



Title	Angelic Interiority
Authors(s)	Casey, Gerard
Publication date	1989-06
Publication information	Casey, Gerard. "Angelic Interiority." Irish Philosophical Journal, June 1989.
Publisher	Irish Philosophical Journal
Item record/more information	http://hdl.handle.net/10197/5531

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Angelic Interiority

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I

Howard Kainz, in his monograph *‘Active and Passive Potency’ in Thomistic Angelology*, remarks that angelology is of some importance in Thomistic philosophy for bringing to a head what he calls ‘certain problematics’ arising from Thomistic presuppositions.¹ An example of just such a problematic, in the form of an apparent inconsistency, is stated in the following extended passage:

One example of this is an inconsistency that seems to develop with regard to St. Thomas’ doctrine that a form could exist completely separate from matter, and that such immaterial existence would render that form ipso facto intelligible.

In the *S. Theol.*, I, Q. 107, a. 5, St. Thomas states that an angel cannot perceive the thoughts of another angel unless that angel chooses to reveal his thoughts. However, aside from the voluntary communication of thoughts through the will, each angel constantly carries about in its intellect intentional species which represent all other angels in their “natural being” (ibid., I, . Q. 56, a. 2). In the *De substantiis separatis*, however, which remains St. Thomas’s last major treatment of angelology, he goes on to note both (a) that the natural being, or substance, of an angel is the receptacle for the angelic existence (*op. cit.* . . . Cap. VII, para. 42 [sic]); and (b) that, although this natural being is not a body, nevertheless it is something proportional to a body, *servatis servandis*. Therefore, as regards its intimate knowledge of others, an angel seems to be subject to certain restrictions quite reminiscent of those restrictions that human beings are subject to. For, just as human beings, aside from voluntary communications, can only have certain and reliable knowledge of the *bodies* of other human beings, and things which become manifest, sometimes involuntarily, in that phenomenal appearance—so also angels can only have continual and certain knowledge of the “natural being” of other angels (the phenomenal appearance as contradistinguished from thoughts which can be kept secret within the

inner sanctum of the existence of an angel). Therefore there seems to be a certain phenomenal aspect in an angel which acts like corporeality in man, providing a natural obstacle to becoming automatically and transparently intelligible to others.

On the other hand, in other places (e. g. *De Veritate*, Q. 8, a. 7) St. Thomas makes it quite clear that angels, being forms completely separate from matter, and not being received in, or possessed by, matter, are *ipso facto* self-possessing intellects, i. e. intelligible forms which are self-intelligizing. Since an individual angel is not hampered in the least by the opacity of matter, he is immediately transparent to himself. This conclusion seems to follow quite well from the basic premise that intelligence consists in the abstraction of intelligible forms from matter. But it is difficult to understand why we could not go one step further and conclude also that the angel completely transparent to himself would also be completely transparent to other angels who, like himself, suffer no impedance or opacity from matter.

The problem that emerges from these considerations is as follows. If the angels have a certain aspect which we might denominate their “natural being”, as opposed to thought, this natural being, for all practical purposes, amounts to a body. If it does amount to a body, it is extremely difficult to see how an individual angel can be automatically and completely transparent to himself. If it does not amount to a body, it is extremely difficult to see why that individual angel would not be automatically and completely transparent to his fellow angels, who are equally free from the opacity of matter. In either case the doctrine, as it stands, on the question of angelic self-knowledge and knowledge of others, seems to be inconsistent. (Kainz, p. 17, n. 10)

It appears that we have something of a dilemma here which may be expressed as follows: either the natural being of an angel amounts to a body, or it does not. If it does amount to a body then the angel’s self-transparency is difficult to understand, while if it does not amount to a body then its lack of transparency to other angels is equally difficult to understand. Since the natural being of an angel either does or does not amount to a body, one of two unpalatable consequences must follow: either the angel is not transparent to other angels but is at the same time not transparent to himself; or he is transparent to himself but is also at the same time transparent to other angels to the extent that his being is completely exteriorised.

I shall attempt to remove the apparent inconsistency that Kainz has delineated by explicating, in the context of St Thomas’s works, (a) the difference between angelic natural being and angelic intentional being; (b) the outflow of both kinds of being from God; (c) the difference between angelic illumination and angelic communication, and (d) matter and will as impediments to knowledge. I shall focus my attention on *Summa Theologiae* Ia, q. 56, aa. 1 and 2 and *De Veritate*, q. 8, aa. 6 and 7, where St Thomas discusses the angel’s self-knowledge and his knowledge of other angels, and *Summa Theologiae* Ia, qq. 106 and 107 and *De Veritate* q. 9, where he discusses angelic illumination and communication. Before discussing these texts, however, I need to recollect the principal points which St Thomas establishes in the earlier questions on angels in the *Summa Theologiae* and some of the principles employed to establish these points.²

II

St Thomas begins his treatise on the angels by asking whether an angel is entirely incorporeal.³ The actual conclusion of the article in which this question is posed is that ‘the universe, to be complete, must contain some incorporeal creature’.⁴ I note here, as others have done, that the arguments in this article alone do not establish the existence of a purely incorporeal substance as such. This is so because its premises are (1) that the universe, to be complete, must contain some intellectual creatures, and (2) that intellection cannot be the act of a body. On the basis of these premises alone, the existence of human beings would satisfy the required necessity. On the other hand, the argument shows that the existence of a pure immaterial being is possible and, if we lean rather heavily on the notion that the universe to be complete requires intellectual beings, that their existence is probable, even fitting. However, in *Summa Theologiae*, q. 54, a. 5, St Thomas notes that ‘it befits the order of the universe that the greatest intellectual creatures be totally intellectual, and not partly intellectual as are human souls.’⁵ With this as a premise, the existence of the angels would be established.

Next, St Thomas refutes the claim that angels are composed of matter and form (*Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 2, c.). The principal exponent of this claim was Avicenna who espoused a theory of universal hylemorphism basing it, according to St Thomas, upon a principle of extreme epistemological realism: ‘those things distinguished by the intellect are distinct in things’.⁶ The denial of this principle is a key element in St Thomas’s theory of knowledge: ‘it is not necessarily the case that those things distinguished by the intellect are distinct in things, for the intellect does not grasp things according to their mode but according to its mode’.⁷ The failure in a theory of knowledge to distinguish that which is contributed by the object known from that which is contributed by our knowing powers is the source of the twin errors of naive realism, and naive idealism. Is our knowledge of the angels univocal? St Thomas thinks not:

Material being exists in our intellect in a simpler way than it exists in itself, for material being is below the intellect. Angelic substances, on the other hand, are above our intellect and so our intellect is not able to attain to them by apprehending them as they are in themselves, but only in our own way, which is the way we understand composed things. Such is the way we understand God.⁸

God, then, is not the only being of whom we can at best have knowledge by analogy. All other beings of a specifically higher nature than man are equally inaccessible to man's knowledge save by way of analogy.

