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**TRUTH**  
**by**  
**Thomas Aquinas**

(1225-1274)

**Question 1**

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are available online at:  
<http://dhsprory.org/thomas>**

*C.G. = Summa Contra Gentiles*

*De pot = De Potentia Dei*

*De ver. = De Veritate*

*Metaph. = Metaphysica*

*Perih. = Peri Hermeneias*

*Quodl. = Quodlibetales*

*Sent. = Commentary on Sentences*

*S.T. = Summa Theologiae*

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## Question One: Truth

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## ARTICLE I

### **The problem under discussion is truth, and in the first article we ask: What is truth?**

[Cf. *S.T.*, I. 16, aa. 1, 3; *I Sent.*, 19, 5, 1; *C.G.*, I, 60;  
*I Perih.*, lect. 3, nn. 3-10; *VI Metaph.*, lect. 4, nn. 1230-44.]

#### **Difficulties**

It seems that the true is exactly the same as being, for

1. Augustine says: “The true is that which is.” But that which is, is simply being. The true, therefore, means exactly the same as being.
2. It was said in reply that the true and being are the same materially but differ formally.— On the contrary the nature of a thing is signified by its definition; and the definition of the true, according to Augustine, is that which is.” He rejects all other definitions. Now, since the true and being are materially the same, it seems that they are also formally the same.
3. Things which differ conceptually are so related to each other that one of them can be understood without the other. For this reason, Boethius says that the existence of God can be understood if for a moment we mentally separate His goodness from His existence. Being, however can in no way be understood apart from the true, for being is known only in so far as it is true. Therefore, the true and being do differ conceptually.
4. If the true is not the same as being, it must be a state of being. But it cannot be a state of being. It is not a state that entirely corrupts— otherwise, this would follow: “It is true. Therefore, it is non-being”— as it follows when we say: “This man is dead. Therefore, this is not a man.” Similarly, the true is not a state that limits. If it were, one could not say: “It is true. Therefore it is.” For one cannot say that a thing is white simply because it has white teeth. Finally, the true is not a state which contracts or specifies being, for it is convertible with being. It follows, therefore, that the true and being are entirely the same.

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5. Things in the same state are the same. But the true and being are in the same state. Therefore, they are the same. For Aristotle writes: “The state of a thing in its act of existence is the same as its state in truth.” Therefore, the true and being are entirely the same.
  6. Things not the same differ in some respect. But the true and being differ in no respect. They do not differ essentially, for every being is true by its very essence. And they do not differ in any other ways, for they must belong to some common genus. Therefore, they are entirely the same.
  7. If they were not entirely the same, the true would add something to being. But the true adds nothing to being, even though it has greater extension than being. This is borne out by the statement of the Philosopher that we define the true as: “That which affirms the existence of what is, and denies the existence of what is not.” Consequently, the true includes both being and non-being; since it does not add anything to being, it seems to be entirely the same as being.

### To the Contrary

1. Useless repetition of the same thing is meaningless; so, if the true were the same as being, it would be meaningless to say: “Being is true.” This, however, is hardly correct. Therefore, they are not the same.
2. Being and the good are convertible. The true and the good, however, are not interchangeable, for some things, such as fornication, are true but not good. The true, therefore, and being are not interchangeable. And so they are not the same.
3. In all creatures, as Boethius has pointed out, “to be is other than that which is.” Now, the true signifies the existence of things. Consequently, in creatures it is different from that which is. But that which is, is the same as being. Therefore, in creatures the true is different from being.
4. Things related as before and after must differ. But the true and being are related in the aforesaid manner; for, as is said in *The Causes*: “The first of all created things is the act of existence.” In a study of this work, a commentator writes as follows: “Everything else is predicated as a specification of being.” Consequently, everything else comes after being. Therefore, the true and being are not the same.

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5. What are predicated of a cause and of the effects of the cause are more united in the cause than in its effects— and more so in God than in creatures. But in God four predicates— being, the one, the true— are appropriated as follows: being, to the essence; the one, to the Father; the true, to the Son; and the good, to the Holy Spirit.

Since the divine Persons are really and not merely conceptually distinct, these notions cannot be predicated of each other; if really distinct when verified of the divine Persons, the four notions in question are much more so when verified of creatures.

## REPLY

When investigating the nature of anything, one should make the same kind of analysis as he makes when he reduces a proposition to certain self-evident principles. Otherwise, both types of knowledge will become involved in an infinite regress, and science and our knowledge of things will perish.

Now, as Avicenna says, that which the intellect first conceives as, in a way, the most evident, and to which it reduces all its concepts, is being. Consequently, all the other conceptions of the intellect are had by additions to being. But nothing can be added to being as though it were something not included in being— in the way that a difference is added to a genus or an accident to a subject— for every reality is essentially a being. The Philosopher has shown this by proving that being cannot be a genus. Yet, in this sense, some predicates may be said to add to being inasmuch as they express a mode of being not expressed by the term *being*. This happens in two ways.

First, the mode expressed is a certain special manner of being; for there are different grades of being according to which we speak when we speak of different levels of existence, and according to these grades different things are classified. Consequently, substance does not add a difference to being by signifying some reality added to it, but substance simply expresses a special manner of existing, namely, as a being in itself. The same is true of the other classes of existents.

Second, some are said to add to being because the mode they express is one that is common, and consequent upon every being. This mode can be taken in two ways: first, in so far as it follows upon every being considered absolutely; second, in so far as it follows upon every being

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considered in relation to another. In the first, the term is used in two ways, because it expresses something in the being either affirmatively or negatively. We can, however, find nothing that can be predicated of every being affirmatively and, at the same time, absolutely, with the exception of its essence by which the being is said to be. To express this, the term thing is used; for, according to Avicenna, "thing differs from being because being gets its name from to-be, but thing expresses the quiddity or essence of the being. There is, however, a negation consequent upon every being considered absolutely: its undividedness, and this is expressed by one. For the one is simply undivided being.

If the mode of being is taken in the second way— according to the relation of one being to another— we find a twofold use. The first is based on the distinction of one being from another, and this distinctness is expressed by the word something, which implies, as it were, some other thing. For, just as a being is said to be one in so far as it is without division in itself, so it is said to be something in so far as it is divided from others. The second division is based on the correspondence one being has with another. This is possible only if there is something which is such that it agrees with every being. Such a being is the soul, which, as is said in *The Soul*, "in some way is all things." The soul, however, has both knowing and appetitive powers. Good expresses the correspondence of being to the appetitive power, for, and so we note in the *Ethics*, the good is "that which all desire." True expresses the correspondence of being to the knowing power, for all knowing is produced by an assimilation of the knower to the thing known, so that assimilation is said to be the cause of knowledge. Similarly, the sense of sight knows a color by being informed with a species of the color.

The first reference of being to the intellect, therefore, consists in its agreement with the intellect. This agreement is called "the conformity of thing and intellect." In this conformity is fulfilled the formal constituent of the true, and this is what *the true* adds to being, namely, the conformity or equation of thing and intellect. As we said, the knowledge of a thing is a consequence of this conformity; therefore, it is an effect of truth, even though the fact that the thing is a being is prior to its truth.

Consequently, truth or the true has been defined in three ways. First of all, it is defined according to that which precedes truth and is the basis of truth. This is why Augustine writes: "The true is that which

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is”; and Avicenna: “The truth of each thing is a property of the act of being which has been established for it.” Still others say: “The true is the undividedness of the act of existence from that which is.” Truth is also defined in another way— according to that in which its intelligible determination is formally completed. Thus, Isaac writes: “Truth is the conformity of thing and intellect”; and Anselm: “Truth is a rectitude perceptible only by the mind.” This rectitude, of course, is said to be based on some conformity. The Philosopher says that in defining truth we say that truth is had when one affirms that “to be which is, and that not to be which is not.”

The third way of defining truth is according to the effect following upon it. Thus, Hilary says that the true is that which manifests and proclaims existence. And Augustine says: “Truth is that by which that which is, is shown”; and also: “Truth is that according to which we, judge about inferior things.”

## Answers to Difficulties

1. That definition of Augustine is given for the true as it has its foundation in reality and not as its formal nature is given complete expression by conformity of thing and intellect. An alternative answer would be that in the statement, “The true is that which is,” the word *is* is not here understood as referring to the act of existing, but rather as the mark of the intellectual act of judging, signifying, that is, the affirmation of a proposition. The meaning would then be this: “The true is that which is— it is had when the existence of what is, is affirmed.” If this is its meaning, then Augustine’s definition agrees with that of the Philosopher mentioned above.
2. The answer is clear from what has been said.
3. “Something can be understood without another” can be taken in two ways. It can mean that something can be known while another remains unknown. Taken in this way, it is true that things which differ conceptually are such that one can be understood without the other. But there is another way that a thing can be understood without another: when it is known even though the other does not exist. Taken in this sense, being cannot be known without the true, for it cannot be known unless it agrees with or conforms to intellect, It is not necessary, however, that everyone who understands the formal notion of



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being should also understand the formal notion of the true— just as not everyone who understands being understands the agent intellect, even though nothing can be known without the agent intellect.

