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 **Peri Herm.**

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

# Peri Herm

**Keywords:**

word, intellect, peri, god, signifying, object, thing, contraries, opinions, intellectual, particular, sense, known, passion, expression, consequently, mean, wherefore, propositions, takes, according, philosopher, virtue, syllogism, residing, local, understood, soul, viz, habit, caused, knowledge, applies, command.

## Volume 2 - Question 7. The circumstances of human acts

**Article 1. Whether a circumstance is an accident of a human act?**

I answer that, Since, according to the Philosopher (**Peri Herm**. i), "words are the signs of what we understand," it must needs be that in naming things we follow the process of intellectual knowledge. Now our intellectual knowledge proceeds from the better known to the less known. Accordingly with us, names of more obvious things are transferred so as to signify things less obvious: and hence it is that, as stated in Metaph. x, 4, "the notion of distance has been transferred from things that are apart locally, to all kinds of opposition": and in like manner words that signify local movement are employed to designate all other movements, because bodies which are circumscribed by place, are best known to us. And hence it is that the word "circumstance" has passed from located things to human acts.

## Volume 1 - Question 13. The names of God

**Article 1. Whether a name can be given to God?**

I answer that, Since according to the Philosopher (**Peri Herm**. i), words are signs of ideas, and ideas the similitude of things, it is evident that words relate to the meaning of things signified through the medium of the intellectual conception. It follows therefore that we can give a name to anything in as far as we can understand it. Now it was shown above (I:12:11 and I:12:12) that in this life we cannot see the essence of God; but we know God from creatures as their principle, and also by way of excellence and remotion. In this way therefore He can be named by us from creatures, yet not so that the name which signifies Him expresses the divine essence in itself. Thus the name "man" expresses the essence of man in himself, since it signifies the definition of man by manifesting his essence; for the idea expressed by the name is the definition.

## Volume 1 - Question 17. Falsity

**Article 4. Whether true and false are contraries?**

On the contrary, The Philosopher says (**Peri Herm**. ii), that a false opinion is contrary to a true one.

Reply to Objection 1. What is in things is the truth of the thing; but what is apprehended, is the truth of the intellect, wherein truth primarily resides. Hence the false is that which is not as apprehended. To apprehend being, and not-being, implies contrariety; for, as the Philosopher proves (**Peri Herm**. ii), the contrary of this statement "God is good," is, "God is not good."

**Article 10. Whether this name "God" is applied to God univocally by nature, by participation, and according to opinion?**

On the contrary, The idea in the intellect is the likeness of what is in the thing as is said in **Peri Herm**. i. But the word "animal" applied to a true animal, and to a picture of one, is equivocal. Therefore this name "God" applied to the true God and to God in opinion is applied equivocally.

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

**Article 13. Whether the knowledge of God is of future contingent things?**

Therefore we must reply otherwise; that when the antecedent contains anything belonging to an act of the soul, the consequent must be taken not as it is in itself, but as it is in the soul: for the existence of a thing in itself is different from the existence of a thing in the soul. For example, when I say, "What the soul understands is immaterial," this is to be understood that it is immaterial as it is in the intellect, not as it is in itself. Likewise if I say, "If God knew anything, it will be," the consequent must be understood as it is subject to the divine knowledge, i.e. as it is in its presentiality. And thus it is necessary, as also is the antecedent: "For everything that is, while it is, must be necessarily be," as the Philosopher says in **Peri Herm**. i.

## Volume 2 - Question 25. The order of the passions to one another

**Article 2. Whether love is the first of the concupiscible passions?**

Reply to Objection 1. We name a thing as we understand it, for "words are signs of thoughts," as the Philosopher states (**Peri Herm**. i, 1). Now in most cases we know a cause by its effect. But the effect of love, when the beloved object is possessed, is pleasure: when it is not possessed, it is desire or concupiscence: and, as Augustine says (De Trin. x, 12), "we are more sensible to love, when we lack that which we love." Consequently of all the concupiscible passions, concupiscence is felt most; and for this reason the power is named after it.