In the same article, St Thomas also introduces some themes that will be developed in greater detail later in the *Summa Theologiae* in the treatise on man. For example, in the response to the second objection St Thomas distinguishes very clearly between the way in which the intellect receives form and the way in which matter receives form. When matter receives form, what comes into being is something with a definite nature, and the form is, as it were, limited or contracted by the matter in which it is received. When the intellect receives form, on the other hand, the received form is not limited by that in which it is received: 'the intelligible form is in the intellect according to its formal nature; that is how the intellect knows it'.⁹ This reinforces the judgement that the intellect has no intrinsic connection with material being, for if it did, then the matter to which it was intrinsically connected would necessarily limit or contract the form it received. This general distinction between what we might call 'natural form' and 'intentional form' will be of great importance when we come to consider angelic self-knowledge in which there is a perfect correspondence between the knower and the known.

In response to the objection that unless angels are composed of form and matter, angels, as pure forms, will be indistinguishable from God, St Thomas notes that the composition of form and matter is a composition only in the order of essence. There is another, more fundamental, composition; more fundamental because applicable to all created being and not merely to material being. This composition, in the order of existence, is between essence and existence and 'we have to understand such a composition to exist in the angels'.¹⁰ All created being in so far as it is composed in some way or other is, by virtue of that composition, radically distinct from that pure simplicity which is God.

If there is a plurality of angels (*Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 3), how is one angel to be distinguished from another? In corporeal beings in the same species, matter is the principle of distinction. But angels are not composed of matter and form, so, unless there is some principle of distinction other than matter, there can be at most one angel—unless, of course, there are different species of angels with no more than one angel in each species, in which case the problem of specific individuation does not arise. Being without matter, an angel is completely identical with his formal determining factor. It follows then that each angel exhausts completely the specific nature which he is, unlike

members of species of corporeal beings, no one of which (indeed no plurality of which) can exhaust the specific nature it possesses.¹¹ It is difficult to conceive, and impossible to imagine, the difference that obtains between one angel and another. No two angels are of the same kind. Consequently, one angel differs from another not merely as to the degree of intelligence he possesses but also as to the kind of intelligence he possesses.¹²

III

Thus far we have been discussing aspects of the angel's constitution in being. Now it is time to focus on the angel in respect of his knowledge.¹³ Questions 54, 55 and 56 of the *Summa Theologiae* deal respectively with the angelic power of knowing, with the medium of angelic knowledge, and with the angel's knowledge of immaterial things.

Of the five articles in q. 54, the first three contrast the angels and God, and the last two contrast the angels and man. As an angel is, so to speak, located ontologically between God and man, so too, a knowledge of his knowing capacity can be had by contrasting it with that of God and that of man. St Thomas establishes that, unlike God, neither the angel's act of understanding nor his power of understanding is to be identified with his substance, nor is it the same thing in an angel for him to be and for him to understand. Because the angel is a creature, and because of the infinite gap between created being and uncreated being, and because only in God is there a complete identity of existence, essence, power, and act, it follows that in no kind of creature, angels included, can there be a simple identity between his substance and action, between his substance and operative power, or between his existence and action.¹⁴ On the other hand, unlike man, the angel does not have an agent intellect, nor does he have any cognitive powers other than the purely intellectual. The distinction between possible and agent intellect must be posited to account for the nature of human knowledge, but it need not (indeed it cannot) be posited to account for angelic knowledge.

The necessity to posit an agent intellect in man results from our sometimes understanding not actually but potentially. And so we must have a power which is in potency to intelligibles before understanding them, but which is brought into act in relation to them when knowing them and, again, when considering them. This power is called the possible intellect. The necessity to posit an agent intellect results from the fact that the natures of the material things which we understand do not subsist outside the soul as actually immaterial and intelligible but, as existing outside the soul, are only potentially intelligible. There has to be, therefore, some power that renders these natures actually intelligible. This power within us is called the agent intellect. Neither of these necessities bears on angels because angels are never in a state of potential understanding respecting those things

which they understand naturally, nor is the intelligibility of those things which they naturally understand ever in potency but is always, rather, in act. Immaterial things are what angels primarily and principally understand.¹⁵

This article establishes a basic difference between the angelic and human intellects in regard to their respective objects. The human intellect is ordered primarily and principally towards an understanding of the natures of material things; the angelic intellect is ordered primarily and principally towards an understanding of the natures of immaterial things. As St Thomas puts it, in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, ‘separate substances have separate substances as the proper objects of their understanding. Each of them, therefore, knows both itself and others’.¹⁶ The conclusion of article five, that angelic cognition is wholly intellectual, follows simply from the previously established facts of angelic immateriality and incorporeality.¹⁷

To the question, ‘Do angels know all things by means of their substance?’ St Thomas answers in the negative. The reason for this answer is not hard to find. The angelic essence is finite and so cannot comprehend everything in itself. On the other hand, the intellect as such, both angelic and human, is unrestricted in its aspiration and its capacity to know. As St Thomas puts it, it ‘extends to everything that can be understood’. The unrestricted outreach of intellect as such is commensurate with the unrestrictedness of its object which is being or truth. Because of the discrepancy between what he can know through his own essence and what he can know *simpliciter*, the angel’s knowledge requires to be perfected by species which are not simply one with his essence.¹⁸ Where do these supplementary species come from? Do they come from the things of which they are the intentional forms? No. Those species by which the angel knows things which are unknowable simply through his essence are co-created with him. They are present in the angel from the moment of his inception, though not as part of his essence, for they could be removed from the angel without affecting him in his essential being.

As an immaterial being, an angel cannot generate such species by abstraction as does man, for abstraction demands a concomitant sensory activity which is obviously impossible for a purely immaterial being.¹⁹ But we must not be misled into thinking that man has somehow an advantage over the angel in this regard. As it turns out, man’s need to employ abstraction derives from the relatively low position which the human intellect occupies on the scale of intellects. Abstraction is not a necessity for intellect as such: it is only a necessity for human intellects. Nevertheless, material beings are only potentially intelligible and so the question remains: if angels know material beings, how do they

know them? Q. 57 is devoted to answering this question in detail, but the answer is already anticipated here. To the extent that he knows anything other than himself through his own essence, the angel knows it by means of an outpouring from God which at once gives to him his intellectual nature (and with it his self-knowledge) and, at the same time, the species of all the other things which he knows. As Professor Connell remarks: ‘these species are not principles that supplant, but co-principles that supplement, the angelic essence, so that it remains true to say that its essence is the principle of all its knowledge’.²⁰ So, to sum up: an angel cannot know everything he knows via his own supplemented essence (unless, of course, his knowledge were to be restricted solely to himself); nor, of course, can he know anything via abstraction. Hence, the angel must know whatever else he knows other than himself through species derived from God, connaturally constituted with his being.

