Aquinas Reader On Aristotle or The Philosopher

St. Thomas Aquinas is often referred to as one of the greatest commentators of Aristotle. The aim of this work is to make St. Thomas the philosopher more accessible for a concentrated study. In order to accomplish this, his principle work, the Summa Theologica has been currated to only sections including the mention of 'Aristotle' or 'The Philosopher'. This subset of articles has been further divided by book from the Aristotelian corpus. Keywords and a simple summary have been added to enrich the learning experience with overarching snapshots. We have added a reference distribution to illustrate the prominence of his citations. The sections presented are as they appear in the Summa Theologica for each reference book identified by headers. Each reference book in study is highlighted throughout in yellow for convenience. Books identified with multiple matching references have been adjudicated arbitrarily.

This is a smaller reader of Aquinas in so far as Aristotle is referenced in **Categor.**

We hope you enjoy this study of Aristotle as he is depicted through the lens of St. Thomas.

# Categor

**Keywords:**

categor, form, good, things, habits, virtues, takes away, qualities, says, privations, ghost, contrary, health, subject according, aristotle, god, bodily dispositions, change, lost, order, privatum, gregory, categories, mutually, nominalists, philosophers concerning, opposite, species, ways, opinions, precepts, different, immaterial.

## Volume 1 - Question 11. The unity of God

**Article 2. Whether "one" and "many" are opposed to each other?**

Reply to Objection 1. No privation entirely takes away the being of a thing, inasmuch as privation means "negation in the subject," according to the Philosopher (**Categor**. viii). Nevertheless every privation takes away some being; and so in being, by reason of its universality, the privation of being has its foundation in being; which is not the case in privations of special forms, as of sight, or of whiteness and the like. And what applies to being applies also to one and to good, which are convertible with being, for the privation of good is founded in some good; likewise the removal of unity is founded in some one thing. Hence it happens that multitude is some one thing; and evil is some good thing, and non-being is some kind of being. Nevertheless, opposite is not predicated of opposite; forasmuch as one is absolute, and the other is relative; for what is relative being (as a potentiality) is non-being absolutely, i.e. actually; or what is absolute being in the genus of substance is non-being relatively as regards some accidental being. In the same way, what is relatively good is absolutely bad, or vice versa; likewise what is absolutely "one" is relatively "many," and vice versa.

## Volume 2 - Question 18. The good and evil of human acts, in general

**Article 8. Whether any action is indifferent in its species?**

Objection 1. It would seem that no action is indifferent in its species. For evil is the privation of good, according to Augustine (Enchiridion xi). But privation and habit are immediate contraries, according to the Philosopher (**Categor**. viii). Therefore there is not such thing as an action that is indifferent in its species, as though it were between good and evil.

Reply to Objection 1. Privation is twofold. One is privation "as a result" [privatum esse], and this leaves nothing, but takes all away: thus blindness takes away sight altogether; darkness, light; and death, life. Between this privation and the contrary habit, there can be no medium in respect of the proper subject. The other is privation "in process" [privari]: thus sickness is privation of health; not that it takes health away altogether, but that it is a kind of road to the entire loss of health, occasioned by death. And since this sort of privation leaves something, it is not always the immediate contrary of the opposite habit. In this way evil is a privation of good, as Simplicius says in his commentary on the **Categor**ies: because it does not take away all good, but leaves some. Consequently there can be something between good and evil.

## Volume 1 - Question 14. God's knowledge

**Article 15. Whether the knowledge of God is variable?**

Reply to Objection 3. The ancient Nominalists said that it was the same thing to say "Christ is born" and "will be born" and "was born"; because the same thing is signified by these three—viz. the nativity of Christ. Therefore it follows, they said, that whatever God knew, He knows; because now He knows that Christ is born, which means the same thing as that Christ will be born. This opinion, however, is false; both because the diversity in the parts of a sentence causes a diversity of enunciations; and because it would follow that a proposition which is true once would be always true; which is contrary to what the Philosopher lays down (**Categor**. iii) when he says that this sentence, "Socrates sits," is true when he is sitting, and false when he rises up. Therefore, it must be conceded that this proposition is not true, "Whatever God knew He knows," if referred to enunciable propositions. But because of this, it does not follow that the knowledge of God is variable. For as it is without variation in the divine knowledge that God knows one and the same thing sometime to be, and sometime not to be, so it is without variation in the divine knowledge that God knows an enunciable proposition is sometime true, and sometime false. The knowledge of God, however, would be variable if He knew enunciable things by way of enunciation, by composition and division, as occurs in our intellect. Hence our knowledge varies either as regards truth and falsity, for example, if when either as regards truth and falsity, for example, if when a thing suffers change we retained the same opinion about it; or as regards diverse opinions, as if we first thought that anyone was sitting, and afterwards thought that he was not sitting; neither of which can be in God.

## Volume 4 - Question 14. God's knowledge

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## Volume 2 - Question 49. Habits in general, as to their substance

**Article 1. Whether habit is a quality?**

Objection 3. Further, "every habit is a disposition," as is stated in the Book of the Predicaments (**Categor**. vi). Now disposition is "the order of that which has parts," as stated in Metaph. v, text. 24. But this belongs to the predicament Position. Therefore habit is not a quality.