4. The true is a state of being even though it does not add any reality to being or express any special mode of existence. It is rather something that is generally found in every being, although it is not expressed by the word *being*. Consequently, it is not a state that corrupts, limits, or contracts.
5. In this objection, *condition* should not be understood as belonging to the genus of quality. It implies, rather, a certain order; for those which are the cause of the existence of other things are themselves beings most completely, and those which are the cause of the truth of other things are themselves true most completely. It is for this reason that the Philosopher concludes that the rank of a thing in its existence corresponds to its rank in truth, so that when one finds that which is most fully being, he finds there also that which is most fully true. But this does not mean that being and the true are the same in concept. It means simply that in the degree in which a thing has being, in that degree it is capable of being proportioned to intellect. Consequently, the true is dependent upon the formal character of being.
6. There is a conceptual difference between the true and being since there is something in the notion of the true that is not in the concept of the existing— not in such a way, however, that there is something in the concept of being which is not in the concept of the true. They do not differ essentially nor are they distinguished from one another by opposing differences.
7. The true does not have a wider extension than being. Being is, in some way, predicated of non-being in so far as non-being is apprehended by the intellect. For, as the Philosopher says, the negation or the privation of being may, in a sense, be called being. Avicenna supports this by pointing out that one can form propositions only of beings, for that about which a proposition is formed must be apprehended by the intellect. Consequently, it is clear that everything true is being in some way.

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## Answers to Contrary Difficulties

1. The reason why it is not tautological to call a being true is that something is expressed by the word *true* that is not expressed by the word *being*, and not that the two differ in reality.
2. Although fornication is evil, it possesses some being and can conform to intellect. Accordingly, the formal character of the true is found here. So it is clear that *true* is coextensive with *being*.
3. In the statement, "To be is other than that which is," the act of being is distinguished from that to which that act belongs. But the name of being is taken from the act of existence, not from that whose act it is. Hence, the argument does not follow.
4. The true comes after being in this respect, that the notion of the true differs from that of being in the manner we have described. This argument has three flaws. First, although the Persons are really distinct, the things appropriated to each Person are only conceptually, and not really, distinct. Secondly, although the Persons are really distinct from each other, they are not really distinct from the essence; so, truth appropriated to the Person of the Son is not distinct from the act of existence He possesses through the divine essence. Thirdly, although being, the true, the one, and the good are more united in God than they are in created things, it does not follow from the fact that they are conceptually distinct in God that they are really distinct in created beings. This line of argument is valid only when it is applied to things which are not by their very nature one in reality, as wisdom and power, which, although one in God, are distinct in creatures. But being, the true, the one, and the good are such that by their very nature they are one in reality. Therefore, no matter where they are found, they are really one. Their unity in God, however, is more perfect than their unity in creatures.

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## ARTICLE II

### In the second article we ask: Is truth found principally in the intellect or in things?

[Parallel readings: *C.G.*, I, 59; *III De anima*, lect. 11, nn. 746-51, 760-64; *S.T.*, I, 16, 2. See also readings given for preceding article.]

#### Difficulties

It seems that it is found principally in things, for:

1. It was pointed out that the true is convertible with being. But being is found more principally in things than in the soul. The true, therefore, is principally outside the soul.
2. Things are not in the soul through their essences but, as pointed out by the Philosopher, through species. If, therefore, truth is found principally in the soul, truth will not be the essence of a thing but merely its likeness or species; and the true will be the species of a being existing outside the soul. But the species of a thing existing in the soul is not predicated of a thing outside the soul and is not convertible with it; for, if this were so, the true could not be converted with being— which is false.
3. That which is in something is based upon that in which it is. If truth, then, is principally in the soul, judgments about truth will have as their criterion the soul's estimation. This would revive that error of the ancient philosophers who said that any opinion a person has in his intellect is true and that two contradictories can be true at the same time. This, of course, is absurd.
4. If truth is principally in the intellect, anything which pertains to the intellect should be included in the definition of truth. Augustine, however, sharply criticizes such definitions, as, for example, "The true is that which is as it is seen." For, according to this definition, something would not be true if it were not seen. This is clearly false of rocks hidden deep in the earth. Augustine similarly criticizes the following definition: "The true is that which is as it appears to the

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knower, provided he is willing and able to know.” For, according to this definition, something would not be true unless the knower wished and were able to know. The same criticism can be leveled against other definitions that include any reference to intellect. Truth, therefore, is not principally in the intellect.

## To the Contrary

1. The Philosopher says: “The true and the false are not in things but in the mind.”
2. Truth is “the conformity of thing and intellect.” But since this conformity can be only in the intellect, truth is only in the intellect.

## REPLY

When a predicate is used primarily and secondarily of many things, it is not necessary that that which is the cause of the others receive the primary predication of the common term, but rather that in which the meaning of the common term is first fully verified. For example, *healthy* is primarily predicated of an animal, for it is in an animal that the nature of health is first found in its fullest sense. But inasmuch as medicine causes health, it is also said to be healthy. Therefore, since truth is predicated of many things in a primary and a secondary sense, it ought to be primarily predicated of that in which its full meaning is primarily found.

Now, the fulfillment of any motion is found in the term of the motion; and, since the term of the motion of a cognitive power is, the soul, the known must be in the knower after the manner of the knower. But the motion of an appetitive power terminates in things. For this reason the Philosopher speaks of a sort of circle formed by the acts of the soul: for a thing outside the soul moves the intellect, and the thing known moves the appetite, which tends to reach the things from which the motion originally started. Since good, as mentioned previously, expresses a relation to appetite, and true, a relation to the intellect, the Philosopher says that good and evil are in things, but true and false are in the mind. A thing is not called true, however, unless it conforms to an intellect. The true, therefore, is found secondarily in things and primarily in intellect.

Note, however, that a thing is referred differently to the practical intel-

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lect than it is to the speculative intellect. Sine the practical intellect causes things, it is a measure of what it causes. But, since the speculative intellect is receptive in regard to things, it is, in a certain sense, moved by things and consequently measured by them. It is clear, therefore, that, as is said in the *Metaphysics*, natural things from which our intellect gets its scientific knowledge measure our intellect. Yet these things are themselves measured by the divine intellect, in which are all created things—just as all works of art find their origin in the intellect of an artist. The divine intellect, therefore, measures and is not measured; a natural thing both measures and is measured; but our intellect is measured, and measures only artifacts, not natural things.

A natural thing, therefore, being placed between two intellects is called true in so far as it conforms to either. It is said to be true with respect to its conformity with the divine intellect in so far as it fulfills the end to which it was ordained by the divine intellect. This is clear from the writings of Anselm and Augustine, as well as from the definition of Avicenna, previously cited: “The truth of anything is a property of the act of being which has been established for it.” With respect to its conformity with a human intellect, a thing is said to be true in so far as it is such as to cause a true estimate about itself; and a thing is said to be false if, as Aristotle says, “by nature it is such that it seems to be what it is not, or seems to possess qualities which it does not possess.”

In a natural thing, truth is found especially in the first, rather than in the second, sense; for its reference to the divine intellect comes before its reference to a human intellect. Even if there were no human intellects, things could be said to be true because of their relation to the divine intellect. But if, by an impossible supposition, intellect did not exist and things did continue to exist, then the essentials of truth would in no way remain.

## Answers to Difficulties

1. As is clear from the discussion, true is predicated primarily of a true intellect and secondarily of a thing conformed with intellect. True taken in either sense, however, is interchangeable with being, but in different ways. Used of things, it can be interchanged with being through a judgment asserting merely material identity, for every being is conformed with the divine intellect and can be conformed with

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a human intellect. The converse of this is also true.

But if true is understood as used of the intellect, then it can be converted with being outside the soul— not as denominating the same subject, but as expressing conformity. For every true act of understanding is referred to a being, and every being corresponds to a true act of understanding.

2. The solution of the second argument is clear from the solution of the first.
3. What is in another does not depend on that other unless it is caused by the principles of that other. For example, even though light is in the air, it is caused by something extrinsic, the sun; and it is based on the motion of the sun rather than on air. In the same way, truth which is in the soul but caused by things does not depend on what one thinks but on the existence of things. For from the fact that a thing is or is not, a statement or an intellect is said to be true or false.
4. Augustine is speaking of a thing's being seen by the human intellect. Truth, of course, does not depend on this, for many things exist that are not known by our intellects. There is nothing, however, that the divine intellect does not actually know, and nothing that the human intellect does not know potentially, for the agent intellect is said to be that "by which we make all things knowable," and the possible intellect, as that "by which we become all things." For this reason, one can place in the definition of a true thing its actually being seen by the divine intellect, but not its being seen by a human intellect, except potentially, as is clear from our earlier discussion.