Q. 56, a. 1 asks, ‘Does an angel know himself?’ We already know the answer, of course. The real question is rather, ‘How does an angel know himself?’ The answer to this question is: by his own form or substance. St Thomas establishes this point in the following way. In immanent acts, of which knowledge is one, the object is united with the agent (*objectum uniatur agenti*). Knowledge occurs when a species is possessed immanently. The existence of a prior change leading to this possession is not a constituent part of knowledge as such, simply of a particular kind of knowledge. In addition, the informing form need not be accidental—that too is a peculiarity of human knowledge.

Now, an angel is a subsistent form and as such he is actually intelligible. The very form by which he is requires no epistemological processing to be converted into a form by which he can understand himself. So, the angel understands himself through that form which is his very substance.²¹ The account in the parallel passage in the *De Veritate* does not differ essentially from the account in the *Summa Theologiae*, but it adds an interesting point with regard to an apparent problem, which is this: in order to understand himself, an angel’s essence must be in his intellect. But this, it appears, cannot be, for his intellect is, on the contrary, in his essence. But two things cannot be in each other at the same time, *ergo*, etc. The solution is simple. Simultaneous mutual in-being does not violate the principle of non-contradiction, provided that it is not also in-being in precisely the same respect. The essence of the angel is in his intellect as an intelligible object is in a knower, while, simultaneously, his intellect is in his essence as a power in a substance.²²

Thus the soul comes to know itself only through the act by which it knows material things.

It is otherwise with the angels which, being completely free from bodies, are altogether immaterial and subsist according to a mode of being that is actually intelligible. Thus, the first object of the angel's knowledge is its own essence. It is true that the act in which it knows itself is an operation really distinct from its essence; yet it is an operation that is accomplished in act the moment the angel exists. This is because the angel is a pure, immaterial form, which is both capable of knowledge and actually knowable, and because there is no ontological distance separating it from itself to prevent it from being the formal principle of the act by which it knows itself. St. Thomas sees no reason why the angel should require a species in order to know its own essence; or why, even though its intellect in its ontological reality is an accident existing in its substance, its substance should not be in its intellect as the principle of its knowledge.²³

Does an angel know other angels? Again, the answer to this question is obviously in the affirmative. The real problem is to understand how one angel understands another. It cannot be through its own essence that one angel understands another, for, as all knowledge depends upon similitude, and the essence of the angel known can only be generically identical with the essence of the angel knowing, the most that can be acquired in this way is a general and improper knowledge of another. Can a knowledge of another angel be acquired through the essence of the angel understood? Again, the answer seems to be negative, because one angel cannot be substantially present within the intellect of another. Can it be through a species that such knowledge takes place? Again, it would appear not, since, as we have just seen, both the angel and its species are immaterial, they would not be adequately differentiated from one another, and we would revert to the impossibility, already adverted to, of one angel being substantially present in the intellect of another.²⁴

St Thomas solves the problem in the following way. He posits an outflow from God of those things which have eternally pre-existed in Him. This occurs in two ways: in one way, the outflow terminates in the existence of the angel in his proper being; in another way, the outflow terminates in the angelic intellect.

In every angel there is impressed its natural existence and its intelligible existence [*esse naturale et esse intelligibile*] so that the angel should at once subsist by his species and understand himself by his species. On the other hand, the forms of other natures, whether spiritual or corporeal, are impressed in him only in their intelligible existence [*secundum esse intelligibile tantum*], that is to say, as impressed species through which he might know both corporeal and spiritual creatures.²⁵

In the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, St Thomas considers the objection that given the essentially intelligible nature of the angel 'someone may see no necessity for holding that one such substance [angel] is understood by another through intelligible species but may think that one understands another through the very essence of the substance [angel]

understood'.²⁶ Such a view conflicts directly with one of St Thomas's most fundamental theses, which is that all cognition takes place through an assimilating of the knower to the known. In the context of the current objection, the identity required by such an assimilation would necessitate that one real being be identified with another real being (since the intellect in act is the thing understood in act) while at the same time they must remain really distinct if the truth in cognition is to be preserved. It is clear, then, that the distinction between *esse naturale* and *esse intentionale* is fundamental and will be an element in the solution to our problem. Immediately, however, it still does not explain why everything in an angel known is not simply revealed as being somehow contained in its *esse intelligibile* which is received by the angel knowing. How, in a word, is angelic interiority possible?

IV

So far we have considered questions from the treatise on angels in the *Summa Theologiae*, with some excursions to the *De Veritate*. Now we need to turn to qq. 106 and 107 of the *Summa Theologiae* and q. 9 of the *De Veritate*, which deal with the notions of angelic illumination and angelic communication. These two notions are related but not identical. Angelic illumination is basically a creaturely participation in divine causality by which the higher angel transmits something of his understanding to the lower angels, both by strengthening the lower angels' intellectual power by a kind of spiritual osmosis, and by manifesting the truth which he understands in a more universal way to the lower angels by adapting it to their less powerful intellects. As such, it is a kind of communication.

Every creature participates in the divine goodness in such a way as to pass on to others the good it itself possesses. . . . The more any agent is constituted by its participation in the divine goodness, the more it strives to pass on to others its own perfections, as far as that is possible.²⁷

It should be obvious from this that illumination is mono-directional. The higher angel illuminates the lower but the lower angel never illuminates the higher. One intellect is illumined by another in so far as the latter gives it some medium of knowledge, which strengthens it, and enables it to know some things which it previously could not know. St Thomas does not hesitate to use the act/potency distinction to assist in clarifying his meaning. Higher angels are, as it were, in act to lower angels and the lower angels can be strengthened by being connected with their angelic superiors. Two more points need to

be noted in this regard. The first is that while the higher angel can transmit to the lower angel the content of his knowledge, he nevertheless retains his specifically higher mode of understanding which is proper to himself and incommunicable. The second is that illumination affects only the intellect of the angel receiving the illumination and not his will. No angel can move another's will in respect of its power of operation.