On the contrary, The Philosopher says in the Book of Predicaments (**Categor**. vi) that "habit is a quality which is difficult to change."

Objection 2. Further, habit is reckoned as one of the predicaments; as may be clearly seen in the Book of the Predicaments (**Categor**. vi). But one predicament is not contained under another. Therefore habit is not a quality.

## Volume 2 - Question 50. The subject of habits

**Article 1. Whether there is a habit in the body?**

Reply to Objection 2. Bodily dispositions are not simply difficult to change on account of the changeableness of their bodily causes. But they may be difficult to change by comparison to such a subject, because, to wit, as long as such a subject endures, they cannot be removed; or because they are difficult to change, by comparison to other dispositions. But qualities of the soul are simply difficult to change, on account of the unchangeableness of the subject. And therefore he does not say that health which is difficult to change is a habit simply: but that it is "as a habit," as we read in the Greek [isos hexin (**Categor**. viii)]. On the other hand, the qualities of the soul are called habits simply.

**Article 2. Whether habit is a distinct species of quality?**

On the contrary, The Philosopher says in the Book of the Predicaments (**Categor**. vi) that "one species of quality is habit and disposition."

Objection 2. Further, the Philosopher says in the Book of the Predicaments (**Categor**. vi), that heat and cold are dispositions or habits, just as sickness and health. Therefore habit or disposition is not distinct from the other species of quality.

On the contrary, The Philosopher says in the Book of Predicaments (De **Categor**. vi) that health of the body and incurable disease are called habits.

I answer that, The Philosopher in the Book of Predicaments (**Categor**. vi) reckons disposition and habit as the first species of quality. Now Simplicius, in his Commentary on the Predicaments, explains the difference of these species as follows. He says "that some qualities are natural, and are in their subject in virtue of its nature, and are always there: but some are adventitious, being caused from without, and these can be lost. Now the latter," i.e. those which are adventitious, "are habits and dispositions, differing in the point of being easily or difficultly lost. As to natural qualities, some regard a thing in the point of its being in a state of potentiality; and thus we have the second species of quality: while others regard a thing which is in act; and this either deeply rooted therein or only on its surface. If deeply rooted, we have the third species of quality: if on the surface, we have the fourth species of quality, as shape, and form which is the shape of an animated being." But this distinction of the species of quality seems unsuitable. For there are many shapes, and passion-like qualities, which are not natural but adventitious: and there are also many dispositions which are not adventitious but natural, as health, beauty, and the like. Moreover, it does not suit the order of the species, since that which is the more natural is always first.

## Volume 2 - Question 52. The increase of habits

**Article 1. Whether habits increase?**

This same explanation is given by Aristotle in the Predicaments (**Categor**. vi), where in explaining why figures are not susceptible of more or less, he says: "Things which are given the nature of a triangle or a circle, are accordingly triangles and circles": to wit, because indivisibility is essential to the motion of such, wherefore whatever participates their nature must participate it in its indivisibility.

In this way, then, there were four opinions among philosophers concerning intensity and remission of habits and forms, as Simplicius relates in his Commentary on the Predicaments. For Plotinus and the other Platonists held that qualities and habits themselves were susceptible of more or less, for the reason that they were material and so had a certain want of definiteness, on account of the infinity of matter. Others, on the contrary, held that qualities and habits of themselves were not susceptible of more or less; but that the things affected by them [qualia] are said to be more or less, in respect of the participation of the subject: that, for instance, justice is not more or less, but the just thing. Aristotle alludes to this opinion in the Predicaments (**Categor**. vi). The third opinion was that of the Stoics, and lies between the two preceding opinions. For they held that some habits are of themselves susceptible of more and less, for instance, the arts; and that some are not, as the virtues. The fourth opinion was held by some who said that qualities and immaterial forms are not susceptible of more or less, but that material forms are.

## Volume 2 - Question 55. The virtues, as to their essence

**Article 1. Whether human virtue is a habit?**

On the contrary, The Philosopher says (**Categor**. vi) that science and virtue are habits.

## Volume 2 - Question 61. The cardinal virtues

**Article 1. Whether the moral virtues should be called cardinal or principal virtues?**

Objection 1. It would seem that moral virtues should not be called cardinal or principal virtues. For "the opposite members of a division are by nature simultaneous" (**Categor**. x), so that one is not principal rather than another. Now all the virtues are opposite members of the division of the genus "virtue." Therefore none of them should be called principal.

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## Volume 2 - Question 67. The duration of virtues after this life

**Article 2. Whether the intellectual virtues remain after this life?**

Objection 2. Further, the Philosopher says (**Categor**. vi) that since science is a habit, it is a quality difficult to remove: for it is not easily lost, except by reason of some great change or sickness. But no bodily change is so great as that of death. Therefore science and the other intellectual virtues do not remain after death.

