo esse desinit; unde quando iterum actu vult considerare aliquud, oportet quod species intelligibiles de novo fluant in intellectum possibilem ab intelligentia agentem; nec tamen sequitur seque quod aliqua species actu scivit, oporteat eum iterum addiscere vel invenire sicut a principio quia relacta est in eo quaedam habilitas per quam faciliter se convertit ad intellectum agentem ut ab eo species effluentia recipiat quam prius; et haec habilitas est habitus scientiae in nobis.”

\textsuperscript{252}De ver. 10, 2. Leon. p. 301. “Sed ista opinio non videtur rationabili: primo quia, cum intellectus possibilis sit stabilioris naturae quam sensus, oportet quod species in eo recepita stabilius recipiatur; unde magis possunt in eo conservari species quam in parte sensitiva. Secundo quia intelligentia agens aequaliter se habet ad influendos species convenientes omnibus scientiis; unde in intellectu possibilis non conservarentur aliquae species sed sola habilitas ad convertendum se ad intellectum agentem, aequaliter remaneret homo habilis ad quodcumque intelligibile, et ita ex hoc quod homo addisceret unam scientiam, non magis sciret illam quam aliis et praeterea hoc videtur espresse contrarium sententiae Philosophi in II De anima III, 4; 429a27] qui commendat antiques de hoc quod posuerunt animam esse locum specierum quantum ad intellectivam partem.”


\textsuperscript{254}See, for instance, De ver. 10, 8 ad cont. 1. Leon. p. 324.

\textsuperscript{255}De ver. 10, 2 ad 4. Leon. p. 302. “Ad quartum dicendum quod in intellectu possibilis differt actu apprehendere et retinere, non ex hoc quod species sit in eo aliquo modo corporaliter, sed intelligibiliter tantum. Nec tamen sequitur quod semper intelligatur secundum illam speciem, sed solum quando intellectus possibilis perfecte fit in actu illius speciei; quandoque vero est imperfecte in actu eius, sicut scilicet quodam modo medio inter purum potentiam et purum actum, et hoc est habituatorial cognoscere, et de hoc modo cognitionis reductur in actu perfectum per voluntatem quae, secundum Anselmum, est motor omnium virtutum.”

\textsuperscript{256}Aristotle, De anima II, 5 (417a21-b1). Hamlyn p. 23.
difference. The first man is in pure potentiality to knowing grammar and will be actualized only “through learning and frequent changes from an opposite disposition.” The second man has simply to move from having grammatical knowledge to exercising it. This is what Thomas calls habitual knowledge. At no stage of the discussion does Aristotle refer to forms or species. He speaks rather of the condition of the knower.

The seventh objection is that, if the intellect retained species, it would, like the angels, be able to turn to them at will without using the imagination. It obviously cannot, says the objection, because a man whose organ of imagination or memory is damaged cannot think.

Thomas replies that in order to know, any power must turn to its object. He quotes Aristotle to the effect that images relate to the intellect in the same way that sensibles relate to the senses and concludes that “however much the intellect has some intelligible species in it, still it never actually considers something according to those species without turning itself to the phantasm.” The human intellect must use phantasms or images irrespective of whether it has a habit or not. On the other hand, phantasms are not the objects of angelic knowledge.

What we have done so far in this section is to provide a straightforward exposition of Thomas’s theory of habits from texts in the De veritate. The theory appears to be dependent mainly on Aristotle, but we note that Thomas’s theory centers on the condition of forms or species whereas Aristotle speaks of states or conditions of the knower. We have seen Thomas’s disagreement with Avicenna who attributed intellectual habits not to forms retained in the intellect but to an aptitude or facility to generate these forms at will from images stored in the bodily imagination. We will now look at two questions which raise some curious issues and where, ultimately, the Augustinian influence on Thomas’s thought becomes more apparent.

In De veritate 10, 9, Thomas asks, “Does our mind know a habit existing in the soul through its

essence or through some similitude?” Most of the response is fairly straightforward. In summary, we must know what a particular habit is before we know whether we have it because we know that we have it from knowing that we are acting according to the habit. Actual knowledge of our habits is gained from seeing the actions that we perform according to those habits and from the consideration of the objects of those actions.

Thomas then considers habitual knowledge of habits.

But with respect to habitual knowledge, habits of the mind are said to be known through their very selves. For what makes something known habitually is that from which some power is caused to proceed into the act of knowledge of the thing that it is said to know habitually. From the very fact, moreover, that habits are in the mind through their essence, the mind is able to proceed to actually perceive the habits in it in so far as through the habits which it has it is able to come forth in an act in which the habits are actually perceived.

Thomas continues that this applies to cognitive but not to affective habits. This is because, unlike the cognitive habit, the affective habit is not the source of knowledge of itself. Both are, of course, the sources of the acts to which they are directed. He concludes in affirming Augustine’s view.

And therefore Augustine said in Confessions X that arts are known through their presence, but affections of the soul are known through certain ideas (notiones).

258 De ver. 10, 2 ad 7. Leon. p. 302. “Ad septimum dicendum quod nulla potentia potest aliquid cognoscere nisi convertendo se ad obiectum suum, sicut visus nihil cognoscit nisi convertendo se ad colorem; unde cum phantasma hoc modo se habeat ad intellectum possibilibus sicut sensibilia ad sensum, ut patet per Philosophum in III De anima [II, 7; 431a14], quatumcumque aliquam speciem intelligibiliem apud se intellectus habeat, numquam tamen actu aliquid considerat secundum illam speciem nisi convertendo se ad phantasma. Et ideo sicut intellectus noster secundum statum viae indiget phantasmatibus ad actu considerandum antequam accipiat habitum, ita et postquam acciperit; secus autem est de angelis quorum intellectus objectum non est phantasma.”


260 De ver. 10, 9. Leon. p. 329. “Sed quantum ad habitualem cognitionem, habitus mentis per se ipso cacognosci dicuntur: illud enim facit habitualiter cognosco aliquid ex quo aliquis efficitur potens progridi in actum cognitionis eius rei quae habitualiter cognoscit; ex hoc autem ipso quod habitus per essentiam suam sunt in mente, mens potest progridi ad actualiter percipiendum habitus in se esse in quantum per habitus quod habet potest prodire in actus in quibus habitus actualiter percipiatur.”

261 De ver. 10, 9. Leon. p. 329. “Sed quantum ad hoc differentia est inter habitus cognitivae partis et affectivae: habitus enim cogitativae partis est princiupium et ipsius actus quo perciptitur habitus, et etiam cognitionis qua percipitur quia ipsa actualis cognitio ex habitu cognitivo procedit; sed habitus affectivae partis est quidem principiup illius actus ex quo potest habitus percipi, non tamen cognitionis qua percipitur. Et sic patet quod habitus cognitivae, ex hoc quod per essentiam suam in
In fact, Thomas has not altered his view on how the habits that we possess are actually known. They are known through the actions of which they are the principles. But he has added this strange sense of habitual knowledge. Intellectual habits are species or arrangements of species residing in the intellect in a state of semi-actuality. They are the source of the actions that actually make them known. But because actual knowledge of the objects of the habit occurs through the actualization of the same species, Thomas sees fit to agree with the Augustinian notion that habits are known through their essences residing in the soul. He covers himself, however, by saying that this knowledge is only habitual, not actual.

In the preceding question, De veritate 10, 8, Thomas had already asked, “Does the mind know itself through its essence or through some species?” Again, the point of the question is whether the medium by which knowledge takes place is the essence of the mind or soul itself, or an intelligible species.

In reply, Thomas distinguishes a twofold knowledge of the soul. The first is knowledge in which the soul knows itself only with respect to what is proper to it. From this kind of knowledge it knows that it exists. The second is knowledge in which the soul is known with respect to what is common to all souls. This is knowledge of soul as such. Without going into details, the second kind of knowledge of the soul takes place ordinarily through species. Thomas divides the first kind further into actual and habitual knowledge. The soul knows itself actually through observing its actions and therefore by means of species. It is habitual knowledge that we are interested in.

Of the soul’s habitual knowledge of itself, Thomas says the following.

But with respect to habitual knowledge, I say that the soul sees itself through its essence. That is, from the fact that its essence is present to itself, it is able to go into the act of knowledge of its very self. Just as someone, because he has the habit of some science, is able from the very presence of the habit to perceive those things which underlie that habit. But in order for the soul to perceive itself to be and to attend to what is enacted in it, no habit is required. For this, the essence of the soul alone, which is present to the mind, is sufficient. For from it the act, in which it actually perceives itself, proceeds.

Apart from being about the soul itself rather than about a habit in the soul, the mechanisms outlined in this text are not very different from those discussed in the last question. It does, however, leave one wondering what a habitual perception might be.

Richard Lambert has written a lengthy analysis of just this passage. He first says what such habitual knowledge is not. It is not scientific understanding but is rather a single perception of existence. Because it is habitual, it does not represent an actual state of awareness. It is not an acquired habit but rather a natural one. Attempting to say what this knowledge is Lambert sees it as grounded in the soul’s identity with itself. The soul satisfies the usual requirements of a medium in knowledge. It is immaterial, present, and proportionate to the knowing power. Because the soul is proximate to itself, it can perceive itself.

Lambert goes on to examine whether this knowledge is really habitual. He decides that it is only analogically habitual but that the analogy is strong. He sees the soul’s presence to itself as guaranteeing “continuity in the actual experience of the soul.” He concludes that “habitual knowledge of the soul may be admitted as ‘knowledge’ if one allows the extension of that term to something less than a fully conscious modification of the soul.” Lambert concludes by showing that reference to this kind of knowledge is almost totally absent from the Thomistic corpus apart from this text.
The Central Problem: How Matter Affects Spirit

The Problem

A survey of the questions, articles, and chapters in Thomas’s works quickly confirms not only that he spent a great deal of time working on questions to do with angelic knowledge but also that, at least up to the Summa Theologiae and Commentary on the De anima, he may have given more attention to angelic knowledge than to human knowledge. In addition, his early discussions directly about human knowledge tend to be of knowledge of the soul after death or of knowledge had by Adam, both of which topics are somewhat specialized.267 On the other hand, we found in the Sentences that most of what Thomas had to say about human knowledge was said under the rubric of knowledge had by God or of God or by angels or by separated souls. At the same time it has to be admitted that, while angelic knowledge may be the highest form of created knowledge, it is human knowledge that we first know and from which we must extrapolate so as to talk about the other.

We see that this is the case in the De veritate. Of the twenty questions broadly dealing with knowledge, two deal with God’s knowledge, two deal with angelic knowledge, two deal with the Word and knowledge had by Christ, one deals with Adam’s knowledge, and one deals with knowledge had by the separated soul. Of the two questions that deal specifically with human knowledge, the first, on “The Mind,” is somewhat unusual in its constitution and contains a number of the questions which deal with strictly theological issues. The second, on “Higher and Lower Reason” quickly moves into questions of sin.

Let us look for a moment at the genre of the De veritate. The precise relationship between an actual disputation and the final written form of a disputed question has not been fully established. P. Mandonnet thought that each article of a written disputed question belonged to a separate oral disputation. Assuming that these were public disputations on days on which university classes were suspended, P. Dondaine put forward the theory that the full questions were the basic unit of the disputation. Otherwise the university would have been constantly involved in disputation and classes would not have met regularly. This position still did not explain the great variation in the numbers of articles in questions.

Bernardo Bázan has put forward a more viable alternative. He claims that there were both public and private disputations. The basic unit of the public disputation was the question, and the basic unit of the private disputation was the article. He further claims that at least the first eight questions of the De veritate were disputed privately in Saint-Jacques because Thomas had not yet been admitted to the Consortium of Masters.

Even with this explanation, questions remain about the composition of the De veritate. Where questions have as few as two articles, question eight on angelic knowledge has the greatest number of articles of any question, seventeen articles. It seems fair to claim, therefore, that angelic knowledge was an issue of great interest and subject to much debate in Thomas’s time. The question is “why?”

One could suggest that the question was of special theological interest. That would be true to an extent and certainly true of divine knowledge but seems hard to maintain to such a degree for angelic knowledge. It is also true that in a metaphysics which posited a strict hierarchy of beings, angels filled an important gap between divine and human being.268 It is our thesis, however, that discussion of angelic knowledge was particularly important as a convenient way in which to deal formally with one of the most difficult issues about knowledge—how material beings affect intellectual substances and powers. Of interest to this study will be the prominence of species in Thomas’s solution to the problem.

The problem is present in human knowledge. How do individual material objects in some way affect an intellect that is a spiritual and immaterial power so as to cause knowledge that is intelligible and universal?269 By shifting the problem to angels or separate substances, the question is put into its most formal case. The complications and complexities of the human soul-body composite are also removed. Further, in harmony with Thomas’s methodology, it allows the paradigm for intellectual knowledge to be established by the beings in the highest genus. Discussion of purely intellectual

267 For discussions of angelic knowledge see In II sent. d. 3, q. 3; De ver. qq. 8-9; SCG II, 96-101; ST I qq. 54-58 For those concerning knowledge had by separated souls see In IV Sent. d. 50; De ver. q. 19 For Adam’s knowledge see In II Sent. d. 20, q. 2, a. 2; De ver. q. 18; ST I q. 94.

268 See Bazán, Les questions disputées, pp. 76-85. See also Weisheipl, Friar Thomas d’Aquino, pp. 123-126.


270 In contemporary and post-Cartesian philosophical discussions this problem is called the mind-body problem. The study of angelic knowledge could easily be seen as a thought-experiment.
substances ought also to highlight the distinction between intelligible substance and intelligible form and between real and intentional being.

That Thomas is concerned with this problem is made clear in *De veritate* 8, 3, where he asks, “Can an angel know God in his essence by means of his own natural powers?” He states the “the divine essence is not the natural intelligible form of the created intellect” and gives these reasons.

Act and potency are always of one genus, so that a potency in the genus of quantity does not relate to act that is in the genus of quality. And so the natural form of a created intellect can be only in that genus in which is the potency of the created intellect. Whence a sensible form, which is of another genus, cannot be the form of it, but only an immaterial form [can], which is of its own genus. Moreover, just as sensible form is below the genus of a created intellective potency, so the divine essence is above it. Consequently, the divine essence is not a form to which the natural faculty of a created intellect reaches.

Thomas has both stated and broadened the issue. If knowledge takes place in a mind and if it is causally linked to what is known, how can knowledge be of things outside the genus of that mind? As we shall see, he will broaden the question again to ask how a separate substance can be affected by something in time? and how can one substance know another?

---

**Limited Being Knowing the Unlimited**

Thomas deals with how created being can most perfectly know God in two articles: *De veritate* 8, 1, where he asks, “Does an angel see God by means of His essence?” and *De veritate* 10, 11, where he asks, “Can the mind in the state of life see God through His essence?” The replies share something in common and the argument of the first actually applies to all intellectual creatures.

But first, in *De veritate* 10, 8, he makes a helpful clarification about what it means to see something by means of its essence (per suam essentiam). He distinguishes two meanings. According to the first, it means to know the essence of a thing rather than simply its accidents. According to the second, the essence of the thing understood rather than a species becomes the actual medium in knowledge. In discussion the knowledge of God had by creatures, Thomas uses the term in both these senses, and this twofold usage is often confusing as, indeed, it was in the *Sentences*. In the text that follows, he seems first to argue for knowledge of God per suam essentiam in the first sense and then to show that such knowledge can occur only in the manner of the second sense.

In *De veritate* 8, 1, Thomas first rejects the opinion of those who say that God cannot be known by means of his essence and provides a

---

271 *De ver. 8, 3.* Leon. p. 225. “Quod quidem lumen si fuerit naturale, ex naturalibus puris intellectus Deum per essentiam videre poterit; sed quod sit naturale est impossibile: semper enim dispositio ultima ad formam et forma sunt unius ordinis in hoc quod, si unum est naturale, et reliquum; essentia autem divina non est naturalis forma intelligibilis intellectus creati. Quod sic patet. Actus enim et potentia semper sunt unius generis, unde potentia in genere quantitatis non respicit actum qui est in genere qualitatis; unde forma naturalis intellectus creati non potest esse nisi sit illius generis in quo est potentia creati intellectus; unde forma sensibilis, quae est alterius generis, non potest esse forma ipsius, sed forma immaterialis tantum quae est generis sui. Sicut autem forma sensibilis est infra genus intelligibiliae potentiae creatae, ita essentia divina est supra ipsum; unde essentia divina non est forma ad quam se extendat naturalis facultas intellectus creati: et ideo lumen illud intelligibile, per quod intellectus creatus fit in ultima dispositione ut coniungatur essentiae divinae ut formae intelligibilis, non est naturale sed supra naturam, et hoc est lumen gloriae de quo Psal. <<In lumine tuo videbimus lumen>>.”

272 See *De ver. 8, 12.*

273 Thomas does, of course, allow other less perfect forms of knowledge of God. See *De ver.* 8, 3 ad 17, Leon. pp. 227-228, where he says that to see God in his essence is natural only to God, to see him in a species is natural to angels, and to see him as if in a mirror through creatures which carry the likeness of their first cause is natural to man.

274 *De ver. 10,* 8, Leon. p. 321. “Dicendum quod, cum quaeritur utrum aliquid per suam essentiam cognoscatur, quaestio ista dupliciter potest intelligi: uno modo ut hoc quod dicitur per essentiam referatur ad ipsum rem cognitam, ut illud intelligatur per essentiam cognoscendi cuius essentia cognoscitur, illud autem non cuius essentia non cognoscitur sed accidetam eius; alicus modo ut referatur ad id quo aliquid cognoscitur, ut sic intelligatur aliquid per suam essentiam cognosci qua ipsa essentia est quo cognoscitur, et hoc modo ad praesens quaeritur utrum anima per suam essentiam intelligat se.”

275 “Utrum mens se ipsum per essentiam cognoscat aut per aliquam speciem.”

276 It should be noted that such knowledge does not imply a complete knowledge of the divine essence because, although that essence is known and is also the quo intelligit, no created intellect has the power to penetrate all that it contains. See *De ver.* 8, 2, Leon. pp. 220-223. “Utrum intellectus angelii vel hominis beati essentiam divinam comprehendat.” See also *De ver.* 8, 4, Leon. pp. 228-234. “Utrum angelus videns Deum per essentiam omnia cognoscat.”
The argument hinges on the notion of beatitude and on the fact that God is the principle and end of every rational creature. It need not detain us.

Next he sets out to show how this can be.

Indeed, in every vision it is necessary to posit something by which the one who sees sees what is seen and this is either the essence of the very thing seen, as when God knows himself, or some likeness of it, as when a man sees a stone. This is so because it is necessary that from the understander and the intelligible in some way in understanding one thing becomes.

He then argues by way of negation and shows that no species can be an adequate medium for knowledge of God’s essence.

For in every cognition that is by means of a likeness, the mode of knowledge is according to the conformity of the likeness to that of which it is a likeness. And I say conformity according to representation, as a species in the soul conforms with the thing that is outside the soul, not according to esse naturale.277

He goes on to show how this mode of knowledge can fail or succeed. As we saw in more detail in the Sentences, likeness may be specific or generic or analogical. His point is that any likeness of God received into the intellect can only represent God, who is above every genus, analogically. Such knowledge would be weaker than even knowledge of an accident and therefore insufficient for ultimate beatitude.

In the final part of the response, Thomas explains how the divine essence can be the medium by which knowledge takes place. “It is not necessary that the divine essence become the form of the intellect itself but that it relate to it as form.”278 This seems to mean that the intellect maintains its own being and that the divine essence is added to it as a further determination. He credits Averroes with the explanation of how this can be. Whenever two things are received in a third, the more perfect relates to the less perfect as form to matter.

In De veritate 10, 11, Thomas shows that human knowledge of God in his essence cannot be had in this life except by extraordinary and divine intervention and with the suspension of the sense faculties. This is possible but highly unusual. Part of his argument adds to the discussion of the last text.

First, he makes it more explicit that, for human beings, species can only be in the intellect if abstracted from phantasms. He does not yet consider that species might be directly infused by God into the intellect as is the case for ordinary angelic knowledge.

Second, he repeats that by means of natural knowledge we cannot see God’s essence, and adds, nor even that of angels. He then answers our question about infused species.

Nevertheless, angels can be seen in their essence by means of some intelligible species different from their essence, but not the divine essence, which exceeds every genus and is outside every genus.

Because of the infinite distance between divine being and created being, only the divine being itself is able to represent itself in any way essentially.

**Angelic Knowledge of Material Beings**

The problem of how a form in one genus can have a causal effect on a form in a higher genus so that the latter knows the former is seen most clearly when one asks how an angel knows singular and material beings. Thomas deals with this issue in two questions. In De veritate 8, 9, he asks, “Are the forms by means of which angels know material things innate or received from things?” In De veritate 8, 11, he asks, “Does an angel know unum in intelligendo, dum intellectus intelligit et essentia per se ipsam intelligitur.”279

276 *De ver.* 8, 1. Leon. p. 217. “In omni siquidem visione oportet ponere aliquid quo videns visum videat; et hoc est vel essentia ipsius visi, sicut cum Deus cognoscit se ipsum, vel aliqua similitudo eius, sicut homo videt lapidem: et hoc ideo quia ex intelligente et intelligibili oportet aliquo modo in intelligendo unum fieri.”

277 *De ver.* 8, 1. Leon. pp. 217-218. “. . . in omni enim cognitione quae est per similitudinem modus cognitionis est secundum convenientiam similitudinis ad id cuius est similitudo; et dico convenientiam secundum repraesentationem, sicut species in anima convenit cum re quae est extra animam, non secundum esse naturale.”

278 *De ver.* 8, 1. Leon. p. 218. “Non autem oportet quod ipsa essentia divina fiat forma intellectus sed quod se habeat ad ipsum ut forma; ut sicut ex forma, quae est pars rei, <et materia> effectur unum ens actu, ita, licet dissimili modo, ex essentia divina et intellectu creato fit unum in intelligendo, dum intellectus intelligit et essentia per se ipsam intelligitur.”

279 *De ver.* 10, 11. Leon. p. 336. “Unde mens nostra naturalia cognitione, quam in statu viae experimur, nec Deum nec angelos per essentiam videre potest; angeli tamen per essentiam videri possunt per aliquas species intelligibilis ab eorum essentia differentes, non autem essentia divina quae omne genus excedit et est extra omne genus: ut sic nulla creatura species inveniri possit sufficienti ad eam repraesentandum. Unde oportet, si Deus per essentiam videri debeat, quod per nullum speciem creatam videatur, sed ipsa eius essentia fiat intelligibilis forma intellectus eum videntis; . . .”
singulars?” An associated and interesting question is *De veritate* 19, 1: “Can the human soul understand after death?” We shall examine each of these discussions in detail.

The solution to each question is bound up with species. Each response follows a similar format. Thomas briefly states his view about whether a particular kind of knowledge takes place or not and then proves his position with a demonstrative argument and sometimes with a statement of faith. Next he conducts a lengthy dialectical discussion in which he sifts the various opinions available to him about how such knowledge could happen and settles on his own account. The variety of opinions and the manner of their rejection is at least as interesting to us as his final opinions and it is these on which we will now concentrate.

In *De veritate* 8, 9. Thomas examines opinions about how forms of material things inform angelic intellects. There are three. The first opinion is that angels receive forms directly from material things. He rejects this on the grounds that, for this to be the case, angels would necessarily have senses, which would make them animals, and that this is contrary to reason and to the authority of the saints. His argument is long. We have already seen the first part in a discussion of human knowledge and will examine the second when we return to the discussion of the same. Briefly, his point is that an intellective power is passive to whatever it receives and that whatever actualizes such a potency must be in the same genus as the power.

The second opinion is “that an angel does not acquire the forms by which it understands by receiving them from things, nor does it understand by means of innate forms but rather that it is in its power to conform its essence to whatever thing is near it. Knowledge of the thing is said to follow from such conformity.” Thomas rejects this position on the grounds that one thing can be conformed to another only if the latter is present in (apud) it. This cannot be by means of the form which is its essence because it has a single *ratio* and so something must be added to the essence, which in turn must have a potency for the reception of such an addition. The potency can only be actuated by a form, which, for the angel, would have to be innate.

Thomas therefore accepts the third opinion “that angels know material things by means of innate forms.” These forms are placed in the angelic intellect at its creation and mirror the eternal archetypes by which the God creates all beings.

A strange consequence of this opinion occurs in the reply to the third objection where it had been objected that an innate species would apply equally to present and to future events and things. Angels do not know the future and hence could not be said to be full of innate forms. Thomas replied that new knowledge takes place when knower and known are assimilated in a new way. In angels this happens when “for the first time the thing known attains to the form which is [already] in the knower.” This is strange and one imagines that

280 *De ver. 8, 9. Leon. p. 250.* “Sed hoc iterum nihil esse videtur: non enim potest aliquid alteri conformari nisi secundum quod forma eius apud ipsum fit; nec potest dici quod ipsa essentia angelii eo faciente fiat forma rei materialis quia essentia eius est semper unius rationis; unde oportet quod illa forma qua se rei conformat, sit addita essentiae et quae fuerit primo in potestate in ipso angelio: non enim conformaret se rei nisi prius conformabili esset. Nihil autem reducturur de potentia in actum nisi per id quod est actum; unde oportet quod angelum praexistere aliquid formas secundum quas esset potens se redurre de potentia conformabilitatis in actum conformacionis, sicut videamus quod imaginatio nostra format novam speciem, ut montis aurei, ex speciebus quas prius apud se habeat, scilicet montis et auri; et similiter intellectus ex formis generis et differentiatae format diffinitionem speciei. Unde oportet redire in hoc quod aliqua formae praexistent in angelo, et has oportet esse vel acceptas a rebus vel innatas.”

281 *De ver. 8, 9. Leon. p. 250.* “Et ideo dicendum videtur secundum quod tertia dicit, quae commune est et verior, quod angelii res materiales per formas innatas cognoscat. Sicut enim ex rationibus aeternis in mente divina existentibus procedunt formae materialiae ad rerum substantiam, ita procedunt in Deo formae rerum omnium in mentes angelicas ad rerum cognitionem, ut sic intellectus angelii nostrum intellectum excedat sicut re formata excedit materiam informem; unde intellectus noster comparatur ‘tabulae in qua nihil est scriptum’, intellectus autem angelii tabulae depictae vel speculou in quo rerum rationes resplendent.’” This third opinion is found in Albert, *Super Sent.* II d. 2, a. 15, and *Bonaventure Super Sent.* II d. 3, p. II, a. 2, q. 1.

282 *De ver. 8, 9 ad 3. Leon. p. 248, 251.* Objection: “Praeterea, species innatae angelis aequaliter se habent...”
since this assimilation is not caused by the thing, the species themselves must "time" the appropriate moment for their becoming available.

In *De veritate* 8, 11, Thomas examines four opinions which attempt to account for the way in which angels can know singular things. The problem is, of course, that singularity comes through individuation by matter, which is not intelligible being and so is not directly knowable by an intellect.

The first opinion is that angels "know singulars by abstracting species of singulars from them." Thomas rejects this as "altogether irrational" because angels do not receive from things and because, even if they did, the species would be received immaterially and hence universally.

The second opinion, proposed by Avicenna, is that angels know singulars universally by knowing the universal causes of things and hence all the particular and individual effects of those causes. Avicenna’s example is advance knowledge of an eclipse had by an astronomer who has calculated the movements of the sun and the moon. Thomas rejects this as insufficient for guardian angels who must dispense care and so know singulars in their singularity.

The third opinion is that angels possess universal forms that they can apply to individual things. Thomas rejects this view because the very application of universal forms to singulars would demand previous knowledge of singulars, which is itself the matter at stake.

Thomas therefore accepts the fourth position that the forms that angels possess enable knowledge both of universals and of particulars. We examined how this can be in the chapter on the *Sentences*. The species that angels have come directly from God and mirror the ideas or archetypes by which God has created all beings. These are creative forms of both matter and form and so enable knowledge of both.

In *De veritate* 19, 1, Thomas seeks to determine how a human soul separated from its body in death can know. The problem is that, in this life, the intellect understands only by turning to phantasms in the imagination. A separated soul is without these. He examines five opinions.

According to the first opinion, the soul will know then as it does now by receiving species from things but without having to go through the senses. Thomas rejects this because “passage from one extreme to the other does not happen unless through a medium.” Species in sensible things have greatest materiality, whereas species in the intellect are most highly spiritual. The path from one to the other must be through middle grades of spirituality such as are found in species in the senses and in the imagination.

The second opinion is that after death the soul understands by means of species that were received through the senses and retained. Thomas immediately entertains an objection by Avicenna, which is a little difficult to decipher in the text but which seems to be that species are retained only in the memory and imagination and that the intellect is activated only when a species in a sense or in the imagination is actually apprehended. This would agree with Avicenna’s position that the agent intellect is separate and one in all men. Thomas’s answer is that the intellect is more stable than the


288 *De ver.* 8, 11. Leon. p. 256. “Et ideo quarto modo . . . non sint rerum factivae.” This opinion is found in the *Liber de causis* VII and Proclus, *The Elements of Theology* CLXXIV as sources for this opinion.

289 *De ver.* 19, 1. Leon. p. 564. “Quidam igitur dicunt quod sicut nunc a sensibilibus debus species accipit mediabantus sensibus, ita tunc accipere poterit nullo sensu interveniente. Sed hoc videtur impossibile, quia ab extremo in extremum non fit transitus nisi per media; species autem in ipsa re sensibili habet esse maxime materiale, in intellectu autem summe spirituale, unde oporet quod in hanc spiritualitatem transeat mediabantus quibusdam gradibus, utpote quod in sensu habet spiritualitatis esse quam in re sensibili, in imaginatione autem aduc spiritualem quum in sensu, et sic deinceps ascendendo.” This opinion is found in Bonaventure, *Super Sent.* IV d. 50, p. II, a. 1, q. 1.
imagination and so holds its species even more securely. Species are held in the intellect habitually—midway between act and potency—as, according to Aristotle, the soul is the place of species. Thomas concurs with this opinion but finds it inadequate to explain how the souls of infants who die know and how the soul is to know things it can learn only after death.

The third opinion, which we have seen in respect of angels, is “that while the separated soul does not receive from things, it has, nevertheless, the power to conform itself to knowing things in the presence of those things, in much the same way that the imagination by itself composes some forms which it has never received from sense.” Thomas rejects this because our soul is in potency to the likeness of things and can only be actualized by something which has those likenesses or by the divine essence. What the imagination does, for instance, in knowing a gold mountain, is to recombine forms which it has already received.

The fourth opinion is that forms were imprinted on the soul by God at its creation. During this life they are obscured by the body so that the soul must be roused by the senses to look at its species. Thomas rejects this view on the basis that someone who lacks a particular sense never learns about the object of that sense. He also rejects an extension of the view, namely, that during this life, the forms in the soul are completely obscured. His reason it that “the conjunction of the body to the soul is not accidental to the soul but natural.” Where two things are joined naturally, one does not impede the other.

The final opinion is Thomas’s own, the detail of which we will reserve for future discussion. His conclusion, however, is interesting. The separated soul understands in three ways: by means of species it received while in the body, by means of species infused into it by God at the moment of death, and by seeing separate substances and with their concurrence knowing what is in them.

What is of interest in these three questions and in the previous section is the broad range of possibilities considered by Thomas when grappling with issues having to do with the relationship between spiritual and material beings in knowledge. How does knowledge, which involves action and potentiality, take place across genera? By situating the discussion among angels, separated souls and even divine being, Thomas is able to experiment with a wide range of solutions to the question and, indeed, to espouse different solutions for different grades of being.

The opinions with which Thomas engaged had generally been held by someone, though mostly by the quidam, those philosophers and theologians of his own time and earlier who did not merit the status of being authorities. As we have noted, his arguments seek solutions not concerning whether but concerning how the various kinds of knowledge take place. They are dialectical but bounded on the one hand by the fact of the particular kind of knowledge and on the other by a set of principles which apply analogically to knowledge at all levels—animal, human, angelic, divine. Briefly, those principles

Aristotle who says that the human intellect is like a tablet on which nothing has been written.

The final opinion is Thomas’s own, the detail of which we will reserve for future discussion. His conclusion, however, is interesting. The separated soul understands in three ways: by means of species it received while in the body, by means of species infused into it by God at the moment of death, and by seeing separate substances and with their concurrence knowing what is in them.

What is of interest in these three questions and in the previous section is the broad range of possibilities considered by Thomas when grappling with issues having to do with the relationship between spiritual and material beings in knowledge. How does knowledge, which involves action and potentiality, take place across genera? By situating the discussion among angels, separated souls and even divine being, Thomas is able to experiment with a wide range of solutions to the question and, indeed, to espouse different solutions for different grades of being. The opinions with which Thomas engaged had generally been held by someone, though mostly by the quidam, those philosophers and theologians of his own time and earlier who did not merit the status of being authorities. As we have noted, his arguments seek solutions not concerning whether but concerning how the various kinds of knowledge take place. They are dialectical but bounded on the one hand by the fact of the particular kind of knowledge and on the other by a set of principles which apply analogically to knowledge at all levels—animal, human, angelic, divine. Briefly, those principles

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 71
are that knowing is an act in which the knower and the known become one; the power receiving form, the form actualizing the power, and the act itself are, except in God, other than the essence of the knower; and an act and its potency belong to the same genus. The discussions of species have to do with how knowledge takes place.

Angel Knowledge of Other Angels

In De veritate 8, 7, Thomas asks, “Does one angel understand another?” The response is interesting on a number of counts. First, the question itself concerns objects of knowledge that are not material and hence are intelligible but that are substantial and therefore individual. Angels are also all within the one genus, although, for Thomas, each belongs to its own species. Second, as before, the answer, in the affirmative, is quickly established and the bulk of the question consists in a dialectical discussion about how such knowledge takes place. But this dialectic is far more complex than those of the last considered questions and involves the harmonization of a number of opinions. Third, the sources of these opinions are authorities—Averroes, Avicenna, Dionysius, the author of the Liber de causis, and Augustine—whom Thomas manages to reconcile to a degree despite their great differences. The question also plays up the very strong influence of the Pseudo-Dionysius in Thomas’s angelology. Finally, Thomas’s conclusion itself ends up being somewhat prosaic, especially in the light of the opinions he has examined.