Communication, in contrast with illumination, is bi-directional. Angels speak to one another, the higher to the lower and the lower to the higher, and all the angels to God.²⁸ But how can this be so, given that the purpose of speech is to communicate what lies hidden in the mind? And since the angel possesses a purely immaterial mode of being, such hiddenness seems impossible. Part of the solution to the puzzle lies in the realisation that, while embodiment is a sufficient condition of interiority, it is not a necessary condition of interiority as such. The interiority of human conceptions is protected by a twofold obstacle. There is, first, the body, which serves to conceal the mind of one man from another (and occasionally, involuntarily, to reveal it). But there is also, more fundamentally, the will, which has the power to retain the mental concept internally, or to direct it externally. If one leaves considerations of involuntary bodily revelation to one side, what the will wills to retain and not to direct externally is opaque to all except God. The bodily nature of human beings is such that, even when the will directs the mental concepts externally, these concepts have to be incorporated in sensible signs with the result that human communication is relatively indirect and often imperfect. In the angels, of course, there is no possibility of bodily concealment, but if the angel's will does not direct his mental concepts outwards, no one except God can know them. In angelic communication, the outward direction of the will is sufficient to bring about communication; there is no need for the angel to incorporate his thought in sensible signs; indeed, it is impossible for him to do so in his natural mode of being. It might be appropriate to recall at this point that an angel's connatural knowledge of another angel extends only to his natural being, and not to his operations, and we have already seen that in no creature can his operations be identical with his being. We see, then, that illumination is a kind of communication, but communication as such is not equivalent to illumination: 'In angels, every illumination is a communication, but not every communication is an illumination.'²⁹

Some objections can be brought against the notion of angelic speech. First, it seems that all speech takes place through the medium of signs. Now, according to St Augustine, a sign is something sensible, something that 'besides impressing a species upon the

senses, makes some thing else known' (*De doctrina Christiana*, II, i). But angels do not receive their knowledge from sensible things, hence not through signs, hence not through speech. St Thomas responds as follows: properly speaking, a sign is that which enables one to know something else other than the sign itself as if by reasoning from it. Now, the angels do not reason, so signs, properly speaking, do not exist among them. But a common use of the term 'sign' is one in which it indicates anything which, being known, leads on to knowledge of something else. In this sense of the term, an intelligible form can be called a sign of the thing which is known by means of it. It is in this common, as distinct from proper, sense of 'sign' that an angel makes use of signs: that is, through a species-sign which actuates his intellect and puts it perfectly in relation to the other. St Thomas does not draw a distinction here between formal and material signs—a material sign being a sign which is capable of existing independently of its signifying, while a formal sign is a sign which can exist only in so far as it signifies. Furthermore, in his account of the intelligible form, he says that the sign has to be prior in knowledge to that which it signifies. This cannot be the case either for expressed intelligible species (concepts, the termini of knowledge) or impressed intelligible species (the principles of knowledge) both of which are formal signs and so co exist with their signification and co-signify with their existence.³⁰ (Species of both kinds have, of course, an entitative dimension, inhering as accidents in the intellect. They differ from one another in this, that while expressed intelligible species cannot exist at all unless they actually signify, impressed intelligible species can be conserved in the intellect in a quasi-memorative way, in which mode of conservation they are virtually significative.)

Intelligible species of either kind do not first come to be known and subsequently come to signify. The whole trend of St Thomas's account of knowledge is clearly to be interpreted as treating intelligible species as formal signs, and so as not having to be known before they signify. While St Thomas continues to insist (*De Veritate*, q. 9, a. 5, ad 5) that a sign need not be something that is prior or posterior in nature to that which it signifies, only prior in knowledge, the medical and meteorological examples he uses clearly indicate that he is here considering only material signs. In any case, any imbalance in the exposition here will be corrected when St Thomas comes to deal with human knowledge, in particular when he discusses whether the abstracted species is that which is first known, or that by which something else is known (*Summa Theologiae*, q. 85, a. 2).³¹

Again, it might be objected that speech exists to enable us to know the signs of another's will. But it would appear that an angel can know the signs of the will of other

angels by knowing himself, for these signs are spiritual, and an angel, by one and the same knowledge, knows all spiritual things. So, it appears that an angel has no need of speech. St Thomas responds by noting that the objection embodies confusion between the mode of knowledge and the medium of knowledge. All angelic knowledge is intellectual in mode, so whatever an angel knows he knows intellectually. But it does not follow that he thereby knows everything that he knows through himself; so that, even if an angel knows the nature of another by knowing himself, it does not follow that he knows the speech of another in the same way.

Another objection that St Thomas considers is essentially the same as one horn of Kainz's dilemma. The objection is that an angel can know, by means of innate species, all that naturally exists in another angel, therefore, through the same species he knows all that takes place by the will of that other; so again, angelic speech is unnecessary. St Thomas responds by allowing that everything that one angel knows of another angel he knows through those innate species that he has of him. But whereas to know the natural being of the other angel does not demand the co-operation of the will of the angel to be known, to know that which is dependent on another angel's will (for example, his thoughts), demands that the angel whose willed acts are to be known should dispose himself to so being known by relating himself to the knowing angel according to an act of some form. Angels, then, do not need speech to know the natures of other angels, but they do require it to know the thoughts of other angels.

St Thomas now introduces the notion of the triple mode of existence of forms in the intellect which he has also discussed in the *Summa Theologiae*. However, in the account in the *De Veritate*, he parallels it with an account of the threefold way in which forms can exist in nature. These forms may exist in a state of becoming between potency and act; or they may exist in a state of perfect act; or they may exist in a state of perfect act which allows for a communication of that form to others. Not everything in perfect act can communicate the perfection it possesses to others as, for example, not everything that is bright can illuminate others. Similarly, intelligible forms may exist habitually in the intellect, halfway between potency and act; they may exist in perfect act with respect to the knower, when the knower is actually thinking according to a form which he has within himself; or they may exist in the knower in a state of perfect act in relation to some other being. The movement from one state to another in the case of these intelligible forms is dependent upon the will. It is perfectly clear from St Thomas's response to this objection that he denies that the knowledge one angel has of another

naturally extends to operations dependent upon the will of the angel known, but the reason for this denial is not yet clear.³²

V

Now let us return to Professor Kainz and, before examining his use of St Thomas's texts, let us clarify a point raised in the opening paragraph of the citation I gave at the beginning of this article. There Kainz claims that St Thomas has a doctrine that 'a form could exist completely separate from matter, and that such immaterial existence would render that form *ipso facto* intelligible'. Kainz fails to appreciate the radical difference between the two kinds of forms that can exist immaterially. Firstly, there are those forms which are mere beings of reason, existing immaterially in the intellect which they inform, and possessing no depth of being beyond the accidental and the referential. Secondly, there are those forms which are separate substances and which are in no way dependent upon any finite intellect for their existence. Now, even though these substantial forms are inherently intelligible by virtue of their immateriality, they still require to be known through the medium of intelligible species. Furthermore, because these are substantial forms and not mere beings of reason, there is no reason to suppose that, if known in any degree, they must be known in every degree.³³