## Volume 2 - Question 68. The gifts

**Article 3. Whether the gifts of the Holy Ghost are habits?**

Objection 1. It would seem that the gifts of the Holy Ghost are not habits. Because a habit is a quality abiding in man, being defined as "a quality difficult to remove," as stated in the Predicaments (**Categor**. vi). Now it is proper to Christ that the gifts of the Holy Ghost rest in Him, as stated in Isaiah 11:2-3: "He upon Whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, He it is that baptizeth"; on which words Gregory comments as follows (Moral. ii, 27): "The Holy Ghost comes upon all the faithful; but, in a singular way, He dwells always in the Mediator." Therefore the gifts of the Holy Ghost are not habits.

## Volume 4 - Question 77. The accidents which remain in this sacrament

**Article 2. Whether in this sacrament the dimensive quantity of the bread or wine is the subject of the other accidents?**

Thirdly, because, since the subject is the principle of individuation of the accidents, it is necessary for what is admitted as the subject of some accidents to be somehow the principle of individuation: for it is of the very notion of an individual that it cannot be in several; and this happens in two ways. First, because it is not natural to it to be in any one; and in this way immaterial separated forms, subsisting of themselves, are also individuals of themselves. Secondly, because a form, be it substantial or accidental, is naturally in someone indeed, not in several, as this whiteness, which is in this body. As to the first, matter is the principle of individuation of all inherent forms, because, since these forms, considered in themselves, are naturally in something as in a subject, from the very fact that one of them is received in matter, which is not in another, it follows that neither can the form itself thus existing be in another. As to the second, it must be maintained that the principle of individuation is dimensive quantity. For that something is naturally in another one solely, is due to the fact that that other is undivided in itself, and distinct from all others. But it is on account of quantity that substance can be divided, as is said in Phys. i. And therefore dimensive quantity itself is a particular principle of individuation in forms of this kind, namely, inasmuch as forms numerically distinct are in different parts of the matter. Hence also dimensive quantity has of itself a kind of individuation, so that we can imagine several lines of the same species, differing in position, which is included in the notion of this quantity; for it belongs to dimension for it to be "quantity having position" (Aristotle, **Categor**. iv), and therefore dimensive quantity can be the subject of the other accidents, rather than the other way about.

## Volume 1 - Question 85. The mode and order of understanding

**Article 3. Whether the more universal is first in our intellectual cognition?**

Objection 1. It would seem that the more universal is not first in our intellectual cognition. For what is first and more known in its own nature, is secondarily and less known in relation to ourselves. But universals come first as regards their nature, because "that is first which does not involve the existence of its correlative" (**Categor**. ix). Therefore the universals are secondarily known as regards our intellect.

## Volume 4 - Question 86. The effect of Penance, as regards the pardon of mortal sin

**Article 5. Whether the remnants of sin are removed when a mortal sin is forgiven?**

Reply to Objection 3. One human act does not remove all the remnants of sin, because, as stated in the Predicaments (**Categor**. viii) "a vicious man by doing good works will make but little progress so as to be any better, but if he continue in good practice, he will end in being good as to acquired virtue." But God's grace does this much more effectively, whether by one or by several acts.

## Volume 3 - Question 101. Piety

**Article 4. Whether the duties of piety towards one's parents should be omitted for the sake of religion?**

I answer that, Religion and piety are two virtues. Now no virtue is opposed to another virtue, since according to the Philosopher, in his book on the **Categor**ies (Cap. De oppos.), "good is not opposed to good." Therefore it is impossible that religion and piety mutually hinder one another, so that the act of one be excluded by the act of the other. Now, as stated above (I-II:07:2; I-II:18:3), the act of every virtue is limited by the circumstances due thereto, and if it overstep them it will be an act no longer of virtue but of vice. Hence it belongs to piety to pay duty and homage to one's parents according to the due mode. But it is not the due mode that man should tend to worship his father rather than God, but, as Ambrose says on Luke 12:52, "the piety of divine religion takes precedence of the claims of kindred."

## Volume 2 - Question 100. The moral precepts of the old law

**Article 6. Whether the ten precepts of the decalogue are set in proper order?**

Objection 2. Further, the acts of virtue are prescribed by the affirmative precepts, and acts of vice are forbidden by the negative precepts. But according to Boethius in his commentary on the **Categor**ies [Lib. iv, cap. De Oppos.], vices should be uprooted before virtues are sown. Therefore among the precepts concerning our neighbor, the negative precepts should have preceded the affirmative.

## Volume 3 - Question 189. The entrance into religious life

**Article 1. Whether those who are not practiced in keeping the commandments should enter religion?**

Objection 5. Further, one should proceed from that which precedes to that which follows after. Now the commandments precede the counsels, because they are more universal, for "the implication of the one by the other is not convertible" [**Categor**. ix], since whoever keeps the counsels keeps the commandments, but the converse does not hold. Seeing then that the right order requires one to pass from that which comes first to that which comes after, it follows that one ought not to pass to the observance of the counsels in religion, without being first of all practiced in the observance of the commandments.