Thomas begins with Averroes’s view that “in substances separated from matter, the form that is in the intellect does not differ from a form that is outside the intellect.” To this he adds, from Dionysius, that angels are both substances and immaterial forms so as to suggest that one angel knows another by means of a form which “is the same as its essence by which it subsists in itself.”

Because the essence of the angel which is understood is intelligible and without matter it is both the object of knowledge and the medium by which knowledge takes place.

Thomas rejects this position in two movements. In the first he denies that it could apply to higher intelligences knowing lower intelligences. The form received in knowledge perfects an intellect and so is more noble than that intellect. A lower angel could not perfect a higher one. This, he says, concurs with Aristotle’s view that God cannot know anything outside himself since it would come to him as a perfection and be more noble than him.

In the second movement of this rejection, Thomas first entertains the possibility that lower angels might know higher by means of their essences and quotes Dionysius to the effect that higher angels, called intelligible, are food for lower angels, called intellectual. But he rejects this “because the form by which the intellect understands, is necessarily inside the intellect which actually understands; whence it cannot be extra intellectum. Quod enim apud nos forma domus quae est in mente artificis, sit aliud a forma domus quae est extra, procedit ex hoc quod forma exterior est in materia, forma autem artis est sine materia. Et secundum hoc, cum angeli sint substantiae et formae immateriales, ut Dionysius dicit, videtur sequi quod forma qua unus angelus intelligitur ab alio, sit idem quod essentia eius qua in se subsistit.”


There seems to be a flaw in Thomas’s argument. If in the superior angel its essence and its intellect are distinct, why should the essence of an inferior angel be necessarily less perfect than an accidental power of the higher angel. And would not knowledge of an added part of the totality of creation be perfecting as Thomas has claimed in De ver. 2, 2.

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 72
said about any separate substance other than God that it is seen through its essence by another. 303

Finally, Thomas quotes Averroes, the author of the Liber de causis, and Avicenna as being in agreement with him. Further he reconciles the statements of Averroes and Dionysius quoted in the first opinion with this view. 304 Averroes, he says, meant that, when a separate substance knows itself, the form in the intellect is not other than the substantial form by which it exists. He takes Dionysius to have meant that the same angel is both intelligible and intellectual and that higher angels are food for lower angels only in the sense that they can give light to the lower.

The second major opinion which Thomas examines is that an angel uses its own essence as a medium by which to understand other angels. He quotes Augustine and the Liber de causis in support. He rejects this view because “since every cognition is by means of assimilation, an angel cannot know another angel by means of his own essence more than to the extent that his essence is similar [to that of the other angel].” 305 Such similarity extends only to common nature and so any knowledge had by means of it would be incomplete.

Next, considering that angels are each of a different species, Thomas asks whether one could know another by knowing its own intellectual nature and adding and subtracting grades of perfection? He considers whether this conceptio might be an adequate medium of knowledge and whether it might also save the opinion of those who say that angels acquire the forms by which they know.

But he finds that this solution is also insufficient. “In an angel of any species, what belongs to it from the ratio of its species will be other than what belongs to it in so far as it is a certain individual, such as its particular operations.” 307 To properly know an angel would require knowledge of each of its own particular activities.

Thomas concludes that angels know one another in just the same way that they know other things——by means of innate forms imprinted by God at their creation.

Two important issues have operated in the background of this question. First, angels are individual substances each with its own integrity. While both intellectual and intelligible, because they are subsistent, their forms are incommunicable. 309 Only God can be known in such a way that his essence is the medium in knowledge, and that is in virtue of his being the creator. Second, in every being other than God, substance and operation are really distinct. The first perfection of a substance is its being. Subsequent perfections come by way of second act, that is, by the operation of potencies and powers which are proper accidents of substances. 310

303 De ver. 8, 7. Leon. p.242. “Forma autem qua intellectus intelligit, oportet quod sit intra intellectum intelligentem in actu; unde non potest dici de aliqua substantia spirituali quod per essentiam suam ab alio videatur, nisi de solo Deo.”

304 De ver. 8, 7. Leon. p.242-243. “Quod vero supra inductum est ex verbis Commentatoris in XI Metaphysicae intelligendum est quando aliqua substantia separata a materia intelligenti se ipsam: tunc enim non oportet quod sit aliud forma in intellectu et forma qua res in se subsistit eo quod ipsa forma qua talis res in se subsistit, est intelligibilis in actu propter immunitatem suam a materia. Dionysii etiam verba non sunt secundum hunc intellectum accipienda, sed eodem vocat intelligibiles et intellectuales, vel superiores vocat intelligibiles et inferiorum cibum, in quantum in eorum lumine inferiores intelligunt.”

305 This is hardly a viable interpretation of Averroes for whom there were no intentional species but for whom form simply existed in different ways. See In Metaph. XII, comm. 17 (VIII, 303D); In III De anima comm. 15. Crawford p. 434. See also our own discussion in Chapter One. It should be noted again that for Averroes both the human possible and the human agent intelligences were one for all men and separate from matter.

306 De ver. 8, 7. Leon. p.243. “Sed istud non videtur sufficere: cum enim omnis cognitio sit per assimilationem, angelli per essentiam suam non potest de alio angello plus cognoscere quam hoc in quo essentiae suae est similis; unus autem angello alteri angello non simulatur nisi in natura communis, et sic sequetur quod unus alium non cognosceret cognitio complete, et praecepit quantum ad illos qui ponunt plures angelos esse unius speciei.”

307 De ver. 8, 7. Leon. p.243. “Sed adhuc etiam hic modus non videtur sufficere: quamvis enim in una specie non siquit unus angelus, tamen in angello alcuuius speciei aliu erit quod ei conveniet ex ratione suae speciei et aliu quod ei conveniet in quantum est quoddam individuum, sicut operationes particularas ipsius, et has secundum modum praedictum alius angelus de eo cognoscere nullatenus posset.”

308 In addition to knowing one another, angels are also able to communicate. See De veritate 9, 1-7, esp. aa. 4-5.

309 See also De veritate 2, 6. Leon. p. 65-66. “... omnis enim forma in quantum huiusmodi universalis est nisi forte sit forma subsistens, quae ex hoc quod subsistit incommunicabilis est.”

310 In some sense, the discussion of the powers or faculties is prior to the discussion of acts in Thomas’s scheme. In ST I q. 75-102, which is Thomas’s only complete and detailed exposition of human nature in his own name, the order of treatment is: the soul, its composition with the body, its powers, acts of intellectual knowledge. This order of treatment is expounded in my M. A. Thesis, “The Identity Between Knower and Known According to Thomas Aquinas” (The Catholic University of America, 1983), pp. 40-61. See also Charles Aloysius Hart, The Thomistic Concept of Mental
Knowledge is an accidental perfection which comes to a created being by way of the addition and assimilation of some form.

The discussion of angelic knowledge both of material being and of other angels has allowed us to see an added dimension of the notion of species. Part of the nature of a species is to straddle genera. It does not necessarily sit in one genus with respect to both its origin and its effect. Thus it is of the nature of a species to be a medium. It is not just something which is a medium but is rather primarily a medium. Perhaps this is one way in which its mode of being is different from that of things.

It has been useful for our purposes to see Thomas grapple with the need for species in a context where there might be other solutions and, indeed, where some of the major authorities had accepted other solutions. That a form is necessary in knowledge is clear. That it is of the nature of a species has come under question. Although Thomas has affirmed that angels know material things and one another by means of species which are in some way analogous to species in human knowledge, this affirmation has come in response to the constraint of other principles and doctrines. Species do not necessarily appear as a solution of first choice.

The Being of the Rational Soul

Whatever the possibilities of angelic knowledge, one must sooner or later come to terms with the realities of the human condition. Thomas always showed a great sensitivity to nature and a firm conviction of its intelligibility. In De veritate 19, 1, in the section which we omitted from an earlier discussion of the question, Thomas situates the human being within the hierarchy of beings.

Being is acquired for the rational soul in a certain middle way between separated forms and material forms. For separated forms, namely angels, receive being (esse) from God neither depending on any matter nor in any matter. But material forms receive being from God both existing in matter and depending on matter, because [they] cannot be conserved without matter. But, in fact, the rational soul acquires being from God, existing indeed in matter in so far as it is the form of the body and because of this united to the body according to its being, not, however, depending on the body, because the being of the soul can be conserved without the body.

Other statements on this theme are familiar to us. The human soul is the lowest in the order of intelligible beings. It is potential in the order of intelligibles in a way similar to that in which prime matter is potential in the order of material things.

On the other hand, in its highest achievement, namely, knowledge of first principles, it reaches the lowest level of angelic knowledge. But even this action is stimulated only by some activity in the senses.

De veritate 19, 1, continues with an analysis of the implications of this state for the kind of knowledge which human beings have.

312 De ver. 19, 1. Leon. p. 565. “Esse autem animae rationali acquiritur quodam modo medio inter formas separatas et formas materiales. Formae enim separatae, scilicet angeli, recipiunt esse a Deo non dependens ab aliqua materia nec in aliqua materia; formae vero materiales esse a Deo accipiunt et in materia existent et a materia dependens, quia sine materia conservari non potest; anima vero rationalis acquirit esse a Deo, in materia quidem existent in quantum est forma corporis, ac per hoc secundum esse corpori unita, non autem a corpore dependens, quia esse animae sine corpore conservari potest.” “Utrum anima post mortem possit intelligere.”


314 De ver. 8, 15. Leon. p. 269. “Sed intellectus noster participans defective lumen intellectualia non est completus respectu omnium cognoscibilium quae naturaliter cognoscere posse sed est perfectibilis, nec potest se in potentia in actum reducere nisi quantum ad aliqua esset eius completa cognitio per naturam; unde oportet quod in intellectu nostro sint quaedam quae intellectus naturaliter cognoscit, scilicet prima principi, quamvis etiam ista cognitione in nobis non determinetur nisi per actionem e homine. Unde sicut intellectus noster se habet ad ista principia, sic se habet angelus ad omnia quae naturaliter cognoscit. Et cum cognitione principiorum in nobis sit altissimum nostrae scientiae, patet quod in supremo nostrae attingimus quodam modo infimum natureae angelicae; ut enim dicit Dionysius VII cap. De divinis nomine <<Divina sapientia fines primorum coniugit principiis secundorum>>. Unde sicut nos sine discursu principi cognoscius simplici intuiti, ita et angeli omnia quae cognoscent; unde et intellectuales dicuntur, et habitus principiorum in nobis dictur intellectus.”

315 The most integral discussion of human knowledge as such in the De veritate is found in q. 10, aa. 4-6. We have treated most parts of these articles in isolation but they are well worth reading as a whole. De ver. 10, 4, “Utrum mens cognoscat res materiales”; De ver. 10, 5, “Utrum mens nostra possit cognoscere materialia singularia”; De ver. 10, 6, “Utrum mens humana cognitionem accipiat a sensibilibus.”
Intellectual light is received in such a way that intellectual knowledge is dependent on bodily powers and receives something from them. On the other hand, intellectual activity is not performed by a corporeal organ. Thus the human soul “by means of the agent intellect can make phantasms which are potentially intelligible actually intelligible and by means of the possible intellect it is able to receive such abstracted intelligible species.”

Thomas draws three conclusions from this. The soul cannot know even those things whose species it contains habitually without turning to phantasms. When God makes revelations to men, he does it by means of phantasms. The soul cannot have full quidditative knowledge of separate substances in this life.

The claim that the soul is immaterial is, of course, for Thomas a central tenet of faith. Philosophically, however, it is justified by the fact that the human being does know universal natures. Such natures can only be known by means of non-individuated and hence immaterial species, which must inhere in an intellect that is independent of matter.

On the other hand, in _De veritate_ 10, 6, Thomas defends the position that human knowledge comes through the senses. He gives three reasons. First, a person lacking a particular sense has no knowledge of the objects of that sense. Second, the mind turns to images even to understand afresh those things that it already knows habitually. Hence, injury to the organ of imagination hinders intellectual thought. Third, to deny the role of the senses is to do away with proximate principles and to make human knowledge directly dependent on separate substances.

Human knowledge is such, then, that action takes place across genera of beings by means of intermediate steps and intermediary forms as found in the senses, in the imagination and finally in the intellect. The principal agent in this process is the agent intellect. Phantasms, being the product of many sensations, are already potentially intelligible. The agent intellect acts to make them actually intelligible. The possible intellect, on the other hand, receives forms already made actual.

---

316 _De ver._ 10, 6. Leon. p. 312. “Sed ista etiam opinio non videtur rationalibilis quia secundum hoc non esset necessaria dependentia inter cognitionem mentis humanae et virtutes sensitivæ, cuius contrarium manifeste apparit tum ex hoc quod deficient sensu deficit scientia de suis sensibilibus, tum etiam ex hoc quod mens nostra non potest actu considerare etiam ea quae habitualiter scit nisi formando aliqua phantasmata, unde et laeso organo phantasiae impeditur consideratio. Et præterea, prædicta positio tollit proxima rerum principia si omnì inferiora ex substantia separata immediate formas consequuntur tam intelligibiles quam sensibiles.” “Utrum mens humana cognitionem accipiat a sensibilibus.”

319 _De ver._ 10, 6. Leon. p. 312-313. “Et ideò præ omniibús prædictis positionibus rationalibilior est sententia Philosophi qui ponit scientiam mentis nostræ partim ab intrínsecō et partim ab extrínsecō esse, non solum a rebus a materia separatis sed etiam ab ipsius sensibilibus. Cum enim mens nostra comparatur ad res sensibiles quae sunt extra animam, inventur se habere ad eas in duplici habitudine: uno modo ut actus ad potentiam, in quantum scilicet res quae sunt extra animam sunt intelligibiles in potentia, ipsa vero mens est intelligibilis in actu, et secundum hoc ponitur in anima intellectus agentis qui faciat intelligibilia in potentia esse intelligibilia in actu; alio modo ut potentia ad actum, prout scilicet in mente nostra formae rerum determinatae sunt in potentia tantum quae in rebus extra animam sunt in actu, et secundum hoc ponitur in anima nostra intellectus possibilis cuius est recipere formas a rebus sensibilibus abstractas, factas intelligibiles in actu per lumen intellectus agentis, quod quidem lumen intellectus agentis in anima procedit sicut a prima origine a substantias separatas et praecipue a Deo.” See also _De ver._ 18, 2.
Esse Immateriale and Similitude

Immateriality

Thomas frequently says that in knowledge forms are received immaterially or spiritually, or according to esse immateriale or esse spiritualiter.

We will consider four arguments, which he uses in the De veritate, for this.

The first argument is fairly brief.

... since knowledge is through assimilation, likeness in natural being (esse naturae) does not produce knowledge but rather impedes it. By reason of this it is necessary that the organs of the senses be denuded from species of sensible things in order that they receive them according to esse spiritualiter, which causes knowledge.

The argument assumes that knowledge is an assimilation and this we have already seen. In assimilation one thing is received or drawn into another so as to become deeply united with it. It is obvious that such an activity could not happen in

320 Thomas mostly uses immaterialiter, spiritualiter, esse immateriale, and esse spiritualiter in opposition to esse materiale or esse naturale. In this section we shall also see esse determinatum, esse proprium, and esse naturae. In the De veritate Thomas uses esse intentionale only once and that in a discussion of appetite. (De ver. 22, 3 ad 4.) He sometimes uses intentio when referring to the usage of Avicenna and Averroes and indicates that it is simply a synonym for species intelligibiles. See, for instance, De ver. 10, 8. Leon. p. 322. "... quod exponens Commentator dicit quod <<intellectus intelligitur per intentionem in eo, sicut alia intelligibilia>>, quae quidem intentio nihil alium est quam species intelligibiles. Sed haec intentio est in intellectu ut intelligibiles actu, in alius autem rebus non, sed ut intelligibilis in potentia." On the infrequency of the term esse intentionale in the whole corpus see Lawrence Dewan, "St. Thomas and the Integration of Knowledge into Being," International Philosophical Quarterly 24 (1984): 383-393. Busa lists only thirteen occurrences of the form intentionale in Thomas’s works. Among these the term esse intentionale occurs eleven times—twice in the Sentences (but in a single objection and then in its reply), once in the De veritate, four times in ST, twice in De sensu and thrice in De anima. On the term intentio in Thomas see H. D. Simonin, “La notion d'intention dans l’œuvre de S. Thomas d’Aquin,” Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques 19 (1930): 445-463. See also André Hayen, L'intentionnel selon Saint Thomas, 2nd edition (Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1954).

De ver. 22, 1 ad 2. Leon. p. 614. “Sed hoc non potest esse verum, quia cum cognitio sit per assimilationem, similitudo in esse naturae non facit cognitionem sed magis impedit; ratione cuius operet organa sensuum a speciebus sensibilium esse denudata ut possint eas recipere secundum esse spiritualiter, quod cognitionem causat.”

321

322 We examined the first part of this article which establishes that knowledge is a perfection in the subsection Knowing as Existing pp. 150-152 above.

323 De ver. 2, 2. Leon. p. 44. “Perfectio autem unius rei in altero esse non potest secundum determinatum esse quod habebat in re illa, et ideo ad hoc quod nata sit esse in re altera operet eam considerari absque his quae nata sunt eam determinare; et quia formae et perfectiones rerum per materiam determinantur inde est quod secundum hoc aliqua res est cognoscibilis secundum quod a materia separatur; unde operet ut et illud in quo suscipitur talis rei perfectio sit immateriale: si enim esset materiale perfectio recepta esset in eo secundum aliquid esse determinatum et ita non esset in eo secundum quod est cognoscibilis, scilicet ut existens perfectio unius est nata esse in altero.”


the manner of natural or material beings. Their very materiality would impede any assimilation other than a mere juxtaposition or mixing. Thomas gives an example from sensation. Sense organs are materially free of the forms of which they are receptive so that they can receive them spiritually or immaterially.

The second argument, in De veritate 2, 2, is based on the notion that knowledge is a perfection. In this article Thomas is seeking to understand what sort of thing can know and what sort of thing can be known in order to answer a question about whether God can know himself. His conclusion is that immateriality is the mark of both knower and known.

He argues this way.

A perfection of one thing cannot be in another according to the determined act of being (determinatum esse) that it was having in that thing. Therefore, in so far as it is designed by nature to be in another thing, it must be considered without those things that are designed by nature to determine it. And because forms and perfections of things are determined by matter, something is knowable in so far as it is separated from matter. Whence it is necessary that even that in which such a perfection of a thing is received is immaterial. For if it were material, the perfection would be received in it according to some determined being and so would not be in it in so far as it is knowable, namely as a perfection existing in one is designed by nature to be in another.

The key notion in the argument is that of determined being (determinatum esse). Deferrari lists as synonyms, esse proprium and esse particulatum, and as antonyms, esse commune and esse universale. In so far as such being is particular, it is individuated being; and being, as the argument indicates, is individuated by matter. In so far as this being is proper, it is really existing in its
proper manner. Below angelic being, such being comes into being by its concretization in matter.

What is shared in knowledge is a form or perfection that naturally belongs to one thing and that is received by another. It may relate to the essence or to accidents of that to which it belongs naturally. Form is constitutive of being. Perfection denotes the completion of second act or operation. The reception is a reception of other as other so that it does not reconstitute the host according to esse determinatum but rather makes it a knower. As the argument has shown, this second kind of action is marked by immateriality—immateriality of the receiver, of what is received, and of the reception itself. In this text, Thomas does not give this kind of action any special name other than immaterial.

Thomas goes on to criticize Empedocles and others who thought that the soul was materially composed of all the things which it knew. “They thought that the perfection of the thing known should be in the knower in so far as it has being determined in proper nature.” He then quotes Averroes to the effect that a form is not in the intellect in the way it is in prime matter but rather immaterially.

Finally Thomas notes two hierarchies. Things that know do so in proportion to their immateriality. Plants and inferior things do not know. “Sense, however, receives certain species without matter but still with the conditions of matter. But the intellect receives species purified from the conditions of matter.”

326 This again touches on the problem of angelic being and knowledge. Angels are immaterial and therefore both cognoscitive and cognoscible. But they are also substances and would seem to have esse determinatum, although not determined by matter.

327 De ver. 2, 2. Leon. p. 44. “Et ideo erraverunt antiqui philosophi qui posuerunt simile simili cognosci, volentes per hoc quod anima quae cognoscit omnia ex omnibus materialiter constitueretur, ut terra terram cognosceret, aqua aquam et sic de aliis: putaverunt enim quod perfectio rei cognitae in cognoscente esse debeat secundum quod habet esse determinatum in propria natura; non autem ita recipitur forma rei cognitae in cognoscente, unde et Commentator dicit in III De anima [comm. 5] quod non idem est modus receptionis quo formae recipiuntur in intellectu possibili et in materia prima quia oportet in intellectu cognoscente recipi aliquid immaterialiter.”

328 De ver. 2, 2. Leon. p. 44-45. “Et ideo videmus quod secundum ordinem immaterialitatis in rebus secundum hoc in eis natura cognitionis inventur: plantae enim et alia quae infra sunt nihil immaterialiter possunt recipere et ideo omni cognitione privantur, ut pater in II De anima; sensus autem recipit quidem species sine materia sed tamen cum conditionibus materialibus; intellectus etiam a conditionibus materialibus species depuratas recipit. Similiter est etiam ordo in cognoscibiliibus: res enim materiales, ut Commentator dicit, non sunt intelligibiles nisi quia nos facimus eas intelligibiles: sunt

hierarchy, things are also knowable in proportion to their immateriality. Material things are intelligible only when made so by the agent intellect. Immaterial substances are intelligible of themselves.

The third argument is from causality. In a discussion about whether God knows singulars, Thomas compares divine knowledge, which causes things, and human knowledge, which is caused by things. He argues in this way.

For that which is in our intellect is received from a thing in so far as the thing acts on our intellect by first acting on a sense. Matter, however, because of the weakness of its being (esse) (for it is a being only in potency), cannot be a principle of acting. And so the thing which acts on our soul acts only through form. Whence the likeness of the thing, which is imprinted on our sense and purified through several grades until it reaches the intellect, is only a likeness of the form.

Because of context, this argument does not reach quite the same conclusion as the last two. Nevertheless, it is an interesting argument for the immateriality of the form which is received. Matter is simply too weak in its being to act on the soul.

A fourth argument is sketched in De veritate 23, 1, where Thomas is investigating whether God has a will or not. He reasons from the kind of relation spiritual beings can have to things. One kind of relation, that of knowledge, is such that things are in the spiritual substance “not indeed according to esse proprium . . . but according to propriam rationem.” He cites, as evidence, Aristotle’s text “for the stone is not in the soul but its species is” and adds “or its ratio.” A thing’s esse proprium is its normal way of being and Thomas again criticizes the ancient philosophers who thought that earth and water were actually in

enim intelligibiles in potentia tantum, sed actu intelligibiles efficiuntur per lumen intellectus agentis sicut et colores actu visibles per lumen solis; sed res immaterialia sunt intelligibiles per se ipsas, unde magis sunt notae secundum naturam quamvis sint minus notae nobis.”

De ver. 2, 5. Leon. p. 63. “Cuius ratio manifeste appareat si consideretur diversa habitudo quam habent ad rem similitudo rei quae est in intellectu nostro et similitudo rei quae est in intellectu divino. Illa enim quae est in intellectu nostro est accepta a re secundum quod res agit in intellectum nostrum agendo per prius in sensum; materia autem propter debilitatem sui esse, quia est in potentia ens tantum, non potest esse principium agendi, et ideo re quae agit in animam nostram agit solum per formam; unde similitudo rei quae imprimitur in sensum nostrum et per quasdam gradus depurata usque ad intellectum pertingit est tantum similitudo formae.”
the soul. A thing’s *proprium rationem* is its proper nature or intelligible character. 329

Thomas goes on to say that the *ratio absoluta* of a thing is found *sine concretione* only in immaterial substances. And so the degree of immateriality of a substance also determines the grade of its knowledge. Knowledge involves, therefore, the inheritance in a substance of the nature of something else considered absolutely and without being mixed. This can happen only immaterially. Thomas identifies the species of Aristotle’s text with this *ratio*.

The arguments for immateriality are fairly clear. It is also clear that Thomas recognizes a number of grades of immateriality. 330 Just what immaterial or spiritual being is is an important question for this study. Further clarity will be added by discussion of the various distinctions made by Thomas about immaterial being.

**Distinctions**

A whole set of distinctions are nested around the notions of *esse immateriale* and *similitudo*. In the *De veritate* these are mostly found in replies to objections and so in greatly varying contexts. Of the texts we shall examine, only two come from the bodies of articles.

The basic distinction is between a species viewed as a form existing in the soul immaterially and a species viewed as a likeness or representation of what is known. This is most clearly put in *De veritate* 3, 1 ad 3.

In knowledge there is a twofold consideration, namely the very nature of knowledge (and this follows the species according to the relationship which it has to the intellect in which it is), and the determination of knowledge to the known (and this follows the relation of the species to the thing itself). Whence, by however much the species is more similar to the thing known in the manner of representation, by that much is knowledge more determined. And by how much more it approaches immateriality, which is the nature of knowledge as such, by so much does it make knowing more efficacious. 331

The text is interesting in that Thomas treats each term of the distinction even-handedly. Elsewhere he will exploit one or other term for his immediate purposes.

In another text, Thomas says that the form in the intellect, or the species, is, on the basis of the first term of the distinction, “of a certain kind” (*alicuius*) because its manner of being follows that in which it is. On the basis of the second term of the distinction the species is “of a certain thing” (*alia*) because, although it represents that thing, it does not share its mode of being. Thomas makes this distinction with respect to the divine ideas so as to allow for their plurality, but it does show the two aspects of a species. 332

The different roles that species play in the respective relationships are stated in *De veritate* 3, 2 ad 3. 333

---

329 *De ver.* 23, 1. Leon. p. 652-653. “Est enim una habitudo spiritualis substantiae ad res secundum quid res quodam modo sunt apud ipsum spiritualem substantiam, non quidem secundum esse proprium ut antiqui ponebat dicentes quod terram terra cognoscam, aqua vero aquam, et sic de alis, sed secundum propriam rationem: <<non enim lapis est in anima sed species lapidis>> sive ratio eius secundum Philosophum in III De anima (III, 8; 431b30).

332 *De ver.* 3, 2 ad 5. Leon. p. 105. “Ad quintum dicendum quod forma quae est in intellectu habet respectum duplicem, unum ad rem cuius est, alium ad id in quo est. Ex primo autem respectu non dicitur aliquis sed alicuius tantum; non enim materialium est forma materialis nec sensibilium sensibilis; sed secundum alium respectum aliquis dicetur quia sequitur modum eius in quo est. Unde ex hoc quod rerum idealitarum quaedam alicuius perfectius essentiam divinam imitantur non sequitur quod idea sint inaequales sed inaequalem.” The question asks whether there are many ideas in God. The objection is that if there were, they would be unequal, and inequality in God cannot be countenanced.


Andrew Murray © *Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known*, Page 78
10. 4.  In so far as the species is a form in the intellect “it causes the knower to actually know.” In so far as the species bears a relation to the things it represents “it determines knowledge to a specific determined knowable.” In other words, the species as a form is responsible for actualizing the intellect so as to bring it to the act of knowing. As a representation it limits that act of knowledge to the specified object which it represents.

This text follows with an important consequence. The form in knowledge is received according to the condition of the knower. That which is known does not, therefore, have to exist in the same manner in which its form exists in the knower as the principle of cognition. This brings us back to the question of immateriality and Thomas concludes that “nothing prevents material things from being known by means of forms that exist immaterially in the mind, albeit in an immaterial mode.”

In the De veritate the distinction between a species as a kind of being and the species as a representation or image occurs mostly in situations that emphasize the representative role of this form. The pivotal text is De veritate 2, 5 ad 17.

Something is known in so far as it is represented in the knower and not in so far as it is existing in the knower. For the similitude existing in the cognitive power is not the principle of knowledge of a thing according to the being (esse) that it has in the cognitive power but according to the relation that it has to the thing known. And hence it is that a thing is known not in the manner in which the similitude of the thing has being in the knower but in the manner in which the similitude existing in the intellect is representative of the thing.

It is notable that, in this text, Thomas says that a species is the principle of knowing of a thing as such, not by reason of the kind of being it exercises but by reason of the relationship it has to what is known. Previously we have seen species regarded as principles of knowing because they are forms which bring the cognitive power to act.

The negative impact of this statement is to down play the importance of the species as a form existing in the soul—in later language, its entitative role. The likeness between the knower and the known is not a likeness of commonness of nature but only a likeness of representation. In the classical example, the form of the stone in the soul is of a greatly different nature from the form in the actual stone but “in so far as it represents it, it is a principle leading to knowledge of it.”

In De veritate 2, 3 ad 9, Thomas says that mutual likeness can be had between two things in two different ways. In the first, it is a likeness in common nature. For example, with respect to human nature, Peter is like John. This, says Thomas, is not necessary for knowledge. The second way is a likeness in representation. This is necessary for knowledge. This, of course, is a

333 De ver. 10, 4. Leon. p. 306. “Dicendum quod omnis cognitio est secundum aliquam formam quae est in cognoscente principium cognitioinis. Forma autem huissmodi dupliciter potest considerari: uno modo secundum esse quod habet in cognoscente, alio modo secundum respectum quem habet ad rem cuius est similitudo. Secundum quidem primum respectum factum cognoscentem actus cognoscer, sed secundum respectum secundum determinat cognitionem ad aliquid cognoscibile determinatum; et ideo modus cognoscendi rem aliquam est secundum condicionem cognoscensis in quo forma recipitur secundum modum eius. Non autem oportet quod res cognita sit secundum modum cognoscentis, vel secundum illum modum quo forma; quae est cognoscendi principium, esse habet in cognoscente; unde nihil prohibet per formas quae in mente immaterialiter existunt res materiales cognosci.”

334 De ver. 2, 5 ad 17. Leon. p. 65. “Ad septimum dicendum quod hoc modo aliquid cognoscitur secundum quod est in cognoscente repraesentaturum et non secundum quod est in cognoscente existens: similitudo enim in vi cognoscitiva existens non est principium cognitionis rei secundum esse quod habet in potentia cognoscitiva sed secundum relationem quam habet ad rem cognitam; et inde est quod non per modum quo similitudo rei habet esse in cognoscente res cognoscitur sed per modum quo similitudo in intellectu existens est repraesentativa rei; et ideo, quamvis similitudo divini intellectus habeat esse immateriale, quia tamen est similitudo materiae et ideo principalium cognoscendi materialia et ita singularia.”

The question is: “Utrum Deus cognoscit singularia,” and the objector claims that because the known is known in the manner in which it is in the knower, God cannot know material things.

335 De ver. 11 ad 3. Leon. pp. 256-257. “Ad tertium dicendum quod inter cognoscens et cognitum non exigitur similitudo quae est secundum convenientiam in natura sed secundum representationem tantum: constat enim quod forma lapidis in anima est longe alterius naturae quam forma lapidis in materia, sed in quantum representationat eam sic est principium duces in cognitionem eius. Unde quamvis formae quae sunt in intellectu angeli sint immaterielles secundum sui naturam, nihil tamen prohibet quis quae in materiae assimiletur rebus non sis secundum formam sed etiam secundum materiam.”

The question is: “Utrum angelus cognoscat singularia.” The objection is that an angel’s intellect cannot be assimilated to matter which is the principle of singularity.

336 De ver. 2, 3 ad 9. Leon. p. 53. “Ad numon dicendum quod similitudo aliquorum duorum ad invicem potest dupliciter attendi: uno modo secundum convenientiam in natura, et talis similitudo non requirit inter cognoscens et cognitum; et ali o modo quantum ad representationem, et haec similitudo requirit cognoscensis ad cognitum. Quamvis igitur sit minima similitudo creaturae ad Deum secundum convenientiam in natura, est tamen maxima similitudo secundum hoc quod expressissime divina essentia reprehensatur creaturam, et ideo intellectus divinum optime rem cognoscit.” We will use the missing section of this text...
more refined argument against the Empedoclean position that like knows like in a material kind of way.

Positively, this mode of the distinction emphasizes that what is of significance if knowledge is to take place is commonness of ratio. The point is difficult but of utmost importance. The species or form which actsuates knowing must display the full intelligibility or nature of that which is known. The act of knowing will be successful to the extent that it does. While an actual species has to be received for knowledge to take place, knowledge is achieved in proportion to the integrity of the relationship that is effected.

This is another way of getting at the notion of the formal. What is conveyed in knowledge is formal because not only does the form that is received not make the recipient become the thing of which it is a form in a real way but also the precise way in which this form does exist (the degree of immateriality, for instance) is irrelevant to the fact of knowledge and to the nature of the determination of knowledge. It is not, of course, irrelevant in other respects. In a sense, we seeing refinements in the notion of form. This is exemplified in two texts.

In the first, Thomas is explaining that and how angels know singulars. The fourth objector has noted that, according to Aristotle, the principle of being and the principle of knowing are the same. The principle, however, of singular being is an individuated form so that, since the angelic intellect receives immaterial forms, it cannot know singulars but only universals. Thomas replies in this way.

It is not necessary that the form which is the principle of being of a thing is the principle of knowing the thing according to its essence, but only according to its likeness. For the form by which the stone is, is not in the soul, but its likeness is. Whence it is not necessary that the form of the intellect of an angel, by which it knows singulars, be individuated, but only that it be the likeness of an individuated form.

Here we see a new formulation of the classic Aristotelian line. It is not only that the stone is not in the soul. Not even the form of the stone is in the soul; only its likeness is.

In the second text, Thomas is arguing that angels can see God by means of his essence. The objection is raised that if the divine essence itself were to be the form by which an angel knew, a union would be effected between the angel and the divine essence. But the divine essence cannot be a constitutive part of anything. Thomas replies as follows.

The form by which an intellect seeing God through his essence sees God is the divine essence itself. Still it does not follow that it is the form that is part of the thing in being, but that in understanding it relates in this way like a form which is part of the thing in being.

principium essendi singulari; ergo ipsa est principium cognoscendi singulare; sed intellectus angelicus accipit sine materia et condicionibus materiae ex quibus formae individuanter; ergo accipit universale tantum et non singulari.” Reply: “Ad quartum dicendum quod non oportet formam quae est principium essendi rem esse, principium cognoscendi rem secundum essentiam suam, sed solum secundum suam similitudinem; forma enim qua lapis est, non est in anima, sed similitudo eius; unde non oportet quod forma intellectus angelici qua singulare cognoscit sit individuata, sed solum qua sit formae individuatae similitudo.”