Now let us examine Kainz's use of those textual sources which, he claims, together generate the apparent inconsistency. His interpretation of the two passages from the *Summa* is accurate, as is his interpretation of *De Veritate* q. 8. However, when we come to *On Separated Substances* the matter is otherwise. As we have seen already in the opening citation from Kainz, he claims that, in *On Separated Substances*, chapter VII, paragraph 42, St Thomas notes (a) that the natural being, or substance, of an angel is the receptacle for the angelic existence, and (b) that, although this natural being is not a body, nevertheless it is something proportional to a body, *servatis servandis*. It is a little difficult to determine exactly which passage Kainz is referring to, since paragraph 42 is in chapter VIII, not chapter VII. Since either the chapter reference or the paragraph reference is in error, and since paragraph 42 lends no support to Kainz's claim regarding Thomas's notes (a) and (b), we must presume that the appropriate passage is to be found in chapter VII. However, chapter VII (paragraphs 32-36) is of no help in supporting Kainz's claims either. St Thomas is there concerned to show that there cannot be one matter for spiritual and corporeal substances. He begins by noting that 'if there be a matter in

spiritual substances, it is not the same as the matter of corporeal things, but much nobler and finer, since it receives form according to its totality'. He goes on to add that

if the matter of spiritual substances cannot be only some potential thing but is some actual being, then the matter itself of spiritual beings is their substance. And in this case, there is no difference whether we posit matter in spiritual substances or whether we hold that simple spiritual substances are not composed of matter and form.³⁴

Nothing, then, in chapter VII of this work lends support to Kainz's claim that St Thomas believes the angelic natural being to be a receptacle for the angelic existence, or that he believes the angelic natural being to be some thing proportional to a body. Indeed, given that the purpose of this work is to refute Avicbron's universal hylemorphism, such beliefs on the part of St Thomas would be little short of incoherent. To describe, as Kainz does, the concealment provided by the will as if it were equivalent to that provided by the body is, to say the least, misleading; just as to describe the act/potency distinction in terms of form/matter puts the cart before the horse. In *De spiritualibus creaturis*, a work composed somewhat earlier than the *De substantiis separatis*, St Thomas is willing to countenance this way of speaking since the wise man does not dispute over words, but he insists that it is an improper way of speaking:

Now if matter be taken in this sense [something which is in the genus of substance as a kind of potency, which is understood as excluding every species and form, and even as excluding privation, and yet is a potency capable of receiving both forms and privations], which is its proper and generally accepted meaning, it is impossible for matter to be in spiritual substances. . . . Yet on the other hand if we use the terms 'matter' and 'form' to mean any two things which are related to each other as potency and act, there is no difficulty in saying (so as to avoid a mere dispute about words) that matter and form exist in spiritual substances. . . . And in this way the nature of a spiritual substance, which is not composed of matter and form, is a potency with reference to its own existence; and thus there is in a spiritual substance a composition of potency and act, and, consequently, of form and matter, provided only that every potency be called matter, and every act be called form; but yet this is not properly said according to the common use of the terms.³⁵

Kainz claims that the natural being of angels functions in a way similar to that in which the body functions in man, with respect to the intimate knowledge of one being by another. As with human beings, where the knower's knowledge, unassisted by revelation on the part of the one to be known, terminates at the body of the person known, so with angelic beings: their knowledge terminates at the natural being of other angels, unless the angels to be known will otherwise. Now, Kainz wonders why angels who are completely transparent to self are not completely transparent to other angels as well. In human beings, the will is only one source of privacy. In angels, however, it is the only one. Now,

of course, an angel's thought cannot but be directed to himself and so angelic self-deception is an impossibility. It is interesting that q. 8, a. 7 of the *De Veritate*, which Kainz cites to show that St Thomas believes the angels to be self-intelligising and immediately self-transparent, is precisely the place in which St Thomas also distinguishes between what belongs to the angel in regard to his specific nature and what belongs to him in regard to his individuality, for example, his operations.³⁶

Whatever analogies may exist between the functions of the human body and that of the angel's natural being, the disanalogies are much greater. The human body, by virtue of its materiality, is per se unintelligible; the natural being of the angel, on the other hand, is per se intelligible by virtue of its immateriality. It is not the angel's natural being which inhibits intelligibility: it is the angel's will. The human body and the angelic natural being are precisely disanalogous in this regard, and so the angel's natural being does not 'amount to a body'.

I have now denied the first disjunct in Kainz's disjunction, 'the natural being of an angel either amounts to a body, or it does not'. The second disjunct remains and it is, in its turn, the antecedent of a conditional whose consequent is 'it is extremely difficult to see why [an] angel [is not] automatically completely transparent to his fellow angels, who are equally free from the opacity of matter'. The problem still remains, then, of explaining how the will can function as a principle of privacy in a purely immaterial being.

Let us summarise the key points so far established which may serve to point us to the solution.

1. Natural being differs from intentional being.³⁷
2. Both kinds of being in angels flow from God.
3. The intentional form of angel A present in angel B is revelatory only of angel A's natural being and not of A's intentional being. God as the source of the outflow reveals only that part of an angel's operations which the angel himself wills to be revealed.
4. Angelic illumination and angelic communication are different.
5. The ultimate principle of communication in intellectual beings is the will. In human beings, the body also must cooperate.
6. For the intellect actually to think or communicate, the will must move it to those perfections. An angel's intellect is always in act in regard to its thought, so there is no need for the will to move it towards that perfection. But it is not always in act in regard to the communication of those thoughts to another, and an act of the will is required to move it to that perfection.

The will is clearly the principle of privacy. In *De Veritate*, q. 8, a. 13, St Thomas tells us why:

Angels cannot see human thoughts directly and through themselves, for if the mind is actually to think something an intention of the will is required by which the mind is actually directed (*convertatur in actu*) to the species which it possesses. This is clear from what Augustine says in *De Trinitate* II, cap. II, III, et seqq. *Now, an angel cannot naturally know the motion in the will of another person, because he naturally knows by means of forms that have been given him, which are likenesses of things existing in nature. But the motion of the will has no dependence on or connection with any natural cause, but is only dependent on and connected with the divine cause which alone can impress the will.* It follows that the motion of the will and the thought of the heart cannot be known by any likeness of natural things, but only in the divine essence, which impresses the will. And so angels cannot know the thoughts of the heart directly unless they are revealed to them in the Word.³⁸ (emphasis added)

We have seen above that actual thinking and the actual relation of thoughts to others are activities dependent upon the motion of the will. It is clear from the passage just cited that if (a) the species by which an angel knows things other than himself are species only of natural entities and if (b) the motion of the will is not dependent on or connected with any natural cause, then it indeed follows that the species by which it knows things other than itself do not extend to the motion of the will, and so angels do not naturally know the motion of the will by means of such species. The argument is valid. What grounds are there for believing its premises to be true? The first premise depends upon the distinction between natural and intentional form which I have already discussed at some length. The angel naturally understands whatever he understands of beings other than himself (God excepted) by means of intentional forms which reveal only the natural dimension of those beings and not the immanent operations of those beings in so far as they are dependent upon the will. (The angel naturally knows God through the angel's own essence to the extent that his essence is similar to God, because God's image is, as it were, impressed upon it. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 56, a. 3.) What I have said by way of explanation, here, amounts to little more than a restatement of the first premise. What has become obvious, however, is the absolutely crucial role of the second premise. Why does St Thomas deny that the will is in any way connected or dependent upon any natural cause? The reason is not hard to discover. If the will were so connected or dependent then its freedom would be compromised; and if the will's freedom were compromised, then all other operations dependent upon the will would be compromised also. The will, of course, does not escape the influence of divine causality, but God is the only cause that can influence the will without restricting or infringing upon its proper freedom.