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## ARTICLE III

### In the third article we ask: Is truth only in the Intellect joining and separating?

[Parallel readings: *De ver.*, I, 9; *S. T.* I, 16, 2; *I Sent.*, 19, 5, 1; *C.G.* I, 59; *III De anima*, lect. 11, nn. 746-51, 760-64; *I Perih.*, lect. 3, nn. 3-10; *VI Metaph.*, lect. 4, nn. 1233-44; *IX Metaph.*, lect. 11, n. 1896 seq.]

#### Difficulties

It seems not, for

1. The true is predicated from the relation of being to intellect. But the first operation by which an intellect is related to things is that in which the intellect forms the quiddities of things by conceiving their definitions. Truth, therefore, is principally and more properly found in that operation of the intellect.
2. The true is a “conformity of thing and intellect.” Now, although the intellect, in joining and separating, can be conformed with things, it can also be conformed with things in understanding their quiddities. Truth, therefore, is not merely in the intellect joining and separating.

#### To the Contrary

1. In the *Metaphysics* we read: “The true and the false are not in things but in the mind. In regard to simple natures and quiddities, however, it is not in the mind.”
2. In *The Soul* the statement is made that the true and the false are not to be found in simple apprehension.

#### REPLY

Just as the true is found primarily in the intellect rather than in things, so also is it found primarily in an act of the intellect joining and separating, rather than in an act by which it forms the quiddities of things. For the nature of the true consists in a conformity of thing and intellect. Nothing becomes conformed with itself, but con-

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formity requires distinct terms. Consequently, the nature of truth is first found in the intellect when the intellect begins to possess something proper to itself, not possessed by the thing outside the soul, yet corresponding to it, so that between the two— intellect and thing— a conformity may be found. In forming the quiddities of things, the intellect merely has a likeness of a thing existing outside the soul, as a sense has a likeness when it receives the species of a sensible thing. But when the intellect begins to judge about the thing it has apprehended, then its judgment is something proper to itself— not something found outside in the thing. And the judgment is said to be true when it conforms to the external reality. Moreover, the intellect judges about the thing it has apprehended at the moment when it says that something is or is not. This is the role of “the intellect composing and dividing.”

For these reasons, the Philosopher says that composition and division are in the intellect, and not in things. Moreover, this is why truth is found primarily in the joining and separating by the intellect, and only secondarily in its formation of the quiddities of things or definitions, for a definition is called true or false because of a true or false combination. For it may happen that a definition will be applied to something to which it does not belong, as when the definition of a circle is assigned to a triangle. Sometimes, too, the parts of a definition cannot be reconciled, as happens when one defines a thing as “an animal entirely without the power of sensing.” The judgment implied in such a definition— “some animal is incapable of sensing”— is false. Consequently, a definition is said to be true or false only because of its relation to a judgment, as a thing is said to be true because of its relation to intellect.

From our discussion, then, it is clear that the true is predicated, first of all, of joining and separating by the intellect; second, of the definitions of things in so far as they imply a true or a false judgment. Third, the true may be predicated of things in so far as they are conformed with the divine intellect or in so far as, by their very nature, they can be conformed with human intellects. Fourth, true or false may be predicated of man in so far as he chooses to express truth, or in so far as he gives a true or false impression of himself or of others by his words and actions; for truth can be predicated of words in the same way as it can be predicated of the ideas which they convey.



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## Answers to Difficulties

1. Although the formation of a quiddity is the first operation of the intellect, by it the intellect does not yet possess anything that, properly speaking, is its own and can be conformed to the thing. Truth, accordingly, is not found in it.
2. From this the solution of the second difficulty is clear.

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## ARTICLE IV

### In the fourth article we ask: Is there only one truth by which all things are true?

[Parallel readings: *De ver.*, 21, 4, ad 5; 27, 1, ad 7; *S.T.*, I, 16, 6; I-II, 33, 1, ad 3; *C.G.*, III, 47; *Quodl.*, X, 4, 7; *I Sent.*, 19, 5, 2.]

#### Difficulties

It seems that this is so, for

1. Anselm says that the relation of truth to all true things is like that of time to all temporal things. But there is only one time to which all temporal things are related. Therefore there will be only one truth to which all true things are related.
2. But it was said that truth is used in two ways. In one, it means the entity of a thing, as when Augustine says: “The true is that which is.” If truth be understood in this sense, then there should be as many truths as there are essences of things. In the second way in which truth is used, it signifies truth as it is expressed in the intellect. Consequently, Hilary writes: “The true affirms existence.” But since nothing can manifest anything to the intellect except in virtue of the first divine truth, all truths are, in some sense, one, inasmuch as they all move the intellect— just as colors are one in moving the sense of sight, since they all move it because of one thing: light.  
  
On the contrary, however, time, the measure of all temporal things, is numerically one; and if truth is related to true things as time is related to temporal things, the truth of all true things must also be numerically one. It will not be sufficient for all truths to be one in their action of moving the intellect or to be one in their exemplary cause.
3. Anselm argues as follows: If there are as many truths as there are true things, then truths should change as true things change. But truths do not change with the changes of true things, for, even when true and correct things are destroyed, the truth and correctness by which they are true or correct remain. There is, therefore, only one truth. He

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proves the minor from this: When a sign is destroyed, the correctness of the signification remains, for it remains correct that the sign should signify that which it did signify. For the same reason, rectitude or truth remains even when a true or correct thing has been destroyed.

4. With regard to created things, nothing is identical with that whose truth it is. The truth of a man is not the man; the truth of flesh is not the flesh. But every created thing is true. No created thing, therefore, is truth. Consequently, every truth is uncreated, and so there is only one truth.
5. As Augustine says, only God is greater than the human mind. But, as he proves elsewhere, truth is greater than the human mind, for truth certainly cannot be said to be less than the human mind. If this were so, it would be within the competence of the mind to pass judgment on truth. This, of course, is false, for the mind does not judge truth but judges according to the truth, like a magistrate who does not pass judgment upon the law but, as Augustine himself says, judges according to the law. Similarly, the mind of man cannot be said to be equal to truth, for it judges everything according to truth. It does not judge everything according to itself. Truth, therefore, must be God Alone, and so there is only one truth.
6. Augustine has proved that truth is not perceived by any bodily sense. His proof is that nothing is perceived by sense unless it is changeable. But truth is unchangeable. Truth, therefore, is not perceived by sense.

One could similarly argue that everything created is changeable. But truth is not changeable. Therefore, it is not a creature but is something uncreated. Consequently, there is only one truth.

7. Augustine offers another proof in the same place: "There is no sensible thing that does not have some similarity to what is false, and, as a result, the two cannot be distinguished. To mention only one example: all that we sense through the body. Even when these objects are not present to the senses, we experience their images as though they were present, as when we are asleep or become delirious." Truth, however, has no resemblance to what is false. Therefore, truth is not perceived by a sense.

One could similarly argue that every created thing has some similarity

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to what is false in so far as it has some defect. Nothing created, therefore, is truth, and so there is only one truth.

### To the Contrary

1. Augustine writes: “As likeness is the form of like things, so truth is the form of true things.” But for many like things there are many likenesses. Therefore, for many true things there are many truths.
2. Just as every created truth is derived from the uncreated truth as its model, and has its truth from it, so all intelligible light is derived from the first uncreated light as from its exemplary cause, and from it possesses its power of making things known. But we say that there are many intelligible lights, as is clear from the writings of Dionysius. Therefore, following this analogy, it seems we must likewise simply concede that there are many truths.
3. Although all colors are able to affect the sense of sight in virtue of light, nevertheless, in themselves colors are distinct and different, and cannot be said to be one, except from a particular point of view. Consequently, even though all created truths manifest themselves in the intellect by virtue of the first truth, we cannot for this reason say that there is one truth, unless considered under this one aspect.
4. Just as a created truth can manifest itself to the intellect only by virtue of the uncreated truth, so no power in a creature can act except by virtue of the uncreated power. Yet we do not say that somehow or other there is one power for all powers; so, in the same manner, we should not say that in some way there is one truth for all truths.
5. God as a cause is related to things in three ways: as an efficient, an exemplary, and as a final cause. Consequently, by a kind of appropriation, the entity of things is referred to God as efficient cause, their truth to Him as an exemplary cause, their goodness to Him as a final cause— even though, properly speaking, each single one could be referred to each single cause. But in no manner of speaking do we say that there is one goodness for all good things, or one entity for all beings. Therefore, we should not say that there is one truth for all true things.
6. Although there is one uncreated truth from which all created truths

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take their model, these truths are not modeled on it in the same way. For while it is true that the uncreated truth has the same relation to all, all do not have the same relation to it— as pointed out in *The Causes*. Necessary and contingent truths are modeled on the uncreated truth in quite different ways. But different ways of imitating the divine model cause diversity among created things. Consequently, there are many created truths.