In quoting Aristotle, De anima III, 8 (431b30), which reads “for it is not the stone which is in the soul, but its form (eidos)” (Hamlyn, p. 65), Thomas is taking some liberty with the text. His more common renditions are “non enim lapis est in anima sed species lapidis” (De ver. 23, 1. Leon. pp. 652-653) or “non enim lapis in oculo sed similitudo lapidis” (De ver. 10, 8 ad cont. 2. Leon. p. 342). But we also find “Sicut enim species lapidis non est in oculo sed similitudo eius” (De ver. 10, 8 ad cont 10. Leon. p. 325) and “species enim lapidis est in anima, autem secundum esse quod habet in lapide)” (De ver. 21, 3. Leon. p. 599). The Arabic-Latin translation reported in Averroes’ Commentary reads “lapis enim non existit in anima, sed forma.” (Crawford p. 503).

shortly. “Utrum Deus cognoscat alia a se.” The objection is that the least possible likeness exists between God and creatures so that there cannot be an assimilation of knower and known.

De ver. 10, 4 ad 4. Leon. p. 308. “Ad quartum dicendum quod, quavis in mente non sinit nisi immaterialia formae, possint tamen esse similitudines materialium rerum: non enim oportet quod eiusmodi hec habeat similitudo et id cuius est similitudo, sed solum quod in ratione conveniant, sicut forma hominis in statua aurea, quael esset habet forma hominis in carne et ossibus.” “Utrum mens cognoscat res materiales.” The objection is that this forms in the intellect can only be immaterial.

De ver. 8, 11 ad 4. Leon. pp. 254, 257. Objection: “Praeterea, omne quod videtur ab intellectu, per aliquam formam videtur: si ergo intellectus angeli videt essentiam divinam, oportet quod per aliquam formam eam videat; sed non potest ipsum videre per ipsum divinam essentiam quia forma qua intellectus intelligit, facit eum intellectum in actu, et sic est actu eius, et sic oportet quod ex ea et intellectu efficatur unum, quod non potest dici de divina essentia quae non potest venire ut pars in constitutionem alia cuius; ergo oportet quod angelus intelligens Deum videat eum mediante aliqua alia forma, et sic non videt eum per essentiam.” Reply: “Ad quintum dicendum quod forma qua intellectus videntis Deum per essentiam videt Deum, est ipsa essentia divina; non tamen sequitur quod sit forma quae est pars rei in essendo, sed quod se habeat hoc modo in intelligiendo sicut forma quae est pars rei in essendo.”
And so not even the highest of forms, the divine essence, which lacks all materiality and potentiality, is able to be the form in knowledge except through the mode of relation. Otherwise the angel would become God in the fullest sense.

These discussions give a sense of how much of the fecundity of Thomas’s theory of knowledge lies on this side of the distinction which recognizes the representative role of the species. On the other side of the distinction, namely, the side that recognizes the species as having being in the soul, lies knowledge as an act which must, according to Thomas’s physics and metaphysics, be actuated by a form which, indeed, the species is. But, as we noted in the discussion of the Sentences, in speaking about the act of knowledge, Thomas’s only tools are the language of the categories and the division of being into act and potency. These were first developed in respect of real being rather than in respect of intentional being and are best suited to real being. His very tools, therefore, tend to sink the discussion back into the heaviness and materiality of real being. In order to avoid this, Thomas uses distinctions and analogical language but the tendency seems to remain.

That there was a problem already for Thomas seems apparent from the De veritate. In the replies to objections he constantly had to defend his claim that what was known was the thing and not the species or idea. Balancing the many times that the distinction under consideration is used to insist that the fact that knowledge is of the thing known depends on the integrity of representation rather than on the kind of being that the species has in the knower, we have found only two instances where the other side of the distinction, namely, the effect of the mode of being of the species on knowledge, has been fully exploited.

Returning to our discussion of the distinction under consideration, we see that it does bring further light to the notion of assimilation. Assimilation is found, not on the side of commonness of nature, but on the side of representation. It carries a meaning very close to its etymological roots—a likening to. As with the ancients, like is known by like, but formally speaking. The notion of likeness becomes extremely flexible. Likeness can be caused directly or through some third party just as a son, who is like his father, who in turn is like the grandfather, is like that grandfather. In another example, Thomas says that we can know Socrates either because our sight is assimilated to Socrates himself or because it is assimilated to an image of Socrates. In either case the assimilation is sufficient for knowledge to take place.

---

342 Thomas seems to show some impatience in De ver. 2, 5 ad 6, Leon. p. 63, where he replies “Ad sextum dicendum quod perfectio cognitionis consistit in hoc ut cognoscatur res esse eo modo quo est, non ut modus rei cognitae sit in cognoscente, sicut saepe supra dictum est.”

343 De ver. 3, 1 ad 2 and De ver. 2, 3 ad 9. We shall examine these texts presently. Of course, the whole development of the theory of knowledge as act is dependent on the notion of the reception of form and of the mode of the reception.

344 De ver. 2, 13 ad 1. Leon. p 89. “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod assimilatio scientiae ad scitum non est secundum conformitatem naturae sed secundum representationem, unde non oportet quod rerum variabilium sit scientia variabilis.” “Utrum scientia Dei sit variabilis.”

345 De ver. 8, 5. Leon. p. 235. “Dicendum quod omnis cognitio est per assimilationem scientis ad scitum. Quicquid autem similatur alioi, secundum hoc quod illud est simile tertio, ipsum etiam est tertio similare; ut si filius similatur patri in hoc quod pater similatus est avo, et filius avo similatur. Dupliciter igitur aliquis aliquo similatur: uno modo ex hoc quod similiter simili sit immediatae ab eo accipit in se, alio modo ex hoc quod assimilatur alioi quod est simile ei; et sic etiam dupliciter fit cognitio: cognoscimus enim per visum Socratem in quantum visus noster assimilatur ipsi Socrati, et etiam in quantum assimilatur imagini Socratis;
What underlies this whole discussion is the nature of image \textit{qua} image. An image can be regarded as a certain thing. In this case, the mind is directed to the image and to that of which it is an image in two separate motions. On the other hand, when an image is regarded simply as an image, the mind is directed to the image and to that of which it is an image in one movement. The mind is able even to think of the thing without reflecting on its image. 

We have been discussing Thomas’s distinction between a species viewed as a certain kind of being and a species viewed as a representation in texts which have emphasised the representative role of the species. Now we will turn briefly to two texts which exploit the side of the distinction which recognizes that a species exhibits a certain kind of being.

In \textit{De veritate} 2, 3 ad 9, which we have already examined in part, Thomas offers a distinction which is not quite that which we have been following. Nevertheless, he shows the consequences of differences in the mode of being of the species or similitude that is in the intellect. When a species is regarded as a certain kind of being, the less it is like that of which it is a likeness, the sharper is the knowledge. By way of example, he explains that the similitude that is a likeness of a stone in the intellect is less like the stone than the similitude of the stone which is in a sense because it is more immaterial. But because of this same immateriality the stone is more penetratingly known by the intellect than by a sense.


\textit{De ver.} 8, 3 ad 18. Leon. p. 228. “Ad nonum dicendum quod imago rei dupliciter potest considerare: uno modo in quantum est res quaedam et cum sit res distincta ab eo cuius est imago, propter modum istum aliquis erit motus virtutis cognitivae in imaginem et in id cuius est imago; alio modo consideratur prout est imago, et sic idem est motus in imaginem et in id cuius est imago. Et sic quando aliquid cognoscitur per similitudinem in effectu suo existentiem, potest motus cognitionis transire ad causam immediate sine hoc quod cogitetur de aliqua alia re; et hoc modo intellectus viatoris potest cogitare de Deo non cogitando de aliqua creatura.” Thomas is arguing against an objection that by thinking about God without reflecting on its being, the less it is like that of which it is a likeness, the sharper is the knowledge. By way of example, he explains that the similitude that is a likeness of a stone in the intellect is less like the stone than the similitude of the stone which is in a sense because it is more immaterial. But because of this same immateriality the stone is more penetratingly known by the intellect than by a sense.

Two things are required of the species which is the medium in knowledge, namely, representation of the thing known which belongs to it according to its closeness to the knowable, and spiritual or immaterial being, which belongs to it in so far as it has being in the knower. Whence something is understood better through a species that is in the intellect than through a species which is in a sense because it is more immaterial. And similarly something is better understood through a species that is in the divine mind than can be known through the very essence of the thing known itself, even given that the essence of a thing could be the medium of knowing despite its materiality.

This is not really very surprising because the two powers have different objects. A sense is directed to sensible quality. The intellect is directed to the essences of things. But what is interesting is that this difference is attributed by Thomas to the mode of being of the species and not to the degree of its representational power. By implication, also, universality in knowledge comes from the mode of being of the species rather than from the manner of determination controlled by the species considered as a representation.

This is why, for Thomas, the different grades of knowledge are essentially different. The species, which are able to actuate those different grades of knowledge, are also quite different. In human intellectual knowledge, the agent intellect must abstract intelligible species from phantasms, which are mere sensible forms. This abstraction is not just an extraction of something that is obscured. The agent intellect acts on phantasms, which are sensible images and intelligible only in potency, and from them makes actually intelligible species. The representative role of species is assured, on the other hand, by the continuity between sense and intellect.

The impact of the mode of the knower on the mode of knowledge is seen in a kind of ultimate sense in divine knowledge.

Two things are required of the species which is the medium in knowledge, namely, representation of the thing known which belongs to it according to its closeness to the knowable, and spiritual or immaterial being, which belongs to it in so far as it has being in the knower. Whence something is understood better through a species that is in the intellect than through a species which is in a sense because it is more immaterial. And similarly something is better understood through a species that is in the divine mind than can be known through the very essence of the thing known itself, even given that the essence of a thing could be the medium of knowing despite its materiality.

This is not really very surprising because the two powers have different objects. A sense is directed to sensible quality. The intellect is directed to the essences of things. But what is interesting is that this difference is attributed by Thomas to the mode of being of the species and not to the degree of its representational power. By implication, also, universality in knowledge comes from the mode of being of the species rather than from the manner of determination controlled by the species considered as a representation.

This is why, for Thomas, the different grades of knowledge are essentially different. The species, which are able to actuate those different grades of knowledge, are also quite different. In human intellectual knowledge, the agent intellect must abstract intelligible species from phantasms, which are mere sensible forms. This abstraction is not just an extraction of something that is obscured. The agent intellect acts on phantasms, which are sensible images and intelligible only in potency, and from them makes actually intelligible species. The representative role of species is assured, on the other hand, by the continuity between sense and intellect.

The impact of the mode of the knower on the mode of knowledge is seen in a kind of ultimate sense in divine knowledge.

Two things are required of the species which is the medium in knowledge, namely, representation of the thing known which belongs to it according to its closeness to the knowable, and spiritual or immaterial being, which belongs to it in so far as it has being in the knower. Whence something is understood better through a species that is in the intellect than through a species which is in a sense because it is more immaterial. And similarly something is better understood through a species that is in the divine mind than can be known through the very essence of the thing known itself, even given that the essence of a thing could be the medium of knowing despite its materiality.

This is not really very surprising because the two powers have different objects. A sense is directed to sensible quality. The intellect is directed to the essences of things. But what is interesting is that this difference is attributed by Thomas to the mode of being of the species and not to the degree of its representational power. By implication, also, universality in knowledge comes from the mode of being of the species rather than from the manner of determination controlled by the species considered as a representation.

This is why, for Thomas, the different grades of knowledge are essentially different. The species, which are able to actuate those different grades of knowledge, are also quite different. In human intellectual knowledge, the agent intellect must abstract intelligible species from phantasms, which are mere sensible forms. This abstraction is not just an extraction of something that is obscured. The agent intellect acts on phantasms, which are sensible images and intelligible only in potency, and from them makes actually intelligible species. The representative role of species is assured, on the other hand, by the continuity between sense and intellect.

The impact of the mode of the knower on the mode of knowledge is seen in a kind of ultimate sense in divine knowledge.

Two things are required of the species which is the medium in knowledge, namely, representation of the thing known which belongs to it according to its closeness to the knowable, and spiritual or immaterial being, which belongs to it in so far as it has being in the knower. Whence something is understood better through a species that is in the intellect than through a species which is in a sense because it is more immaterial. And similarly something is better understood through a species that is in the divine mind than can be known through the very essence of the thing known itself, even given that the essence of a thing could be the medium of knowing despite its materiality.
In one sense, this conclusion is startling. On the other hand, it sits easily with Thomas’s doctrines of the complete otherness of divine being, of God being his own being, and of creation.

In summary, then, we can say that Thomas demands immateriality in knowledge because the being that is had through reception of form in knowledge is very different from the being that is had through a reception of form in material things. Matter particularizes and determines so that a received form does not exhibit real being, namely as secundum quas a rei collect which was, for example, in abstraction but the determination of the knowledge to some particular thing is carried by the representation.

Species and Modifications of the Identity Claim

At times and in different texts the unity that is had in knowledge between the knower and the known and that is achieved in the act of knowing seems to be a simple unity. It appears this way particularly when angelic or divine knowledge are in the background of the discussion. We have seen Thomas quote Averroes more than once to the effect that “in substances separated from matter the form which is in the intellect does not differ from the form which is outside the intellect.”

The identity claim is even more striking in those texts which consider God as artificer so that the same form is in the divine mind, in the created being, and in the human intellect. Divine ideas are exemplary forms according to which God fashions the created universe. Nothing exists in a creature that is not contained in the divine idea of it. In this respect, Thomas even affirms Plato’s theory of forms but says that they exist in the divine mind, not outside it.

...
In fact, divine knowledge is the ultimate realization of the identity between knower and known. God is entirely free from matter and hence is most knowable and most knowing. In knowing he is united with his own essence, in which he knows himself and all creation in an act that is identical with his own act of existence. Thomas even speaks of the divine intellect knowing all things through one species, which is, of course, his own essence.

Comparison with the divine forces Thomas on a few occasions to qualify the unity or identity which is found in human knowing. For instance, he replies to an objection which claims that there cannot be composition and division in the divine intellect so that, unable to form a judgement, it cannot know whether or not things actually exist. “In place of the composition that is in our intellect there is unity in the divine intellect. Moreover, composition is a certain imitation of unity, whence it is also called union.” In another place he says that “the application of known to knower, which effects knowledge, should not be understood through the mode of identity but through the mode of a kind of representation.”

The identity or union that is achieved in human knowledge is modified both in respect of the knower and in respect of what is known. In respect of the knower, knowing is done by a power or faculty, which is really distinct from the essence of a human being. Knowing itself is a further determination or perfection of this faculty—an operation. Prior to knowing, the human intellect is a tabula rasa—it is empty of all forms and so much in potency in the order of intelligibles that it is compared to prime matter in the order of material beings.

In respect of what is known, identity is modified because the act comes about by means of a representation. “The very form by which a thing exists is not in the intellect but its likeness [is].” And even then, as we have already seen, “for knowledge, a likeness of conformity in nature is not required but only a likeness of representation, just as we are lead by a gold statue to the memory of some man.” At the same time, Thomas does insist that the principle of being of the thing itself is the principle of its knowing in some respect.

That which is the principle of being is also the principle of knowing from the side of the thing known because a thing is knowable by means of its principles. But that by which it is known from the side of the knower is the similitude of the thing or its principles and this is not the principle of being of the thing itself unless perchance in practical knowledge.

The problem for human knowledge is that its objects are material things, either in their accidents (sensation) or in their essential natures (intelllection). Knowledge of whatever kind is to some degree immaterial, and intellectual knowledge is directed to intelligibles which are generically different from material beings. “But act and potency always belong to one genus.”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 84
Thomas’s use of the notion of a species is extremely flexible. We have seen it used of a sensible form inhering in matter and of the divine essence considered as the form in divine knowledge. In terms of representational power, a species can excel its object, or be equal to it or fail in various degrees. In terms of its mode of being, the species usually excels the mode of being of its object, particularly of material objects, because it is more immaterial or spiritual. In human knowledge, Thomas allows that a species may be representationally equal to its object but at the same time excel it in mode of being.

A species is a representation and Thomas insists that it is not to be equated with the essence of the thing known even though the thing may be known essentially by means of the species. On the other hand, there is a kind of knowledge in which an essence itself does play the intermediary role—for human beings this is restricted to a grace-filled knowledge of God and to a particular kind of knowledge of their own souls. Most commonly Thomas identifies the representational content with the ratio of the thing known—its nature or intelligible content. On occasion, however, he does seem to identify the intentional

361 De ver. 22, 1 ad 2. Leon. p. 614. “. . . oportet organa sensuum a speciebus sensibilium esse denudata ut possint eas recipere secundum esse spirituale. . .”


363 De ver. 8, 10 ad 3. Leon. p. 253. “Ad tertium dicendum quod it quod <est> unum, non potest esse propria ratio plurium si sit eis aedaquatum; sed si sit superexcedens, potest esse plurium propriam ratio quia continent in se uniformiter propriam utrasque quae in eis divisiinveniunt. Et hoc modo essentia divina est propria ratio rerum omnium quia in ipsa uniformiter praesexistit quicquid divisim im omnibus creaturis inventur, ut Dionysius dicit. Et similiter cum formas intellectus angelici sint excellenteres ubus ipsis, utpoate divinae essentiae propinquiores, non est inconveniens si una forma intellectus angelici sit ratio propria plurium secundum diversas eius habitudines ad diversas res, sicut et divina essentia est propria ratio plurium secundum diversas habitudines eius ad res; ex quibus habitudinibus consurgit pluralitas idearum. Sed formas intellectus nostri accepistis ex rebus; unde non sunt superexcedentes rebus sed quasi aedaquatae quantum ad representationem, licet sint excedentes quantum ad modum essendi in quantum habent esse immateriali; unde una forma intellectus nostri non potest esse ratio propria plurium.”

364 De ver. 8, 7 ad 8. Leon. p. 245. “. . . constat enim quod lapis per essentiam suam non est in anima quamvis ab anima intelligatur.”

365 See De ver. 8, 1; 8, 2; 10, 8.

366 De ver. 23, 1. Leon. pp. 652-653. “. . . <<non enim lapis est in anima sed species lapidis>> sive ratio . . .”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knowers and Known, Page 85
species with the species meant as definition or genus and difference.

De ver. 10, 9 ad cont. 2. Leon. p. 330. “Ad secundum dicendum quod species illa per quam iustitia cognoscitur, nihil est aliud quam ratio ipsa iustitiae per cuius privationem in iustitia cognoscitur; haec autem species vel ratio non est aliud a iustitia abstractum sed id quod est completivum esse ipsius ut specifica differentia.” The context is a discussion of the question: “does our mind know a habit existing in the soul through its essence or through some species?” The fact that this knowledge is of a habit is important.
CHAPTER THREE
THE SUMMA AND THE DE ANIMA

Introduction

Thomas completed the De veritate in 1259 and after just three years teaching in Paris was recalled to the Roman Province where he remained until 1268. It is unclear why this happened but it was in keeping with the general practices of the Dominicans at Paris and with the ways of religious orders. Thomas was Preacher General for Naples which involved him in yearly chapters but does not seem to have had heavy teaching commitments until 1265 when he was transferred to Rome. Reginald of Piperno became his secretary at this time and remained with him until his death. He began an apostolate of writing, often in response to a direct request and many of his shorter works date from this period. He completed Book I of the Summa contra gentiles at Naples. In 1261 Thomas took up the position of lector at the Priory of San Domenico in Orvieto. The commentary on the Book of Job dates from this period. The arrival of Pope Urban IV at Orvieto with his curia in 1262 brought Thomas into contact with William of Moerbeke and his revised translations of Aristotle as well as the commentaries of Themistius and Simplicius. Thomas himself did not make any commentaries on Aristotle, apart from that on the De anima, at this stage but was eager to study the new translations. At the prompting of Urban he also began his Catena Aurea. Once much used but now little touched, this work added glosses from twenty-two Latin and fifty-seven Greek Fathers to the four gospels. For Thomas it meant a much deepened contact with Greek thought and theology.

In 1265 Thomas was appointed to open a new studium for the Province which he did in Rome at the Priory of Santa Sabina. Again a master, he produced the disputed questions De potentia, De malo and De spiritualibus creaturis. The First Part of the Summa theologiae, written as a text for beginners in theology was composed between 1266 and 1268. This began an interesting textual relationship wherein Thomas would often hold dispositions on the issues he was developing for the Summa.

At the end of 1268 Thomas was somewhat urgently called back to Paris by the Master General of the Dominicans due to the reactivation of the anti-mendicant controversy. He was to remain there until 1272. The controversy was hard fought and bitter although without the physical violence that accompanied the earlier battles. De perfectione spiritualis vitae was part of Thomas’s response. This period also saw the rise of Radical Aristotelianism in the university and its condemnation in 1270. This was to be, for Thomas and for the history of thought, an issue of much greater import than that for which he had been recalled to Paris. Masters such Siger of Brabant claimed as philosophical truth propositions to do with the eternity of the world and the unicity of the intellect and hence the denial of individual immortality and responsibility for human actions. Thomas’s direct responses were published in 1984, Gauthier dates the work between December 1267 and September 1268. (Vol. 45, n. 1, pp. 283*-286*.)

Weisheipl, Friar Thomas d’Aquin ch. 4, pp. 141-185.

“The simple explanation is that he had finished his assignment in Paris, and William of Alton, an English Dominican, was ready to succeed Thomas in the chair for foreigners. No doubt, Thomas’s own province of Rome also wanted him back as soon as possible; for some extraordinary reason, superiors always want their students to return ‘as soon as possible.’” Weisheipl p. 142.

372. See Weisheipl, p. 378. In the 1974 edition Weisheipl dated the Sentencia libri De anima 1269-1270 and suggested that Book I which he took to be a reportatio may have been written in Rome. In the corrections to the 1983 printing he accepts Gauthier’s dating, namely, that the commentary was written in Italy in 1267-69. See R. A. Gauthier, “Quelques questions à propos du commentaire de S. Thomas sur le De anima,” Angelicum 51 (1974) : 419-472. In the Préface to the Leonine edition of the Sentencia libri De anima, Weisheipl, ch. 5, pp. 187-239.

Weisheipl, ch. 6, pp. 241-292.

De anima, De aeternitate mundi contra Averroistas and De unitate intellectus contra Averroistae but the issues flowed into much of his other writing. From his teaching during this period we have the commentaries on John and on some of the Pauline Epistles and the later disputations (De anima, De virtutibus in communi, etc.). At the same time he completed the Second Part of the Summa Theologiae and began the Third Part. Also in Paris Thomas began most of his commentaries on Aristotle, all of which were written between 1269 and 1273 with the exception of that on the De anima. These were a response to the confusion following the introduction of Aristotle into the West and also to the needs of students to have a commentary other than that of Averroes.

The “Treatise on Man” in the Summa theologiae is, apart from the Commentary on the De anima, the only extended discussion of human knowledge as such to be found in Thomas’s entire corpus. It is orderly and direct and because of its date gives the promise of Thomas’s mature thought. It is, therefore, of obvious interest to us.

Thomas’s commentary on the De anima is of interest to us primarily because, whatever the other influences on this thought, Thomas’s theory of knowledge was fundamentally Aristotelian. The De anima is the work in which Aristotle outlined his theory of the soul and of knowledge. Thomas readily acknowledged his debt to the work and, as we have seen, quoted from it frequently.

This treatment of the Summa theologiae and of the Sententia libri De anima will not be exhaustive in the way in which the treatments of the Sentences and of the De veritate were. It will neither be comprehensive nor mindful of every detail in the texts. It is provided for completeness’ sake. It deals with works from later in Thomas’s life. In the Summa we will find a discussion of a kind not found elsewhere in the corpus. In the Commentary we will see how Thomas treats certain texts which he has frequently cited.

The First Part of the Summa theologiae was written in Rome at about the same time that Thomas was writing the Commentary on the De anima. Weisheipl dates it 1266-1268. But it is a very different kind of work from a commentary. Thomas himself describes its purpose:

Our intention in this work is to teach those things that pertain to Christian religion in such a way that it is suited to the instruction of beginners. For we consider that newcomers to this doctrine are impeded very much by those things that have been written by different ones;—partly indeed because of the multiplication of useless questions, articles and arguments; partly also because those things which are necessary to such students for knowledge are not treated according to the order of learning but according to what the exposition of the books requires or according to what the occasion of disputing offers; partly indeed because frequent repetition of those things was generating distaste and confusion in the minds of the hearers.

The Summa theologiae is a mammoth work of 512 questions, 2669 articles, and 1,573,434 words. Part One comprises about 23% of the whole. The Summa is an orderly and synthetic treatment of the whole field of theology designed to be accessible to students but nevertheless challenging even to experts.

The work is, indeed, theological, not philosophical. Whereas a philosophical treatise would begin from natures, causes, and properties of things, the Summa begins with the First Cause, God, and what flows from Him. It then treats of the return of creation, particularly of man, to God. The structure is the theological and neo-Platonic exitus-reditus, which Thomas had already used in the Sentences. Part I is the “going-out” from God; Part II is man’s “coming-back” to God; Part III is man’s “coming-back” to God with the assistance of Christ.

Again problems exist for the use of such a work for philosophical purposes. We have seen these already with respect to the Sentences. The order of investigation is different; revealed doctrine carries normative force; things not reached by philosophical enquiry are part of the fabric of the work; the purpose of the theological investigation is different from that of the philosophical investigation. Nevertheless, Thomas does use philosophy extensively and, as we have seen, at times inserts a strictly philosophical discussion in a theological work.

We are going to examine only a small part of the Summa. Part One is divided into 119

---


Weisheipl, p. 361.

---

376 Weisheipl, p. 361.
questions. The “Treatise on Man” comprises questions 75-102. Our interest is with questions 84-88 where Thomas discusses human knowledge but particularly with questions 84-85. Topics dealing with knowledge in other sections of the Summa——divine knowledge, angelic knowledge, knowledge of separated souls, etc.——have been adequately dealt with in earlier parts of this study.

The Sentencia libri De anima, which had been thought to have been written in Paris in 1269-70, is now accepted as having been written in Rome in 1267-68. The difference is not insignificant for understanding its purpose. Presuming that it had been written in Paris, Weisheipl saw it as a response to the Latin Averroism of the early 1270’s and as an attempt to clarify the meaning of Aristotle in the context of that debate. That it was written in Rome means that it preceded Thomas’s involvement in that debate.

In fact, Gauthier shows that the commentary belongs to a “period of serenity” in Thomas’s intellectual life and especially in his relationship to Averroes. In the commentary Thomas is almost silent about Averroes apart from correcting a few errors. Yet he obviously used Averroes’ Long Commentary in writing his own and used words and phrases belonging to Averroes. Gauthier concludes that there were three periods in Thomas’s relationship to Averroes. In the first (Sentences, Summa contra gentiles), he was eager to refute Averroes’ position on the unity of the intellect. In the third (De unitate intellectu), he was vigorously fighting the Parisian Latin Averroists. But in the second period, that of the Sentencia libri De anima, his attention was given to understanding Aristotle by means of a new translation and of new resources, especially the Paraphrase of Themistius. In this Averroes was an ally.

Still, even though Thomas was not yet involved in the specific debate in Paris, the issues and problems were abroad. As Chenu says in a much earlier work, “Aristotle, the master of thought, concealed riches of an equivocal nature.” By the late 1260’s, the battle to have Aristotle read in the universities had been won. Now the problems were of a different nature: in what way is Aristotle to be understood? how does one deal with the diversity of systems which had sprung from his thought? how is the Philosopher to be reconciled with Christian Faith?

Gauthier sees Thomas’s commentary on the De anima as a work of wisdom occasioned by the new translation and by new resources that could be used in understanding it. The De anima is brief and extremely dense. It leaves much unsaid and many problems. According to Gauthier, Thomas’s intention was to understand Aristotle and to make him understood in such a way as to deepen reflection on the theology of the soul. His work was to proclaim truth and refute error and, in this case, “to reclaim for faith the authority of the Philosopher.”

The Commentary on the De anima belongs to a standard thirteenth century genre. It consists of minutely detailed divisions of the text, of word-by-word exposition, and of longer excursions into questions and difficulties raised by the text itself or by the commentary tradition. While at first sight the division and exposition can seem mechanical and repetitive, it proves to be remarkably helpful in unpacking the Aristotelian text. The excursions are often very rich in content.

A problem has long existed in interpreting the differences of style between Thomas’s commentaries on Book I and on Books II & III. Book I was thought to be a reportatio, taken down by a student, while Books II & III were accepted as an ordinatio written by Thomas himself. Gauthier rejects this and claims in a detailed argument that all three Books were written by Thomas and at the same time. He shows that the commentary on Book I is technical and laborious and attributes this to the fact that it was not a book that was useful to the theologian and so was less familiar to Thomas. But Thomas was very familiar with Books II & III and there the commentary is “free and spontaneous on a text known, reread, and loved.”

In commenting on the De anima, Thomas used William of Moerbeke’s new revision, the translatio nova (1267), of James of Venice’s translatio vetus (mid-12th C). In fact, he was the first to write a commentary on the nova although many had, of course, been written on the vetus. Gauthier shows that the recension of the text which Thomas used was imperfect and that some of Moerbeke’s corrections had been missed by the scribe who transposed it. As well, while often quoting from the nova, Thomas sometimes quoted

384 Gauthier, “Préface,” p. 288*-294*.

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 89
the text from memory and then he was inclined to use the *vetus*.

The problem of dealing with any of Thomas’s commentaries in an analysis of his thought is the question of whether one can take a commentary as an indication of its author’s own thought or whether a commentary is simply an act of transmission and exposition of somebody else’s thought. It must be emphasised that this is a problem not just a question. Were it just a question, the answer could be given and no further discussion would be needed. Since it is a problem, all we can do is articulate the dimensions of the problem and then deal with the text carefully and in accord with those parameters.

M.-D. Chenu examined this problem in a book first published in 1950. While allowing that the problem remains, he argued strongly from the kind of thing that it is that the thirteenth century commentary can be taken for the most part as a personal position. The text commented on is authoritative in its field. “Thus the commentator proceeds along a crest laid between two objectives: he prizes his text, and he wants to penetrate its inner meaning; . . . His purpose is to find in his text a witness to the truth.” Chenu goes into some detail about how this could be done.

In a more recent work, John F. Wippel recognizes and deals with the problem. He steers a middle course between regarding the commentaries as simply works of history and assuming that every statement is Thomas’s personal view. He suggests that one can use external controls such as what Thomas has said in other works or things that he may have said, for instance, in a *Proemium*. Wippel also provides notes on recent literature about the issue.

The recent Leonine edition of the commentary is very helpful in this respect. The notes are extensive and detailed. But the editor, R. A. Gauthier, has also examined the text very carefully and editorially marked off different kinds of writing. Thus we find simple literal exposition carefully and editorially marked off different kinds of writing. Thus we find simple literal exposition of the text, short analyses occasioned by the text, and extended discussions that are not tied word-for-word to the text and which investigate either a problem (*dubitatio*) or a question (*questio*) arising out of the text.

Thomas himself is sometimes helpful. For instance, he is not patient with the dialectical method that Aristotle customarily uses in the first Book of a work. And so we find this: “Now although Aristotle will show this, uncovering it sufficiently in Book III, nevertheless we shall explain something about it here.” In other places, he discusses the intention of the text rather than the apparent meaning of the text. Interestingly, he expects this of his author as well. And so we find: “… very often when Aristotle rejects the opinions of Plato, he does not reject them according to the intention of Plato, but according to the sound of his words.”

Summa Theologiae: Questions 84 and 85

In question eighty-four of the the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas commences a new section of his study of man. In the *Proemium* he indicates that attention must now be focused “on the acts of the soul.” He indicates that he will treat only the acts of the appetitive and intellective parts of the soul “for the other powers do not pertain directly to the consideration of the theologian.” He delays treatment of the appetitive powers until the Second Part of the *Summa* where he deals with morals.

What we find, therefore, in the discussion of the acts of the soul is a discussion of intellect. Other activities, most notably sensation, but also locomotion, nutrition, and growth, are not

---

386 Gauthier, “Préface,” pp. 172*-199*.
387 Chenu, pp. 207-214.
388 Chenu, p. 207.
390 In 1 De anima cap. 2. (40315-9) Leon. p. 9.
391 “Quamuis autem hoc Aristotiles satis aperte manifestet in III huius, nichilominus tamen quantum ad hoc alicuid exponemus.”
392 In 1 De anima cap. 8. (407a2-9) Leon. p. 38. “Vbi notandum est quod Aristotiles plerunque quando reprobat opiniones Platonis, non reprobat eam quantum ad intentionem Platonis, set quantum ad sonum uerborum eius; . . .”
393 ST 1, 84, proemium. B.A.C. I, p. 611. “Consequentier considerandum est de actibus animae quantum ad potentias intellectivas et appetivae: aliae enim animae potentiae non pertinent directe ad considerationem theologii. Actus autem appetitivae partis ad considerationem moralis scientiae pertinent: et ideo in secunda parte huius operis de eis tractabitur, in qua considerandum erit de morali materia. Nunc autem de actibus intellectivae partis agetur.”
394 In consideratione vero actuam, hoc modo procedemus: primo namque considerandum est quomodo intelligit anima corpori coniuncta; secundo quomodo intelligit a corpore separata (q. 89).
395 Prima autem consideratio erit tripartita: primo namque considerabitis quomodo anima intelligit corporalia, quae sunt infra ipsam; secundo, quomodo intelligit seipsum, et ea quae in ipsa sunt (q. 87); tertio, quomodo intelligit substantias immateriales, quae sunt supra ipsam (q. 88).
396 Circa cognitionem vero corporalium, tria consideranda occurrunt: primo quidem, per quid ea cognoscit; secundo, quomodo et quo ordine (q. 85); tertio, quid in eis cognoscit (q. 86).
investigated except incidentally. The discussion of intellection is divided into questions on the soul’s knowledge while joined to the body and a question (q. 89) on knowledge had by separated souls. This study will focus on two questions. Question 84 asks how a soul joined to a body understands things below it. Question 85 investigates the mode and order of understanding. Questions 86-88, with which we will not deal, investigate the soul’s knowledge of material things, itself, and incorporeal substances.