Perhaps we can throw some more light on this little problem if we notice that the will and its operations are not the only things that are outside the scope of the angel's natural knowledge: the future is also outside its scope.

Those things now existing possess a nature by which they are assimilated to the angelic species through which the angel is enabled to know them. But future events do not yet have a nature by which they may be assimilated to the angelic species and so they can not be known by means of such species.³⁹

In the cases both of angelic communication and angelic knowledge of the future, we see that when the angel does come to know, it does so because the *res* conforms to the *intellectus*. In this respect, the angel's mode of knowing rather resembles God's than man's. If the angel were to have a proper natural knowledge of the thoughts of another, and of the future, then the gap between Creator and creature would disappear. For both angels and God, knowledge is a matter of the conformity of things to ideas; in God alone is such knowledge productive. The only conditions under which angels could have a proper natural knowledge of another's thoughts and of the future would be if they were to be the cause of such things, i. e. if they were God. We see, then, that if the gap between Creator and creature is to be maintained there must exist differences between them, not only with respect to their mode of being, but also with respect to their mode of operation. Those areas which remain outside the scope of the angel's natural knowledge are precisely those areas dependent upon God's unique knowledge and God's unique causality and which are therefore incommunicable.

Angelic natural being does not amount to a body. An angel's lack of transparency to other angels is adequately accounted for by the will's independence of natural causes. The inconsistency which Kainz claims to detect in St Thomas's angelology is more apparent than real.

VI

The foregoing discussion has taken place within the ground rules of Thomistic principles, as it were. Throughout the discussion I have simply been assuming the normative status of St Thomas's texts and arguing for what I take to be a correct interpretation of his teaching on angelic knowing and angelic being. If we leave these textual and exegetical considerations aside, however, questions can arise concerning the contemporary philosophical relevance of angelology. Obviously, no defence of the truth

of St Thomas's angelology can be undertaken apart from a general defence of the truth of his basic metaphysical and epistemological principles, and no such defence can be undertaken here. However, I should like to indicate briefly the philosophic relevance of St Thomas's angelology. There are two basic areas of relevance: metaphysical and epistemological. I begin by considering the former.

Metaphysically speaking, the angels provide a sort of laboratory test for St Thomas's metaphysical principles. Being can be divided into uncreated being and created being, the distinction between them being that the former is simple and uncomposed, while the latter is complex and composed. If the only principles of composition are form and matter, then all created being, if it is not to be conflated with uncreated being, must be so composed. However, if there are other principles of composition, then not all created being need be composed of matter and form if it is to be metaphysically distinct from uncreated being. St Thomas's angelology, then, can be considered as a speculative exercise in which he investigates the existence and nature of such nonmaterial created beings. (Of course, he already has extra-philosophical reasons for believing such creatures to exist, but that does not preclude the possibility of a philosophical demonstration of their existence and nature.) If St Thomas succeeds in demonstrating even the possibility of the existence of such creatures and in providing a coherent account of their natures, then he will have made a contribution to metaphysics, broadly conceived of as the science of all that is in so far as it is.

Epistemologically speaking, the angels provide a useful contrast against which human knowledge can clearly be seen. Usually, in a comparative analysis of human knowing, it is compared to animal cognition and divine cognition. While animal cognition can provide a useful contrast on the level of sensation and perception, it is of little or no use when it comes to a consideration of intellectual cognition. Divine cognition, which is certainly intellectual if it is anything at all, is starkly *sui generis* and our knowledge of it patently analogical, so that again it is of little practical use when it comes to illuminating human intellectual cognition. Angels, then, as created beings (like us and unlike God), yet as purely spiritual beings (like God and unlike us), provide a test case of what it would be like for a created, finite intellect, unimpeded by matter, to know. In investigating such a test case, light is thrown on the more complicated case of human knowledge.

Notes

1. Howard Kainz, *'Active and Passive Potency' in Thomistic Angelology* (Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1972), p. 16, no. 10. James Collins, *The Thomistic Philosophy of the Angels* (Catholic Univ. of America Press, Washington DC, 1947) is the standard work in English on Thomistic angelology. See also J. Peghaire, *Intellectus et Ratio selon S. Thomas* (Vrin, Ottawa/Paris, 1936); Mortimer Adler, *The Angels and Us* (Macmillan Publishing Co. , N. Y. , 1982); Desmond Connell, *The Vision in God* (Nauwelaerts, Louvain/Paris, 1967), chapter III, 'Angelic Knowledge According to St. Thomas and Scotus', and chapter IV, 'Angelic Knowledge According to Suarez'; Etienne Gilson, *Le Thomisme*, 6th ed. , Librairie Philosophique (J. Vrin, Paris, 1965), second part, chapter II, 'Les Anges'.
2. Where translations of St Thomas's texts exist I have consulted them, but, as I have altered as I saw fit, I must accept overall responsibility for the translation. The Latin original, of course, remains authoritative.
3. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 1: 'Utrum angelus sit omnino incorporeus'.
4. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 1, c. : 'Unde necesse est ponere, ad hoc quod universum sit perfectum, quod sit aliqua incorporea creatura'.
5. 'Et hoc convenit ordini universi, ut suprema creatura intellectualis sit totaliter intellectiva, et non secundum partem, ut anima nostra.' Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 57, a. 1, c. , and a. 2, c. : 'talis est ordo in rebus, quod superiora in entibus sunt perfectiora inferioribus; et quod in inferioribus continetur deficienter, et partialiter, et multipliciter, in superioribus continetur eminenter, et per quamdam totalitatem et simpliciter. . . . Hoc enim rerum ordo habet, quod quanto aliquid est superius, tanto habeat virtutem magis unitam, et ad plura se extendentem.'
6. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 2, c. : 'quaecumque distinguuntur secundum intellectum [in intellectu] sint etiam in rebus distincta.'
7. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 2, c. : 'Non est autem necessarium quod ea quae distinguuntur secundum intellectum sint distincta in rebus; quia intellectus non apprehendit res secundum modum rerum, sed secundum modum suum'. Adapting a term from electronics, we might term 'noise' that which in any communication is added to the message by the medium. Noise seems to exist in every medium of communication. For example, in magnetic tapes we have tape hiss, in records we have needle hiss, and in all electronic systems using loudspeakers we have speaker hum. Writing possesses a

linearity that distorts to some extent the polyphonic mode of oral speech. In human cognitive powers we have a somewhat similar situation: in sense cognition what is grasped is proportioned to the organs of sensation; in perception, what is perceived is perceived relative to the needs, desires, and interests of the perceiver; in the intellect, what is conceived is conceived immaterially, according to the mode of being of the intellect itself. 'Quidquid recipitur recipitur secundum modum recipientis.'