7. Truth is “the conformity of thing and intellect.” But since things differ specifically, there cannot be a single conformity to the intellect. So, since true things are specifically different, there cannot be one truth for all true things.
8. Augustine writes as follows: “One must believe that the nature of the human mind is so connected with intelligible things that it gazes upon all it knows by means of a unique light.” Now, the light by whose means the soul knows all things is truth. Truth, therefore, belongs to the same genus as the soul and must be a created thing. Consequently, in different creatures there are different truths.

## REPLY

From our previous discussion it is clear that truth is properly found in the human or divine intellect, as health is found in an animal. In things, however, truth is found because of some relation to intellect— just as health is said to be in things other than animals in so far as they bring about or preserve animal health. Truth, therefore, is properly and primarily in the divine intellect. In the human intellect, it exists properly but secondarily, for it exists there only because of a relation to either one of the two truths just mentioned.

In his gloss on these words of Psalm 11 (v. 2), “Truths are decayed from among the children of men,” Augustine writes” that the truth of the divine intellect is one, and from it are drawn the many truths that are in the human intellect— “just as from one man’s face many likenesses are reflected in a mirror.” Now, there are many truths in things, just as there are many entities of things. But truth predicated of things because of their relation to the human intellect is, as it were, accidental to those things; for, supposing that the human intellect did not or could not exist, things would still remain essentially the same. But truth predicated of things because of their relation to the divine

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intellect is inseparably attendant on them, for they cannot exist except by reason of the divine intellect which keeps bringing them into being. Again, truth is primarily in a thing because of its relation to the divine intellect, not to the human intellect, because it is related to the divine intellect as to its cause, but to the human intellect as to its effect in the sense that the latter receives its knowledge from things. For this reason, a thing is said to be true principally because of its order to the truth of the divine intellect rather than because of its relation to the truth of a human intellect.

So, if truth in its proper sense be taken as that by which all things are primarily true, then all things are true by means of one truth, the truth of the divine intellect. This is the truth which Anselm writes about. But if truth in its proper sense be taken as that by which things are said to be true secondarily, then there are many truths about many true things, and even many truths in different minds about one true thing. Finally, if truth in its improper sense be taken as that by which all things are said to be true, then there are many truths for many true things, but only one truth for one true thing.

Things are called true from the truth in the divine or human intellect, just as food is called healthy, not because of any inherent form, but because of the health which is in an animal. If, however, a thing is called true because of the truth in the thing, which is simply its entity conformed with intellect, then it is so called because of something inhering in it after the manner of a form, as food is said to be healthy because of a quality of its own— which is the reason for its being said to be healthy.

## Answers to Difficulties

1. Time is related to temporal things as a measure is related to the measured. It is clear, therefore, that Anselm is referring to that truth which is only the measure of all true things. There is only one such truth numerically, just as there is only one time— as the second argument concludes. However, the truth in the human intellect or in things themselves is not related to things as an extrinsic or common measure is related to those it measures. It is related as a measured thing is related to a measure, for such is the relation of truth in a human intellect to things, and it must, as a consequence, vary as

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things vary. Or, it is related as an intrinsic measure to the thing itself, as is the case with the truth that is in things themselves. Intrinsic measures must be multiplied as the number of things measured is multiplied— just as dimensions must be multiplied with the multiplicity of bodies.

2. We concede the second argument.
3. The truth which remains after things are destroyed is the truth of the divine intellect, and this is numerically one. However, the truth which is in things or in the soul is diversified according to the diversity of things.
4. The proposition “Nothing is its own truth” is understood of things having a complete act of existence in reality. It is likewise said that “Nothing is its own act of existence,” yet the act of existence of a thing is, in a sense, something created. In the same way, the truth of a thing is something created.
5. The truth by which the soul passes judgment on all things is the first truth; for, just as from the truth of the divine intellect there flow into the angelic intellects those intelligible species by which angels know all things, so does the truth of the first principles by which we judge everything proceed from the truth of the divine intellect as from its exemplary cause. Since we can judge by means of the truth of these first principles only in so far as this truth is a likeness of the first truth, we are said to judge everything according to the first truth.
6. That immutable truth is the first truth, which is neither perceptible by sense nor something created.
7. Although every creature has some similarity to what is false, created truth itself does not have this similarity. For a creature has some similarity to what is false in so far as it is deficient. Truth, however, does not depend on a creature in so far as it is deficient, but in so far as it rises above its deficiency by being conformed to the first truth.

### **Answers to Contrary Difficulties**

1. Properly speaking, when two things are similar, likeness is found in both. Truth, however, being a certain agreement of intellect and thing, is not, properly speaking, found in both, but only in intellect;

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and since all things are true and said to be true in so far as they are in conformity with one intellect, the divine intellect, everything must be true according to one truth, even though in many Eke things there are many different likenesses.

2. Although intelligible light has the divine light for its exemplary cause, light is nevertheless predicated in the proper sense of created intelligible lights. Truth, however, is not predicated in the proper sense of things having the divine intellect as their exemplary cause. Consequently, we do not say that there is one light in the same way that we say that there is one truth.
3. Our reply given immediately above will answer the argument taken from colors, for visible is properly predicated of colors, also, even though they are not seen except by means of light.
- 4-5. Our answer to the fourth argument (from the nature of power) and to the fifth (from the nature of being) is the same.
6. Even though things are modeled in different ways upon the divine truth, this does not keep things from being true in the proper sense of the term by a single truth— not by many truths. For that which is received in different ways in the things modeled upon the exemplar is not properly called truth with the same propriety as truth is said to be in the exemplar itself.
7. Although things differing specifically are not on their own part conformed with the divine intellect by one conformity, the divine intellect to which all things are conformed is one, and on its part there is one conformity with all things— even though all things are not conformed to it in the same way. The truth of all things, therefore, is one in the manner described.
8. Augustine is speaking of truth in our mind as it is modeled upon the divine mind as the likeness of a face is reflected in a mirror; and, as we said, there are many reflections of the first truth in our souls. Or one can say that the first truth belongs to the genus of the soul if **genus** be taken in a broad sense, namely, in so far as everything intelligible or incorporeal is said to belong to one genus. **Genus** is used in this way in the Acts of the Apostles (17:28) where we read: “For we are also his offspring [**genus**].”



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## ARTICLE V

### In the fifth article we ask: Is some truth besides the first truth eternal?

[Parallel readings: *S.T.*, I, 10, 3, ad 3; 16,7; *I Sent.*, 19, 5, 3; *C. G.*, II, cc. 36, 83-84; *De pot.*, 3,17, ad 27-29.]

#### Difficulties

It seems that there is some such truth, for

1. When treating the truth of propositions, Anselm says: “Whether truth be said to have, or whether it is understood not to have, a beginning or end, it cannot be circumscribed by a beginning or end.” But every truth is understood either to have or not to have a beginning or end. Therefore, no truth is circumscribed by a beginning or end, and, since anything like this is eternal, every truth is eternal.
2. Anything whose existence is a consequence of the destruction of its existence is eternal; for, whether it is taken as existing or not existing, it follows that it is. Moreover, at any given time each and every thing must be held as either existing or not existing. Now, a consequence of the destruction of truth is that truth is; for, if truth is not, the fact that truth is not is true, and nothing can be true except by truth. Therefore, truth is eternal.
3. If the truth of propositions is not eternal, then a time must be assigned when their truth was not. But at that time it was true to say: “There is no truth of propositions.” Therefore, truth of propositions exists—which contradicts the supposition. Therefore, one cannot say that the truth of propositions is not eternal.
4. The Philosopher’s proof that matter is eternal (which is false) rests on the fact that matter remains after its corruption and exists prior to its generation, since, if it corrupts, it corrupts into something, and if it is generated, it is generated out of something. But that from which something is generated and that into which it corrupts is matter. The same would be true of truth if it were said to undergo corruption or generation: it would exist before its generation and after its corruption. If it were generated, it would be changed from non-being to

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being, and if it corrupted, it would change from being to non-being. However, when truth did not exist, it would have been true that it did not exist—which could not be unless there was truth. Therefore, truth is eternal.

5. Whatever cannot be conceived as not existing is eternal, for whatever is able not to exist can be conceived as not existing. The truth of propositions, however, cannot be conceived as not existing, because the intellect cannot understand anything unless it understands it to be true. Therefore, the truth of propositions is eternal.
6. Anselm argues as follows: “Let him who is able think of when this truth began or when it did not exist.”
7. That which is future always was future, and that which is past will always be past. Consequently, a proposition about the future is true since something is future, and a proposition about the past is true since something is past. Therefore, the truth of a future proposition always was, as the truth of a proposition concerning the past always will be. Hence, not only the first truth is eternal, but also many other truths are eternal.
8. St. Augustine says that nothing is more eternal than the nature of a circle and that two and three are five. Since these are created truths, some truth besides the first truth is eternal.
9. For a proposition to be true, it is not necessary that something be actually stated. It is sufficient that something exist about which a proposition can be formed. But, even before the world existed, there was something, even apart from God, about which a proposition could be formed. Hence, before the world existed, the truth of propositions existed, and, since what existed before the world is eternal, the truth of propositions is eternal. The minor is proved thus: The world is made from nothing, that is, after nothing. Hence, before the world was, there was its non-existence. But a true proposition is formed not only about that which is, but also about that which is not; for, just as what is, is truly stated to be, so that which is not is truly stated not to be—as is clearly shown in *Interpretation*. Hence, before the world existed, there was that from which a true proposition could be formed.
10. Whatever is known is true while it is known. But from all eternity God

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knew all possible propositions. Therefore, from all eternity the truth of all propositions has existed, and so there are many eternal truths.