Our exposition will follow the order of the texts. They are highly structured in themselves. We will look only at the two questions, qq. 84 and 85, which deal most closely with our topic.

Question 84 investigates how a human being in this life gains intellectual knowledge of corporeal beings. The order of exposition is determined by the theological nature of the work and by a superb use of rhetoric. The theological order is apparent from the topics of the articles. Article 1 asks the fundamental question: does the soul have intellectual knowledge of bodies? Articles 2-5 canvass various possibilities for how this might be achieved. What is the medium?——Is it the soul’s own essence (as in divine knowledge)? innate species (as in angelic knowledge)? forms derived from separate substances? the divine exemplars (as in the knowledge of the separated soul)? Article 6 examines the remaining alternative——intellectual knowledge is derived from sensible things. Article seven asks whether the intellect must always turn to the phantasm to understand and article eight investigates whether intellectual judgement is hindered by suspension of the sensitive powers.

Thomas’s rhetoric is seen partly in the order of questions just discussed but more in the internal constitution of his replies. The replies appear dialectical——posing, balancing, discussing, rejecting, accepting the major known views on the issues under consideration. They are not, however, like an Aristotelian dialectic which is far more wide-ranging, aporetic, and tentative in its judgements. Thomas’s choice of competing positions is precise, sharp and clear and his determinations are exact and definite. The truth that he is seeking is the truth in the minds of his students who “have got the point.” Juxtaposed to this is care to cover the predominant opposing theological positions of the time as found in Augustinianism and Avicennianism.

**ST I q. 84, aa. 1-3**

Article one begins with the question: “Does the soul know bodies by means of the intellect?” Thomas first canvasses the views of the first philosophers who “thought that there was nothing in the world besides bodies.” Consequently “they reckoned that no certitude about the truth of things could be had by us.” Thomas does not answer this directly even though it is their grossest error. Rather he turns to Plato.

Plato, says Thomas, so as to save the certitude of knowledge, “posited besides those corporeal things another kind of beings separated from matter and motion which he called species or ideas.” These are both the objects of knowledge and the forms in which individual sensible bodies participate. Thomas concludes that, in this view, “the soul does not understand bodily things themselves, but understands the separate species of those corporeal things.”

Thomas, of course, rejects Plato’s position and on two grounds. First, were the objects of

---

393. Thomas has enumerated the generic and specific powers of the soul in *ST* I qq. 78-82. *ST* I 78, 3, in which the external sense powers are distinguished, carries an important discussion of esse spiritalare. He will discuss generation in *ST* I qq. 98-100.

394. It is interesting to read these articles in reverse order. It appears closer to a philosophical order but is not such because, although Thomas’s theological positions remain rooted in a solid philosophy of nature and of man, the tendency of the theological questions is to spiritualize the issues.


396. *ST* I 84, 1. B.A.C. I, p. 612. “Responsio dicendum, ad evidentiam huius quaestionis, quod prius philosophi qui de naturis rerum inquisivereunt, putaverunt nihil esse in mundo praeter corpus. Et quia videbant omnia corpora mobilia esse, et putabant ea in continuo fluxu esse, aestimaverunt quod nulla certitudo de rerum veritate habere posset a nobis. Quod enim est in continuo fluxu, per certitudinem apprehendi non potest, quia prius labitur quam mente diudicetur: sicut Heraclitus dixit quod ‘non est possibile aquam fluvii currentis bis tangere,’ ut recitat Philosophus in IV Metaphys.”

397. *ST* I 84, 1. B.A.C. I, p. 612. “His autem superveniens, Plato, ut posset salvare certam cognitionem veritatis a nobis per intellectum haberi, possit praeter ista corporalia aliiud genus entium a materia et motu separatum, quod nominabat species sive ideas, per quarum participationem unusquodque istorum singularitatum et sensibilium dicitur vel homo vel equus vel aliquem huissusmodi. Sic ergo dicebat scientias et definitiones et quidquid ad actum intellectus pertinet, non referri ad ista corpora sensibilia, sed ad illa immaterialia et separata; ut sic anima non intelligat ista corporalia, sed intelligat horum corporalium species separatas.”
knowledge immaterial and immoveable, it would exclude natural science whose object is moveable and material being. Second, he finds it laughable that, in trying to know beings that are more manifest to us, we bring in as a medium other beings which cannot be the substance of those first beings because they are essentially different from them. What is interesting about these arguments is, first, that the fact of natural science is presumed and is prior to the discussion of knowledge itself. Second, the argument against a mediatory role for Platonic ideas puts some limitations on the nature of the cognitive species which Thomas will accept.

Thomas then goes on to examine Plato’s error. “Since he reckoned that every cognition is through the mode of some likeness, he believed that the form of the known is necessarily in the knower in the same way in which it is in the known.” This was because Plato recognized that form is in the intellect universally, immaterially and immoveably and thought that “the mode of the action is according to the form of the agent.”

We see here that Thomas accepts the view of both the first philosophers and Plato that “like is known by like.” He does not argue against the materialism of the philosophers but lets Plato do it for him and accepts Plato’s characterization of intellectual knowledge as universal, immaterial and immoveable. Plato was right to recognize the role of the form and the formal but not in thinking that these forms subsist. This sets the stage for Thomas’s own major distinction. There was no need, he tells us, for Plato to have gotten into this predicament because, even among sensible things, a form can appear in different things in different ways. “White” can appear intensely or mildly, or with sweetness or without sweetness. Similarly form is received differently by the senses and by things outside the soul. It is received into the senses immaterially.

And similarly the intellect receives species of bodies, which are material and moveable, immaterially and immoveably according to its own mode. For the received in is in the recipient according to the mode of the recipient.

Thomas accepts Plato’s ideas or species in some sense but limits their being. They exist only in the intellect and there immaterially and universally according to the manner of the intellect. In this way, they are somewhat more formal than even Plato’s ideas which are substances.

In article 2, Thomas asks whether the soul understands corporeal things through its essence. His conclusion is similar to that of article one, namely, that the intellect knows by receiving forms or species immaterially. What is surprising is that Thomas takes the question as an opportunity to attack the views of the ancient materialists. In this, the article is a reverse image of article one, which reached the same conclusion by attacking Plato. Given the views of knowledge by means of the soul’s own essence that we saw canvassed in the Sentences and Thomas’s rejection of those views, it is strange that he here takes the materialists as his opponents. On the other hand, this approach falls within his goal, which is to set out the issues with clarity and without confusing his beginning theologians with needless subtlety. By choosing his opponents carefully, Thomas engages in easier arguments. At a level below the obvious he establishes the formality of knowledge while correcting Plato, and he establishes the interiority of knowledge while correcting the materialists. His fundamental points are, therefore, uncontested.
by his opponents. At a level closer to the surface, by attributing this view of article 2 to the materialists he disposes of the Augustinian theory that knowledge is had by the soul through its own essence without having to get into arguments made complex by their theological overtones.

So, says Thomas, the ancient philosophers thought that the soul knew bodies by means of its essence.

For it was commonly instilled in the minds of all that “like is known by like.” But, they thought that the form known is in the knower in that mode in which it is in the thing known.

He notes that the Platonists made the contrary error on the same principles by positing subsistent forms. This was their failing.

In neither this article nor article one does Thomas question or elaborate the two principles “like is known by like”: and “what is known is somehow in the knower.” It seems that they were unquestioned and that Thomas was happy to take them as such. The issue at stake is the manner in which something known is in the soul.

Thomas sets out the position of the Natural Philosophers carefully and in opposition to Plato.

Because they recognized that the things known were material and corporeal, they posited that things known must exist materially even in the knowing soul.

In addition, they claimed that the soul contained the principles of all things and that these principles were material. Some chose fire or air or water as principles. Empedocles postulated four elements and two principles of motion. The failure of the first philosophers was in being unable to discern between sense and intellect and so in being unable to recognize the immateriality of knowledge.

This is important because Thomas is going to accept that the principles of things are in the soul but differently—as forms not as elements, immaterially not materially, potentially not always actually.

Thomas argues against the naturalist position in two ways. First, things that have principles do not exist in the principles except potentially. But, according to Aristotle, things are known only in so far as they are in act. Therefore, for knowledge to happen, the things known materially would have to be in the soul in all their individuality and with all their properties. Second, if knowledge were to occur through things being in the soul materially, there would be no reason for things outside the soul not to be knowers.

Thomas then draws his own conclusions.

It remains, therefore, that, when material things are known, it is necessary that they exist in the knower not materially but rather immaterially. The reason for this is that the act of knowledge reaches to those things which are outside the knower—for we know also those things which are outside us. But the form of a thing is determined to some one thing by matter. Hence it is clear that the nature of knowledge relates inversly to the nature of materiality. And therefore those things, such as plants, that receive forms only materially are in no way knowers.

---


403 ST I 84, 2. B.A.C. I, p. 614. “Priores vero Naturales, quia considerabant res cognitas esse corporea et materiales, posuerunt oportere res cognitas etiam in anima cognoscente materialaria esse. Et ideo, ut animae attribuerunt omnium cognitionem, posuerunt eam habere naturam communem cum omnibus. Et quia natura principiorum ex principiis constituitur, attribuerunt animae naturn principii: ita quod qui dixit principium omnium esse ignem, posuit animam esse de natura ignis; et similiter de aere et aqua. Empedocles autem, qui posuit quatuor elementa materialia et duo moventia, ex his etiam dixit animam esse constitutam. Et ita, cum res materialaria in anima ponentur, posuerunt omnem cognitionem animae materialem esse, non discernentes inter intellectum et sensum.”

404 ST I 84, 2. B.A.C. I, p. 614. “Sed haec opinio improbatur. Primo quidem, quia in materiali principio, de quo loquebantur, non existit principiata nisi in potenti. Non autem cognoscitius aliquid secundum quod est in potentia, sed solum secundum quod est actu, ut patet in IX Metaphys.; unde nec ipsa potentia cognoscitur nisi per actum. Sic igitur non sufficienter attribuere animae principiorum naturam ad hoc quod omnia cognoscere, nisi inessent ei naturae et formae singulorum effectuum, puta ossis et carnis et aliorum huissmodi; ut Aristoteles contra Empedoclem argumentatur in I De anima.”

405 ST I 84, 2. B.A.C. I, p. 614. “Relinquitur ergo quod oportet materialia cognitam in cognoscente existere non materialiter, sed magis immaterialiter. Et huius ratio est, quia actus cognitionis se extendit ad ea quae sunt extra cognescendam: cognoscimus enim etiam ea quae extra nos sunt. Per materialiam autem determinatur forma rei ad aliquid unum. Unde manifestum est quod ratio cognitionis ex oppuesto se habet ad rationem materialitatis. Et ideo quae non recipiunt formas nisi materialiter, nullum modo sunt cognoscitiva, sicut plantae; ut dicitur in II libro De anima.”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 93
Thomas continues the discussion by relating the degree of immateriality of a received form to the perfection of knowledge. Thus the intellect “which abstracts species not only from matter, but also from material individuating conditions” knows more perfectly than sense “which receives the form of the thing known indeed without matter but with the conditions of matter.” Sense and different intellects are likewise distinguished by the immateriality of their reception.

What Thomas has established, therefore, is that in knowledge what is known is somehow in the knower. But it is in the knower not materially and individually but immaterially and by means of its form or species. The perfection or grade of knowledge is related to the degree of immateriality proper to the particular cognitive power.

The reply to objection 2 of article 2 adds a precision to the notion of the soul containing what it knows and the extension of this notion to the soul being what it knows. The objector had quoted Aristotle to the effect that “the soul is someway all things.” Thomas explains this text. Unlike the Natural Philosophers he did not mean that the soul was actually composed of all things. “Rather he said that in a certain way the soul is all things, in so far as it is in potency to all—through sense to sensibles, through the intellect to intelligibles.”

The notions of containment of principles or forms and of identity or becoming the known flow easily together for Thomas. What is is divided into sensibilia and intelligibilia. The human soul is able to reach each of these through its senses and its intellect.

In ST I 84, 3, Thomas asks whether the soul understands all things through species naturally imparted to it, that is, by means of innate species. The context of such a question is neatly framed by the objections—angelic knowledge; the nobility of the intellect, which would seem to demand that it be more than a mere potentiality; and the theory of recollection in Plato’s Meno. The ad contra cites Aristotle’s comparison of the intellect to “a tablet on which nothing has been written.”

Thomas begins with the axiom “form is the principle of action” and states that “something is related to the form that is the principle of action in the same way that it is related to the action.” For example, the form lightness, is the principle of upwards motion. What is only in potency to move upwards is only potentially light. What is actually moving upwards is actually light. (Thomas is not considering the case of external restraint of movement.)

Similarly, he says, with respect to both sense and intellect, man is sometimes only in potency to know and at other times is actually knowing. He is reduced from potency to act by the actions of sensible things or, in intellectual knowledge, by teaching and discovery. And so “the knowing soul is in potency as much to the similitudes which are the principles of sensing as to the similitudes which are the principles of understanding.” He concludes that Aristotle was right to say that the intellect does not contain innate species “but is, in the beginning, in potency to all species of this kind.”

The rest of the article is directed against the position of Plato who said “that the intellect of man is naturally full of all intelligible species, but through union with a body it is impeded so that it

\[\text{408}\] Aristotle, De anima III, 4. (430a1)

\[\text{409}\] Thomas here uses actio rather than actus, which was preferred in the Sentences and in the De veritate.

\[\text{410}\] ST I 84, 3. B.A.C. I, p. 616. “Respondeo dicendum quod, cum forma sit princicium actionis, oportet ut eo modo se habeat aliquid ad formam quae est actionis principium, quae se habet ad actionem illam: sicut si moveri sursum est ex levitate, oportet quod in potentia tantum sursum furt, esse leve solum in potentia, quod autem actu sursam furt, esse leve in actu.”

\[\text{411}\] This parallel between sensing and understanding could be developed. That Thomas uses “teaching and discovery” shows his appreciation of the complexity and difficulty of intellectual acts.

\[\text{412}\] ST I 84, 3. B.A.C. I, p. 616. “Videmus autem quod homo est quandoque cognoscens in potentia tantum, secundum sensum quam secundum intellectum. Et de tali potentia in actum reducitur, ut sentiat quidem, per actiones sensibilibus in sensum; ut intelligat autem, per disciplinam aut inventionem.unde oportet dicere quod aliqua cognoscivit sit in potentia tam ad simulitades quam principia sensibilibus; quae sunt principia sentiendi, quam ad simulitades quae sunt principia intelligendi. Et propter hoc Aristoteles posuit quod intellectus, quo anima intelligit, non habet aliquas species naturaliter inditas, sed est in principio in potentia ad huiusmodi species omnem.”

---

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 94
is unable to pass into act.” Thomas rejects this position on two grounds. First, it is unreasonable both that man would forget something he knew naturally and that the body which is naturally joined to the soul should be an impediment to it. Second, we know that when a particular sense is lacking to a person, he does not come to understand things that would be first known through that sense. Although they will not detain us here, these arguments are important and interesting. The first shows the centrality of Thomas’s understanding of human nature in these discussions. The second marks a shift to more phenomenal and less a priori evidence and argument in this question.

Other things are also of interest. Right at the beginning Thomas focused on the axiom “form is the principle of action” in order to come to terms with a problem about species. He clearly envisages knowledge in terms of act and, he regards the species as the actualizing form. Within the discussion he is quite comfortable to use the term species intelligibiles as a term common to himself, to Aristotle, and to Plato and as meant in the same way by each even though he disagrees with Plato about how species come to be in the soul. Finally, he is at ease in using similitudo synonymously with species.

The terms esse immateriale or esse spirituale have not appeared in the three articles we have discussed nor do they appear anywhere in questions 84 and 85. Rather Thomas has referred to the reception of form immaterialis, immaterially. “The intellect receives species immaterially according to its mode” (a. 1). “Material things known exist in the knower not materially but rather immaterially” (a. 2). He has also correlated the degree of perfection of knowledge to the degree of immateriality in the way the form of the known is had (a. 2). We now turn briefly to an article of another question of the Summa theologiae in which Thomas uses the term esse spirituale and in which we find a discussion of how immateriality admits of degrees.

In ST I q. 78, a. 3, Thomas distinguishes the five external senses. In doing so he distinguishes two kinds of change.

Change, moreover, is of two kinds: one natural, the other spiritual. Natural [change occurs] in so far as the form of the changer is received in the changed according to esse naturale, as heat in the heated. But spiritual [change occurs] in so far as the form of the changer is received in the changed according to esse spirituale, as the form of colour in the pupil, which does not become coloured.

Thomas continues that a spiritual change “through which the intention of a sensible form arises in the organ of sense” is necessary for sensation to take place.

Here we see the term esse spirituale introduced and, at least in part, defined. It arises in distinction to esse naturale and involves a change in which the recipient of change or of form does not become such as that form would ordinarily or naturally make it. Rather it becomes a knower. That it is “an intention of a sensible form” which arises in the sense organ seems to imply some sort of weakening of the form.

Such a description would fit the terms materialiter and immaterialiter or spiritualiter equally well. And, indeed, in the context of q. 78, Thomas uses secundum esse naturale and secundum esse spirituale. These phrases modify the verb, recipitur, in the same way that simple adverbs would. In the passage in question Thomas has already used naturalis and spiritualis adjectively qualifying the noun, immutatio. In the succeeding passage, he continues with the adjectival forms. Any difference of meaning between secundum esse spirituale and spiritualiter is not great.

We have already seen how Thomas distinguished sense from intellect on the basis of degree of immateriality. Sense, although receiving form immaterially, receives it with the individuating conditions of matter, that is as individual and in a material organ. In question 78, he also distinguishes among the senses on the basis of immateriality or spirituality of the change involved. Sight involves only spiritual change. Natural change occurs in the objects of both hearing and smelling: the one, movement; the other, alteration. In touch and taste, natural change occurs along with spiritual change even in the

413 ST I 84, 3. B.A.C. I, p. 561. “Sed qui id quod habet actu formam, interdum non potest agere secundum formam propter aliquod impedimentum, sicut leve si impediatur sursum ferri; propter hoc Plato posuit quod intellectus hominis naturaliter est plenus omnibus speciebus intelligibilibus, sed per unionem corporis impeditur ne possit in actum exire.”


415 ST I 84, 2. B.A.C. I, p. 615. “Unde et intellectus, qui abstrahit speciem non solum a materia, sed etiam a materialibus conditionibus individuanti bus, perfectius cognoscit quam sensus, qui accipit formam rei cognitae sine materia quidem, sed cum materialibus conditionibus.”
sense organ so that, for example, a hand becomes hot as well as feeling hot. 416

We return now to q. 84, a. 4. Thomas asks whether intelligible species flow into the soul from separated forms. The purpose of the article is to combat certain views of Plato and Avicenna. The details are not particularly germane to our task but Thomas’s final argument is. He states that, had the intellect the ability to receive species directly from separate substances rather than through the sense, there would not be sufficient reason for the soul to be joined to the body. It is not joined to the body for the sake of the body since form is not for the sake of matter but rather the contrary. The soul needs the body and acts through it.

ST I q. 84, aa. 6-7

Articles 6 and 7 are quite significant for our purposes. Article six asks, “Is intellective knowledge received from sensible things?” It is the central article of question 84 and is finely constructed. First, Thomas states the opposing views of Democritus and Plato and then he presents Aristotle’s view as a middle position and as true. For Aristotle intelligible forms are abstracted from sensible images caused by sensible objects and retained in the imagination. 417

According to Thomas, Democritus held that there was no distinction between intellect and sense so that all knowledge was caused by bodies by means of images and discharges. 419 Plato, on the other had, distinguished the intellect from the sense, denying it any organ or access to the senses. Therefore, the intellect receives nothing from sensibles but rather participates in separate forms. Even the senses generate their own species by their own specific action when excited by some body but separately from it. 420 Thomas pulls his Aristotelian media via out of this complex of views. He agrees with Plato that intellectation differs from sensation. But he holds that since sensation is an act of the union of body and soul, it does not take place without some communication of soul with body. And so he agrees with Aristotle and Democritus that sense knowledge is caused by impression made by sensible things. He disagrees with Democritus, however, and holds that this does not happen in the manner of a discharge but by means of a particular

---

416 ST I 78, 3. B.A.C. I, p. 568. “Sed in quibusdam sensibus inventur immutatio spiritualis tantum, sicut in visu—In quibusdam autem, cum immutatione spirituali, etiam naturalis; vel ex parte objecti tantum, vel etiam ex parte organi. Ex parte autem objecti, inventur transmutatio naturalis, secundum locum quodem, in solo, qui est objectum auditus: nam sonus ex percussione causatur et aeris commotione. Secundum alerationem vero, in odore, qui est objectum olfactorius: oportet enim per calidum alterari aliquo modo corpus, ad hoc quod spiret odorem.—Ex parte autem organi, est immutatio naturalis in tactu et gustu: nam et manus tangens calida calefit, et lingua humectatur per humiditatem saporum. Organum vero olfactus aut auditus nulla naturali immutatione immutatur in sentiendo, nisi per accidentem.”

417 ST I 84, 4. B.A.C. I, p. 619. “Sed secundum hanc positionem sufficiens ratio assignari non posset quare anima nostra corpori uniretur. Non enim potest dici quod anima intellectiva corpori uniatur propter corpus; quia nec forma est propter materiam, nec motor propter mobile, sed potius e converso. Maxime autem videtur corpus esse necessarium animae intellectivae ad eius propriam operationem, quae est intelligere: quia secundum esse suum a corpore non dependit. Si autem anima species intelligibles secundum suam naturam apta nata esset recipere per intuitiam aliorum separatorm principiorum tantum, et non acciperet eas ex sensibus, non indigenter corpore ad intelligentiam: unde frustra corpori uniretur.”

418 In article 5, Thomas asked whether the rational soul knows material things in the eternal types. The article added little to our discussion.

419 ST I 84, 6. B.A.C. I, p. 621. “Respondeo dicendum quod circa istam quaestionem triplex fuit philosophorum opinio. Democritus enim posuit quod ‘nula est alia causa cuiuslibet nostrae cognitionis, nisi cum ab his corporibus quae cogitamus, veniunt atque intrant imaginines in animas nostras;’ ut Augustinus dicit in epistola sua Ad Dioscorum. Et Aristoteles etiam dicit, in libro De somno, et vigil., quod Democritus posuit cognitionem fieri ‘per idola et defluxiones.’—Et huius positionis ratio fuit, quia tam ipse Democritus quam ali qui antiqui Naturales non ponebant intellectum differre a sensu, ut Aristoteles dicit in libro De anima [III, 3. 427a17-29]. Et ideo, quia sensus immutatur a sensibili, arbitrabantur omnem nostram cognitionem fieri per solam immutationem a sensibili. Quam quidem immutationem Democritus asserebat fieri per imaginim defluxiones.”

420 ST I 84, 6. B.A.C. I, p. 621-622. “Plato vero et contrario posuit intellectum differre a sensu; et intellectum quidem esse virtutem immaterialis organo corporeo non utentem in suo actu. Et quia incorporeum non potest immutari a corporeo, posuit quod cognitio intellectualis non fit per immutacionem intellectus a sensibili, sed per participationem formarum intelligibilium separatarum, ut dictum est. Sensum etiam posuit virtutem quandam per se operantem. Unde nec ipse sensus, cum sit quaedam vis spiritualis immutatur a sensibili; sed organa sensuum a sensibili immutatur, ex qua immutazione anima quodammodo excitatur ut in se species sensibilibium formet. Et hanc opinionem tangere videtur Augustinus, XII Super Gen. ad litt., ubi dicit quod ‘corpus non sentit, sed anima per corpus, quo velut nutrio utitur ad formandum in seipsa quod extrinsce nuntiatur.’ Sic igitur secundum Platonis opinionem, neque intelligibilibus cognitioni a sensibili procedit, neque etiam sensibilis totaliter a sensibili subest; sed sensibilia excitant animam sensibilum ad sentiendum, et similiter sentus excitant animal animam intelligibilibum ad intelligendum.”
operation. Thomas explains that Democritus held that actions were caused by an influx of atoms.

This passage bears closer examination. Thomas has opposed operatio to Democritus’s discharge (influxio). We have already examined operatio in detail. An operation is an activity whose effects remain where the activity takes place. It is contrasted to an action, such as heating, where the effects “cross-over” into another party. But what is a discharge? Thomas quickly explains that Democritus held that action occurred through an influx of atoms. Clearly, Thomas is not going to accept such a materialistic view. But he has already quoted Democritus as saying that sensation occurs “by means of idola and discharges.” “Idola”, while it has technical and historical implications, can be translated as either “image” or “form.”

What is going on here?

Thomas holds that Aristotle and Democritus agree that “operations of the sensitive part are caused by means of the impression of sensibles onto the sense.” Although a theory based on atoms is in no way acceptable to Thomas, its rejection does not seem to be the point. The real opposition is not between form and atoms but is rather between operation and influx. Sensation is an operation which takes place in the sense whenever a sensible body physically acts on that sense even though it be through a medium. At the same time the operation belongs to a sense which is a conjunction of both the sensitive power of the soul and the corporeal organ. Thomas is not, therefore, prepared to accept Plato’s alternative position that “the sense organ is changed by the sensible and from this change the soul is somehow excited so as to form species of sensibles in itself.”

The path that is carved out here is narrow and seems to be built along a steep and rocky slope. Species are not mentioned in the argument and that is interesting in itself. According to Thomas’s overall position, they are intimate to the operation both as actualizing forms and as bearers of likeness. But the point of the argument seems to be that species do not “flow” from the sensible object but rather arise in the operation of a sense in response to the active impression of something sensible on an organ of sense. On the other hand, species do not just appear in the soul in some parallel response to the excitation of a sense organ. Sensation is the act of a sense, which is an organ informed by a sensitive part of the soul. In Thomas’s terminology, it is an operation so that it occurs and reaches a certain completion in the sense. The species is the actualizing form of this operation.

At the end of article 6, Thomas examines intellection, which occurs without participation of the body. Impression by a body is, therefore, insufficient to cause understanding and a more noble agent is required. This is not a superior substance, as Plato had thought, but the agent intellect which “makes phantasms received from the senses intelligible by way of a certain abstraction.” This will be explored further in subsequent articles. In answer to the original question, then, Thomas concludes that from the side of the phantasm intellection is caused by sense but “it cannot be said that sensible knowledge is the total and perfect cause of intellectual knowledge, but rather it is in a way the material cause.”

421 ST I 84, 6. B.A.C. I, p. 622. “Aristoteles autem media via processit. Posuit enim cum Platone intellectum differre a sensu. Sed sensum posuit propriae operationem non habere sine communicacione corporis; ita quod sentire non sit actus animae tantum, sed coniuncti. Et similiter posuit de omnibus operationibus sensitivae partis. Quia igitur non est inconveniens quod sensibilia quae sunt extra animam, causent aliquid in coniunctum, in hoc Aristoteles cum Democrito concordavit, quod operatio sensitivae partis causent aliquid per impressionem sensitivum in sensum: non per modum defluxionis, ut Democritus posuit, sed per quandam operationem. Nam et Democritus omnem actioem fieri posuit per influxionem atomorum, ut patet in I De general.”

422 Lewis and Short (p. 878) define eidolon. -a as “I an image, form, esp. a spectre, apparition, ghost; II Church Fathers: an idol.” They indicate that it derives directly from the Greek eidos.

423 Contrasted to this reading, which goes far to remove the sense of species being almost “things” which can be moved around, is, of course, the “sound” of the equivalent operation at the level of intellect. The agent intellect “abstracts intelligible species from the phantasm” and presents them to the possible intellect which receives them.

424 ST I 84, 6. B.A.C. I, p. 622. “Intellectum vero possit Aristoteles habere operationem absque communicacione corporis. Nihil autem corporeum imprimere potest in rem incorpoream. Et ideo ad causandam intellectualem operationem, secundum Aristotelem, non sufficit sola impressio sensibili corporum, sed requiritur aliquid nobilis, quia ‘agens est honorabilius patiente,’ ut ipse dicit. Non tamen ita quod intellectualis operatio causetur in nobis ex sola impressione aliquarum rerum superiorum, ut Plato possit: sed illud superius et nobilis agens quod vocat intellectum agentem, de quo iam supra diximus, facit phantasma a sensibus accepta intelligibilia in actu, per modum abstractionis ciusdam. Secundum hoc ergo, ex parte phantasmatum intellectualis operatio a sensus causatur. Sed quia phantasmata non sufficient immutare intellectum possibilum, sed operet quod fiant intelligibilia actu per intellectum agentem; non potest dici quod sensibilis cognitio sit totalis et perfecta causa intellectualis
In article 7, Thomas asks whether the intellect can understand by means of the species which it has within it, without turning to phantasms. The sed contra quotes Aristotle in De anima III, 7 to the effect that “the soul understands nothing without a phantasm.” Thomas’s answer is straightforward. “It is impossible that our intellect, in the present state of life, in which it is joined to a possible body, actually understand anything without turning to a phantasm.” He gives two sets of arguments for this, the first evidential, the second from reason.

There are two evidential arguments, which argue that it is the case that the intellect must abstract species from phantasms. The first, which Thomas gives in considerable detail, is that lesions, which disrupt the imagination, or lethargy, which impedes the memory, hinder the actual use of the intellect. Since the intellect itself does not function by means of an organ, it must be that it uses sensitive powers in part of its operation. The second argument is from personal experience. We form images, which we use as examples, when we wish to understand something. Also we propose examples to those whom we wish to bring to understanding about something.

He makes it in this way:

Whence the nature of a stone, or of whatever material thing, cannot be known perfectly and truly except in so far as it is known as existing in a particular. We apprehend a particular, however, by means of sense and imagination. And therefore for the intellect to actually understand its proper object it is necessary that it turn itself to phantasms in order that it observe the universal nature existing in a particular.

Thomas next investigates the reason why this is the case. The argument is very interesting. He first compares angelic and human intellects. The angelic intellect, which exists free from matter, has as its object things which are free from matter. “The proper object of the human intellect, which is joined to a body, is, however, a quiddity or nature existing in bodily matter.” But such an object, by nature exists only in some individual which is “not without” corporeal matter. He gives examples. The very nature of a stone is what is found in an individual stone and so on. Thus far, then, he has established that the objects of human knowledge are natures of corporeal things and that such natures exist only in individuals. This we already know. The next turn we have not seen before.

There are two evidential arguments, which argue that it is the case that the intellect must abstract species from phantasms. The first, which Thomas gives in considerable detail, is that lesions, which disrupt the imagination, or lethargy, which impedes the memory, hinder the actual use of the intellect. Since the intellect itself does not function by means of an organ, it must be that it uses sensitive powers in part of its operation. The second argument is from personal experience. We form images, which we use as examples, when we wish to understand something. Also we propose examples to those whom we wish to bring to understanding about something.
This discussion shows up the tightness of Thomas’s theory of knowledge and also brings to the fore several tensions in it. We have more frequently seen him stressing the spirituality of the human intellect, which receives species without any matter and which acts without a material organ. Its knowledge is universal. Yet here he makes it clear that that same intellect cannot actually understand without interacting with a corporeal organ. His reason is clear and it “fits.” The object of the human intellect is the nature of a material thing, which, while it may be known universally, exists only in the individual. For knowledge to be true it must be known there. Thomas again contrasts his position with that of Plato. Were the object of human understanding separated forms, it would not need to turn to phantasms. But that is not so.

In the texts we have seen in the whole of this study, both Thomas’s interests and his order of exposition seem to belie this position. He has spent more time discussing angelic and divine knowledge than human knowledge. And even when he has spoken of human knowledge, he has tended to be interested in man’s knowledge of divine things. Such were his interests. The theological order of proceeding, which we have seen in this question as well, begins with the soul and particularly with the soul already recognized as incorporeal and immortal. The text under consideration, then, ought to be seen as a severe corrective to any over-spiritualization of Thomas’s philosophical position which might flow from the theological nature of the texts. Thomas seems to recognize this himself in the reply to the third objection where he insists that incorporeal things are known by us only through comparison to sensible bodies.

An issue also arises in relation to habitual knowledge. In this article, Thomas has insisted that nothing is actually understood unless the intellect turns to the phantasm. But he also holds that things can be potentially or habitually understood by means of intelligible species retained in the intellect. We examined this in detail in our study of the De veritate and will return to it in the study of the Sentencia libri De anima. Thomas rejected Avicenna’s interpretation of Aristotle that a habit is merely an aptitude to abstract species more easily and insisted that habits consist of conserved species. Now he insists that even those species are not sufficient to activate knowledge but rather a fresh turn to the phantasms is required.

It is in conserved species or habits that we most clearly see Thomas’s insistence on species which are distinct from the act of understanding. We are prompted to wonder why he so insisted especially when part of each new act of the intellect is a fresh turn to the phantasm. There seems to be a superfluity: either on the side of retained species or on the side of having always to turn to the phantasm.

The final article (a. 8) of question 84 reinforces and strengthens what we have just seen. Thomas states that the intellect cannot make judgements in isolation from the senses. The object of the intellect is a sensible nature existing in a particular thing. The philosopher, says Thomas, cannot judge properly without knowing sensible things. All other things, namely spiritual things, are known with reference to sensible things. This article does make clear that a turn to the phantasm is necessary not only for simple apprehension or the first act of the intellect but also for its further acts, specifically, judgement.

Thomas’s insistence that every act of intellection involves a turn to the phantasms should be read in conjunction with ST I 86, 1 where he discusses whether the intellect knows singular things. The import of the reply is that it cannot know them directly or principally because they are bound up with matter. It knows only universally directly. It knows singulars indirectly through its turn to the phantasm. On knowledge of singulars see George P. Klubertanz, “St. Thomas and Knowledge of the Singular,” The New Scholasticism 26 (1952) : 135-166, and the texts cited there.