8. 'Unde res materiales quae sunt infra intellectum nostrum simpliciori modo sunt in intellectu nostro quam sint in se ipso. Substantiae autem angelicae sunt supra intellectum nostrum; unde intellectus noster non potest attingere ad apprehendendum eas secundum quod sunt in se ipsis, sed per modum suum, secundum quod apprehendit res compositas. Et sic etiam apprehendit Deum' (*Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 2, c.).

9. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 2, ad 2: 'Sed forma intelligibilis est in intellectu secundum ipsam rationem formae; sic enim cognoscitur ab intellectu.'

10. '[I]n angelo non sit compositio formae et materiae, est tamen in eo actus et potentia. Quid quidem manifestum potest esse ex consideratione rerum materialium, in quibus invenitur duplex compositio. Prima quidem formae et materiae, ex quibus constituitur natura aliqua. Natura autem sic composita non est suum esse, sed esse est actus ejus. Unde ipsa natura comparatur ad suum esse sicut potentia ad actum. Subtracta ergo materia et posito quod ipsa forma subsistat non in materia, adhuc remanet comparatio formae ad ipsum esse ut potentiae ad actum. Et talis compositio intelligenda est in angelis' (*Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 2, ad 3). Cf. *De substantiis separatis*, cap. VIII, § 44, and Gilson's *Le Thomisme*, pp. 21314.

11. Cf. *Le Thomisme*, p. 216.

12. Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 50, a. 4, obj. 2 and ad 2. Some of the more important points established in qq, 51-53 may be quickly summarised here. Angels do not have a body naturally united to them, though, as part of their role in the order of divine providence, they sometimes assume bodies. An angel can be said to be in a bodily place not as contained therein, but as, in some way, containing that bodily place by an application of his power to it. An angel can only be in one place at a time, though this constitutes no very important restriction, in that the place can be of any size and need not even be a geographically contiguous whole. Only one angel can be in any one place at a given time. This restriction too is more apparent than real. The reason for it is that it is impossible that one and the same thing should have two complete, immediate causes. Angels, in the matter of location, resemble God rather than man, being, like God, located where they

act, but unlike God, not being everywhere in that they cannot act in all places at the same time. Granted that an angel can be, in some sense, in a place, it follows that he is capable, in some sense, of local motion. The same considerations bear on the angel's movement from one place to another as bore on the angel's being in one place rather than another. For an angel to move is for it to be in power contact (*contactum virtutis*) with distinct places, i. e. for there to be a succession of distinct power contacts.

13. For a succinct discussion of angelic knowledge in the context of a Thomistic account of knowledge in general, see Connell, pp. 6073.

14. The first three articles of q. 54 constitute a treasurehouse of material for reflection on the metaphysics of act and potency, existence and essence, and substance. I have no space here to reproduce or analyse any of the argumentation bearing on these matters; for my present purpose, the conclusions of these articles suffice.

15. 'Dicendum quod necessitas ponendi intellectum possibilem in nobis fuit propter hoc quod nos invenimur quandoque intelligentes in potentia et non in actu. Unde oportet esse quamdam virtutem quae sit in potentia ad intelligibilia ante ipsum intelligere, sed educitur in actum eorum cum fit sciens, et ulterius cum fit considerans. Et haec virtus vocatur intellectus possibilis. Necessitas autem ponendi intellectum agendum fuit, quia naturae rerum materialium, quas nos intelligimus, non subsistunt extra animam immateriales et intelligibiles in potentia extra animam existentes. Et ideo oportuit esse aliquam virtutem quae faceret illas naturaliter intelligibiles actu; et haec virtus dicitur intellectus agens in nobis' (*Summa Theologiae*, q. 54, a. 4, c.). Cf. *Summa Contra Gentiles* II, cap. 98, §§ 8, 9. For an account of Scotus's views on the agent intellect in angels, see Connell, pp. 98100.

16. *Summa Contra Gentiles* II, cap. 98, § 1.

17. What an angel knows by nature is not acquired by a process of learning or discovery. An angel is always in possession of such knowledge though he need not always actually be considering it. Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 58, a. 1, c.

18. 'Knowledge for St. Thomas is simply the activity consequent on actual being, when this is not restricted by matter, i. e. by a potential factor, intrinsic to the being, which absorbs and limits the energies of the actualizing determinant factor, the form. . . . In so far as form is free from matter it is free to be self-determining, to deploy its activity 'immanently' . . . and so vitally to possess itself; and this self-possession . . . is knowledge taken absolutely and without qualification. Thus in Thomism the primary and most radical knowledge is self-knowledge. Considered metaphysically, knowledge is first of all

the return of an essence upon itself . . . and only if the essence, being limited, cannot reveal the whole of being to the resulting act of knowledge, only if it falls short of the fullness of actuality which terminates intellects as such . . . only then will the knower require to receive his knowledge from another than himself (*Summa Theologiae*, vol. 9 in Blackfriars edition, with notes by Kenelm Foster OP, pp. 923, note a).

19. Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 57, a. 1, ad 3.

20. Connell, p. 76.

21. The kind of intellectual transparency which Sartre, in the best of Cartesian traditions, attributes to the human intellect is indeed an actuality; not, however, in man but in the angels. Cf. Connell, p. 59.

22. *De Veritate*, q. 8, a. 6, obj. 6 and ad 6.

23. Connell, p. 75.

24. Cf. Connell, p. 64.

25. 'Ita tamen quod unicuique angelo impressa est ratio suae speciei secundum esse naturale et intelligibile simul, ita scilicet quod in natura suae speciei sub sisteret, et per earn se intelligeret. Aliarum vero naturarum, tam spiritualium quam corporalium, rationes sunt ei impressae secundum esse intelligibile tantum, ut videlicet per huiusmodi species impressas tam creaturas corporales quam spirituales cognosceret' (*Summa Theologiae*, q. 56, a. 2). Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 57, a. 2, c. , where this notion of an outflow from God is used by St Thomas as part of the explanation of how angels know particulars.