11. It was said, however, that from this it follows that those propositions are true in the divine intellect— not in themselves.— On the contrary, things must be true in the way in which they are known. But from eternity all things are known by God not only in so far as they are in His mind, but also as they exist in their proper nature; for Sirach (23:29) says: “All things were known to the Lord God before they were created; so also after they were perfected, he beholdeth all things.” He accordingly knows things in no other way after they are perfected than He did from eternity. Therefore, from eternity there were many truths existing not only in the divine intellect but in themselves.
12. A thing is said to exist simply in so far as it is in that which gives it its formal perfection. But the character of truth finds its formal perfection in the intellect. Hence, if from eternity there were many things simply true in the divine intellect, it must be granted that there are many eternal truths.
13. Wisdom (1:15) states: “For justice is perpetual and immortal.” As Cicero says, however, truth is a part of justice. Hence, truth is perpetual and immortal.
14. Universals are perpetual and immortal. But the true is most universal, for it is interchangeable with being. Therefore, truth is perpetual and immortal.
15. It was said, however, that, although a universal does not cease of itself, it may cease accidentally.— On the contrary, a thing ought to be denominated by that which belongs to it essentially rather than by that which belongs to it accidentally. Therefore, if truth taken essentially is perpetual and incorruptible, and does not cease or begin to be except accidentally, truth taken universally must be eternal.
16. Since from eternity God was prior to the world, this relation of priority in God was eternal. But when one member of a relation is posited, the other must also be posited. Therefore, from eternity the posteriority of the world with respect to God existed; consequently, there was from all eternity something outside of God to which truth belonged in some way. Hence, our original position stands.

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17. It must be said that that relation of before and after is not something in nature but merely a rational relation.— On the contrary, as Boethius says, God is by nature prior to the world, even if the world had always existed. Therefore, that relation of priority is a relation of nature and not of reason alone.
18. The truth of signification is correctness of signification. But from eternity it was correct that something is signified. Therefore, the truth of signification was from eternity.
19. From eternity it was true that the Father generates the Son, and that the Holy Spirit proceeds from both. Since these are a number of truths, a number of truths exist from eternity.
20. It was said, however, that these are true by one truth; hence, it does not follow that several truths existed from eternity.— On the contrary, that by which the Father is Father and generates the Son is not that by which the Son is Son and breathes the Holy Spirit. But by that by which the Father is Father it is true that the Father generates the Son, or that the Father is the Father; and by that by which the Son is the Son it is true that the Son is generated by the Father. Hence, propositions of this kind are not true by one truth.
21. Although *man* and *capable of laughter* are interchangeable, the same truth is not found in each of the two following propositions: “Man is man” and “Man is capable of laughter”; for the property which the word *man* predicates is not the same as that predicated by *capable of laughter*. Similarly, the property implied in the word *Father* is not that implied in the word *Son*. Therefore, the truth is not the same in the propositions mentioned above.
22. It was said, however, that those propositions were not from eternity.— On the contrary, whenever there is an intellect able to make a proposition, there can be a proposition. But from eternity the divine intellect existed, understanding the Father to be the Father, and the Son to be the Son, and thus forming propositions or speaking— since, according to Anselm, “for the most high Spirit to speak is the same as to understand.” Therefore, the propositions previously mentioned existed from eternity.

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## To the Contrary

1. No creature is eternal, and every truth, except the first, is created.  
Therefore, only the first truth is eternal.
2. Being and the true are interchangeable. But only one being is eternal.  
Therefore, only one truth is eternal.

## REPLY

As mentioned previously, truth means a proportion and commensuration. Hence, something is said to be true just as something is said to be commensurate. A body, however, is measured both by an intrinsic measure, such as a line, surface, or depth, and by an extrinsic measure, such as happens when a located body is measured by place, or when motion is measured by time, or a piece of cloth by an elbow length. Similarly, a thing can receive the name true in two ways: by its inherent truth or by an extrinsic truth. In this latter way, all things receive the name true from the first truth; and since truth in the intellect is measured by things themselves, it follows that not only the truth of things, but also the truth of the intellect or of a proposition signifying what is understood, gets its name from the first truth.

In this commensuration or conformity of intellect and thing it is not necessary that each of the two actually exist. Our intellect can be in conformity with things that, although not existing now, will exist in the future. Otherwise, it would not be true to say that “the Anti-Christ will be born.” Hence, a proposition is said to be true because of the truth that is in the intellect alone even when the thing stated does not exist. Similarly, the divine intellect can be in conformity with things that did not exist eternally but were created in time; thus, those in time can be said to be true from eternity because of the eternal truth.

If we take truth, therefore, as meaning the inherent truth of true created things—the truth we find in things and in a created intellect—then truth is not eternal whether it be that of things or that of propositions; for neither the things themselves nor the intellect in which these truths inhere exists from all eternity. On the other hand, if we take it to mean the truth of true created things, by which all are said to be true—their extrinsic measure, as it were, which is the first truth then the truth of everything—of things, propositions, and intellects—is eter-

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nal. Both Augustine and Anselm search for an eternal truth of this sort; the latter writes: “You can understand how I have proved in my Monologion that the highest truth does not have a beginning or end from the truth that is in speech.”

This first truth must be one for all things. For in our intellect truth is multiplied in only two ways: first, by the multiplicity of the things known, for this results in a multiplicity of conceptions upon which there follows a multiplicity of truths in our soul; second, by the multiplicity of our ways of knowing, for even though Socrates’ running is one thing, the soul understands time along with it by joining and separating— as it is said in *The Soul*. Consequently, the soul knows his running as present, as past, and as future— each in a different way. Accordingly, it forms separate conceptions in which separate truths are found. In divine knowledge, however, neither of these two kinds of diversity can be found. For God does not have separate acts of knowing for separate things, but by one act He knows all, since He knows all by a single principle, that is, by His essence, as Dionysius points out, and He does not direct His act of knowing toward things one by one. Similarly, too, His own act of knowing does not involve time, since it is measured by eternity, which abstracts from all time inasmuch as it embraces all. It remains, therefore, that there are not many truths from eternity, but one alone.

## Answers to Difficulties

1. As Anselm explains his meaning in another place, he said that the truth of statements is not circumscribed by a beginning or end, “not because the statement itself has no beginning but because no time can be conceived at which the statement could exist. and truth be absent from it.” The statement referred to here is one discussed previously, namely, one by which it is truly signified that something will take place in the future. Hence, it is quite clear that Anselm did not want to imply that either the truth inherent in a created thing or a proposition itself is without a beginning and end. Be held simply that the first truth by which a proposition is said to be true by a sort of extrinsic measure is without beginning or end.
2. Outside the mind we find two things: the thing itself, and its privations and negations. These two are not related to truth in the same way, for they do not have the same relation to intellect. Because of the

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species it possesses, the thing itself is proportioned to the divine intellect as a product of art is to art. Because of the same species, moreover, the thing is able to conform our intellect to it, in so far as its likeness, being received into the soul, causes the thing itself to be known. But non-being, considered outside the soul, has nothing by which it can be proportioned to the divine intellect or cause itself to be known in our intellects. Hence, if non-being is in conformity with any intellect, it is not because of itself but because of the intellect which forms within itself the notion of non-being.

Anything existing positively outside the soul has something in itself by which it can be called true; but this is not the case with the nonexistence of a thing: whatever truth is attributed to it comes from the intellect. When it is said, therefore, "It is true that truth does not exist," the truth here signified has no reality except in the intellect, since it is about a non-being. Hence, from the fact that the truth in a thing is destroyed nothing follows except that there is a truth which is in the intellect. And so it is clear that from this argument we can conclude only that the truth which is in the intellect is eternal. This truth must, of course, be in an eternal intellect, and it is the first truth. Consequently, from the argument given only the first truth is shown to be eternal.

- 3-4. The explanation just given also makes clear the solution to the third and fourth arguments.
5. Truth, taken without any qualification, cannot be understood as not existing; but all created truth can be conceived as not existing, just as it can be conceived that no creature exists. For the intellect can conceive itself as not existing and not understanding, even though it can never conceive without existing or understanding. It is not necessary, however, that, in its act of understanding, the intellect understand everything that it has in its act of understanding, because it does not always reflect upon itself. Hence, there is no contradiction if it understands created truth as not existing, even though, without it, it cannot understand.
6. [No solution is given for the sixth difficulty.]
7. Since the future as such is not, and the past as such is not, the same reasoning holds for the truth of the past and future as for the truth

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of non-being. From this, as has been said, the eternity of no truth other than the first can be concluded.