Objection: “Intellectus enim fit in actu per speciem intelligibilem qua informatur. Sed intellectum esse in actu, est ipsum intelligere. Ergo species intelligibiles sufficent ad hoc quod intellectus actu intelligat, absque hoc quod ad phantasmata se convertat.”
Rely: “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod species conservatae in intellectu possibili, in eo existunt habitualiter quando actu non intelligit, sicut supra dictum est. Unde ad hoc quod intelligamus in actu, non sufficit ipsa conservatio specierum; sed oportet quod eis utamur secundum quod convenit rebus quorum sunt species, quae sunt naturae in particularibus existentes.”

430 Thomas’s insistence that every act of intellection involves a turn to the phantasms should be read in conjunction with ST I 86, 1 where he discusses whether the intellect knows singular things. The import of the reply is that it cannot know them directly or principally because they are bound up with matter. It knows only universally directly. It knows singulars indirectly through its turn to the phantasm. On knowledge of singulars see George P. Klubertanz, “St. Thomas and Knowledge of the Singular,” The New Scholasticism 26 (1952) : 135-166, and the texts cited there.

431 ST I 84, 7 ad 3. B.A.C. I, p. 624. “Ad tertium dicendum quod incorporea, quorum non sunt phantasmata, cognoscuntur a nobis per comparationem ad corpora sensibilia, quorum sunt phantasmata. Sicut veritatem intelligimus ex consideratone rei circa quam veritatem speculamur; Deum autem, ut Dionysius dicit, cognoscimus ut causam, et per excessum, et per remotionem; alias etiam incorpores substantias, in statu praesentis vitae, cognoscere non possimus nisi per remotionem, vel aliquam comparationem ad corporalia. Et ideo cum de huiusmodi aliud intelligimus, necesse habemus converti ad phantasmata corporum, licet ipsorum non sint phantasmata.”

432 That there is no ambiguity about this is made clear by the first objection and reply. ST I 84, 7 ad 1. B.A.C. I, pp. 623-624.

433 Objection: “Intellectus enim fit in actu per speciem intelligibilem qua informatur. Sed intellectum esse in actu, est ipsum intelligere. Ergo species intelligibiles sufficent ad hoc quod intellectus actu intelligat, absque hoc quod ad phantasmata se convertat.”
Rely: “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod species conservatae in intellectu possibili, in eo existunt habitualiter quando actu non intelligit, sicut supra dictum est. Unde ad hoc quod intelligamus in actu, non sufficit ipsa conservatio specierum; sed oportet quod eis utamur secundum quod convenit rebus quorum sunt species, quae sunt naturae in particularibus existentes.”

434 ST I 84, 8. B.A.C. I, p. 625.
ST I q. 85, aa. 1-2

In the first two articles of question 85, Thomas probes more deeply into the matters which we have just seen in question 84, article 6. The intellect understands by means of intelligible species abstracted from phantasms. The first article determines the need for abstraction. The second shows that what is known is not the species but rather the object of knowledge. Thomas begins article one with the previously established principle. "the knowable object is proportionate to the cognitive power," and delineates three grades of power.

Sensation is the act of a bodily organ and so its object is “a form according as it exists in corporeal matter.” Because matter is the principle of individuation, such knowledge is of particulars only. It is to be noted that the object, even of sense knowledge, is a form. It is not a thing, or a whole, or matter. This is not really hard to grasp and can be most easily seen in sight and hearing. Colour is qualitative addition to a thing. It adds no matter or stuff, only form. A noise, as a “formless form,” is more obviously a form due to its deficiency of form.

Thomas next considers the angelic intellect which is neither the act of a corporeal organ nor joined to corporeal matter in any way. Its object is “a form subsisting without matter.” Even in knowing the physical universe, an angel knows it as existing immaterially in itself or in God. This position is interesting in the light of the next article. It seems that, at least in some respect, what angels may first know are species and that their knowledge of other things may be secondary.

The third kind of cognitive power is the human intellect, which, although it is not the act of any organ, is the form of a body. Its proper object is “a form existing individually in matter yet not according as it is in such matter.” The only way that such knowledge can take place “is by abstracting form from individual matter which the phantasms represent.” Intellectual knowledge even though immaterial begins in this way.

In stating this view, Thomas sees only Plato’s position as an alternative. Naturalistic or materialistic theories which deny the distinction of sense and intellect have already been disposed of. The only other alternative is illumination. This has been refuted and is in any case somehow derivative of Platonism. Plato, according to Thomas, conceived the objects of the human intellect as separate ideas and knowing as a kind of participation in those ideas. Thomas insists that natures are known in bodies and that immaterial forms are abstracted from phantasms.

The replies to the objections add considerable precision to the matter of this article. The reply to objection one distinguishes two kinds of abstraction—one, by mode of composition and division (judgement), would be false if, for instance, it considered the form of a stone to be separate from the stone; the other, by mode of simple or absolute consideration, can consider things separately without falsehood. This is the mode involved in abstraction of species from a phantasm.

What this discussion brings out is that what is grasped in an act of knowledge and that whose content is conveyed by a species is an aspect of a thing. The aspect may be accidental, for example, colour, and then it is grasped by a sense. The aspect may be essential, in Thomas’s words, “it may be the nature of a species” (specific nature), and then it is grasped by the intellect which considers the nature apart from individuating principles.

And this is to abstract the universal from the particular, or the intelligible species from the phantasm, to consider, namely, the nature of the


435 ST I 85, 1. B.A.C. I, p. 627. “Quaedam enim cognoscitiva virtus est actus organi corporalis, scilicet sensus. Et ideo objectum cuiuslibet sensitiva potestatem quae est forma prout in materia corporali existit. Et quia huiusmodi materia est individuationis principium, ideo omnis potentia sensitiva partis est cognoscitiva particularium tantum.”

436 ST I 85, 1. B.A.C. I, p. 627. “Quaedam autem virtus cognoscitiva est quae neque est actus organi corporalis, neque est aliquid modo corporali materiae coniuncta, sic aut intellectus angelicus. Et ideo huius virtutis cognoscitivae objectum est forma sine materia subsistens: etsi enim materialia cognoscant, non tamen nisi in immortalibus ea intuentur, scilicet vel in seipsis vel in Deo.”
species without consideration of the principles of individuals, which are represented by the phantasms.

Two things are at stake here. First, what a human being knows is somewhat limited and is in the first instance only an aspect of being. Knowledge of a whole is a far more complex achievement. It is found, for instance, to some degree by way of sense in the act of the common sense, and intellectually in intellectual knowledge of singulars or more, perhaps, in a complete science. Second, we see in the text just quoted that in the case of simple abstraction, the notions of the universal, intelligible species, and the nature of the species seem to flow easily together. At least by way of content and ideally, the intelligible species seems to coincide for a moment with the natural species or with the essence of what is understood.

Thomas concludes the reply by grounding his position in a distinction we have frequently seen.

For it is without falsity that the mode of the one understanding in understanding is other than the mode of a thing in existing, because the understood is in the understander immaterially, in the manner of the intellect but not materially in the manner of a material thing.

In the reply to the second objection, Thomas clarifies the sense in which intelligible species are abstracted from matter. He defines two kinds of matter: common matter, such as flesh and bones; and signate or individual matter, such as this flesh or these bones. “The intellect abstracts the species of a natural thing from individual sensible matter but not from common sensible matter.” Thomas carries his argument against those who think that “the species of a natural thing is form only and that matter is not part of the species.” Clearly the form in knowledge or the intelligible species is not to be equated with the substantial form of the thing that is known but rather with its nature or essence. The essences of material things include a relationship to matter.

The replies to objections 3 and 4 focus on the action and effects of the agent intellect and can be treated together. The agent intellect both illuminates phantasms so that they are made more fit for abstraction and abstracts an intelligible species from them. This seems to be the full extent of the agent intellect’s activity.

Thomas holds that the more complex and apparently active functions of the intellect such as composition and division are performed by the possible intellect. It is the possible intellect that understands.

Both replies emphasize the transformation that takes place in the representative form by abstraction. The third reply is clearest.

But by the power of the agent intellect a certain likeness comes to be in the possible intellect from the turning of the agent intellect to the phantasms. And this is, indeed, representative of those things to which the phantasms belong but only in respect...
of the nature of the species (or specific nature). And in this way an intelligible species is said to be abstracted from phantasms. But it is not the case that some numerically one form that was first in the phantasms afterwards is affected in the possible intellect in the way in which a body is received and transferred from one place to another.

What we see Thomas emphasizing here is the fact that abstraction is an achievement belonging only to the agent intellect and that its product, the intelligible species, is something new. True, the species relates to and is representative of whatever thing is known and this relationship is borne through the phantasm. But the specific nature which is recognized by the intellect does not already exist in the phantasm which is simply a rather complex sensible image of the thing known. The constitution of an intelligible essence from sensible experience is a peculiarly human achievement.

It is in this notion of abstraction that we see species in their glory and so the theory demands careful examination. What is Thomas talking about under the rubric of abstraction? It seems two things: first, the formation of essences or universals; second, the initiation of the act of understanding. At the heart of the issue is the possible intellect: the intellect that understands but which is totally passive at least in respect of its first act - a tabula rasa.

Building on Aristotle and the commentary tradition, Thomas posits an agent intellect whose nature is to be actual. In the first instance, this agent intellect forms essences or universals by illuminating sensible images (phantasms) and by abstracting intelligible species from them. In the second instance, the agent intellect conveys these species to the possible intellect, which is accordingly actualized. The species is somehow identified with the essence but somehow different.

The process sounds terribly mechanical and put this way it is. Thomas makes some efforts to modify this. We have seen him insist that it is not numerically the same form that is in the phantasm and that is somehow changed and received by the intellect. His insistence that it is not like a body that is transferred from place to place anticipates the criticism of Thomas Hobbes some four centuries later. In article 2, we will see him insisting that a species is not that which is known but that by which something is known.

The theory of abstraction is often made the guarantor of truth and certitude in the intellect. If senses do not err about their proper objects and if abstraction is made directly from sensible images, truth would seem to be attained. There is certainly a sense in which this argument can work. Yet if it is taken mechanically, despite assurances to the contrary it quickly leads to species seeming to be some kind of stuff which is moved from something outside the knower to the sense, to the imagination, and to the intellect. This tendency is increased by insisting on the total passivity of the possible intellect so that all that it receives must come from outside it and by the fact that abstraction and reception are distinct operations of distinct powers.

It seems that Thomas went as far as he wanted. As we have seen, he introduced correctives into his theory but he does not seem to have had further questions about abstraction and species such as would be raised by some of the modern discomfiture with the notion of species. [What are they? How do you find them? Where are they?] Yet three points can be made to show that Thomas’s position is much more lively than a merely mechanical reading of the theory of abstraction would imply.

First, despite his repeated insistence on the passivity of the senses and of the possible intellect, it is clear that, for Thomas, knowing is anything but purely passive and, indeed, that the final shape of an act of knowledge is very much determined by the knower. The imagination forms images, the agent intellect abstracts universals, the possible intellect forms definitions and propositions. Any reception is governed by the principle, “whatever is received is received after the manner of the recipient.” What is first grasped by any particular power is an object which is either an accident or the essence of the thing known. It is an aspect of the thing appropriate to the particular power that is grasping it. Knowledge of more complex wholes is gained by subsequent activity, but human knowledge is frequently imperfect and slow to reach completion. In this respect we have seen Thomas point to the role of learning and discovery and knowledge reaches its completion only in a full science. One person can know more than another both on account of more learning and on account of absolute capacity to learn.

444 ST I 85, 1 ad 3. B.A.C. I, p. 629. “Sed virtute intellectus agens resultat quaedam similitudo in intellectu possibili ex conversione intellectus agentis supra phantasmata, quae quidem est representaiva eorum quorum sunt phantasmata, solum quantum ad naturam speciei. Et per hunc modum dictur abstrahi species intelligibilis a phantasmatisbus: non quod aequam edem numero forma, quae prius fuit in phantasmatisbus, postmodum fiat in intellectu possibili, ad modum quo corpus accipitur ab uno loco, et transfertur ad altem.”

445 “Some say that Senses receive the species of things and deliver them to the Common-sense; and the Common Sense delivers them over to the Fancy, and the Fancy to the Memory, and the Memory to the judgement, like handling of things from one to another, with many words making nothing understood.” Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, edited by C. B. Macpherson (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p. 86.
Second, Thomas has said that the intelligible species is not numerically the same form as the phantasm from which it has been abstracted. The phantasm is a kind of material cause. The intelligible species is in a sense generated and becomes the formal cause of a new activity. This both keeps alive the formal nature of knowledge and recognizes it as a series of activities.

Third, any act of knowledge is an operation. It is initiated and terminates in a power or faculty. Although the object of knowledge exercises a certain agency, it is properly the power which acts. In question 84, article 6, we saw Thomas reject Democritus’s position that sense knowledge occurs owing to an influx of images in favor of his own notion of operation. It seems that the same would apply to the intellect even though here the situation is made more complex by there being two intellects which are distinct powers.

The upshot of this discussion is that what is known in any particular act of knowledge is an aspect-as-achieved of the thing known. Knowledge had by the external senses is very direct, but intellectual knowledge, reaching for universals and essences, is very different from sense knowledge. It can claim a line that reaches to first sensings but it is built on much more complex activity. Truth is found in so far as these operations are directed to things but its achievement is dependent, to some degree, on the success of the activity. Error and falsehood are common in human experience. Some people understand more than others. This is not to say by any means that truth is at the whim of the knower. Rather it is at different times more or less adequately achieved.

Article 2 of question 85 addresses one of the issues that has become significant to modern philosophy. What is known? - something outside the knower or its impression in the knower? Thomas recognizes that this has been an issue and offers two arguments against the view that what is known is the impression in the soul.

His first argument is that if this were the case, science would be only about things in the soul and not about objects outside the soul. For some modern philosophers this is what has to be proved. But for Thomas science is somehow prior to a theory of knowledge and a given with which the theory has to deal.

The second argument is a kind of reduction to absurdity. If a cognitive power were to know only its own impression, whatever it knew would be true. This, says Thomas, is obviously false in the case of an unhealthy sense which perceives that honey is bitter. In a more subtle way it points to the old adage “whatever seems is true.” Such a position would allow simultaneous truth claims for contradictories and hence lead to the failure of speech.

Those are his arguments. Then, as he commonly does, Thomas moves into an explanation of this. The explanation is in terms of act and species, or act and form. He begins with the statement that the intelligible species is related to the intellect as that whereby the intellect knows. The argument is based on a comparison between transitive and immanent action.

Transitive action, for instance heating, is effected by a form, heat, as is immanent action. Thomas explains that the form from which heating proceeds is a likeness of the heated object. He then claims that similarly the form from which knowledge proceeds is a likeness of the object of knowledge. Central to the argument is that in each case the object is other than its likeness.

---

446 Thus it is that the relation of knower to known is a real relation but the reciprocal relation is a relation of reason.

447 ST I 85, 2. B.A.C. I, p. 630. “Respondeo dicendum quod quidam posuerunt quod vires cognoscitivae quae sunt in nobis, nihil cognoscunt nisi propriae passiones; puta quod sensus non sentit nisi passionem sui Organ. Et secundum hoc, intellectus nihil intelligit nisi suam passionem, idest speciem intelligibilibre in se receptam. Et secundum hoc, species huismodi est ipsum quod intelligitur.” This issue is treated in greater detail in De spir. creat. 9 ad 6 (Maretti pp. 403-406); and in Quodl. 8, 2, 1 (Maretti pp. 160-161). See also In De mem. cap. 3 (450a27-451a17), Leon. pp. 113-115; and In III De anima cap. 2 (429b8-22), Leon. pp. 212-213.

448 ST I 85, 2. B.A.C. I, p. 630. “Primo quidem, quia eaem sunt quae intelligimus, et de quibus sunt scientiae. Si igitur ea quae intelligimus essent solum specie quae sunt in anima, sequetur quod scientiae omnes non essent de rebus quae sunt extra animam, sed solum de speciebus intelligibilibus quae sunt in anima; sicut secundum Platonicos omnes scientiae sunt de ideis, quas ponebant esse intelligibilibre in actu.”

449 ST I 85, 2. B.A.C. I, p. 630. “Secundo, quia sequetur error antiquorum dicentium quod ‘omne quod videtur est verum;’ et sic quod contradictoriae essent simul verae. Si enim potentia non cognoscit nisi propriam passionem, de ea solum iudicat. Sic autem videtur aliud, secundum quod potentia cognoscitiva afficitur. Semper ergo iudicium potentiae cognoscitiva erit de eo quod iudicat, scilicet de propria passione, secundum quod est; et ita omne iudicium erit verum. Puta si gustus non sit propriam passionem, cum aliquid habens solum gustum iudicat mel esse dulce, vere iudicabit; et similiter si ille qui habet gustum infectum, iudicet mel esse amarum, vere iudicabit: uteque enim iudicat secundum quod gustus eius afficitur. Et sic sequitur quod omnis opinio aequaliter erit vera, et universaliter omnis accipiet.”

450 ST I 85, 2. B.A.C. I, p. 630. “Et ideo dicendum est quod species intelligibilis se habet ad intellectum ut quod intelligit intellectus. Quod sic patet. Cum enim sit duplex actio, sicut dictur IX Metaphys., una quae manet in agente, ut videre et intelligere, altera quae transit in rem exteriorum, ut calefacere et secare; utraque fit secundum aliquam formam. Et sic forma secundum quam provenit actio tendens in rem exteriorum, est...
The analogy is not all that clear and could stumble on the very difference between immanent and transitive action. In transitive action, for instance heating, a hot body acts to heat the cold body or patient. In immanent action, for instance seeing, in one sense the object of vision acts on the passive power. But according to Thomas’s understanding of immanent action, the sense power is both actor and the locus of the action. The notion of object seems to be used differently.

Nevertheless, Thomas is clear that a species is that by which or according to which one knows. It is not what is primarily known. On the other hand, he maintains that the species is known in a secondary way by the intellect’s reflection on its own act. What this involves is not spelt out. It may mean that the species is not known in the way an essence is abstracted but rather as a reasoned conclusion reached by the intellect thinking about its own operation.

The concluding remark in this last text is interesting. There Thomas plainly says that “that which is first understood is the thing of which the intelligible species is a likeness.” As we have already seen, the species relates to the intellect as “that by which the intellect knows.” It is clear, then, that Thomas does hold to a direct realism and not to some kind of representationalism. The species is not that in which something is known but rather a means by which understanding takes place.

The last paragraph of the response to article 2 and the reply to the first objection will serve as a fitting conclusion to the discussion of texts from the Summa theologiae. In summary and cryptic fashion they state what Thomas means by identity in knowledge and the role that species play in the achievement of that identity.

Accepting the ancient saying the “like is known by like,” he corrects it with the Aristotelian formula, “the stone is not in the soul but its form is.” He concludes that “by means of intelligible species the soul knows things which are outside it.” In the reply to the first objection, Thomas turns this around.

The understood is in the understander through its likeness. And in this way it is said that the understood in act is the intellect in act in so far as the likeness of the thing understood is the form of the intellect, just as the likeness of the sensible thing is the form of the sense in act.

For Thomas, both statements lead to a single conclusion. What is known is the object, not the species.

Some Texts from the De anima
Frequently Cited by Thomas

The purpose of this section is to isolate certain key passages of Aristotle’s De anima which Thomas has often cited in the texts that we have used in Chapters One and Two and to examine Thomas’s commentary on those passages. The section, therefore, does not purport to give a complete view of Thomas’s use of the De anima on all questions. Rather it reports the texts he has used in specific discussions of species and of the act of knowing as we have seen it.

in ipsa erat, cognosceret terram quae extra ipsam erat; et sic de aliis. Si ergo accipiamus speciem terrae loco terrae, secundum doctrinam Aristotelis, qui dicit quod ‘lapis non est in anima, sed species lapidis;’ sequetur quod anima per species intelligibiles cognoscat res quae sunt extra animam.”

ST I 85, 2 ad 1. B.A.C. I, p. 631. “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod intellectum est in intelligente per suam similitudinem. Et per hunc modum dicitur quod intellectum in actu est intellectus in actu, inquantum similitudo rei intellectae est forma intellectus; sicut similitudo rei sensibilis est forma sensus in actu. Unde non sequitur quod species intelligibilis abstracta sit id quod actu intelligitur, sed quod sit similitudo eius.”

In citing the text of Thomas’s commentary we will follow the Leonine edition. This edition follows the medieval Latin division of the text of Aristotle so the Book III begins at III, 4 of the Greek text. This can cause some confusion as both the Marietti and Busa editions follow the Greek division. Thomas divides his commentary on each Book into chapters and often writes two or even three chapters for one of Aristotle’s chapters. The Bekker numbers of the Aristotle text will be used to locate Thomas’s commentary on that text. On the medieval discussion on the division of the text see Gauthier, “Préface,” pp.210*-217*. In Appendix I of this dissertation, the numeration of Thomas’s commentary is reconciled with that of the Greek De anima.

In fact, the major questions arising out of the De anima and its commentary tradition were, for Thomas, other than those we have been discussing, e.g. the unicity of the intellect, the union of soul and body, the distinction of powers, the separation of soul and body. The Qq. disp. de anima and the Qq. disp. de spir. creat. give a good indication of Thomas’s major preoccupations.
This is not to say that Aristotle was the sole source of Thomas’s theory. He was influenced, as we have seen, by a long commentary tradition, by Christian Faith, by Augustine, and by Neo-Platonism in various guises but particularly by the Pseudo-Dionysius, who was, for Thomas, the major authority on matters concerning angels and angelic knowledge. Still, it was Aristotle who provided the basic framework of Thomas’s theory and whom Thomas himself recognized as his major source.

An interpretative principle that will be used in this section is one of Thomas’s own. Most of his citations of the De anima are very cryptic, for instance, “The stone is not in the eye, but its form is,” or even just the mention of “the stone”. These references will be taken to refer, not just to a line, but to the whole discussion which forms its context.

In De anima III, 3, Aristotle quotes Homer very briefly. “And Homer’s ‘Such is the mind of men’ means the same thing too.” In his commentary, Thomas explains that Aristotle did not give the whole text but only its beginning because that was all that was necessary since the full text was known to the readers. He points out that this brief form of quotation is found both in the Greek and in the Arabic texts but that Boethius’s Latin translation inserts the whole quotation because the verses were not known to his readers.

The principle of interpretation, therefore, is that where Thomas makes a brief allusion to a text or to an example, the whole passage from which it comes ought to be examined. This principle does, of course, sometimes become difficult to apply in the De anima which is itself often so cryptic.

In the notes three medieval Latin translation of the texts of Aristotle will be provided. Comparisons can be interesting. Both the translatio vetus and Moerbeke’s translatio nova seem to remain close to the word order and grammatical structure of the Greek text and are, therefore, very difficult Latin. The nova is built upon the vetus. The text that came with Averroes’ commentary and with which Thomas also was familiar had been filled out more and is clearer Latin. However, it had come into Latin probably via Syriac, then Arabic, and possibly Castilian. As well, it is in some way already interpretative of the De anima.

II, 5. (417a17-20).

Assimilation

All things are affected and moved by a cause and a being in act. Whence, indeed, being affected is in a way by like; on the other hand, it is in a way by unlike, as we said. For indeed, what is unlike is affected; the affected, however, is like.
This text occurs in *De anima* II, 5 where, for the first time after Book I, Aristotle grapples with the nature of sensation. He works with three contraries—afflicting and being affected, act and potency, and like and unlike. We will review them in the reverse order.

We have seen the importance of the dictum “like is known by like” several times in our discussions so far. Here, in Chapter Ten of his commentary on Book II, Thomas again deals with it in commenting on the above text and on the lines preceding it. He identifies Empedocles and his view that the soul is composed of the elements of things and then elaborates Aristotle’s argument against this.

If the sense contains the same elements as those which are sensed, two things will follow. First, the sense will be able to sense itself. Second, it will be able to actually sense even when external sensibles are not present to it. This is obviously false and constitutes a problem that the early philosophers were not able to solve.

Thomas’s usual way of dealing with “like is known by like” has been to distinguish between likeness being in a thing according to *esse materiale* and being in the soul according to *esse immateriale*. He has done this even in Book I of the current work by going beyond the text of Aristotle and “stating the truth.” “Knowledge comes through the likeness of the thing known being in the knower.” The error of the Ancients, according to Thomas, was to think that the likeness was in the knower “according to esse naturale and according to the same esse which it has in its very self.”

In dealing with the current text, Thomas does not mention modes of being but stays with Aristotle’s solution, which is much more earthy. According to Aristotle, says Thomas, whatever is potential is acted upon by some already existing agent. The distinction which the early philosophers missed had to do with before and after this action. “In the beginning, when it is in a state of being changed and affected, it is unlike; but at the end, when it is in a state of having been changed and affected (*in transmutatum esse et passum*), it is like.”

Although Thomas does use a sense of *esse* in this last text, the two solutions are very different. Aristotle’s solution is a matter of states before and after the act of cognition. We have not seen Thomas use this solution in other texts discussed in this study. Thomas’s preferred solution has been to distinguish the modes of being of a form as it exists in a natural thing and as it exists in an active knower.

---

463 *In I De anima* cap. 4. (404b8-10). Leon. p. 18. “Ad ponendum autem animam esse ex principiis constitutam, mouebantur quia ipsi antiqui philosophi quasi ab ipsa ureritate coacti somnpiabant quoquo modo ueritatem. Veritas autem est quod cognitio fit per similitudinem rei cognitae in cognoscente; oporet enim quod res cognita aliquo modo sit in cognoscente. Anti qui uero philosophi arbitrati sunt quod oporetet similitudinem rei cognitae esse in cognoscente secundum esse naturale et secundum idem esse quod habet in se ipsa; dicebant enim quod oporetet simile simili cognoscit; unde, si anima cognoscit omnia, oporet quod habeat similitudinem omnium in se secundum naturale esse, sicut ipsi ponebant; nescierunt enim distinguere illum modum quo res est in intellectu seu in oculo et quo res est in se ipsa; unde, quia illa que sunt de essencia rei sunt principia illius rei et qui cognoscit principia huiusmodi cognoscit ipsam rem, posuerunt quod ex quo anima cognoscit omnia, esset ex principiis rerum. Eto hoc erat omnibus commune.”

464 *In II De anima* cap. 10. (417a2-9). Leon. p. 108. “Circa primum considerandum est quod Empedocles et quicumque posuerunt simile simili cognoscit, posuerunt sensum esse actu ipsa sensibilis; ut enim cognosceret omnia sensibilia, posuerunt anamim sensitiuum esse compositam quodam modo ex omnibus sensibilibus, in quantum constatab secundum eos ex elementis sensibilibus. Duo ergo ad hanc positionem consequebantur, quorum unum est quod, si sensus est ipsa sensibilia in actu utpote compositus ex eis, cum ipsa sensibilia in actu sentiri possunt, sequetur quod ipsi sensus sentiri possunt; secundum est quod, cum sensus sentire possit presentibus sensibilibus, si sensibilia actu sunt in sensu utpote ex eis composito, sequetur quod sensus possit sentire sine exterioribus sensibilibus. Vtrumque autem horum est falsum. Et ideo hce duo inconueniencia que sequitur ad Antiquorum positionem, sub qucetione proponit, tanquam que per antiquos solui non possint.”
II. 5. (417a21-b1). Habit

But distinction must be made about potency and act. For now we are saying the things we hold about them simply.

For there is, indeed, such a thing which knows, as when we say man, since man is among knowers and among those having knowledge. But there is as when we say one having grammatical knowledge. But these two are not possible in the same way— the former, indeed, because his kind and his matter is of this sort; but the latter because so wishing he is able to consider unless something exterior prohibits. Moreover, there is the one already considering, actually being and properly knowing this letter A.

Indeed, both of the first are therefore knowers according to potency, but one is altered through teaching and often changed from a contrary state, whereas the other [moves] from not acting to acting because it has sense or grammar, but in another way.

Thus Aristotle brings further distinction into the matter of act and potency in knowledge. The distinction will be used in working out what sensation is and the way in which it is or is not an affection. Thomas’s exposition is clear and detailed and stays very close to Aristotle’s text. The only exception to this is that, following up on “a contrary state,” Thomas distinguishes two kinds of ignorance which Aristotle has not.

The basic distinction, then, is that there are three states in which a knower can be found. The first is the state of pure potentiality. The third is the state of actually knowing or contemplating. The second state is actual with respect to the first but potential with respect to the third and constitutes a condition of being ready to act at will. Thomas readily calls this state a habit although Aristotle does not.

What is noticable in this passage is that Thomas does not mention species. In the discussion of habit in the De veritate, we saw how Thomas explained intellectual habits by means of retained species and also his disagreement with Avicenna on this. Aristotle himself does not deal with habit in this way. Rather he distinguishes three degrees of act and potency in which a knower can be found.

Thomas does describe habit in terms of species later when he comments on De anima III, 4 (429b5-9). There Aristotle applies the three-fold distinction to intellectual knowledge in much the same terms that we have seen in De anima II, 5. Aristotle does not mention forms but the passage does follow 429a27-28 where he calls the soul the place of forms.

Thomas uses his discussion of 429a18-28 to justify an explanation of habit in terms of retained species which he then provides. It is brief and adds little to the discussion of habit we saw in the De veritate. He does give a reason for going beyond the text when he says that “it is when someone has a particular form that he is able to perform the operation of that form.” He also distinguishes first act, which is habit, and second act, which he calls operation.

Having dealt with the text, Thomas steps outside it to criticize Avicenna’s view that species are not retained in habitual knowledge but are in the intellect only when it is actually understanding. This, says Thomas, is both false and contrary to Aristotle. It is contrary to Aristotle because he

---

465 This text was clearly used in In III Sent. d. 14, a. 1, qc. 2; In IV Sent. d. 50, q. 1, a. 2 ad 5; De ver. 10, 2; 10, 8; 10, 9; 20, 2.
Est quidem enim sic scienatis aliquid, sicut si dicanus hominem, quot-un homio scienciam et habemus se scieniam; est autem sic dicimus scientem habentem grammaticam. Vierque autem homin non eodem modo possibilis est, set hic quidem quoniam genus huiusmodi et materia est, ille autem quia ulens possibilis est considerare, nisi aliquid prohibet exterius; iam autem considerans, actu ens et propriis scienis hanc litteram A.
Ambo quidem igitur primum secundum potencia scientes sunt, set hic quidem per doctrinam alteratus est et multociens ex contrario mutatus habuit, hic autem ex eo quod habet sensum aut grammaticam, non agere autem, in agere, alio modo.”
467 In II De anima cap. 11. (417a22-b1). Leon. pp. 110-111. See also In II De anima cap. 12. (417b16-18), Leon. p. 114. There he distinguishes sensitive and intellectual habits and shows that the former are natural to man while the latter are learned.
held that “when the intellect is brought into the act of species [plural] in the manner in which science is an act, the intellect is still in potency.” The text here is dense. It seems to hinge on Aristotle’s view that when science is possessed, the man of science can spontaneously move into the activity of science without reinvestigating the matter of the science. Thomas’s view is that the content-matter of science can only be retained by means of species.


But sensation occurs in something being moved and being affected, as has been said: for it seems to be a certain alteration.

If, therefore, understanding is like sensing, it will undoubtedly be either undergoing something from the intelligible or something else of this kind.

The question of the sense in which knowing is an affection (passio) or an under-going (patti) has been a problem throughout this study. It is a problem also faced by Aristotle in the De anima where it first arises in conjunction with “like affects like” and his criticism of Empedocles. A solution is worked out in De anima II, 5 in relation to sense knowledge using the distinction between habitual and actual knowledge and in De anima III, 4 in relation to intellectual knowledge. Further precisions are made in De anima III, 7. We shall follow Thomas’s commentary on these passages. Other texts have been noted but are less important.

In commenting on II, 5 (417b2–15), Thomas first draws out the distinction Aristotle has made between different senses of patti. In the proper sense, being affected implies destruction by a contrary. A patient is "conquered" by an agent so that one form, either substantial or accidental, is replaced by another.

The second kind of passio is said less properly and only in so far as it implies a reception. To explain this, Thomas shifts from the categories of action and passion to the distinction of act and potency. “Act is the perfection of a potency” and so the affection occurs not as destruction but as the perfection of the potency. Indeed, a potency can be perfected only by something which is in act. Whatever is in act in this sense is not a contrary but rather “something like” “because a potency is nothing other than a

sentire, aut pati aliquid utique erit ab intelligibile aut aliquid huiusmodi alterum.”

Translation vetus, Gauthier lect. 1, p. 445. “Et quosmodo forte fit ipsum intelligibile, si igitur est intelligere sicentur aut pati aliquid sit ab intelligibili, aut aliquod huiusmodi alterum sit.”

Averroes’s version, Crawford t. 2, p. 380. “Dicamus igitur quod, si formare per intellectum est sicut sentire, aut patietur quoquo modo ab intellecto, aut aliiud simile.”

Hamlyn p. 57. “Now, if thinking is akin to perceiving, it would be either being affected in some way by the object of thought or something else of this kind.”

These texts were referred to, for instance, in In II Sent. d. 19, q. 1, a. 3ad 1; In III Sent. d. 15, q. 2, a. 1, qe. 2. The theme is frequently found in Aristotle. Other texts are: I, 5 (410a25–26); II, 4 (415b23); II, 5 (417a14); II, 11 (424a1); III, 7 (431a4–7).


Translatio vetus, Gauthier lect. 10, p. 267. “... sensus enim in ipso moueri et pati accidit, sicut dictum est. Videtur enim quedam alteratio esse in sentiente.”

Averroes’ version, Crawford t. 51, p. 208. “Dicamus igitur quod sentire accidit secundum motum et passionem, sicut diximus; existimatur enim quod est aliqua alteratio.”

Hamlyn, p. 22. “Perception consists in being moved and affected, as has been said; for it is thought to be a kind of alteration.”

certain order to act, but unless there were some likeness between potency and act, it would not be necessary that the proper act arise in the proper potency."

Having made the distinction, Thomas applies it first to the move from habitual to actual knowledge and then to the move from not knowing to knowing. In regard to the former, *passio* or *alteratio* cannot be said properly because the knower "is not changed from contrary to contrary but is perfected in what it already has." This activity is not gaining new knowledge but is rather performing or being perfected in what is already had. This case, although in one sense the less significant instance, is strategic to the argument because it establishes the possibility of knowledge being other than an affection.