26. *Summa Contra Gentiles* II, cap. 98, § 14.

27. 'Dicendum quod omnes creaturae ex divina bonitate participant ut bonum quod habent in alia diffundant. . . . Quanto igitur aliqua agentia magis in participatione divinae bonitatis constituuntur, tanto magis perfectiones suas nituntur in alios transfundere, quantum possibile est' (*Summa Theologiae* Ia, q. 106, a. 4, c.).

28. Obviously, angelic speech with God does not exist for the purpose of providing God with knowledge He does not already possess. All speech is for the ordering of thought to another, but it need not always be for the enlightenment of that other—it may be ultimately for the purpose of enlightening the speaker himself: 'Locutio non semper est ad manifestandum alteri, sed quandoque ad hoc ordinatur finaliter ut loquendi aliquid manifestetur, sicut cum discipulus quaerit aliquid a magistro' (*Summa Theologiae* Ia, q. 107, a. 3, ad 2).

29. ‘Omnis illuminatio est locutio in angelis, sed non omnis locutio est illuminatio’ (*Summa Theologiae* Ia, q. 107, a. 2, c.). For more on the difference between illumination and communication, see *De Veritate*, q. 9, a. 5, c.

30. Cf. Connell, p. 73.

31. Connell. pp. 71-72: ‘In the operation of knowledge, therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between the ontological reality of the principles by which it is effected and their formal nature as principles of the operation. The species is present in the intellect as an accident in its subject, but it does not follow that it is present in this way precisely as object known; as accident inhering in the intellect it is really distinct from the object. When, however, the intellect is considered precisely as principle of operation it is a capacity to be identified with its object, and when the species is considered precisely as a co-principle of this operation it is a likeness of the object, a means of achieving the identity from which proceeds the act of knowledge as an act of knowledge of the object. Consequently the species is not that which is known but a pure means by which the object is known. Thus, the species forms the intellect into a likeness of the object so that the intellect is in its way what the object is in its way. From the intellect as thus enriched with the perfection of the object proceeds the immanent act whereby the intellect expresses to itself what it has become in the concept, in which it knows the object.’

32. Cf. *Summa Theologiae*, q. 57, a. 4 for an account of the angels’ knowledge of human thought. There St Thomas claims that the wills of rational creatures are controlled only by God, and that only God can operate in them.

33. See footnote 37 below.

34. ‘Materia si qua sit in spiritualibus substantiis, non sit eadem cum materia corporalium rerum, sed multo altior et sublimior, ut pote recipiens formam secundum ejus totalitatem. . . . Si materia spiritualium substantiarum non potest esse aliquid ens in potentia tantum, sed est aliquid ens in actu, ipsa spiritualium rerum materia est eorum substantia. Et secundum hoc nihil differt ponere materiam in spiritualibus substantiis et ponere substantias spirituales simplices non compositas ex materia et forma.’ These citations are from St Thomas Aquinas, *Treatise on Separated Substances*, ed. Francis J. Lescoe (St Joseph College, West Hartford, Connecticut), cap. VII, paragraphs 33 and 35 respectively. I am indebted to the *Irish Philosophical Journal*’s referee for suggesting that the second of these passages ‘leans towards Kainz’s claim b’.

35. *De spiritualibus creaturis*, a. 1, c. In his *Disputed Questions on the Soul*, St Thomas notes that ‘matter is not found except in corporeal things in the sense in which philosophers

have spoken of matter, unless one wishes to take matter equivocally'; but if one does, 'he is deceived in consequence of the equivocation'.

36. 'Sed adhuc hic modus non videtur sufficere. Quamvis enim in una specie non sit nisi unus angelus, tamen in angelo alicuius speciei aliud erit, quod ei convenit ex ratione suae speciei, et aliud quod ei convenit in quantum est quoddam in dividuum, sicut operationes particulares ipsius; et has secundum modum praedictum nullo modo de eo alius angelus cognoscere posset' (*De Veritate*, q. 8, a. 7. c.).

37. There are two sets of related but nonidentical distinctions in St Thomas. There is, first, *esse intelligibile* as contrasted with *esse sensibile*, and second, *esse naturale* as contrasted with *esse intentionale*. *Esse intelligibile* is that which is the object of the intellect, being either actually immaterial, or potentially so. *Esse sensibile*, on the other hand, is the object of the senses, i. e. that which is material and corporeal, and which is, as such, unintelligible. This distinction between *esse intelligibile* and *esse sensibile* drawn thus with respect to what is known by the cognitive powers is all on the *esse naturale* side of the *esse naturale/esse intentionale* distinction. There is, however, another sense of *esse intelligibile* in which it connotes not that which is understood but rather the mode of existence of things in the understanding. In this sense of *esse intelligibile* it falls clearly on the *esse intentionale* side of the *esse naturale/esse intentionale* distinction. To this distinction we now turn. *Esse naturale* is the objective, extramental existence which a thing possesses in itself and not as a result of being known by any finite knower. As such, *esse intelligibile*, as that which is understood, is also *esse naturale*. *Esse intentionale*, on the other hand, is subjective, intrasensible or intraintellectual being. *Esse intentionale* must be distinguished from mere *entia rationis* which are purely mental beings that can have no existence apart from the intellect sustaining them. *Esse intentionale* is a mode of being which, while in general sharing with *entia rationis* a purely intellectual mode of existence, nevertheless contains an intrinsic reference to the extramental objective being from which it derives.

38. 'Angeli cogitationes hominum per se et directe in tueri non possunt. Ad hoc enim quod mens actu aliquid cogitet, requiritur intentio volentis, qua mens convertatur in actu ad speciem quam habet, ut patet per Augustinum. . . . Motus autem voluntatis alterius non potest angelo notus esse naturaliter cognitione, quia angelus naturaliter cognoscit per formas sibi inditas, quae sunt similitudines rerum in natura existentium; motu autem voluntatis non habet dependentiam nec connexionem ad aliquam causam naturalem, sed solum ad causam divinam, quae in voluntate sola imprimere potest. Unde motus voluntatis et cordis cogitatio non potest cognosci in aliquibus similitudinibus rerum

naturalium; sed solum in essentia divina, quae in voluntatem im primit. Et sic angeli cognoscere non possunt cogitationes cordium directe, nisi in Verbo eis revelentur' (*De Veritate*, q. 8, a. 13, c.).

39. 'Quia es quae praesentia sunt, habent naturam per quam assimilantur speciebus quae sunt in mente angeli; et sic per eas cognosci possunt. Sed quae futura sunt, nondum habent naturam per quam illis assimilentur; unde per eas cognosci non possunt.