8. The words of Augustine must be understood in the sense that the truths mentioned are eternal in so far as they are in the divine mind. Or Augustine takes *eternal* in the sense of *perpetual*.
9. Although a true proposition can be made about being and nonbeing, being and non-being are not similarly related to truth, as is clear from what was said above. From it, also, the solution to this difficulty is clear.
10. Although God knew many propositions from eternity, He knew them by one act of knowing. Hence, from eternity there was only one truth by which the divine cognition was true of many things that would come about in time.
11. As is clear from our previous discussion, intellect is in conformity not only with things actually existing but also with those not actually existing— especially the divine intellect to which the past and the future are the same. Hence, although things did not exist from eternity in their own proper nature, the divine intellect was conformed with things in their proper nature even though they would come into being in time. In this way, from eternity, God had true knowledge of things, even in their proper natures, although the truths of things did not exist from eternity.
12. Truth finds its formal perfection in the intellect, but a thing does not. Hence, although we must concede without qualification that the truth of all things was from eternity, since it was in the divine intellect, we cannot concede without qualification that there were true things from eternity merely because they existed in the divine intellect.
13. The definition refers to divine justice; or, if it refers to human justice, then it is said to be perpetual in the way in which natural things are said to be perpetual. For example, we say that fire always moves upwards, unless impeded, because of its natural inclination. Now, because a virtue is, as Cicero says, “a habit resembling a nature and in harmony with reason,” in so far as the nature of the virtue goes, it has an unfailing inclination to its act, even though this is sometimes impeded. Hence, in the Digest one reads that justice is: “the constant



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and perpetual will to give each one his due.” However, the truth which is a part of justice is found in the testimony of legal trials. But we are not now discussing that kind of truth.

14. The statement that a universal is perpetual and incorruptible is explained by Avicenna in two ways. First, a universal is said to be incorruptible and perpetual because, according to those who hold the eternity of the world, particulars had no beginning and will have no end. For, according to the philosophers, generation is for the purpose of conserving the perpetual existence of the species— since it cannot be preserved by the individual. Second, a universal is said to be perpetual in so far as it does not cease of itself but accidentally— because of the corruption of the individual.
15. A thing is predicated of another essentially in two ways. First, it is done positively, as when we say of fire that it is carried upwards. A thing gets its name from this kind of essential predicate rather than from an accidental predicate; for we say rather that fire is carried upwards and belongs to the class of things carried upwards than that it belongs to the class of those that are carried downwards, even though it may happen, accidentally, that fire is carried downwards— as would evidently be the case of red-hot iron.

The second type of essential predication is by “removal”— when there is removed from a thing those things which bring on a contrary disposition. If one of those things should happen to be present, the contrary disposition will be predicated absolutely. For example, unity is predicated essentially of first matter, not by positing some unifying form, but by removing diversifying forms. Hence, when forms occur which differentiate matter, we say, without qualification, that there are several matters rather than that there is only one. Such is the case in the difficulty; for a universal is said to be incorruptible, not because it possesses some form giving it incorruptibility, but because those material qualities which cause corruption in individuals do not belong to it as a universal. Hence, a universal existing in particular things is said, without qualification, to be corrupted in this or that individual.

16. All genera as such, with the exception of relation, posit something in reality. For example, quantity by its very nature posits something. But relation, alone, because of what it is, does not posit anything in real-

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ity, for what it predicates is not *something* but *to something*. Hence, there are certain relations which posit nothing in reality, but only in reason. This occurs in four ways, as can be seen in the writings of the Philosopher and Avicenna.

First, there occurs a relation merely in reason when a thing is referred to itself; for example, when we say that a thing is identical with itself. If this relation posited something in reality in addition to the thing which is declared to be identical with itself, we should have an infinite process in relations; for the very relation by which something is said to be identical with itself would also be identical with itself through an added relation, and so on to infinity. Second, a relation existing only in reason occurs when the relation itself is referred to something. For example, one cannot say that paternity is referred to its subject by some intermediate relation; for that mediate relation would need another intermediate relation, and so on to infinity. Consequently, the relation signified when paternity is compared to its subject is not real but only rational. Third, a relation existing in reason alone occurs when one of the related things depends on the other and not conversely. For example, knowledge depends on the thing known but not the other way about. Hence, the relation of knowledge to a thing known is something real, but the relation of the thing known to knowledge is merely rational. Fourth, a rational relation occurs when a being is compared with a non-being. For example, we say that we are prior to those who are to come after us. If this were a real relation, it would follow (if future generations were infinite) that there could be an infinite number of relations in the same thing.

From the last two types it is clear that that relation of priority posits nothing in reality but only in the intellect, because God does not depend on creatures and because such a priority is a relation of being to non-being. From this argument, therefore, it does not follow that there is an eternal truth except in the divine intellect, which alone is eternal. This is the first truth.

17. Although God is prior by nature to created beings, it does not follow that this relation is real. Since it arises merely from a consideration of what is naturally prior and what is naturally posterior— in the way in which a thing known is said to be naturally prior to knowledge— the relation of the thing known to knowledge is not a real relation. The

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statement that, even when signification does not exist, it is nevertheless correct that something is signified, is taken with respect to the order of things existing in the divine intellect. For example, even when a trunk does not exist, it is correct to say that a trunk has a lid according to the plan conceived by the craftsman. Consequently, this argument also does not prove that there is an eternal truth other than the first.

18. The intelligible character of the true is based upon being. Although several persons and properties are posited in God, only one act of being is posited in Him, for the act of being is predicated essentially of Him; so, all those propositions, such as that the Father is or generates, and that the Son is or is generated, and so on,— in so far as they are related to the divine essence— all have one truth, the first and eternal truth.
20. Although that by which the Father is Father, and that by which the Son is Son, are different, since one is paternity, the other, filiation, that by which the Father is, and that by which the Son is, is the same. For each is because of the divine essence, which is one. Moreover, the intelligible character of truth is not based upon the character of paternity and sonship as such, but upon the character of being. Here, moreover, paternity and sonship are the one essence. Therefore, there is one truth for both.
21. The property predicated by *man* and *capable of laughter is* not the same essentially, nor does it have one act of existence, as is the case of paternity and sonship. Hence, there is no analogy.
22. The divine intellect knows things, no matter how diverse they be, by one act of knowing, even if they have different truths considered in themselves. Hence, He knows with only one act of knowing all the various propositions about the persons even to a greater degree. Consequently, there is only one truth for these, also.

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## ARTICLE VI

### In the sixth article we ask: Is created truth immutable?

[Parallel readings: *S.T.*, I, 16, 8; *I Sent.*, 19,5, 3; *Quodl.*, X, 4,7.]

#### Difficulties

It seems that it is, for

1. Anselm says: “By this argument, I see that truth persists immutable.”  
The argument he refers to is that taken from the truth of Signification, which we discussed earlier. Hence, the truth of propositions is immutable; for the same reason, so is the truth of the thing which it signifies.
2. If the truth of a proposition changes; it changes especially when a thing changes. But when a thing has been changed, the truth of the proposition remains. Therefore, the truth of a proposition is immutable. Proof of the minor: Truth according to Anselm is “a certain correctness— inasmuch as the thing fulfills that which it receives in the divine mind. But the fact that the proposition, “Socrates is sitting,” signifies the sitting of Socrates comes from the divine mind, and this proposition will signify his sitting even when Socrates does not sit. Therefore, even when Socrates does not sit, truth remains in that proposition. Consequently, the truth of the proposition is not changed, even if the thing be changed.
3. If truth is changed, this can be only because the subjects in which truth inheres have previously been changed— just as certain forms cannot be said to be changed unless their subjects have changed. But truth is not changed with the change of true things; for, as both Augustine and Anselm prove, when true things have been destroyed, truth still remains. Therefore, truth is entirely immutable.
4. The truth of a thing is the cause of the truth of a proposition, for a statement is said to be true or false in so far as a thing exists or does not exist. But the truth of a thing is immutable. Therefore, the truth of a proposition is also immutable. Proof of the minor: Anselm proves that the truth of a proposition remains fixed to the extent that it fulfills

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that which it has received in the divine mind. But each thing likewise fulfills that which it has been ordained in the divine mind to have. Therefore, the truth of each and every thing is immutable.

5. That which always remains when every change has been made is never changed. For example, when colors are changed, we do not say that the surface is changed, for it remains no matter what change of colors is made. Now, truth remains in a thing, no matter what change a thing undergoes, for being and the true are interchangeable. Therefore, truth is immutable.
6. Where there is the same cause, there is the same effect. But the same thing is the cause of the truth of these three propositions: “Socrates sits,” “Socrates will sit,” and “Socrates sat”—namely, the sitting of Socrates. Therefore, the truth of each is the same. Now, if one of these three propositions is true, one of the other two must always be true; for, if at some time it is true that Socrates sits, it always was true and will be true that Socrates sat or will sit. Therefore, one truth remains constant for the three propositions, and, consequently, is immutable. For the same reason, any other truth is immutable.