475 *In II De anima* cap. 11. (417b2-4). Leon. pp. 112. “Alio modo passio communis dicitur minus proprie, secundum scilicet quod importat quandam receptionem; et quia quod est receptituum alterius comparatur ad ipsum "sicut potencia ad actum"; actus autem est perfectio potencia, ideo hoc modo dicitur passio non secundum quod fit quedam corruptio patientis. Set "magens" secundum quod fit quedam "salus", id est perfectio, " eius quod" est in "potencia ab eo quod est" in "actu"; quod enim est in potencia non perfectitur nisi per id quod est actu; quod autem est in actu non est contrarium ei quod est in potencia in quantum huiusmodi, set magis simile (nam potencia nichil alius est quam quidam ordo ad actu, nisi autem esset aliqua similitudo inter potemian et actu, non esset necessarium quod proprius actu ficerit in propria potencia), passio igitur sic dicta non est a contrario sicut passio primo modo dicta, set est a "similii"; eo modo quo "potencia se habet" secundum similitudinem "ad actu.""

476 *In II De anima* cap. 11. (417b5-11). Leon. p. 112. “Dicit ergo primo quod "habens scientiam", id est habitualliter scientis, "fit" actu "speculans"; set hoc non est "alterare" et propriosc alterari et patri (quia, ut dictum est, non est proprio passio et alteratio cum de potencia procedit in actu, set cun aliquid de contrario mutatur in contrariam; cum autem habitualliter scientis fit speculans actu, non mutatur de contrario in contrariam, set perficetur in eo quod iam habet; et hoc est quod dicit quod "est additio in ipsum et in actu": additur enim ei perfectio, secundum quod proficit in actu); "aut" si dicatur alterari et patri, eri alius "genus alterationis" et passionis non propriec dicte. Et hoc manifestet per exemplum, dicens quod "non bene" se "habet dicere sapientem" habitualliter, "cum sapiat" actu, "alterari, sicut neque" dicimus "edificatorem" alterari "cum edificat". Concludit autem uterius quod, cum ille qui transit de habitu in actu non accipiatur de nouo scientiam, set proficiat et perficiatur in eo quod habet, doceri autem est scientiunc accipere, manifestum est quod cum ducituir aliquis de potencia "in actu secundum" hoc quod [incipit] facit eum "intelligere" actu "et sapere, non" est "iuustum" quod talis exitus de potencia in actu habeat "denominationem" doctrine, set aliquam aliam, que quidem forte non est posita, set potest poni."

The second case, learning something for the first time, is more difficult. But again it cannot be called a *passio* in the sense of a privation or of a change from a contrary disposition. Rather “some habits or forms, which are perfections of nature, are received without anything being lost.” Thomas identifies this with the second kind of *passio*.

Thomas then raises two problems in his own voice. According to the first, it would seem that to go from error to knowing the truth is a change from contrary to contrary. Thomas admits a similarity but insists that this is only accidental. Error is not a necessary prerequisite to knowledge. Alteration, properly speaking, involves both contraries *per se* and essentially. For example, becoming white necessarily involves ceasing to be other than white.

The implications of this clarification are profound. It is in a sense that which underlies the notion that the soul can become all things. Knowledge comes as a perfection and does not exclude other cognitive perfections. True, there are limitations. External sensation is dependent on the juxtaposition of object and organ. Intellectual knowledge is limited in scope by the time available for learning and by ability in learning. The relevant limitation, however, is that the intellect can only think of one thing at a time. But this is balanced by habit’s being a state of partial actuality. The discussion also shows up the depths.
of the potentiality in knowledge. It is not a potentiality to change from one thing to another but rather a potentiality to receive all things by way of added perfection.

The second problem has to do with the actualization of knowledge. A teacher actualizes a student, but Thomas points out that sometimes a man may acquire knowledge alone by his own discovery. Thomas replies that whenever some thing is reduced from knowing potentially to knowing actually, it must be done by something which is in act. But he distinguishes extrinsic and intrinsic agents. Discovery is effected by an intrinsic agent. Man knows the first principles immediately and naturally. This actual knowledge leads to further actualization.

In De anima III, 4, Aristotle begins to treat of the intellect. He does so first in terms of a comparison with sense and again explores how pati is appropriate to knowledge. Thomas’s commentary follows the text closely and also restates the distinction we have just examined in II, 5. He draws his conclusion in the following way.

If understanding is similar to sensing, and as it is necessary that the intellective part be incapable of being affected, “affection” being taken properly, it is still necessary that it have some similarity to affectability, for it is necessary that this kind of part be receptive of intelligible species and that it be in potency to this kind of species but not that it actually be this.

Again in De anima III, 7, the same ground is covered. We will simply take note of two points from Thomas’s comments on the text. First, he says, “for the sensible does not act on sense as a contrary on its contrary, as for example, it casts something away from it by changing and altering it; but it only reduces it from potency to act.” Here we see the meaning of the claim that a sense is identical with its object. It is said in contrast to change in the normal sense. Knowledge is not an alteration in which an object or agent expunges one form from a material substrate so as to implant another. Rather a sense which is in potency to all its proper sensibiles is actuated by one particular sensible object. A reception of form is involved but not an alteration.

The second point is a matter of terminology. Thomas again distinguishes between motion and the kind of activity that knowledge is. The former he calls “the act of the the imperfect.” The latter he calls “the act of the perfect.” It is the second that is properly called “operation” and of which sensing and willing and understanding are examples. There is nothing here that has not already been implicit in Thomas’s earlier discussion but the terms have been refined.

The question of the manner in which passio or alteratio or pati can be said of knowledge remains difficult. In the Quaestiones disputatae de anima, which was probably written shortly after the Sentencia libri De anima, Thomas says that passio is said equivocally of passio in the soul and of

---

480 In II De anima cap. 11. (Dubitatio 2). Leon. p. 113. “Et ad hoc dicendum quod semper operet quod, cum aliiquis est potentia sciei, si fiat actu habens scieniciam, oportet quod hoc sit ab eo quod est actu... Eodem autem modo se habet in acquisitione scienic: homo enim acquirit scieniac et a principio intrinseco, dum inuenit, et a principio extrinseco, dut addiscit; utrobiue autem reducitur de potentia in actum ab eo quod est actu: homo enim per lumen intellectus agentis statim cognoscit actu prima principia naturaliter cognita et, dum ex eis conclusiones elicit, per hoc quod actu scit uenit in actualem cognitionem eorum quae potentia scieiabat; et eodem modo docens exterius et auxiliatur ad quod sensitiue neque “patitu” faciens in “actu” partem sensitiuam “ex” eo quod ab eo abiciat transmutando et alterando ipsum, set solum reducit eum de potentia in actum; et hoc est quod subdit quod sensitiuum neque “patitur neque alteratur” a sensibili, passione et alteratione proprioe accepta, secundum scilicet quod est a contrario in contrarium.”


482 In III De anima cap. 6. (431a4-7). Leon. pp. 229-230. “Dicit ergo primo quod “sensibile videtur” esse faciens in “actu” partem sensitivum “ex” eo quod erat in “potentia” : “non enim” sic agit sensibile in sensum sicut contrarium in sua contrariam ut aliquid ab eo abiciat transmutando et alterando ipsum, set solum reducit eum de potentia in actum; et hoc est quod subdit quod sensitivum neque “patitur neque alteratur” a sensibili, passione et alteratione proprioe accepta, secundum scilicet quod est a contrario in contrarium.”

483 In III De anima cap. 6. (431a4-7). Leon. p. 230. “Et quia motus qui est in rebus corporalisibus, de quo determinatum est in libro Phisicorum, est de contrario in contrarium, manifestum est quod sentire, si dicatur motus, est “alia species motus” ab ea de qua determinatum est in libro Phisicorum: ille enim motus est actus existentis in potentia, quia uidelicet recedens ab uno contrario quandiu mouetur non attingit alterum contrarium quod est terminus motus, set est in potentia ad ipsum, et quia omne quod est in potentia in quantum huissusmodi est imperfectum, ideo ille “motus” est “actus” imperfecti; set iste motus est actus “perfecti” (est enim operatio sensus iam facti in actu per suam speciem, non enim sentire conuenit sensui nisi actu existenti), et ideo est motus “simpliciter alter” a motu phisico. Et huissusmodi motus dicitur proprae operatio, ut sentire, intelligere et uelle, et secundum hunc motum anima mouet se ipsam secundum Platonem, in quantum cognoscit et amat se ipsum.”
passio in matter. This clarifies the ambiguity we noticed in the Sentences, but what use are equivocal terms for communicating meaning? Unfortunately, we do not have other words. What the passages from this commentary bring out are some of the distinctions demanded when we speak of two quite different kinds of activity.

II, 12. (424a17-20) Receptive of Form without Matter

It is universally necessary moreover of every sense to receive, because sense indeed is receptive of sensible species without matter, as wax receives the sign of a ring without iron or gold. However, it receives the golden or bronze sign, but not in so far as [it is] gold or bronze.

Commenting on this passage, Thomas restates the principle “sense is receptive of species without matter” and the analogy and then immediately raises a problem about the meaning of the principle. In the discussion he seems to use the words species and forma interchangeably and without discrimination. The Leonine Edition sets the passage apart as a dubitatio.

484 Qq. disp. de anima q. 6 ad 5. Robb p. 113. “Ad quintum dicendum quod passio quae est in anima quae attribuitur intellectu possibili non est de genere passionum quae attribuuntur materiae, sed aequivoce dicitur passio utroque, ut patet per Philosophum in III De anima, cum passio intellectus possibilis consistat in receptione secundum quod recipit aliquid aliquid immaterialiter.” Weisheipl (pp. 364-365) holds that this disputation was given in Paris in early 1269.

485 See, for instance. In IV Sent. d. 44, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 3; De ver. 26, 3 ad 11.


487 In II De anima cap. 24. (Dubitatio). Leon. pp. 168-169. “Set uidetur hoc esse commune omni pacienti: omne enim paciens recipit aliquid ab agente secundum quod est agens; agens autem agit per suam formam et non per suam materiam; omne igitur paciens recipit formam sine materia. Et hoc etiam ab sensum apparet: non enim aer recipit ab igne agente materiam eum, set formam. Non <igitur > uidetur hoc esse proprium sensum, quod sit susceptius specierum sine materia.”

488 In II De anima cap. 24. (Dubitatio). Leon. pp. 169. “Dicendum est igitur quod, licet hoc sit commune omni pacienti quod recipiat formam ab agente, differencia tamen est in modo recipiendi. Nam forma que in paciente recipit ad agente, quandoque quidem habet eundem modum essendi in paciente quem habet in agente (et hoc quidem contingit quando paciens eandem habet dispositionem ad formam quam habet et agens; unumquodque enim recipitur in altero secundum modum recipientis, unde si eodem modo disponatur saciens sicut agens, eodem modum recipitur forma in paciente sicut erat in agente), et tunc non recipitur forma sine materia, quia, licet illa et eadem materia numero que est agens non fiat pacientis, fit tamen quodam modo eadem in quantum similem dispositionem materialem ad formam acquirit ei que erat in agente; et hoc modo aet pacienti ab igne, et quicquid patitur passione naturali.”

489 In II De anima cap. 24. (Dubitatio). Leon. pp. 169. “Quandoque uero forma recipatur in paciente secundum
It is curious that Thomas raises this “doubt” in the way that he does. We have not seen an objection like it in any of his other works. However, the text of Aristotle is painfully brief on a very complex point, and Thomas has clearly thought it necessary to go well beyond the text. The example of fire and air would seem to be chosen to create as graphic a problem as possible for the text so as to bring further distinction to it. What Thomas adds is the notion of modes of being and the principle “whatever is received is received in the manner of the recipient.” The formulation is very clear.

Thomas next provides an explanation of Aristotle’s notoriously difficult example of a metal ring stamping its seal in wax. 490 “And therefore, he adds, that wax receives the sign, that is, the golden or bronze image or figure but not in so far as it is gold or bronze; for the wax is assimilated to the gold seal in respect to the image but not with respect to the disposition of gold.” 491

This is a fair reading of the text yet seems to fail to exploit the example fully. Thomas, to be sure, explains that the wax does not become gold, but we might add that nor does it become hard, nor does it become a (metal) seal. Why is it not a seal?

Because it in turn is not able to impress its form on something else. It is too soft.

It has been difficult, in this study, to press Thomas on what he means by receiving form secundum esse immateriale. The usual formulation has been that, in seeing colour, the eye does not become coloured. This is important but also rather obvious. More is added if it is recognized that, as well, the sense of sight does not become an agent that can make something else become coloured or see colour. And this is despite the fact that it contains and is determined in its being by that form of colour.

Put another way, it would seem that Thomas usually interprets immaterialiter, sine materia, or secundum esse immateriale in a quasi-substantial or even material sense. But there is also a formal sense in which form is received immaterially. A sense qua sense does not even have the possibility open to it of acting on some third in virtue of the form which it contains. 492 Thus it is that esse immateriale is a weak form of being.

The difficulty of interpreting the example and applying it to the distinction is shown by the fact that there is only one word, seal, for both the seal that secures a document by being stuck to it and the seal that stamps so as to shape the wax and press it to the paper. Verbally the distinction has to be made by calling the first wax and the second gold or bronze. The very language, then, tends to shift the example towards its more material sense. But the other sense is the more important.

Thomas is no doubt sensitive to the difference. Although he is often perfunctory in discussion of esse immateriale, he is very subtle in his descriptions of human activity. 493 This is seen, for instance, in his discussion of teaching. A teacher leads a pupil to understanding by means of examples. The teacher’s knowledge can prompt the teacher to action but it is communicated to the pupil only indirectly. 494 In the sense of Aristotle’s

490 This example is found in Plato, Theaetetus 191 D ff.

In 194 D. Socrates attributes it to Homer (Iliad 2, 851; 16, 554). The Collected Dialogues of Plato, edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 897-900. The sense of the discussion is that what is impressed on memory is more or less easily lost depending on the strength of the impression. Aristotle uses this sense of the analogy in De memoria 450a27-31.


492 D. S. Hutchinson, “Restoring the Order of Aristotle’s De anima,” Classical Quaterly, 37 (1987): 379, in interpreting Aristotle goes further. He says that a sense is not even able to be a medium. It is fluid and cannot pass on changes. Yves Simon, “To Be and to Know,” Chicago Review 14 (1961) : 83-100, also explores the example of wax.

493 This brings up a point about how Thomas writes. We noted often in the discussions of questions from the De veritate and ST that Thomas would offer two sets of arguments: those that argue that such is the case and those that argue how or why it is the case. These ought to be recognized as arguments quia and propter quid. (See In I Post. anal. cap. 23-25 (78a22-79a16)). Mostly, if not always, discussions about species occur in arguments propter quid. The arguments quia take the form of discussions about human activity—teaching, discovery, the limitations of human nature, etc.

494 See, for instance, ST I 84, 7. The description is in some ways akin to Plato’s theory of educating forms.
example, the teacher’s soul has not become a metal seal and so is not able to stamp a form directly onto the student’s soul.

Still, it is our goal to gain as great an understanding as possible of Thomas’s theory of species and here to explore what he means by esse immateriale. To do this we must press him. We will do so by examining all the occurrences of the term esse intentionale in his works.

Esse Intentionale

The term, esse intentionale, was used by Thomas in the discussion of Aristotle’s phrase “receptive of forms without matter.” The term, although favored by Thomas’s later commentators, is extremely rare in his works. In his entire corpus of some eight and a half million words, it occurs only eleven times as esse intentionale and once as ens intentionale. These twelve occurrences are found in nine separate passages. The adjective, intentionalis, is used only three times apart from these twelve. On the other hand, the noun, intentio, and the verb, intendeo, are used in their various forms with great frequency. The adverbial form, intentionaliter, is never used by Thomas, nor is the abstract noun, intentionalis, used by him.

In five of its occurrences, esse intentionale occurs in the form, habet esse intentionale. Four times it occurs as secundum esse intentionale. Once the two forms are combined. In its earliest use the term is used substantively in its own right. It occurs twice this way in the one text.

The contexts in which the term is used are interesting. Four occurrences in three texts deal with the nature of light and the being of colours in the medium. Three occurrences in two texts deal with a distinction of the kinds of being enjoyed by angelic intellects themselves and by the species they contain. Two occurrences deal with human sensitive or intellecctive knowledge. These nine occurrences are all found in works written after 1265. In addition, the term occurs twice in the Sentences in an objection and its reply in the context of the possibility of resurrected bodies. It occurs once in the De veritate in a discussion about appetite. We will not study these last two texts.

The apparatus of the Leonine Edition of the commentary attempts to find sources for esse intentionale. Intentio is found in the Latin Averroes. In the chapter on the Sentences, we saw that Thomas used it and equated it with intelligible species. He used it for the most part in contexts dependent on Avicenna or Averroes. An anonymous commentary on II-III De anima, possibly written in Paris about 1246/47, says that the sensible when it is in a sense is an intentio and again that it has esse spiritualia. Albert the Great did not use esse intentionale in his Summa de homine of ca. 1245 but rather used esse spiritualia. However, in his De anima (ca. 1254-1257), he uses esse intentionale frequently. The editor suggests that the term found its way into the Faculty of Arts in Paris around 1250.

In II Sentences d. 13, q. 1, a. 3, we saw that Thomas found the question of the nature of light very perplexing. He canvassed various views which he rejected and then examined an opinion that “light does not have firm and fixed being in nature but is only an intention.” He at first found this view probable, but after examination he rejected it and determined in favour of the view that “light is an accidental form having fixed and firm esse in nature and is, like heat, an active quality of the sun itself.” He maintains this view in the Summa theologiae and in the Commentary on the De anima.

In ST I 67, 3, Thomas asks whether light is a quality, and we notice two things. First, he is far more definite in his position. He deals with two alternative views but not with any sense of their probability. Second, there is a change of terminology. We find habet esse intentionale rather than est tantum intentio.


496 The texts and the dates of their composition are as follows: In IV Sent. d. 44, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 3 obj/ad 2 (twice) (1252-56); De ver. 22, 3 ad 3 (1256-59); ST I 56, 2 ad 3 (twice) (1265-68); ST I 67, 3 (twice) (1265-68); De spir. creat. 1 ad 11 (1267-68); In II De anima cap. 14 (twice) (1267-68); In II De anima cap. 24 (1267-68); In De sensu cap. 4 (1268-69); In De sensu cap. 18 (1268-69). C.f. Busa, Index Thomisticus, Sect. II, Concordantia Prima, Vol. 12, pp. 255-256.

497 Busa lists 33 and 28 pages of entries respectively.

498 In II De anima p. 128, notes to ll. 292-293; p. 169, notes to l. 56.

499 See also Bonaventure, In II Sent. d. 13, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Quicquetti c. 11, p. 329a): “Et hoc modo dicit Commentator super II De anima quod lux est habitus diaphani et quod est in ipsis sicut intentio vel species vel similitudo.” Quoted ibid. p. 128.

500 Ibid. p. 169.

501 In II Sent. d. 13, q. 1, a. 3. Mandonnet p. 334. “Allii dicunt, quod lux non habet esse firmum et ratum in natura, sed est tantum intentio: ...” “... lux est fomra accidentalis, habens esse ratum et firmum in natura, sicut calor, est qualitas activa ignis, ita lux est qualitas activa ipsius solis, ...” C.f. Ch. 1, p. 85-87 above.
The first view, then, is that “light in air does not have esse naturale, like colour in a wall, but esse intentionale, as the likeness of colour in air.” He rejects this on two grounds both of which are significant for our purposes. The first is that “light ‘names’ air because air becomes actually luminous.” The contrast is that air is not said to be coloured. Behind this is a physics which sees luminosity as a quality inhering in air. Its form, namely light, must have esse naturale. Colour, however, does not colour the air as it is transmitted from a coloured body to an eye. It is not a quality of the air, which in turn is not called coloured.

The second argument is that light has effects in nature as when the rays of the sun heat a body. “Intentions,” says Thomas, “do not cause natural changes.” In these two arguments we find a full analysis of Aristotle’s seal analogy. A form received intentionally is distinguished in two ways. First, the recipient does not become what that form would normally make it. Second, an intentional form is not able to have any effect on natural things outside the soul.

Thomas inserted a separate treatise on the nature of light into Chapter Fourteen of his commentary on Book Two of the De anima. It has a manuscript tradition as a separate treatise (though altered) and is titled “On the Nature of Light, and of the Transparency, and on the Necessity of Light for Seeing,” by the Leonine editors. It is far more comprehensive than his other discussions on light.

He rejects, in effect, five views. Light is not a body, nor of a spiritual nature, nor a manifestation of colour, nor the substantial form of the sun, nor something having an esse intentionale, which flows down from the sun. We will not look at the details of the arguments in each of these cases. Rather, what is interesting is the range of the kinds of being which Thomas considers. He concludes that “light is the active quality of a celestial body which acts through it, and is in the third species of quality like heat.” The argument against light having esse intentionale is that light causes natural changes.

In the De sensu, Thomas uses esse intentionale in reference to colours in the medium. The context is a discussion of the need of light for vision. The role of the medium in vision is discussed. A short passage interests us.

Acts are in receivers according to their own mode, and therefore colour is indeed in coloured bodies as a complete quality in its natural esse. In the medium, however, it is incomplete according to a certain esse intentionale.

The sense of intentionale here is incompleteness or imperfection.

We now turn to the two texts in which Thomas uses esse intentionale in reference to

substantialis solis, et lumen defluens a luce habet esse intentionale, sicut species colorum in aere. Vtrumque autem horum est falsum: primum quidem, quia nulla forma substantialis est per se sensibilis, set solo intellectu comprehensibilis (et si dicatur quod id quod uidentur in sole non est lux set splendor, non erit contendendum de nomine, dummodo hoc quod dicimus lucem, scilicet quod visu apprehenditur, non sit forma substantialis); secundum etiam falsum est, quia que habent solum esse intentionale non faciunt transmutationem naturalem, radii autem corporum celestium transmutant totam naturam inferiorem.

Vnde dicimus quod, sicut corpora elementia habent qualitates actuas per quas agunt, ita lux est qualitas actua corporis celestis per quam agit, et est tercia specie qualitatis sicut et calor.”

C.f. In II De anima cap. 20 (Dubitatio). Leon. p. 152. Here Thomas discusses the spiritual change required of a medium. “Causa autem huius diversitatis hec esse uidentur, quia Antiquis non percipiebant aliquid de imnutatione spirituali medi, set solum de imnutatione naturali, in aliis alius sensibus apparat quedam imnutationi natus in medio, set non in usu. Manifestum est enim quod somi et odores per uentos deferuntur uel impediuntur, colores autem nullo modo: manifestum est etiam quod contrariorium colorum species per eandem partem aeris deferuntur ad uisum, sicut cum unus uident album et alius nigrum simul existentes et eodem aerre utentres pro medio, quod quidem in olfactu non accidit, nam contrarii odores etiam in medio se impediunt inueniuntur. Et ideo, non percipientes imnutationem qua medium imnaturat a uisibili, posuerunt quod uisus deferretur usque ad rem uisum, set, quia percipiebant imnutationem qua medium imnaturatur ubi alis sensibus, credebant quod alia sensibilia deferrentur ad sensum.”

505 In De sensu cap. 4 (438bh2-7). Leon. p. 28. “ . . . actus enim sunt in suspetius secundum modum ipsorum, et ideo color est quidem in corpore colorato sicut qualitas completa in suo esse naturali, in medio autem est incomplete secundum quoddam esse intentionale.” The Leonine editor draws attention to a text of Averroes, Compendium libri De sensu (ed. Shelds and Blumberg) pp. 31-32. “Et esse formarum in mediis est modo medio inter spirituale et corporale: forme enim extra animam habent esse corporale purum, et in anima spirituale purum, et in medio medium inter spirituale et corporale.”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 114
angelic knowledge. In one of them he uses it twice. Both texts are replies to objections in which the problem of how a pure form can receive form immaterially is pushed to a limit—either one limit or the other. The issue has arisen a number of times in the course of this study but has not yet been resolved.

In De spiritualibus creaturis a. 1, Thomas argues against the view that spiritual substances are composed of matter and form. The eleventh objection is that were angels form only, one angel would be in the other. This would occur because whenever one angel was understood by another either its essence would be in the other, or its species would be in the other, and the same conclusion would follow. If the angel were not composed of matter and form there would be no distinction between its complete substance and its essence. Thomas replies as follows.

The intelligible species which is in the intellect of an angel which understands, differs from the angel understood not according to abstraction from matter and concreteness of matter, but just as ens intentionale differs from being which has esse ratum in natura; as the species of colour in the eye differs from colour which is in a wall.

In ST I 56, 2 ad 3, Thomas replies to an objection that one angel cannot know another by means of species “because those species do not differ from an angelic intellect since each is immaterial.” Thomas replies as follows:

One angel knows another through its species existing in its intellect, which differs from the angel of which it is a likeness, not secundum esse materiale et immateriale, but secundum esse naturale et intentionale. For an angel itself is a form subsisting in esse naturale. Not, however, its species which is in the intellect of another angel and has there only esse intelligibile. For just as even the form of colour in a wall has esse naturale, in the conveying medium it has only esse intentionale.

In De sensu cap. 18, Thomas raises a problem in his own voice about something Aristotle has said. It has to do with contraries. A body can be both sweet and white because they are different kinds of quality, but it cannot be both white and black in all the same respects. But what about the soul? Can it know contraries? Thomas solves it this way:

For a natural body receives forms according to esse naturale et materiale, according to which they have contrariety. And therefore a body cannot receive whiteness and blackness at the same time. But sense and intellect receive forms of things spiritually and immaterially secundum esse quoddam intentionale, so that they do not have contrariety, whence sense and intellect can receive the species of sensible contraries at the same time.

Forms that have only esse intentionale do not even partake of contrariety.

With these discussions behind us we can turn back to Thomas’s discussion of Aristotle’s “receptive of form without matter” and his example of the wax and seal. Thomas has said, “For in the sensible thing [the form] has esse naturale, but in the sense it has esse intentionale sive spirituale.”

The text is historically and doctrinally important. Historically, because, since it relates to this particular text of Aristotle, it is the most obvious place to which a philosopher would turn to ask what Thomas means by “receiving form immaterially.” And that, indeed, is what has been done.

Doctrinally, we find that late in his career and in commenting on a crucial text Thomas has turned to the term esse intentionale to describe the reception of form in human sensitive knowledge. The text from the Sentences shows that he was aware of the term from early on but did not choose to use it until after 1265. Until then he was content to use esse immateriale or esse spirituale. What are we to make of this?

---

507 De spir. creat. a. 1 ad 11. Marietti p. 372. “Ad undecimum dicendum quod species intelligibilis quae est in intellectu angeli intelligentis, differt ab angelo intellecto non secundum abstractum a materia et materiae concretum, sed sicut ens intentionale ab ente quod habet esse ratum in natura; sicut differt species coloris in oculo a colore qui est in pariete.”

508 ST I 56, 2 ad 3. B. A. C. I, p. 408. “Ad tertium dicendum quod unus angelus cognoscit alium per speciem eius in intellectu suo existentem, quae differt ab angelo cuius similitudo est, non secundum esse materiale et immateriale, sed secundum esse naturale et intentionale. Nam ipse angelus est forma subsistens in esse naturali: non autem species eius quae est in intellectu alterius angeli, sed habet ibi esse intelligibile tantum. Sicut etiam et forma coloris in pariete habet esse naturale, in medio autem deferenter habet esse intentionale tantum.”

509 Aristotle, De sensu cap. 7 (449a13-22).

510 In De sensu cap. 18 (dubia 1). Leon. p. 99. “Corpus enim naturale recipit formas secundum esse naturale et materiale, secundum quod habent contrarietatem, et ideo non potest idem corpus simul recipere albedinim et nigredinem; set sensus et intellectus recipiunt formas rerum spiritualiter et immaterialiter secundum esse quoddam intentionale, prout non habent contrarietatem, unde sensus et intellectus simul potest recipere species sensibilium contrariorum.” Cf. also Metaphysics IV, 3 (1005b26-35).

511 This has to be seen in context. See, for instance, ST I 85, 2, where Thomas says that contradictories cannot be true.
It seems that there is a development in Thomas’s thought. It is primarily a refinement of terms but denotes a distinction that was only implicit in his earlier formulations. Its usefulness is shown by how frequently commentators have used the term esse intentionale despite the fact that Thomas used it so little. On the one hand, the development is forced on him by consideration of extreme cases—light and colour in the medium, and questions of how angels know one another without being subsumed into one another and without having matter in their composition. On the other hand, in the Summa and in the Commentary, for the first time he deliberately and at length focuses on human knowledge as such and apart from theological issues. It is not insignificant that the Commentary is written at this time with the aid of a revised translation and of translations of the Greek commentators as well as with the aid of other thirteenth century commentators.

When, in the Commentary, Thomas applies esse intentionale to the mode of existence of a form in sense, he does so deliberately and with renewed meaning. Esse intentionale is a very weak and incomplete form of being. It does not even admit of contraries. The discussion of light and of colour in the medium has shown that an intentional form can neither make its subject like its principle nor empower its subject to act as its principle did. The problems with angels showed that esse intentionale is not simply the same as esse spiritualue, which angels have, nor is it the same as esse immateriale, which is strictly appropriate to forms abstracted from beings that have matter in their natures.

Thomas continues to use the terms, esse immateriale and esse spiritualue, and that is satisfactory. In context and relatively speaking their meanings are clear. But as other texts in this chapter will also show, there is a subtle change in his thought. He is more obviously aware that, apart from the act of knowing, this form of being is nothing. Linked to this is the recognition of how radically different an activity is the operatio of the cognitive powers from the actio or immutatio of things in the ordinary physical world.

**III, 4. (429a27-28). A Place of Forms**

And already there are those saying well that the soul is a place of species, except that [it is] not the whole but the intellective [soul] and [the soul is] not actually but potentially the species.

This text draws attention to Thomas’s commentary on 429a18-28 which divides into three parts. First (429a18-24), Aristotle argues that the intellect is neither anything corporeal nor compounded of bodily things. Second (429a24-27), he shows that the intellect has no bodily organ. Third (429a27-28), he approves the saying of the ancients in the light of the preceding arguments. At issue is the nature of the intellect and its distinction from sense. The first two parts are remarkable for being free of any mention of form or species. They speak of the receptivity of the soul to sensibles and intelligibles.

The first part is long, but within it Thomas provides his own argument. “Everything which is in potency to something and receptive of it is free from that to which it is in potency and of which it is receptive.” The intellect is in potency to all sensible natures and so must be free of any bodily nature. The second part need not detain us except for its conclusion that the intellect has no bodily organ.

The purpose of our text, which is found in part three of Thomas’s exposition, is simply to restate with the help of an old saying that the intellect has no bodily organ. That the soul is “a

---


514 Translatio vetus animam esse locum specierum, nisi quod non tota, set intellectiua, neque actu set potencia species.”

515 Averroes’ version, Crawford t. 6, p. 413. “Recte igitur dixerunt dicentes quod anima est locus formarum; sed non universa, sed intelligens; neque forme in endelechia, sed in potencia.”

516 Hamlyn translation, p.57. “Those who say, then, that the soul is a place of forms speak well, except that it is not the whole soul but that which can think, and it is not actually but potentially the forms.”

517 In III De anima cap. 1 (429a18-24). Leon. P. 203. “Et hoc quidem tali ratione apparet: omne enim quod est in potencia ad aliquid et receptiuis eius caret eo ad quod est in potencia et eius est receptiuis, sicut pupilla que est in potencia ad colores et receptiua eorum est absque omni colori; set intellectus noster sic intelligit intelligibilis quod est in potencia ad ea et susceptiuis eorum sicut sensus sensibilium; ergo caperet omnibus illis rebus que natus est intelligere; cum igitur intellectus noster sit natus intelligere omnes res sensibles et corporeas, oportet quod caperet omni natura corporalri, sicut sensus usus caret colore propiter hoc quod est cognoscitius coloris: si enim haberet aliquem colorem, ille color prohideret uideri aliis colores; sicut lingua febridentis que habet aliquem humorem amarum non potest percipere dulcem saporem, sic et intellectus, si haberet aliquam naturam determinatam, illa natura sibi connaturalis prohideret eum a cognitione aliarum naturarum.”

---

512 See, for instance, In I Sent. d. 3, q. 4, a. 1 et ad 1; In II Sent. d. 19, q. 1, a. 1 sed cont. 4; De ver. 10, 2; 19, 1.
place of species’ primarily means, and Thomas takes it to mean, that it has nothing to do with matter, only with form. Following Aristotle, he says that it is not the whole soul but only the intellect that is this way, because in sense knowledge, for instance sight, it is the eye not vision which receives species.

This text is significant for any determination of whether or why Thomas requires intelligible species that are distinct from the act of knowledge as such. Interpreted in an Augustinian sense, it would seem that the soul is “a place of forms,” which is to say that it is full of forms. But that is not the meaning of the text, nor has Thomas taken it that way. And, in fact, both he and Aristotle insist that the soul is not the place of species in so far as “it actually has species but in potency only.”

The saying is meant as an image that conveys the meaning that “the soul is receptive of species.”

There is no mention in this text of habit nor of Thomas’s view that intellectual habits consist of species retained in a state of potency. *Locus specierum* is interpreted in a way that does not offer support to Thomas’s usual position, but neither does it necessarily undermine it. The difference lies in whether one interprets Aristotle (and Thomas) as saying that the soul does not actually have the forms but is in potency to receive the forms, or as saying that the soul has the forms but indeed not actually but rather potentially. What is clear is that before it thinks at all, it does not have forms.

In each of the texts from the Sentences and the *De veritate* that we have noted as places where Thomas used this phrase, he used it in the sense of a place where species are conserved. The clearest is in *De veritate* 19, 1 where he said, “the Philosopher determines that the soul is the place of species in III De anima inasmuch as it retains and conserves them in itself.” This reading cannot be sustained of the *De anima* itself, nor in his commentary of the text does Thomas appear to wish to do so. Nevertheless, in Chapter 2 he will again criticize Avicenna and maintain that the soul retains species. He will not, however, explain this in terms of the soul being “a place of forms.”

**III. 4. (429b29-a2). A Tablet on Which Nothing Is Written**

Being affected in respect of something common was indeed previously distinguished, since the intellect in a certain way is potentially the intelligibles but actually nothing before it understands. However, such is necessary just as nothing is actually written on a tablet, which is indeed the case in the intellect.