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

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## Volume 1 - Question 34. The person of the Son

**Article 1. Whether Word in God is a personal name?**

To see how this is true, we must know that our own word taken in its proper sense has a threefold meaning; while in a fourth sense it is taken improperly or figuratively. The clearest and most common sense is when it is said of the word spoken by the voice; and this proceeds from an interior source as regards two things found in the exterior word—that is, the vocal sound itself, and the signification of the sound. For, according to the Philosopher (**Peri Herm**. i) vocal sound signifies the concept of the intellect. Again the vocal sound proceeds from the signification or the imagination, as stated in De Anima ii, text 90. The vocal sound, which has no signification cannot be called a word: wherefore the exterior vocal sound is called a word from the fact the it signifies the interior concept of the mind. Therefore it follows that, first and chiefly, the interior concept of the mind is called a word; secondarily, the vocal sound itself, signifying the interior concept, is so called; and thirdly, the imagination of the vocal sound is called a word. Damascene mentions these three kinds of words (De Fide Orth. i, 17), saying that "word" is called "the natural movement of the intellect, whereby it is moved, and understands, and thinks, as light and splendor;" which is the first kind. "Again," he says, "the word is what is not pronounced by a vocal word, but is uttered in the heart;" which is the third kind. "Again," also, "the word is the angel"—that is, the messenger "of intelligence;" which is the second kind. Word is also used in a fourth way figuratively for that which is signified or effected by a word; thus we are wont to say, "this is the word I have said," or "which the king has commanded," alluding to some deed signified by the word either by way of assertion or of command.

## Volume 1 - Question 39. The persons in relation to the essence

**Article 4. Whether the concrete essential names can stand for the person?**

Reply to Objection 5. To say, "God begot God Who is God the Father," is wrong, because since the word "Father" is construed in apposition to "God," the word "God" is restricted to the person of the Father; so that it would mean, "He begot God, Who is Himself the Father"; and then the Father would be spoken of as begotten, which is false. Wherefore the negative of the proposition is true, "He begot God Who is not God the Father." If however, we understand these words not to be in apposition, and require something to be added, then, on the contrary, the affirmative proposition is true, and the negative is false; so that the meaning would be, "He begot God Who is God Who is the Father." Such a rendering however appears to be forced, so that it is better to say simply that the affirmative proposition is false, and the negative is true. Yet Prepositivus said that both the negative and affirmative are false, because this relative "Who" in the affirmative proposition can be referred to the "suppositum"; whereas in the negative it denotes both the thing signified and the "suppositum." Whence, in the affirmative the sense is that "to be God the Father" is befitting to the person of the Son; and in the negative sense is that "to be God the Father," is to be removed from the Son's divinity as well as from His personality. This, however, appears to be irrational; since, according to the Philosopher (**Peri Herm**. ii), what is open to affirmation, is open also to negation.

## Volume 2 - Question 53. How habits are corrupted or diminished

**Article 1. Whether a habit can be corrupted?**

We must therefore inquire whether habits of this kind can be corrupted directly. If then there be a habit having a contrary, either on the part of itself or on the part of its cause, it can be corrupted directly: but if it has no contrary, it cannot be corrupted directly. Now it is evident that an intelligible species residing in the "possible" intellect, has no contrary; nor can the active intellect, which is the cause of that species, have a contrary. Wherefore if in the "possible" intellect there be a habit caused immediately by the active intellect, such a habit is incorruptible both directly and indirectly. Such are the habits of the first principles, both speculative and practical, which cannot be corrupted by any forgetfulness or deception whatever: even as the Philosopher says about prudence (Ethic. vi, 5) that "it cannot be lost by being forgotten." There is, however, in the "possible" intellect a habit caused by the reason, to wit, the habit of conclusions, which is called science, to the cause of which something may be contrary in two ways. First, on the part of those very propositions which are the starting point of the reason: for the assertion "Good is not good" is contrary to the assertion "Good is good" (**Peri Herm**. ii). Secondly, on the part of the process of reasoning; forasmuch as a sophistical syllogism is contrary to a dialectic or demonstrative syllogism. Wherefore it is clear that a false reason can corrupt the habit of a true opinion or even of science. Hence the Philosopher, as stated above, says that "deception is the corruption of science." As to virtues, some of them are intellectual, residing in reason itself, as stated in Ethic. vi, 1: and to these applies what we have said of science and opinion. Some, however, viz. the moral virtues, are in the appetitive part of the soul; and the same may be said of the contrary vices. Now the habits of the appetitive part are caused therein because it is natural to it to be moved by the reason. Therefore a habit either of virtue or of vice, may be corrupted by a judgment of reason, whenever its motion is contrary to such vice or virtue, whether through ignorance, passion or deliberate choice.

## Volume 2 - Question 64. The mean of virtue

**Article 3. Whether the intellectual virtues observe the mean?**

Reply to Objection 3. The things themselves that are contrary have no contrariety in the mind, because one is the reason for knowing the other: nevertheless there is in the intellect contrariety of affirmation and negation, which are contraries, as stated at the end of **Peri Herm**enias. For though "to be" and "not to be" are not in contrary, but in contradictory opposition to one another, so long as we consider their signification in things themselves, for on the one hand we have "being" and on the other we have simply "non-being"; yet if we refer them to the act of the mind, there is something positive in both cases. Hence "to be" and "not to be" are contradictory: but the opinion stating that "good is good" is contrary to the opinion stating that "good is not good": and between two such contraries intellectual virtue observes the mean.