### To the Contrary

Effects are changed when their causes are changed. But things, which cause the truth of a proposition, undergo changes. Therefore, the truth of propositions changes.

### REPLY

A thing is said to be changed in two ways. First, because it is the subject of a change, as when we say that a body is changeable. In this meaning, no form is said to be changeable. Consequently, a form is said to be something steadfast in an unchanging essence; since truth consists in a form, the present question is not whether truth is mutable in this sense. Second, a thing is said to be changed because something else changes according to it, as when we say that whiteness is changed because a body is changed in its whiteness. It is in this sense that we ask whether or not truth is changeable.

To clarify this point, we should note that the thing according to which there is a change is sometimes said to be changed and sometimes not.

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For, when it is inhering in a thing which is affected in its respect, then it is said to be changed itself— as whiteness or quantity is said to be changed when something is changed in their respect because they succeed each other in a subject. When, however, that according to which the change occurs is extrinsic, the thing itself is not changed but remains unaffected throughout the whole change. For example, a place is not said to be moved when a thing moves with respect to it. For this reason, it is said in the Physics that place is “the unchangeable boundary of the container,” because local motion does not mean a succession of loci in regard to one located body, but a succession of many located bodies in one place.

Now, there are two ways in which inhering forms are said to be changed with respect to a change of their subject; for general forms are said to be changed in one way and special forms in another. After a change, a special form does not remain the same either according to its act of existing or according to its intelligible character. For example, when a qualitative change has been made, whiteness does not remain at all. But, after a change has been made, a general form retains the same intelligible character, though not the same act of existing. For example, after a change from white to black has taken place, color, according to the general character of color, remains unchanged; but the same species of color does not remain.

It was noted previously, however, that a thing is said to be true by the first truth as by an extrinsic measure; but it is said to be true by an inherent truth as by an intrinsic measure. Consequently, created things change in their participation of the first truth, yet the first truth itself, according to which they are said to be true, does not change in any way. This is what Augustine says: “Our minds sometimes see more, sometimes less, of truth itself; but truth itself remains, and neither increases nor decreases.”

If we take truth as inherent in things, however, then truth is said to be changed inasmuch as some things are said to be changed with respect to truth. For, as pointed out previously, truth in creatures is found in two different subjects: in things themselves and in intellect. The truth of an action is included in the truth of a thing, and the truth of a proposition is included in the truth of the understanding which it signifies. A thing, however, is said to be true by its relation to intel-

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lect, divine and human.

Consequently, if the truth of a thing is considered according to its reference to the divine intellect, then, indeed, the truth of a changeable thing is changed into another truth, but not into falsity. For truth is a most general form because the true and being are interchangeable. Hence, just as, even after any change has been made, a thing nevertheless remains a being, although it is other as a result of the other form by which it has existence; so, also, a thing always remains true—but by another truth; for, no matter what form or what privation it acquires through the change, it is conformed in that respect to the divine intellect, which knows it as it is, whatever may be its state.

If, however, the truth of a thing is considered in its reference to a human intellect, or conversely, then sometimes there is a change from truth into falsity, sometimes from one truth to another. For truth is “an equation of thing and intellect”; and, if equal amounts are taken from things that are equal, these things remain equal, although the equality is not the same. Hence, when intellect and thing are similarly changed, truth remains; but it is another truth. For example, when Socrates sits, what is understood is that Socrates is sitting. Afterwards, when he does not sit, what is understood is that he is not sitting. But, if something is taken from one of two equal things, and nothing from the other, or if unequal amounts are taken from each, then inequality must result; and this corresponds to falsity, just as equality corresponds to truth.

Consequently, if an intellect is true, and it is not changed when a thing is changed, or vice versa, or if each is changed but not similarly, falsity results, and there will be a change from truth to falsity. For example, if, when Socrates is white, he is understood to be white, the intellect is true. If, however, the intellect later understands him to be black, although Socrates still is white; or if, conversely, he is still understood to be white, although he has turned black; or if, when he has turned pale, he is understood to be reddish—then there will be falsity in the intellect. Accordingly, it is clear how truth changes and how it does not.

## Answers to Difficulties

1. Anselm is speaking here of the first truth according to which all things

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are said to be true as by an extrinsic measure.

2. Since the intellect reflects upon itself and knows itself as it knows other things (as said in *The Soul*), the things belonging to the intellect as regards the intelligible character of truth can be considered in two ways. First, in so far as they are things; in this way, truth is predicated of them in the same way in which it is predicated of other things. Consequently, as a thing is said to be true because it fulfills what was assigned to it in the divine mind by retaining its own nature, so a proposition is also said to be true by retaining its own nature, which was also allotted to it in the divine mind; and this cannot be taken from it as long as the proposition itself remains. Second, these may be considered in their reference to things that are known. In this way, a proposition is said to be true when it is proportioned to a thing. This kind of truth is changed, as has been said.
3. Truth which remains after true things have been destroyed is the first truth, which does not change even when things change.
4. As long as a thing remains, no change can take place in it concerning its essentials. For example, it is essential to a proposition that it signify that which it has been made to signify. Consequently, it does not follow that the truth of a thing is in no way changeable, but only that it is unchangeable with respect to the essentials of the thing while the thing remains. Nevertheless, in those cases in which a change occurs through corruption of a thing, but only with respect to its accidentals, this accidental change can take place even though the thing remains. In this way, a change can take place in the truth of a thing in regard to its accidentals.
5. When every change has been made, truth remains, but not the same truth— as is clear from what has been said.
6. The identity of the truth depends not only on the identity of the thing but also on the identity of the intellect— the same way that identity of an effect depends on the identity of the agent and that of the patient. Moreover, even though the same thing is signified by those three propositions, the understanding of each is not the same; for time enters into the intellect's conjunctive operation, and the understandings of things differ with the differences of time.



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## ARTICLE VII

### In the seventh article we ask: Is truth as applied to God predicated personally or essentially?

[Parallel readings: *S.T.*, I, 16, 5, ad 2; 39, 8.]

#### Difficulties

It seems that it is predicated personally, for

1. In regard to God, whatever implies the relation of origin is predicated personally. But truth belongs to this class, as is clear from Augustine; for he says that the divine truth is “the greatest possible likeness of its source, without any unlikeness” from which falseness arises. Therefore, truth is predicated personally of God.
2. Just as nothing is similar to itself, so also, nothing is equal to itself. But, according to Hilary, from the fact that nothing is similar to itself, likeness in God implies a distinction of persons. The same reasoning can be applied to equality. But truth is a certain equality. Therefore, truth implies a distinction of persons in God.
3. Whatever implies procession in God is predicated personally of Him. But truth implies a certain procession since it signifies an intellectual concept just as a word does. Therefore, just as the Word is predicated personally, so also is truth.

#### To the Contrary

Augustine says that of the three Persons there is but one truth. Therefore, it is something essential, not personal.

#### REPLY

In regard to God, truth can be taken in two ways: properly and, as it were, metaphorically. If truth is taken properly, then it will imply an equality of the divine intellect and of a thing. Since the first thing the divine intellect knows is its own essence, through which it knows all other things, truth in God principally implies an equality between the divine intellect and a thing which is its essence; and, in a secondary

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sense, truth likewise implies an equality of the divine intellect with created things.

The divine intellect and the divine essence are not, however, made equal to each other in the way in which a measure is related to what is measured, since one is not the source of the other, but both are entirely identical. Consequently, the truth resulting from such equality does not involve its having the character of a source, whether it be considered from the standpoint of the essence or from that of the intellect, since both in this case are one and the same. For, just as in God the knower and the thing known are the same, so also in Him the truth of the thing and that of intellect are the same, without any connotation of origin.

But if the truth of the divine intellect be considered in its conformity to created things, the same truth will still remain; for God knows Himself and other things through the same means. However, there is added to the concept of truth the note of origin with respect to creatures, to which the divine intellect is compared as a measure and cause. Moreover, in theological matters every name which does not imply the notion of origin or of being from a principle is predicated essentially. And even if the name implies the notion of origin of creatures, it still is also predicated essentially. Consequently, if truth is taken properly in whatever pertains to God, it is predicated essentially; yet it is appropriated to the person of the Son, as are also art and all else pertaining to intellect.

Truth is taken metaphorically or figuratively in divine matters when we take it according to that formal character by which truth is found in created things. For in these, truth is said to exist inasmuch as a created thing imitates its source, the divine intellect. Similarly, when truth is applied to God and is said to be the highest possible imitation of its principle, this is attributed to the Son. Taken in this way, truth properly belongs to the Son and is predicated personally; and this, too, is what Augustine says.