Thomas’s commentary on the passage is unremarkable though the point of the text itself is significant. He spells out the two ways in which *being affected* can be understood. Again, intellecction is not properly speaking an affection in the way in which material things are affected by one another. “The intellect is said to be affected only because it is in a certain way in potency to intelligibles and is actually none of them before it understands.” Thomas points out that, in this

---

515 In *III De anima* cap. 1 (429a27-28). Leon. pp. 204-205. “Deinde cum dicit: Et bene iam dicentes sunt” etc., adaptat ei quod dictum est opinionem Antiquorum. Et dicit quod, ex quo pars intellectu non habet organum sicut habet pars sensitiuam, “iam” potest utrificari dictum illorum qui dixerunt quod anima est locus “specierum”, quod per similitudinem dicitur eo quod est specierum receptivia; quod quidem non esset locus “specierum”, quod per similitudinem dicitur eo quod est species receptum, sicut quod ani quosque intellectualia, que organum non habet, “neque” ita est locus specierum quod habeant “actu species, set potencia” tantum.”

516 *De ver.* 19, 1. Leon. p. 564. “Unde etiam Philosophus vult quod anima intellectiva sit locus specierum in III De anima, upote eas in se retenis et conservas.”

---

517 See, for instance, *In I Sent.* d. 40, q. 1, a. 2 ad 5; d. 35, q. 1, a. 2 obj 3; *In IV Sent.* d. 50, q. 1, a. 1 obj 6; *De ver.* 8, 9; 18, 7; 19, 1; ST 184, 2.


519 Thomas's commentary on the passage is unremarkable though the point of the text itself is significant. He spells out the two ways in which *being affected* can be understood. Again, intellecction is not properly speaking an affection in the way in which material things are affected by one another. “The intellect is said to be affected only because it is in a certain way in potency to intelligibles and is actually none of them before it understands.”

520 Thomas points out that, in this
text, Aristotle has rejected positions of both the Naturalists and of Plato: the Naturalists’ view that the soul was composed of all things, Plato’s view that the soul has always contained forms that are obscured by the body.

III, 4. (430a2-4). Intellect Understanding Itself

And [the intellect] itself is intelligible like intelligibles. For in these things, indeed, which are without matter, the understander and what is understood are the same. In fact, speculative knowledge and what is so known are the same.

This text of Aristotle follows immediately after the last that we examined and is dependent on it. It was crucial to the discussion of De veritate 10, 8 where Thomas investigated “whether the mind knows itself through its essence of through some species.” Implications of the text having to do with angelic knowledge and Averroes’s interpretation of the same have lurked in the background of discussions throughout this study.

Thomas’s comments on this text are brief but absolutely to the point. They speak to the most central concerns of this study and so are given here in full.

Therefore he says first that the possible intellect is intelligible, not through its essence but through some intelligible species, like also other intelligibles. And he proves this from the fact that the understood in act and the understander in act are one, just as he also said above that the sensible in act and the sense in act are one. For something

is intelligible in act through this that it is actually abstracted from matter. For so he said above that just as things are separable from matter, so also are things which have to do with the intellect. And therefore he says here that “in these things which are without matter,” that is, if we receive intelligibles in act, “the understander and what is understood are the same,” just as one sensing in act and what is sensed in act are the same. For speculative knowledge itself and what is so knowable, that is, knowable in act, are the same. Therefore, the species of the thing understood in act is the species of the intellect itself, and so it is able to understand itself through it. Whence, indeed, the Philosopher above searched out the nature of the possible intellect through understanding itself and through what is understood. For we do not know our intellect except in so far as we understand ourselves to understand.

At stake is the question of how the possible intellect knows itself. In Chapter Two of this study we examined in detail how the soul might know itself through its essence, which is a form separate from matter. Here Thomas insists that it cannot do so. He explains in the passage after the one just quoted that “in the order of intelligibles the soul is only in potency.” It is a “tablet on which nothing is written.”

522 In III De anima cap. 3 (430a2-4). Leon. p. 216. “Dicit ergo primo quod intellectus possibilis “est intelligibilis” non per essenciam suam, set per aliquam speciem intelligibilem, “sicut” et alia “intelligibilia”. Quod probat ex hoc quod intellectum in actu et intelligens in actu sunt unum, sicut et supra dixit quod sensibile in actu et sensus in actu sunt unum; est autem aliquid intelligibile in actu per hoc quod est actu a materia abstractum: sic enim supra dixit quod sicut res sunt separabiles a materia, sic sunt et quae sunt circa intellectum; et ideo hic dicit quod “in hiis quae sunt sinea materia”, id est si accipiamus intelligibilia actu, “idem est intelligens et quod intelligitur”, sicut idem est senciens in actu et quod sentitur in actu; ipsa enim “scientia speculatia et sic scibile”, id est scibile in actu, “idem est”. Species itigur rei intellecte in actu sunt species ipsius intellectus, et sic per eam se ipsum intelligere potest; unde et supra Philosophus per ipsum intelligere et per id quod intelligitur scrutatus est naturam intellectus possibilis: non enim cognoscimus intellectum nostrum nisi per hoc quod intelligimus nos intelligere.”

523 In III De anima cap. 3 (430a2-4). Leon. pp. 216-217. “Accidit autem hoc intellectui possibili, quod non intelligatur per essenciam suam set per speciem intelligibilem, ex hoc quod est potencia tantum in ordine intelligibilium: ostendit enim Philosophus in IX Metaphysicis quod nichil intelligitur nisi secundum quod est in actu. Et potest accipi simile in rebus sensibilibus: nam id quod est in potencia tantum in eis, scilicet materia prima, non habet aliquam actionem per essenciam suam set solum per formam ei adiunctam; substantia autem sensibles, quae sunt secundum aliquid in potentia et secundum aliquid in actu, secundum se...
The focal sentence of the passage in question for our purposes is, “Species igitur rei intellecta in actu est species ipsius intellectus, . . .”——“The form of the thing understood in act is the form of the intellect itself.” It is our thesis that here Thomas clearly defines knowledge in terms of identity, and that species are central to that definition, but that species is in no way meant apart from the very act of knowing itself. It is not in any sense a third, nor indeed, is there a second.

Foster translates this line as, “Therefore the concept of the actually understood thing is also a concept of the understanding.” While in all fairness it has to be admitted that it is often very difficult to render this Latin into readable English, this translation is simply wrong. Whatever ambiguities there may be in statements by Thomas in other or earlier works, it is clear in this passage that he means differently.

The species intellecta in actu exists only in an intellect. The form of a sensible thing as it belongs to that thing is only in potency to be understood or potentially intelligible. On the other hand, the intellect is nothing actual until it thinks. And it thinks only when it is actualized by the species ipsius intellectus.

In the act of knowing, says Thomas, the species rei intellecta in actu and the species ipsius intellectus are simply one. In this we see both operatio and identity at work. Operatio is completely and fundamentally different from transitive action in which a form crosses over from an agent to a patient. Operatio is the achievement of the intellect in relation to an intelligible object and consists in the act of the intellect being formed or configured to the intelligible thing. The species is nothing other than the form or configuration of this act. It is of the thing, but it is found only in the intellect. Identity consists in there being no third produced.

Thomas’s language in this passage is exceptionally sparse. By not multiplying words he has avoided giving the impression of multiplying entities. As well, the specific issue, the soul’s knowledge of itself, has sharpened the discussion. But he has also changed his position on key aspects of the interpretation of Aristotle and of the resolution of the issue in question. This can be seen from a comparison of this text to De veritate 10, 8.

The third sed contra quotes 430a2-4 to the effect that “in those things that are separate from matter, the quod intelligitur and the quo intelligitur are the same.” Therefore, it says, since the mind is immaterial, it can know itself through its essence. Thomas rejects this.

The saying of the Philosopher must be understood [to be] about an intellect which is altogether separated from matter, such as the intellect of angels, as the Commentator explains in the same [text], but [it is] not about the human intellect. Otherwise it would follow that speculative knowledge would be the same as the thing known, which is impossible, as the Commentator also deduces in the same place.

In our passage, Thomas’s understanding of Aristotle is completely different. He takes things without matter to apply to things abstracted from matter, not to separate substances. Further, he is happy to accept that speculative knowledge and what is knowable are the same but only when understood as in act.

524 Kenelm Foster, Aristotle’s De anima, p. 423, n. 724, [cap. 3 (430a2-4)]. His translation of the whole paragraph can be compared with the text cited and our translation at the beginning of this section. “First, then, he says that the potential intellect is itself intelligible, not indeed immediately, but like other intelligible things, through a concept. To prove this he has recourse to the principle that the actually understood object and the actually understanding subject are one being——just as he said earlier in this book, that the actually sensed object and the actually sensing subject are one being. Now the actually understood is so in virtue of an abstraction from matter; for, as we have seen, things become objects of the understanding just in the degree that they can be separated from matter. So he says ‘in things separated from the material’. So the understanding and the understood are one being, provided the latter is actually understood; and the same is true of the object and subject of sensation. Speculative knowledge and what is knowable ‘in this way’ (i.e. in act) are identical. Therefore the concept of the actually understood thing is also a concept of the understanding, through which the latter can understand itself. That is why all the foregoing discussion of the potential intellect has been carried on in terms of the latter’s act and object. For we only know the intellect through our knowledge that we are using it.”

525 De ver. 10, 8 ad cont 3. Leon, pp. 320, 325. Sed contra: “Praeterea, sicut dicitur in III De anima, ‘in his quae sunt separata a materia idem est quod intelligitur et quo intelligitur;’ sed mens est res quaedam immaterialis; ergo per essentiam suam intelligitur.” Ad contra: “Ad tertium dicendum quod verbum Philosophi est intelligendum de intellectu qui est omnino a materia separatus, ut Commentator ibidem exposit, sicut sunt intellectus angelorum, non autem de intellectu humano; alias sequetur quod scientia speculativa esset idem quod res scita, quod est impossibile, ut Commentator etiam ibidem deducit.”
In *De veritate* 10, 8, Thomas concluded that the mind understood itself in three ways - through its essence, as Augustine had said; through species, as Aristotle and the Commentator had said; and by contemplating inviolable truth, as Augustine had also said. The sixth objection quoted the text of Aristotle that we are considering to the effect that the soul could only know itself through species. Thomas replied that the philosopher had to be understood as referring to the intellect’s knowing what it itself is, and not to its habitual knowledge about whether it is.

The *Commentary on the De anima* seems to exclude this reading. Thomas allows that God and angels can know themselves immediately but is firm that man cannot. There is no mention of habitual knowledge of the soul. This presents a problem. Has Thomas changed his view? Or, in the context of a commentary, has he simply limited himself to Aristotle’s views? Or is something else the case? We discussed the whole issue in detail in the section on “Habitual Knowledge” in Chapter Two. For the present, *ST* I 87, I corroborates the position of the *Commentary* and it seems that Thomas did, in fact, reject the earlier position of the *De veritate*.

It seems, then, that there is a change in Thomas’s thought and that in the *Commentary on the De anima* we see a keener appreciation of the nature of the act of knowledge and of the identity which is achieved in it. If the present text is read in conjunction with our discussions of esse intentionale, it also seems that Thomas became more sensitive to how little can be said about intelligible species apart from the act of knowledge itself. This has, in fact, already been suggested by the more defensive position in *ST* I 85, 1 ad 3 where he insisted that species are not like bodies that can be passed from one place to another.

The difference is brought out if one compares the comments on 430a2-4 in the *Commentary on the De anima* with those on the same text in *De veritate* 10, 8. We have quoted the former in full. In the latter we read the following.

And this is what the Philosopher says in *III De anima* that the intellect ‘is intelligible just as are other intelligibles.’ And explaining this the Commentator says that ‘the intellect is understood through an intention in it, just as are other intelligible things.’ And this intention is, indeed, nothing other than an intelligible species. But this intention is in the intellect as intelligible in act, not so in other things, however, but as intelligible in potency.

### III, 5. (430a14-16), The Agent Intellect

And there is indeed an intellect of this kind in which all things become, [and] that, by which it is to make all things. And it is a kind of habit like light; for in a certain way light makes colours existing potentially [to be] colours actually.

It is not our intention here to enter into a full description of the agent intellect or into the problems that surround it. To do so would not be irrelevant, but it would take us too far afield.

The agent intellect, says Thomas, “is essentially in act in which it differs from the possible intellect, which is essentially in potency and which is in act only with respect to received species.” In addition, he says that “the agent intellect is compared to actually understood

---


528 See, for instance, *De ver.* 1. 2 ad 4; 2; 15; 6 ad 2.

529 *De anima* III, 5, (430a14-16). Moerbeke version, Leon. cap. 4, p. 218. “... et est huissusmodi quidem intellectus in quo omnia fiunt, ille uero quo omnia est facere, sicut habitus quidam, ut lumen: quodam enim modo et lumen facit potencia existentes colores actu colores.”

530 *Translatio vetus*, Gauthier lect. 2, p. 459. “Et huissusmodi quidem est intellectus in quo omnia fiunt, ille uero quo omnia est facere.

Et est habitus quidam, ut lumen: quodam enim modo et lumen facit potencia colores actu colores.”

Averroes’ version, Crawford t. 18, p. 437. “Oportet igitur ut in ea sit intellectus qui est intellectus secundum quod effictur omne, et intellectus qui est intellectus secundum quod facit ipsum intelligere omne, et intellectus secundum quod intelligit omne, quasi habitus, qui est quasi lux. Lux enim quoquo modo etiam facit colores qui sunt in potentia colores in actu.”

Hamlyn translation, p. 60. “And there is an intellect which is of this kind by becoming all things, and there is another which is so by producing all things, as a kind of disposition, like light, does; for in a way light too makes colours which are potential into actual colours.”

531 *In III De anima* cap. 4 (430a17-18). Leon. p. 220. “... quarta autem condicio est quod sit in actu secundum suam substantiam, in quo differat ab intellectu possibili, qui est in potencia secundum suam substantiam, set est in actu solum secundum speciem susceptam.”
species just as the artist [is compared to] the species of the artifact.\textsuperscript{531}

This again shows up the difficulty of the issue before us. Despite the resolution of the nature of identity that we saw in the last section, it remains that any act of knowledge is complex. It involves more than one faculty and, except in the lower senses, is not achieved by immediate contact between the knowing power and the thing or object which is known.

The agent intellect is an actualizing power and is necessary because the possible intellect is in pure potency to intelligibles and because intelligible things are only potentially intelligible. We have seen elsewhere that distinct faculties are necessary because one faculty could not be at once in act and in potency in respect to the same genus. At the same time they are a special pair because they are not a “two” in the sense that one could act apart from the other or that either would be complete without the other.

Thomas keeps the two intellects distinct from one another and also avoids the impression that species are somehow in motion from one to the other by being very clear about the relationships involved. The possible intellect is not in any way determined in its nature to sensible things until it is informed by a species. The agent intellect, on the other hand, is not determined in its act by intelligibles. It is actual in itself and its role is to make what is potentially intelligible actually intelligible.

\textsuperscript{532}

\textsuperscript{531} In \textit{III De anima} cap. 4 (430a17-18). Leon. p. 220. “... et praeterea intellectus agens comparatur ad species intelligentiae in actu sicut ars ad species artificiorum, ...”

\textsuperscript{532} In \textit{III De anima} cap. 4 (430a17-18). Leon. p. 221. “Set hoc de facili soluitur, si quis recte consideret quomodo intellectus possibilis sit in potencia ad intelligibilia et quomodo intelligibilia sunt in potencia respectu intellectus agentis. Est enim intellectus possibilis in potencia ad intelligibilia sicut indeterminatum ad determinatum: nam intellectus possibilis non habet determinate naturam aliquiuis rerum sensibilium, unumquodque autem intelligibile est aliqua determinata natura aliiuis speciei; unde supra dixit quod intellectus possibilis comparatur ad intelligibilia sicut tabula ad determinatas picturas. Quantum autem ad hoc, intellectus agens non est in actu: si enim intellectus agens habuerit in se determinationem omnium intelligibilium, non indigeret intellectus possibilis fantasmatis confusus, set per solum intellectum agentem reducetur in actum omnium intelligibilium; et sic non comparatur ad intelligibilia ut faciens ad factum, ut Philosophus hic dicit, set ut existens ipsa intelligibilia. Comparatur igitur ut actus respectus intelligibilium in quantum est quendam uirtus immaterialis actuas potens alia sibi similia facere, scilicet inmaterialia, et per hunc modum ea que sunt intelligibilia in potencia factit intelligibilia actu: sic enim et lumen facit colores in actu, non quod ipsum habeat in se determinationem omnium colorum.”

\textit{III, 7. (431a14-17). The Phantasm}\textsuperscript{533}

Moreover, to the intellective soul, phantasms are like sensibles. But when it affirms or denies good or bad, it even flees or pursues. Because of this the soul never understands without a phantasm.\textsuperscript{534}

Thomas has insisted throughout his works both that the phantasms are in a certain sense the objects of the intellect and that the intellect never thinks without a phantasm. It is this text that he has cited as his authority.

In his \textit{Commentary}, he simply follows Aristotle. Aristotle is distinguishing sense and intellect and does so on the basis of how each pursues or flees good or evil. Sense responds to what immediately touches it, but the response comes only after the experience of pleasure or pain. The intellect, however, apprehends good or bad universally and can respond immediately to its apprehensions.\textsuperscript{535}

\textsuperscript{533} See, for instance, \textit{In I Sent.} d. 3, a. 4, a. 3; \textit{In I Sent.} d. 17, q. 1, a. 4; \textit{In II Sent.} d. 17, q. 2, a. 1; \textit{In III Sent.} d. 31, q. 2, a. 4; \textit{De ver.} 10, 2 ad 7; \textit{ST} I 75, 2 ad 3; 76, 1; 85, 1 ad 3; 84, 7.

\textsuperscript{534} \textit{De anima} III, 7. (431a14-17). Moerbeke version, Leon. cap 6, p. 229. “Intelectutae autem anime fantasmatata ut sensibilia sunt; cum autem bonum aut malum affirmat aut negat, et fugit aut persequitur: propter quod nequaquam sine fantasmate intelligit anima.”

\textsuperscript{535} \textit{Translatio vetus}, Gauthier lect. 3, p. 477. “Set intellectiue autem anime fantasmatata ut sensibilia sunt, cum autem bonum aut malum est dicere aut negare, et fugit aut prossequit; ex quo nequaquam sine fantasmate intelligit anima.”
There has been a problem with Thomas’s citation of this text. Very often he presents it as, “Phantasms relate to the intellect, as is said in III De anima, just as colours to vision.” This occurs in the Sentences, for instance, In II Sent. d. 17, q. 2, a. 1; and it is found as late as ST I 76, 1, which was written more or less contemporaneously with the Commentary. “Colours to vision” is not to be found in Aristotle. Where does Thomas get this formulation?

Gauthier, in his “Préface” to the Commentary, addresses this question. He shows that in Thomas’s time there was a body of “adages” or sayings current among the Masters, which expressed particular opinions of Aristotle and sometimes of Averroes. They were generally cited in reference to a specific text but the actual formulation was often different from the source text. “Colours to vision” was one of those sayings.

Thomas’s commentary on 431a14-17 does not tell us much more that is of interest to this study. Two other texts, however, ought to be noted in the context of the phantasm and of the objects of the senses and of the intellect.

In Chapter 12 of the Commentary on Book II, Thomas distinguishes the senses from the intellect on the basis of their objects. The senses apprehend “singulars which are outside the soul.” The intellect apprehends “universals which are in a certain way in the soul.” He then conducts two discussions which go beyond mere exposition of the text. The Leonine editors have titled them: “Why Sense is of Singulars, Science of Universals,” and “How Universals are in the Soul.” Here we simply note the text.

In Chapter 2 of the Commentary on Book III, Thomas investigates the object of the intellect. Again, in one section he speaks in his own voice. The whole discussion is worth noting. Quotation of just three sentences will give the sense of the whole. “The Philosopher says here that the proper object of the intellect is the quiddity of the thing, which is not separated from the thing, as the Platonists thought.” Again: “It is clear also that intelligible species, by which the possible intellect comes into act, are not the object of the intellect.” And again: “For the intelligible species is not the understood itself, but the likeness of it in the soul. And, therefore, if there are many intellects having a likeness of one and the same thing, the same thing will be understood by all.” These discussions are important but can only be noted here.

III, 8. (431b28-a3). The Stone

Now it is necessary that they are the things themselves or species. They are therefore, indeed, not the things themselves, for the stone is not in the soul, but a species. Wherefore the soul is like the hand. For the hand is the organ of organs and the intellect the species specierum and sense the species sensibilium.

---


539 See, for instance, In I Sent. d. 35, q. 1, a. 2 ad 1; In I Sent. d. 40, q. 1, a. 1 ad 1; In II Sent. d. 12, q. 1, a. 3 ad 5; In II Sent. d. 19, q. 1, a. 3 ad 1; De ver. 8, 11 ad 4; 10, 8 ad cont. 2; 10, 8 ad cont. 10; 23, 1; 23, 3.

De anima III, 8 is a summary of what has been investigated in the De anima. Aristotle restates how the soul is all things and distinguishes again between intellect, imagination, and sense.

The text of the analogy of the stone is, of all Thomas’s citations of Aristotle in the subject matter of this study, the most frequent. As we have noted it comes in confusing variety. The frequency of its use has, no doubt, to do with the vividness of the image. It is easily remembered and quickly refers the hearer to the precise text of Aristotle. But the context itself is very rich. The chapter summarizes much of the thought of the De anima on the nature of knowledge and on the relation between intellect and sense. There are in effect, therefore, two referents—the summary and the central teachings of the whole work. As such this text makes a fitting conclusion to our treatment of the De anima.

Thomas recognizes that the ancient philosophers were correct in saying that the soul is in a way all things. This is true in two ways. When a sense of the intellect is only in potency to know, it is potentially the knowable. But when it is actually known it is actually the known.

Translatio vetus, Gauthier lect. 4, p. 484. “Necesse autem aut ipsa species esse. Ipsa quidem enim non sunt: non enim hic lapis in anima est, set species. Quare anima sicut manus est: manus enim est organum organorum, et intellectus est species specierum et sensus est sensibilibum.”

Avernoes’ version, Crawford t. 38, p. 503. “Necesse est enim ut entia sint aut ista, aut forme. Et non sint ista; lapis enim non existit in anima, sed forma. Et ideo anima est quasi manus; manus enim est instrumentum instrumentis, et intellectus forma formas, et sensus forma sensatis.”

Hamlyn translation, p. 65. “These [the objects of perception and knowledge] must be either the things themselves or their forms. Not the things themselves; for it is not the stone which is in the soul, but its form. Hence the soul is as the hand is; for the hand is a tool of tools, and the intellect is a form of forms and the sense a form of objects of perception.”

See again, “non enim lapis est in anima sed species lapidis” (De ver. 23, 1. Leon. pp. 652-653) or “non enim lapis in oculo sed simulilitudo lapidis” (De ver. 10, 8 ad cont. 2. Leon. p. 342). We also find “Sicut enim species lapidis non est in oculo sed simulilitudo eius” (De ver. 10, 8 ad cont 10. Leon. p. 325) and “species enim lapidis est in anima, non autem secundum esse quod habet in lapide” (De ver. 21, 3. Leon. p. 599).

In III De anima cap. 7 (431b28-a2). Leon. pp. 235-236. “Deinde cum dicit: “Necesse est autm” etc. ostendit quod alio modo est omnia quam Antiqui ponebant. Et dicit quod, si anima est omnia, “necesse est” quod uel sit ipse sensibili sensibiles et scibile, sicut Empedocles posuit quod terra terram cognoscimus et aqua aquam et sic de aliis, “aut” quod sit “species” ipsarum. Non autem anima est ipse res, sicut illi posuerunt, quia “lapis non est in anima, set species” lapidis; et per lune modum dictur intellectus in actu esse ipsum intellectum in actu, in quantum species intellecti est species intellectus in actu.”

The formula, “The stone is not in the eye, but its species is,” is used to show how the ancient philosophers were wrong in what they thought. Empedocles held that we know earth by earth and so on.

The soul, however, is not the thing itself, like they posited, because ‘the stone is not in the soul, but the species’ of the stone is. And in this way the intellect in act is said to be the understood itself in act, in so far as the form (species) of the understood is the form (species) of the intellect in act.

Again, the brevity and resultant precision of this statement catches all. The intellect in act has no being apart from being the stone understood. The stone has no actual being-understood apart from the intellect. The knower and the stone remain separate realities but they are one in the act of knowing.

Aristotle’s analogy of the hand completes the exposition. The hand is the organ of organs, or tool of tools. Thomas interprets it in this way.

The hand is given to man in place of the more numerous organs that animals have with which to feed and protect themselves. And man can provide for all his needs with it.

Similarly, the soul is given to man in place of all forms, in order that man in a certain way be all being in so far as in respect to the soul he is in a certain way all things, just as his soul is receptive of all forms. For the intellect is a certain form

potest” id est potencia intellectuaria, non est ipsum sensibile uel scibile, set est in potencia ad ipsa, sensitiuim quidem ad “sensibile” quod autem scire potest ad “scibile”. Relinquitur igitur quod anima quodam modo sit omnia.”

In III De anima cap. 7 (431b28-a2). Leon. pp. 235-236. “Deinde cum dicit: “Necesse est autm” etc. ostendit quod alio modo est omnia quam Antiqui ponebant. Et dicit quod, si anima est omnia, “necesse est” quod uel sit ipse sensibili sensibiles et scibile, sicut Empedocles posuit quod terram cognoscimus et aqua aquam et sic de aliis, “aut” quod sit “species” ipsarum. Non autem anima est ipse res, sicut illi posuerunt, quia “lapis non est in anima, set species” lapidis; et per lune modum dictur intellectus in actu esse ipsum intellectum in actu, in quantum species intellecti est species intellectus in actu.”

More can be made of Aristotle’s analogy of the hand than Thomas does. See, for instance, G. Patzig, “Theology and Ontology in Aristotle’s Metaphysics,” in Articles on Aristotle, vol. 3, edited by Jonathan Barnes (London: Duckworth, 1979), p. 41-42. “Without a hand to use them, all other tools would no longer properly be called tools. Tools are dependent for their status as tools upon the human hand—the hand is, as Aristotle would put it, their ‘principle’.” See also Parts of Animals IV, 10 (687a20-21, b3-7). See also Kurt Pritzl, “The Unity of Knower and Known in Aristotle’s De anima,” p. 21.
receptive of all intelligible forms and sense is a certain form receptive of all sensible forms.  

The chapter concludes with a discussion of how the intellect is dependent on the senses. Although the intellect understands intelligibles, and sense understands sensibles, the intellect cannot operate apart from the senses. The objects of understanding of our intellect all exist among sensible things. None exist apart from sensibles. The objects of both the natural sciences and of mathematics have their existence in sensibles.

And because of this, without a sense, man is not able to learn anything such as acquiring science anew, nor to understand such as using science already possessed. But whenever it actually think anything, it is necessary that it simultaneously form some phantasm for itself.

545 In III De anima cap. 7 (431b28-a2). Leon. p. 236. “Ex quo patet quod anima assimilatur manui: “manus enim” est “organum organorum” quia manus date sunt homini loco omnium organorum que data sunt aliis animalibus ad defensionem uel inpugnationem uel cooperatorum: omnia enim hec homo sibi manu preparat; et similiter anima data est homini loco omnium formarum, ut sit homo quodam modo totum ens, in quantum secundum animam est quodam modo omnia, prout eius anima est receptiua omnium formarum; nam intellectus est quodam forma receptiua omnium formarum intelligibilium et sensus est quodam forma receptiua omnium formarum “sensibilium”.”

546 In III De anima cap. 7 (432a3-9). Leon. p. 236. “Deinde cum dicit: “Quoniam autem neque res” etc., quia dixerat quod intellectus est quodam modo intelligibilia sicut sensus est sensibilia, posset aliquis credere quod intellectus non dependet a sensu, et hoc quidem aerum esset si intelligibilia nostri intellectus essent a sensibilibus separata secundum esse, ut Platonici posuerunt; et ideo hic ostendit quod intellectus indiget sensu, et postmodum quod intellectus differt a fantasia, quae etiam a sensu dependet, ibi: “Est autem fantasia”. Dicit ergo primo quod, quia “nulla res” intellecta a nobis “est preter magnitudines” sensibiles, quasi ab eis separata secundum esse, “sicut sensibilia uidentur” ab inuicem “separata” necesse est quod intelligibilia intellectus nostri sint “in speciebus sensibilibus” secundum esse, tam illa que dicuntur per abstractionem, scilicet mathematica, quam naturalia, que sunt “habitus et passiones sensibilium”. Et propere hoc sine sensu non potest aliquid homo addiscere quasi de nouo acquirere scieniiae neque intelligere quasi utens sciencia habita, set oportet, cum aliquid speculatur in actu, quod “simul” formet sibi “aliquid fantasma; fantasmata autem” sunt similitudines sensibilium, set in hoc differunt ab eis quod sunt preter materiam: nam « sensus est susceptiuaus specierum sine materia », ut supra dictum est, fantasia autem est «motus a sensu cundam actum ».”
GENERAL CONCLUSION

We have examined four major works of Thomas. Two early works, the Commentary on the Sentences and the Disputed Questions on Truth, were probed and carefully analysed for clues about Thomas’s positions on the nature of knowledge and on the nature and functions of species. In Chapter Three two late works, the Summa theologiae and the Commentary on the De anima, were examined more selectively so as to deal only with the more significant passages.

There were differences. In the earlier works, Thomas did not focus on ordinary human knowledge as such but was preoccupied with topics having to do with divine knowledge, angelic knowledge, the knowledge of separated souls, beatific knowledge, and so on. Human knowledge was in a sense a model for understanding those others. In the later works we found the only detailed and lengthy discussions of specifically human knowledge as such which are to be found in the entire corpus.

We saw some development or refinement of Thomas’s thought in terms of what identity entails and what esse intentionale means. This took the form of reduced emphasis on species and of greater attention to the nature of the act of knowledge itself. In the discussions particularly of the De veritate and the Summa theologiae, we noted that Thomas would often provide both arguments quia and arguments propter quid. Discussion of species tended to be found in the latter. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the first two works, where attention was given mainly to angelic and divine knowledge, there was a greater emphasis on species.

Knowledge is primarily spoken of as act by Thomas Aquinas. This raised two problems that proved to be central to the whole discussion. What kind of an affection (passio, pati, alteratio) is knowledge? What kind of an activity is it? (It is an operatio.) These were problems found in the text, but they are more fundamentally problems of the nature of knowledge itself. They remained central to Aristotle’s De anima and to Thomas’s Commentary.

It was in the arguments quia that Thomas showed himself to be most profoundly in touch with the specificity of human nature. There the argumentation is more evidential than formal as we saw, for instance, in the discussions of teaching and learning. It is also there that we see the subtlety of Thomas’s understanding of the limitations and complexities of human knowledge as well as the place that human nature has in the larger scheme of things.

Sense and intellect must be passive because they cannot be activated by all their objects at once. In addition, sensation involves some physical impression of a body on the sense organ. Intellection happens differently but involves both affection in the sense of a reception, which occurs and passes away, and habit or qualitative change, which is fixed and permanent.

Although Thomas was clear from the beginning that passio is said only equivocally of the actions of material things and of the actions of the soul, we saw that, in the Sentences, the issue was in some ways troubling to him. It was made more complex by certain theological questions, such as how a separated soul suffers from the fires of hell.

In the De veritate Thomas distinguished three meanings of passio. Commonly, it means a reception of any kind. Strictly, it refers to motion between contraries, that is, physical change. Broadly, it is said of an impediment to action. He also distinguished between coming to know, which involves some action and patience, and the act of knowing, which is an act of perfection and which involves no affection in the strict sense.

In the Commentary on the De anima, Thomas followed Aristotle in distinguishing between passio properly said, in which case it involves the destruction of a contrary, and passio said less properly. In the latter case, passio implies only reception and is not to be viewed in terms of action and passion but rather in terms of act and potency. Act is the perfection of a potency, not its destruction. The discussion of habit played an important role in working this out.

At issue in this discussion was the adequacy of the ten categories to describe intentional being.

Statements about the kind of activity that knowledge is were more uniform. The fundamental distinction is between an actio and an operatio. An action goes from an agent to an exterior thing. Thus a man acts and a house is built, or fire acts and water is heated. An operation remains in the agent as a
perfection of the agent. A man acts, and that man is changed. Sensing, understanding, and willing are operations. In the *Commentary on the De anima*, Thomas noted that action is the act of the imperfect (motion) and that operation is the act of the perfect.

The distinction between action and operation is not complicated. Its implications, however, are far-reaching and have to be worked out in response to the questions which were asked at the beginning of this study. We will turn to those questions now.

**1. What does Thomas mean by *species***?

This question will, of course, not really be answered until all our questions are met. However, something can be said initially.

A species is, in the first instance, a form. Form is the principle of both intelligibility and of intelligence. It is also the principle of act. In the *Sentences* "similitudo" was used synonymously with "species" and was often the preferred term. In its primary sense "similitudo" means "a likeness," which is the relation of sameness of quality. A species, then, is both these things. It is a form, which inheres in the soul, and a bearer of likeness. "Intentio" was used as a term derived from the Arabic philosophers, and Thomas took it to be a synonym for "species intelligibilis."

In Chapter Two, we were able to state more clearly what these terms mean. "*Forma*" is used commonly of all forms but is more properly said of a causal form. "*Species*" is used in two senses. As a form, it is the formal cause of the act of knowledge. As a *similitudo* or ratio it determines knowledge to be of a particular thing. In this role it is self-effacing. "*Similitudo*" primarily refers to the relationship of likeness, but it is again used synonymously for "species."

The *Summa theologiae* focused more clearly on the notion that knowledge consists in what is known being in the knower. The soul is at first in one way nothing, and so something must move into it. This cannot happen materially, but the species is the means-by-which it happens formally. The species of the stone is in the soul. This language has a heaviness about it which seems to make a species to be something.