## Volume 4 - Question 60. What is a sacrament?

**Article 7. Whether determinate words are required in the sacraments?**

Objection 1. It seems that determinate words are not required in the sacraments. For as the Philosopher says (**Peri Herm**. i), "words are not the same for all." But salvation, which is sought through the sacraments, is the same for all. Therefore determinate words are not required in the sacraments.

**Article 8. Whether it is lawful to add anything to the words in which the sacramental form consists?**

The same is to be said of a change in the order of the words. Because if this destroys the sense of the words, the sacrament is invalidated: as happens when a negation is made to precede or follow a word. But if the order is so changed that the sense of the words does not vary, the sacrament is not invalidated, according to the Philosopher's dictum: "Nouns and verbs mean the same though they be transposed" (**Peri Herm**. x).

## Volume 2 - Question 77. The cause of sin, on the part of the sensitive appetite

**Article 2. Whether the reason can be overcome by a passion, against its knowledge?**

Objection 3. Further, if it be said that it draws the reason from its knowledge of something in general, to form a contrary judgment about a particular matter—on the contrary, if a universal and a particular proposition be opposed, they are opposed by contradiction, e.g. "Every man," and "Not every man." Now if two opinions contradict one another, they are contrary to one another, as stated in **Peri Herm**. ii. If therefore anyone, while knowing something in general, were to pronounce an opposite judgment in a particular case, he would have two contrary opinions at the same time, which is impossible.

Objection 5. Further, according to the Philosopher (**Peri Herm**. i), "words express the thoughts of the mind." Now it often happens that man, while in a state of passion, confesses that what he has chosen is an evil, even in that particular case. Therefore he has knowledge, even in particular.

## Volume 4 - Question 78. The form of this sacrament

**Article 5. Whether the aforesaid expressions are true?**

Consequently, then, it remains to be said, as stated above (Article 4), that this sentence possesses the power of effecting the conversion of the bread into the body of Christ. And therefore it is compared to other sentences, which have power only of signifying and not of producing, as the concept of the practical intellect, which is productive of the thing, is compared to the concept of our speculative intellect which is drawn from things. because "words are signs of concepts," as the Philosopher says (**Peri Herm**. i). And therefore as the concept of the practical intellect does not presuppose the thing understood, but makes it, so the truth of this expression does not presuppose the thing signified, but makes it; for such is the relation of God's word to the things made by the Word. Now this change takes place not successively, but in an instant, as stated above (III:77:7). Consequently one must understand the aforesaid expression with reference to the last instant of the words being spoken, yet not so that the subject may be understood to have stood for that which is the term of the conversion; viz. that the body of Christ is the body of Christ; nor again that the subject be understood to stand for that which it was before the conversion, namely, the bread. but for that which is commonly related to both, i.e. that which is contained in general under those species. For these words do not make the body of Christ to be the body of Christ, nor do they make the bread to be the body of Christ; but what was contained under those species, and was formerly bread, they make to be the body of Christ. And therefore expressly our Lord did not say: "This bread is My body," which would be the meaning of the second opinion; nor "This My body is My body," which would be the meaning of the third opinion: but in general: "This is My body," assigning no noun on the part of the subject, but only a pronoun, which signifies substance in common, without quality, that is, without a determinate form.

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

**Article 2. Whether the intelligible species abstracted from the phantasm is related to our intellect as that which is understood?**

Objection 3. Further, the Philosopher says (1 **Peri Herm**. i) that "words are signs of the passions in the soul." But words signify the things understood, for we express by word what we understand. Therefore these passions of the soul—viz. the intelligible species, are what is actually understood.

## Volume 3 - Question 85. Sacrifice

**Article 1. Whether offering a sacrifice to God is of the law of nature?**

Objection 3. Further, Augustine says (De Civ. Dei x, 5,19) that sacrifices are offered in signification of something. Now words which are chief among signs, as he again says (De Doctr. Christ. ii, 3), "signify, not by nature but by convention," according to the Philosopher (**Peri Herm**. i, 2). Therefore sacrifices are not of the natural law.

**Article 5. Whether our intellect understands by composition and division?**

On the contrary, Words signify the conceptions of the intellect, as the Philosopher says (**Peri Herm**. i). But in words we find composition and division, as appears in affirmative and negative propositions. Therefore the intellect acts by composition and division.