**2. What are Thomas’s reasons for requiring intentional species and, in particular, for requiring intelligible species distinct from the act of knowledge itself?**

We saw the basic arguments for the existence of species at the beginning of the chapter on the *Sentences*. Human understanding is the act of a potency, which is the lowest of intellects and so, like prime matter, must receive form from outside itself. The argument relied on the principle, “Nothing acts except in so far as it is in act.” The received form is the principle of act.

A second argument stated that the “distance” between a species and the intellect that it informs is inversely proportional to the simplicity of the nature involved. And so God understands everything in his essence and is perfectly identified with it. An angel does not understand by means of its essence but rather through innate species. For the human being, a similitude is like the form of the intellect and is received from the thing.

As the arguments developed, it became clear that a species both perfects the intellect in its act and determines knowledge to be of some particular thing. In both instances, a species as a form is required. In several texts, Thomas spoke of knowledge as a relation. In just one text from a remote context in the *Sentences* we found him insisting that any relation must be founded on a form.

The discussion, particularly of angelic knowledge in the *De veritate*, brought out a central problem for any theory of knowledge: “How does matter affect spirit?” We saw that Thomas recognized and raised this issue. A form can only act in its own genus. Passage from one extreme to another does not happen unless through a medium. One thing cannot be conformed to another unless it is in it. We saw that species were Thomas’s solution to this problem. Species are a means of communication across genera.

At the end of the chapter on the *Sentences* we saw Thomas use species in his argument against Averroes’s positions that there is one agent intellect and one possible intellect in all men and that they are separate substances. For Thomas, the same thing could be known by different men who would each receive a species that was individuated by the particular human soul in which it inhered. Thomas thus preserved the immortality of individual human souls but species seemed to take on a life of their own.

In two instances particularly, species seem to have an existence apart from the act of knowledge itself. The first is in the theory of abstraction of intelligible species from phantasms (*ST I* 84, qq. 6-7.). Intellectual knowledge is spiritual because it is of universals. It must therefore be something other than what is found in the phantasms.
which are particular. Thomas gives two arguments *quia* to show that intellection is dependent on phantasms. Lesions of the brain make thinking impossible, and when we think we use images to do so. When he turns to explain how this happens, he does so in terms of species, and they sound somewhat independent in their being.

The second instance is Thomas’s theory of habit. This was discussed at length in the chapter on the *De veritate*. The intellect can know both by way of a kind of *passio* whereby knowing ceases in the absence of the object, and by way of a habit or quality, in which case knowing remains possible in the absence of the object so that the intellect is able to act spontaneously. Thomas’s discussion followed that of Aristotle in *De anima* II, 5, but he added to it that habit is caused by retained species. In this he disagreed with Avicenna, who claimed that a habit was simply an aptitude to abstract forms more easily from phantasms. Thomas’s arguments were that the agent intellect is equally disposed to abstract any form so that the aptitude would not belong to any particular habit, such as science, and that Aristotle had said that the soul is a place of species. In the discussion of *ST* I 84, 6-7, we noted that even when the intellect has habitual knowledge of something, Thomas insists that actual knowledge of that thing must still be initiated by a turn to the phantasm.

It seems that, whenever one admits species into a theory of knowledge, one’s efforts must then be turned towards weakening their presence. Thomas was adamant that species are not what is known (*id quod*) but rather that by which (*id quo*) something is known. The remaining three questions of our study have to do with this diminution, but something can first be said about abstraction and about habit.

Abstraction relates to grasping universals and to the initiation of intellection. It can indeed be made to sound mechanical, but two aspects of Thomas’s thought ought to be noted. First, in the *Summa theologiae* he insisted that it is not numerically the same form that is in the phantasm and in the intelligible species. He specifically rejected any theory that sounded like passing bodies from one place to another. Second, in the discussion about the agent intellect in the *Commentary on the De anima*, we recognized the intense mutuality of the agent and possible intellects. Before it knows, the possible intellect is only potential and awaits all determination. It must be brought into act and into act that is determined to something. The agent intellect is entirely actual but always lacks any determination. One, therefore, does not act without the other.

The solution to the problem of species in abstraction lies with the nature of *operatio*. The form in intellection is the form of the intellect in act which is nevertheless configured in relation to the determination illuminated in the phantasm. That *passio* is said equivocally of material things and the soul is also to be taken seriously. The mean was drawn by Thomas in two arguments in *ST* I q. 84, aa. 6-7. He rejected Democritean *idolae* not because they were atoms, since they were not, but because they involved an influx. On the other hand, in the same place, he rejected Plato’s view that even sense acted in parallel but without direct relation to the impression of physical objects against the sense organ.

The question of habit is more difficult. We saw that, by the time of the *Commentary on the De anima* and the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas had withdrawn from some of his more extreme views on habits. In his discussion of *De anima* II, 5, he did not mention species although he did so in this respect later in the commentary. He radically changed his interpretation of Aristotle’s statement that the soul is “a place of species.” He took it to mean not that the soul is full of species but that it is in its nature to be form. Thomas did not go back to his earlier theory of the soul’s habitual knowledge of itself. However, despite these changes, for Thomas, habits remained orderly arrangements of retained species.

3. What is the nature of the identity between knower and known, and what role do species play in achieving this?

We saw some shift in what we would take to be Thomas’s answer to these questions. Early, in the *Sentences*, Thomas was eager to emphasize that the similitude or species was other than the substance of the intellect. This was to set human knowledge radically apart from the knowledge of God, who is both his essence and his understanding. Thomas did, in fact, hold that from the intellect and the similitude a perfect unity, which is the intellect in act, is formed, but there is a heaviness about his language.

The human intellect, which is sometimes in potency and sometimes in act, is not the same, when it is understanding in potency, as the intelligible in potency, which is something existing outside the soul. But for it to be understandunderstanding in act, it is necessary that the intelligible in potency become intelligible in act through this that its species

Andrew Murray © *Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known*, Page 127
is denuded from all appendages of matter by the power of the agent intellect. And it is necessary that this species, which is understood in act, perfect the intellect in potency. From this conjunction a perfect one is produced, which is the intellect in act, just as from the soul and body is effected one thing, which is a man having human operations. Whence just as the soul is not other than man, so the intellect in act is not other than the intellect understanding in act but the same. Not, however, so that the species becomes the substance of the intellect or part of it, except a formal [part], as neither does the soul become the body.

In the De veritate two things happened. First, we saw the aesthetically rich passage in which Thomas set human knowledge into the contexts of creation and perfection. The human being is limited in its being but by an act of second perfection it is able to become all things. Second, we noted modifications to the identity claim. Human knowledge is mediated and involves composition. On the side of the knower, knowledge is a perfection or determination added to a power of the soul. On the side of what is known, we find a species which is a representation and so involves not a conformity of nature but only likeness of representation.

In the Commentary on the De anima, in the discussion of “Intellect Understanding Itself,” Thomas seemed to come to new clarity about the identity had between knower and known.

Therefore he says first that the possible intellect is intelligible, not through its essence but through some intelligible species, like also other intelligibles. And he proves this from the fact that the understood in act and the understander in act are one, just as he also said above that the sensible in act and the sense in act are one. For something is intelligible in act through this that it is actually abstracted from matter. For so he said above that just as things are separable from matter, so also are things which have to do with the intellect. And therefore he says here that “in these things which are without matter,” that is, if we receive intelligibles in act, “the understander and what is understood are the same,” just as one sensing in act and what is sensed in act are the same. For speculative knowledge itself and what is so knowable, that is, knowable in act, are the same. Therefore, the species of the thing understood in act is the species of the intellect itself, and so it is able to understand itself through it.

The focal sentence is “The form (species) of the thing understood in act is the form (species) of the intellect itself.” Thomas clearly defines knowledge in terms of identity, and “species” is central to that definition. But “species” is in no way meant apart from the very act of knowing itself.

This reading is not contradictory to the earlier accounts of knowledge and can be found in them. But it is much sharper. The interpretation is further validated by Thomas’s discussion of “The Stone.” The intellect has no being-in-act apart from the stone. The stone has no being-understood apart from the intellect. At the core of how this can be is operatio.

---

547 In I Sent. d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, ad 3. Mandonnet p. 812. The question is whether scientia is appropriate to God. Thomas is answering an objection that the plurality of scientia, sciens and scitum would imply plurality in God. His answer hinges on God always being in total act. “Intellectus enim humanus, qui aliquando est in potentia, et aliquando in actu, quando est in potentia intelligens, non est idem cum intelligibili in potentia, quod est aliqua res existens extra animam; sed ad hoc quod sit intelligens in actu, oportet quod intellectu intelligibile in potentia fiat intelligibile in actu per hoc quod species ejus denudatur ab omnibus appenditibus materiae per virtuem intellectus agentis; et oportet quod haec species, quae est intellecta in actu, perficiat intellectum in potentia; ex quorum conjunctione, efficitur unum perfectum quod est intellectus in actu, sicut ex anima et corpore efficitur unum, quod est homin habens operationes humanas. Unde sicut anima non est alius ad homine, ita intellectus in actu non est alius al intellectu intelligente actu, sed idem: non tamen ita quod species illa fiat substantia intellectus vel pars ejus, nisi formalis, sicut nec anima fit corpus.”

548 In III De anima cap. 3 (430a2-4). Leon. p. 216. “Dicit ergo primo quod intellectus possibilis “est intelligibilis” non per essenciam suam, set per aliquam speciem intelligibilem, “sicut” et alia “intelligibilia”. Quod probat ex hoc quod intellectum in actu et intelligens in actu sunt unum, sicut et supra dixit quod sensibile in actu et sensus in actu sunt unum; est autem aliquid intelligibile in actu per hoc quod est actu a materia abstracterum; sic enim supra dixit quod sicut res sunt separables a materia, sic sunt et que sunt circa intellectum; et ideo hic dicit quod in hiis que sunt sine materia", id est si accipiam intelligibilium actum, “idem est intelligens et quod intelligitur”, sicut idem est scienti in actu et quod sentitur in actu; ipsa enim “scientia speculativa et sic scibile”, id est scibile in actu, “idem est”. Species igitur rei intellecte in actu est species ipsius intellectus, et sic per earm se ipsum intelligere potest; unde et supra Philosophus per ipsum intelligere et per id quod intelligitur scaturus est naturam intellectus possibilis: non enim cognoscimus intellectum nostrum nisi per hoc quod intelligimus nos intelligere.”

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 128
4. What does Thomas mean by esse immateriale and esse spirituale?

_Esse immateriale_ and _esse spirituale_ are used by Thomas adjectively to refer to the mode of being that species have. _Secundum esse immateriale_ and _secundum esse spirituale_ are used adverbially to refer to the manner of the reception that occurs in the act of knowledge. They are contrasted with _esse materiale_ and _esse naturale_ and also with _esse firmum in natura_. He also applies the expression _non habent esse vere_ to things which have _esse immateriale_.

Thomas uses these distinctions in each of the works that we treated. In natural reception a thing becomes “hot” or “white.” In spiritual reception a knower knows “hot” or “white” but does not become them physically. The quality of colour existing in a wall has natural being. Colour, however, existing in a knower has only a weak kind of being - immaterial or spiritual being.

Two discussions, “Forms without Matter” and “Esse intentionale,” in our treatment of the _Commentary on the De anima_ deepened our appreciation of what Thomas meant by this other kind of being. It seemed that it was a late development for Thomas himself. First, that species are received _secundum esse immateriale_ does not only mean that the sense which receives them does not become, say, hot. It also means that the sense, though somehow containing or identified with “hot,” is not able to make anything else hot.

Second, it was only late in in his career that Thomas used the term “esse intentionale.” “Esse immateriale” is convenient when speaking about knowledge of material things because abstraction from matter is a prerequisite to knowledge. But “esse intentionale” involves more. It showed up in the discussion of angelic knowledge. The forms by which angels know are of a different order from the forms that angels are. Here Thomas found the term “esse intentionale” necessary to distinguish this other form of being. _Esse intentionale_ is also shared by colours in the medium but not by light, which has _esse naturale_. It is a very weak form of being and almost nothing.

5. How does Thomas express and justify the two-fold role of species, namely an ontological role whereby they are qualities having esse immateriale in the soul, and a cognitive role whereby they are mediators of the form of another thing?

In the earlier works this distinction is Thomas’s preferred way of lessening the impact of whatever being species have. What is necessary for proper knowledge to occur is _similitudo secundum rationem suae speciei_. Form is the act of knowing but it is in its _ratio_ that the species communicates with an external thing. The discussion of this distinction in the _Sentences_ was complicated. The richest discussion was in the section “Distinctions” in the chapter on the _De veritate_. The distinction did not emerge from the texts of the _Summa theologiae_ and the _Commentary on the De anima_ that we used.

In the _De veritate_ we found that Thomas mostly emphasized the representational role of the species when making this distinction. The determination of knowledge to the known rests in the relation of the species to the thing. Thomas played down the entitative role of the species. What is necessary is a commonness of _ratio_. The species as beings are insignificant. Knowledge has to do with the purely formal. Assimilation is of the formally like, not of the materially like.

On the other side of the distinction we saw that the less the species is like that of which it is a likeness, the sharper is the knowledge that is achieved. Universal knowledge, which for Thomas implies a universal species, is less like a material object than is sense knowledge, but intellectual knowledge is more profound. This is another way of dealing with the principle, “Whatever is received is received in the manner of the recipient.”

An important conclusion from this discussion is that the species which are found in the medium, in sense, and in the intellect are fundamentally and irreducibly different from one another. The certainty and objectivity of knowledge are not assured by the same species reappearing albeit changed but by the representational identity, which in turn is founded on the continuity of operation between sense and intellect.

We can conclude by again asking, “What are species?” It seems that they are barely anything apart from the configuration of the cognitive power in act. On the other hand, Thomas does insist that intellectual habits are composed of retained species. In his earlier discussions, which focus on theological questions and which were more influenced by the neo-Platonic traditions, his treatment of species seems to be somewhat excessive. They could seem to be “things.” But when,
after 1265, he focused on human knowledge itself and confronted Aristotle afresh, his position seems to have become more Aristotelian. Then, while Thomas clearly maintains a theory of species, his emphasis seems to have been more on the act of knowledge itself.
APPENDIX ONE

A NOTE ON THE TERM SPECIES

It is not easy to translate the term species. According to Maritain “The word species has no equivalent in our modern languages.”

Species are Thomas’s solution to the problem of identity between knower and known. It is clear that a species is some kind of form and that it is used by Thomas within the context of intentionality. (We exclude here species as used in the species/genus distinction, although ultimately the two have to be related.) Maritain suggests presentative form as an adequate translation.  Bernardo Bazán prefers representative form. Species is frequently translated by its English cognate “species”. Although this has the advantage of rendering the original text very precisely, historically it has caused much misunderstanding since the English term is rather “heavy”, Latinate and lacking in clear reference to form.

Species was a medieval Latin translation of the Greek eidos which, in this context, is generally translated into English as “form”. Cicero saw no difference in meaning between forma and species.

For even if Latin usage allowed, I should be unwilling to say specierum or specierum. Still we often have to use these cases. But I should prefer formis and formarum. Since, however, either word has the same meaning, I think one should not fail to use the convenient word.

Thomas was familiar with the Topics which he quotes, for instance, in ST I-II 7, 1, arg. 1 but a statistical analysis of occurrences of the various forms of forma and species in the Index Thomisticus shows no evidence that he adhered to Cicero’s advice.

Augustine in a text that Thomas quotes affirmatively in De veritate 3, 1 and 3, 3 exhibits a similar flexibility. “In Latin we are able to call ideas either forms or species, in order that we appear to translate a word from a word.”

A comparison between the Greek text of the De anima, an older medieval Latin text which was translated from the Arabic and can be found with Averroes’ Long Commentary, and the later medieval Latin translation made from the Greek by William of Moerbeke is interesting. Four words occur in the Greek text with can be loosely translated by forma: eidos, idea, morphe and schema. Schema, which occurs in five places is translated without exception in the old Latin text and by Moerbeke as figura. Eidos occurs in fifteen

---

553 Augustine, De diversibus quaestionibus LXXXIII, n XLVI. (PL 40: 30). “Ideas igitur latine possumus vel verbum e verbo transferre videamur.”
557 De anima 404a2-11, p. 5; 405a11, p. 8; 414b21, p. 32; 418a18, p. 41; 425a18, p. 58.
558 Commentarium pp. 27, 39, 173, 226, 331.
559 Moerbeke, pp. 10, 17, 73, 99, 141.
Moerbeke translates it exclusively as *species*. The old translation uses *forma* in all but three cases. It uses *species* in the sense of genus and species in 402b3. It uses *modum* in a discussion of definition in 414b27. Finally, it uses *species* in the sense of a form which is an object of perception in 432a5. *Idea* occurs only once and is translated from the Arabic as *forma* and by Moerbeke as *idea*. The phrase *eidos kai morphe* occurs three times in the *De anima*. It is in each case translated by *forma* in Moerbeke’s text but is, in the older text, translated variously as *formam et creaturam, forma alone*, and *forma et intentio*.

As a result of this investigation we can see that in Moerbeke’s translation there is a one to one correspondence between Greek and Latin terms: *eidos – species; morphe – forma; idea – idea; schema – figura*. The older translation through the Arabic is much looser so that *forma* can correspond to each of *eidos, morphe* and *idea*. What we seem to have, then, are two words, *forma* and *species*, which of themselves have much the same meaning but which in the Moerbeke translation have been given the precise technical meaning of being equivalents of the Greek terms.

It may seem from this that *species* is best translated simply as *form* and certainly some of the mystery is taken out of the term. However, to do so would be to risk obscuring the fact that Thomas does build a specific epistemological doctrine around this term. Bazán brings this out in the article already cited by comparing Averroes’ notion of the *intellectum speculativum* with Thomas’s notion of the *species intelligibilis*. For Averroes “the *intellectum speculativum* is the object known, the form or *intention* which actualises the material intellect and which constitutes the *content* of the act of knowledge.” The same universal form is in the image of the imagination where it is obscured by individual determination so that it must be illuminated and abstracted by the agent intellect. Averroes does not have the notion of *species*. On the other hand in Thomas’s doctrine the intelligible species is no longer the object of knowledge, but a representation or *similitudo*. As such it is simply that by which we know the object, the object itself being a form or quiddity which *transcends* the modes of being that it assumes either in the thing, the image or the *species*.

Contrasting the two positions Bazán says that Averroes’ realism is more immediate. In his account the form that gives both being and intelligibility to things is also present in the image under cover of individual characteristics and in the act of the material intellect by means of the illuminating and liberating act of the agent intellect.

The doctrine of *species*, on the other hand, gives “the impression of being a medium, a reduplication device.”

It is worthy of note that no doctrine of intelligible species distinct from the act of knowing itself is found in Aristotle nor in some of the more Aristotelian medieval authors such as Siger of Brabant or Godfrey of Fontaines.

An interesting aspect of Bazán’s article is that it shows how noetic considerations are influenced in this case by other questions. Thomas’s primary dispute with Averroes was on the unicity of the intellect. By replacing Averroes’ *intellectum speculativum* with his own *species intelligibilis* Thomas was able to explain how the intelligible object or essence absolutely considered could be one, although

---

560 *De anima* 402b3, p. 2; 403b2, p. 4; 411b21, p. 25; 412a8, p. 25; 412a10, p. 26; 414a14, p. 30; 414a15, p. 30; 414a17, p. 30; 414b27, p. 32; 415b7, p. 34; 424a18, p. 56; 429a15, p. 69; 429a26-28, p. 70; 431b28-a3, p. 77; 432a5, p. 77.
561 Moerbeke, pp. 1, 6, 53, 57(2), 69(3), 73, 80, 137, 163(2), 186(2).
562 *Commentarium* pp. 22, 124, 129, 130, 163, 165(2), 183, 316, 381, 413, 503.
563 Ibid., p. 10.
564 Ibid., p. 173.
565 Ibid. P. 504.
566 *De anima* 404b20, p. 7.
567 *Commentarium* p. 33.
569 *De anima* 407b24, p. 15; 412a8, p. 25; 414a9, p. 30.
570 Moerbeke, pp. 30, 57, 69.
571 *Commentarium* pp. 74, 129, 163.
572 Bazán, “*Intellectum Speculativum*” p. 432.
573 Ibid., p. 436.
574 Ibid., p. 432.
575 Ibid.
578 See Thomas’s *De unitate intellectus contra Averroistas*. 
known by many men, without appealing to a single separate material intellect as had Averroes. This guaranteed to every human being an intellect and an immortal soul.

579 Bazán, “Intellectum Speculativum”, p. 446.
APPENDIX TWO

TEXTS RECOGNIZED

Effort has been taken to be thorough in the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, the *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, the *Summa contra gentiles*, Book I of the *Summa theologiae*, the *Sententia libri De anima*, the *Quaestiones disputatae de anima*, and the *Quaestiones disputatae de spiritualibus creaturis*. For other works, well known or particularly significant texts are listed.

I Sentences.

2, 1, 3.
3, 1, 1 ad 3.
3, 4, 1.
3, 4, 1 ad 2.
3, 4, 3.
3, 5 ad 1.
8, 5, 2 ad 4.
15, 5, 3.
15, 5, 3 ad 3.
16, 1, 3 ad 1.
17, 1, 4.
17, 1, 5 ad3.
19, 5, 1.
19, 5, 1 ad 7.
27, 2, 1.
27, 2, 1 ad 4.
27, 2, 2, 1.
27, 2, 2, 1 ad 4.
27, 2, 3.
28, 2, 1.
30, 1, 3.
33, 1, 1 ad 3.
34, 3, 1 ad 1.
34, 3, 1 ad 4.
35, 1, 1.
35, 1, 1 ad 3.
35, 1, 1 ad 4.
35, 1, 2.
35, 1, 2 ad 1.
35, 1, 3.
35, 1, 5.
35, 1, 5 ad 3.
35, 2, 1 ad 3.
36, 1, 1.
36, 1, 3 ad 3.
36, 2, 1.
36, 2, 1 ad 3.
38, 1, 2.
38, 1, 2 ad2.
38, 1, 3.
40, 1, 1, ad1.
45, 1, 2 ad 1.

II Sentences

2, 2, 2 ad5.
3, 1, 2 ad 3.
3, 1, 1 ad 3.
3, 3, 1.
3, 3, 1 ad 1.
3, 3, 1 ad 2.
3, 3, 2.
3, 3, 2 ad 1.
3, 3, 2 ad 2.
3, 3, 3.
3, 3, 3 ad 1.
3, 3, 3 ad 3.
3, 3, 4.
3, 3, 4 ad 4.
4, 1, 1 ad 4.
7, 2, 2.
7, 2, 2 ad 3.
8, 1, 5 ad 4.
11, 2, 2.
11, 2, 3.
12, 1, 3 ad 5.
13, 1, 2.
13, 1, 3.
13, 1, 4.
17, 2, 1.
17, 2, 1 ad 3.
17, 2, 1 ad 4.
19, 1, 1 ad 6.
19, 1, 3 ad 1.
20, 2, 2.
20, 2, 2 ad 2.
20, 2, 2 ad 3.
23, 2, 1.
23, 2, 2 ad 3.
28, 1, 5.
36, 1, 2.
38, 1, 2.
38, 1, 2 ad2.
38, 1, 3.

IV Sentences

1, 1, 4, 4.
4, 1, 1.
44, 2, 1, 1.
44, 2, 1, 3.
44, 2, 1, 3 ad 1-4.
44, 2, 1, 4.
44, 2, 1, 4 ad 1-6.
44, 3, 3.

III Sentences

49, 2, 1.
49, 2, 1 ad 1-5.
49, 2, 1 ad 5-8.
49, 2, 1 ad 9-14.
49, 2, 1 ad 15-16.
49, 2, 2. 4, 1 ad 4. 4, 1 ad 9. 10, 6 ad 7. 10, 8. 10, 8 ad 1. 10, 8 ad 14. 10, 8 ad cont. 2. 10, 8 ad cont. 6. 10, 8 ad cont. 9. 10, 8 ad cont. 10. 10, 9. 10, 9 ad cont. 2. 10, 11. 12, 7 ad 3. 12, 7 ad cont. 5. 12, 7 ad cont. 12. 13, 3 ad 4. 18, 1 ad 1. 18, 1 ad 10. 18, 2. 18, 2 ad 1. 18, 4 ad 10. 18, 5. 18, 5 ad 6. 18, 5 ad 8. 18, 5 ad 9. 18, 7.

49, 2, 3 ad 6. 4, 1 ad 9. 4, 2. 10, 8. 4, 2 ad 3. 10, 8 ad 1. 4, 3. 10, 8 ad 14. 4, 4 ad 5. 10, 8 ad cont. 2. 4, 5. 10, 8 ad cont. 6. 50, 1, 1. 10, 8 ad cont. 9. 50, 1, 2. 10, 8 ad cont. 10. 50, 1, 2 ad 1-6. 10, 9 ad cont. 2. 50, 1, 3. 12, 7 ad 3. 50, 1, 3 ad 1-5. 12, 7 ad cont. 5. 50, 1, 4. 12, 7 ad cont. 12. 50, 1, 6. 13, 3 ad 4. 50, 1, 7. 18, 1 ad 10. 50, 1, 8. 18, 2. 50, 1, 9. 18, 4 ad 10.

De veritate

1, 1. 18, 5. 1, 3 ad 1. 18, 5 ad 6. 1, 5 ad 2. 18, 5 ad 9. 1, 11. 19, 1. 2, 1. 19, 1 ad 14. 2, 2. 19, 2. 2, 3. 19, 2 ad 1. 2, 3 ad 1. 19, 2 ad 2. 2, 3 ad 8. 20, 2. 2, 3 ad 9. 20, 2 ad 5. 2, 4. 20, 4. 2, 4 ad 2. 22, 1 ad 2. 2, 5. 22, 3 ad 4. 2, 5 ad 5. 22, 11. 2, 5 ad 6. 23, 1. 2, 5 ad 7. 23, 7 ad 11. 2, 5 ad 15. 24, 4 ad 9. 2, 5 ad 16. 26, 1. 2, 5 ad 17. 26, 2. 2, 6. 26, 3. 2, 7. 26, 3 ad 4. 2, 7 ad 3. SCG I.

4, 1 ad 4. 44: 376. 4, 1 ad 9. 45: 382-88. 4, 2. 46: 389-93. 4, 2 ad 3. 47: 395-97. 4, 3. 48: 403-04. 4, 4 ad 5. 51: 434. 4, 5. 53: 441-45. 50, 1, 1. 54: 446-54. 50, 1, 2. 55: 455-59. 50, 1, 3. 56: 468-70. 50, 1, 4. 63: 521.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCG II</th>
<th>SCG IV</th>
<th>ST I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30: 1076</td>
<td>1: 3340</td>
<td>65: 537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45: 1225</td>
<td>11: 3464-66</td>
<td>69: 588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47: 1239-40</td>
<td>11: 3469-72</td>
<td>71: 611-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50: 1261</td>
<td>11: 3473</td>
<td>61: 4497-501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55: 1306-07</td>
<td>11: 3474</td>
<td>14: 3507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59: 1353-69</td>
<td>11: 3475-76</td>
<td>67: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60: 1387-89</td>
<td>11: 3477</td>
<td>75: 2 ad 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62: 1408-09</td>
<td>14: 3497-501</td>
<td>75: 3 ad 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62: 1412-13</td>
<td>14: 3507</td>
<td>75: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66: 1436-41</td>
<td>14: 3507</td>
<td>75: 5 ad 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71: 1479-81</td>
<td>12: 3 ad 3</td>
<td>76: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73: 1514-26</td>
<td>12: 6</td>
<td>76: 1 ad 1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74: 1527-43</td>
<td>12: 7</td>
<td>76: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75: 1546, 1550-56</td>
<td>12: 9 ad 2</td>
<td>76: 2 ad 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75: 1547, 1557-59</td>
<td>12: 9 ad 2</td>
<td>76: 2 ad 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76: 1562</td>
<td>12: 9 ad 2</td>
<td>76: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76: 1563</td>
<td>12: 9 ad 2</td>
<td>78: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76: 1565-70</td>
<td>12: 10</td>
<td>78: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76: 1578</td>
<td>12: 10 ad 1</td>
<td>78: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76: 1579</td>
<td>13: 1</td>
<td>79: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77: 1580-84</td>
<td>14: 1</td>
<td>79: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78: 1593-96</td>
<td>14, 1 ad 1, 3</td>
<td>79: 4 ad 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81: 1625-26</td>
<td>14, 2</td>
<td>79: 6 et ad 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81: 1627</td>
<td>14, 2 ad 2, 3</td>
<td>80: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81: 1641-43</td>
<td>14, 4</td>
<td>84, proem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96: 1813</td>
<td>14, 5</td>
<td>84, 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96: 1816-18</td>
<td>14, 5 ad 2</td>
<td>84, 1 ad 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98: 1828-29</td>
<td>14, 5 ad 3</td>
<td>84, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98: 1835-38</td>
<td>14, 6 ad 1</td>
<td>84, 2 ad 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98: 1840-45</td>
<td>14, 11 ad 1</td>
<td>84, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>99: 1846-52</td>
<td>14, 12</td>
<td>84, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100: 1853-57</td>
<td>14, 14</td>
<td>84, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101: 1858-60</td>
<td>15, 1</td>
<td>84, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15, 2</td>
<td>84, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15, 3</td>
<td>84, 7 ad 1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16, 7</td>
<td>85, 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17, 3</td>
<td>85, 1 ad 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17, 3</td>
<td>85, 1 ad 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34, 1</td>
<td>85, 1 ad 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35, 1</td>
<td>85, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22: 2025</td>
<td>45, 7</td>
<td>85, 2 ad 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cap 41-43</td>
<td>54, 1</td>
<td>85, 2 ad 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41: 2180-86</td>
<td>54, 2</td>
<td>85, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42: 2196-97</td>
<td>54, 3</td>
<td>85, 3 ad 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44: 2214</td>
<td>54, 4</td>
<td>85, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46: 2333</td>
<td>55, 1</td>
<td>85, 4 ad 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49: 2265</td>
<td>55, 1 ad 2</td>
<td>85, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49: 2266</td>
<td>55, 2</td>
<td>85, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49: 2267</td>
<td>55, 2 ad 2</td>
<td>85, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51: 2284-89</td>
<td>55, 3</td>
<td>85, 8 ad 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53: 2297-2300</td>
<td>56, 1</td>
<td>86, 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56: 2328</td>
<td>56, 2</td>
<td>86, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69: 2458</td>
<td>56, 2 ad 3</td>
<td>86, 2 ad 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84: 2591-92</td>
<td>56, 3</td>
<td>86, 2 ad 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In II De anima. 27: 427a9-14.

87. 1. 87, 1 ad 2.
87. 1 ad 3.
87. 3.
87. 3 ad 1.
87. 3 ad 2.
88. 1.
88. 1 ad 2.
88. 1 ad 5.
89. 1.
89. 1 ad 3.
89. 2.
89. 3.
89. 4.
89. 5.
89. 6.
93. 9.
94. 1.
94. 2.
94. 1 ad 3.
107. 1.
117. 1.
12: questio i.
12: questio ii.
13: dubitatio.
173. 2.
173, 2 ad 1, ad 2, ad 3.
173, 3.

ST II-II

13: dubitatio.
[II, 7; cap.:]
[III, 7; cap.:]
14: 418b20-25, Lux.
15: 419a7-14.
[II, 8; cap.:]
[III, 8; cap.:]
16: 419b4-8.
[II, 9; cap.:]
[III, 9; cap.:]
173, 2.
173, 3.

ST III

19: 421a16-25.
19: questio ii.
19: 421a26-b2.
20: dubitatio.
[II, 10; cap.:]
[III, 12; cap.:]
[II, 11; cap.:]
11: 434a27-29.
11, 2.
11, 2 ad 1.
23: dubitatio.
11, 6.
12, 2.
24: 424a17.
62, 1 ad 2.
24: dubitatio.
24: 424a14-18.
24: 424a20-23.
24: 424a24-27.
24: 424a28-b2.
24: 424b3-8.
4: 404b8-10.
24: 424b14-17.
[II, 3; cap.:]
[III, 1; cap.:]
25: 425a3-12.
6: 406b5-10.
[III, 2; cap.:]
10: 408b9-17.
26: 425b22-a1.
10: 408b9-17(+) Qq disp. de anima.
26: 426a2-14.
27: 426b8-11.
27: 427a5-8.

In I De anima.

27: 426b8-11.

[II, 2; cap.:]
[III, 4; cap.:]
1: 429a13-17.
1: 429a18-26.
1: 429a29-b4.
1: questio.
2: 429b5-9.
2: 429b5-9(+).
2: 429b10.
2: 429b10-17.
2: 429b18-21.
2: 429b18-21(+).
3: 429b29-a1.
3: 430a2-4.
3: 430a2-4(+).
3: 430a5-9.
4: 430a17-18.
4: 430a17-18(+).
4: 430a17-18.
5: 430b14-19.
5: 430b20-25.
6: 431a4-7.
6: 431a14-16.
6: 431a17-b1.
6: 431b2-9.
6: 431b12-16.
7: 431b20-27.
7: 431b28-a2.
7: 432a3-9.
[II, 10; cap.:]
11: 434a22-29.
11: 434a27-29.
12: questio ii.
12: questio ii.
13: dubitatio.

In III De anima.

Qg disp. de spir. cr.

Andrew Murray © Intentional Species and the Identity between Knower and Known, Page 138
a. 5 ad 7.
a 8 ad 14.
a 9  
a. 9 ad 6.
a. 10 ad 8.
a. 10 ad 17.

OTHER TEXTS

De sensu
3: 438a5-a9.
3: 438a27-b1.
4: 438b2-7.
14: 445b29-446a6.
18: dubia I.

De mem.
2: 450a1-8.
3: 450a32-b10.
3: 450b11-b19.

De pot.
7, 10.
8, 1.
9, 5.

De unit. Intell

De Trin.
1, 2.
1, 3.
1, 4 ad 6.

De mem.

De unit. Intell

De ente

In De Trin.

De mem.

De unit. Intell

De ente

De sensu

In Physica

De mem.

De unit. Intell

De ente

In Metaphysica

De mem.

De unit. Intell

De ente

In Physica

De mem.

De unit. Intell

De ente

In Metaphysica

De mem.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


FURTHER BIBLIOGRAPHY