## Answers to Difficulties

1. The response is clear from the reply.
2. When equality is referred to divine things it sometimes implies a relation that indicates a distinction of Persons— as when we say that the

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Father and the Son are equal. In this respect a real distinction is understood in the word equality. Sometimes, however, a real distinction is not understood in the word equality, but merely a rational distinction, as when we say that the divine wisdom and the divine goodness are equal. Hence, equality does not necessarily imply a distinction of persons. Such also is the distinction implied in the word truth, since truth is an equality of intellect and essence.

3. Although truth is conceived by the intellect, the notion of a concept is not expressed by the word truth as it is by the term word. Hence, no analogy can be drawn.

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## ARTICLE VIII

### In the eighth article we ask: Is every other truth from the first truth?

[Parallel readings: *De ver.*, 21, 4, ad 5; 27, 1, ad 7; *S.T.*, I, 16, aa. 5-6; *C.G.*, III, 47; *Quodl.*, X, 4,7; *I Sent.*, 19,5, aa- 1-2; *II Sent.*, 37, 1, 2, ad 1; *X Metaph.*, lect. 2, nn. 1956-59.]

### Difficulties

It seems not, for

1. Fornication is a true thing; yet it is not from the first truth. Therefore, not every truth is from the first truth.
2. The answer was given that fornication is said to be true by reason of the truth of the sign or concept, and this is from God. Its truth as a thing, however, is not from God.— On the contrary, besides the first truth, there is not only the truth of the sign or of the concept, but also the truth of the thing. Therefore, if its truth as a thing is not from God, then there is a truth of a thing not from God, and our proposition that not every truth other than the first is from God will have to be granted.
3. From “He fornicates,” it follows that “fornication is true.” Therefore, a transition can be made from the truth of a proposition to the truth of what is said, which in turn expresses the truth of the thing. Consequently, the truth mentioned consists in this: that that act is joined to that subject. But the truth of what is said would not arise from the conjunction of such an act with a subject unless the conjunction of the act, which has the deformity, were understood. Therefore, the truth of the thing regards not only the very essence of an act but also its deformity. But an act considered as having a deformity is by no means from God. Not all truth of things, therefore, is from God.
4. Anselm says that a thing is called true if it is as it ought to be. Among the ways in which a thing can be said to be what it ought to be he mentions one, namely, that it happens with God’s permission. Now, God’s permission extends even to the deformity in an act. Therefore, the

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truth of the thing reaches as far as that deformity. But deformity is in no way from God. Therefore, not every truth is from God.

5. It was said, however, that just as a deformity or privation cannot be called a being without qualification, but only a being in a certain respect, so also a deformity or privation cannot be said to have truth without qualification, but only in a certain respect. Such a restricted truth is not from God.— On the contrary, to being, the true adds a reference to intellect. Now, although privation or deformity in itself is not being absolutely, it is apprehended absolutely by the intellect. Therefore, even though it does not have entity absolutely, it does have truth absolutely.
6. Everything qualified is reduced to something unqualified. For example, “An Ethiopian is white with respect to teeth” is reduced to this: “The teeth of an Ethiopian are white without qualification.” Consequently, if some limited truth is not from God, then not every qualified truth will be from God— which is absurd.
7. What is not the cause of the cause is not the cause of the effect. For example, God is not the cause of the deformity of sin, for He is not the cause of the defect in a free choice from which the deformity of sin arises. Now, just as the act of existing is the cause of the truth of affirmative propositions, so non-existing is the cause of negative propositions. Now, as Augustine says, since God is not the cause of this non-existing, it follows that He is not the cause of negative propositions. Hence, not every truth is from God.
8. Augustine says: “The true is that which is as it appears.”<sup>3</sup> Now, an evil thing is as it appears. Therefore, something evil is true. But no evil is from God. Therefore, not every true thing is from God.
9. But it was said that evil is not seen through the species of evil but through the species of a good.— On the contrary, the species of a good never makes anything appear but that good. Consequently, if evil is seen only through the species of a good, evil will appear only as a good. But this is false.

## To the Contrary

1. Commenting on the text, “And no man can say the Lord Jesus...” (1 Cor.

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12:3), Ambrose says: “Every true thing, no matter who says it, is from the Holy Spirit.”

2. All created goodness is from the first uncreated goodness, God. For the same reason, all other truth is from the first truth, God.
3. The formal character of truth finds its completion in the intellect. But every intellect is from God. Hence, every truth is from God.
4. Augustine says: “The true is that which is.” But every act of existing is from God. Therefore, every truth is from Him.
5. just as the one is interchangeable with being, so is the true, and conversely. But all unity is from the first unity, as Augustine says. Therefore, every truth also is from the first truth.

## REPLY

As is clear from what has been said among created things truth is found both in things and in intellect. In the intellect it is found according to the conformity which the intellect has with the things whose notions it has. In things it is found according as they imitate the divine intellect, which is their measure— as art is the measure of all products of art— and also in another way, according as they can by their very nature bring about a true apprehension of themselves in the human intellect, which, as is said in the *Metaphysics*, is measured by things. By its form a thing existing outside the soul imitates the art of the divine intellect; and, by the same form, it is such that it can bring about a true apprehension in the human intellect. Through this form, moreover, each and every thing has its act of existing. Consequently, the truth of existing things includes their entity in its intelligible character, adding to this a relation of conformity to the human or divine intellect. But negations or privations existing outside the soul do not have any form by which they can imitate the model of divine art or introduce a knowledge of themselves into the human intellect. The fact that they are conformed to intellect is due to the intellect, which apprehends their intelligible notes.

It is clear, therefore, that when a stone and blindness are said to be true, truth is not related to both in the same way; for truth predicated of the stone includes in its notion the entity of the stone, adding a reference to intellect, which is also caused by the thing itself since it

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has something by which it can be referred to intellect. As predicated of blindness, however, truth does not include in itself that privation which is blindness, but only the relation of blindness to intellect. This relation, moreover, is not supported by anything in the blindness itself, since blindness is not conformed to intellect by virtue of anything which it has in itself.

Hence, it is clear that the truth found in created things can include nothing more than the entity of a thing and conformity of the thing to intellect or conformity of intellect to things or to the privations of things. All this is entirely from God, because both the very form of a thing, through which it is conformed, is from God, and the truth itself in so far as it is the good of the intellect, as is said in the Ethics; for the good of any thing whatsoever consists in its perfect operation. But since the perfect operation of the intellect consists in its knowing the true, that is its good in the sense just mentioned. Hence, since every good and every form is from God, one must say, without any qualification, that every truth is from God.

### Answers to Difficulties

1. The argument—“Every true thing is from God. But to fornicate is true. Therefore.”—falls into the fallacy of accident. For, as is evident from our discussion above,\* when we say that fornicating is true, we do not imply that the defect involved in the act of fornication is included in the notion of truth. True predicates merely the conformity of that act to an intellect. Hence, one cannot conclude that fornicating is from God, but merely that its truth is from God.
2. As is clear from our reply just above, deformities and other defects do not possess truth in the same way that other things do. Consequently, even though the truth of defects is from God, it does not follow that the deformity is from God.
3. According to the Philosopher, truth does not consist in the composition found in things but in that made by the soul. Hence, truth does not consist in this, that the act with its deformity inheres in a subject (for this is proper, rather, to the character of good and evil). It consists in the conformity of the act, inherent in its subject, to the soul’s apprehension.

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4. The good, the due, the right, and all other things of this sort are related in one way to the divine permission, and in another, to other manifestations of the divine will. In the latter, there is a reference to the object of the will act, as well as to the will act itself. For example, when God commands that parents be honored, both the honor to be given parents and the act of commanding are goods. But in a divine permission there is a reference only to the subjective act of permitting, and not to the object of the permission. Hence, it is right that God should permit deformities, but it does not follow from this that the deformity itself has some rectitude.
  5. [The solution to the fifth difficulty is not given.]
  6. The qualified truth which belongs to negations and defects is reducible to that unqualified truth which is in the intellect and from God. Consequently, the truth of defects is from God, although the defects themselves are not from Him.
  7. Non-existing is not the cause of the truth of negative propositions in the sense that it causes them to exist in the intellect. The soul itself does this by conforming itself to a non-being outside the soul. Hence, this non-existing outside the soul is not the efficient cause of truth in the soul, but, as it were, its exemplary cause. The difficulty is based upon the efficient cause.
  8. Although evil is not from God, that evil is seen to be what it is, is from God. Hence, the truth by which it is true that there is evil is from God.
  9. Although evil does not act on the soul except through the species of good, nevertheless, since evil is a deficient good, the soul grasps the intelligible character of the defect, and so conceives the character of evil. Accordingly, evil is seen as evil.



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## ARTICLE IX

### In the ninth article we ask: Is truth in sense?

[Parallel readings: *S.T.*, I, 16, 2; 17, 2; 85, 6; *III De anima*, lect. 6, n. 660 *seq.*; *IV Metaph.*, lect. 12, nn. 67 3, 68 1 *seq.*]

#### Difficulties

It seems that it is not, for

1. Anselm says: “Truth is a correctness perceivable only by the mind.” But sense does not have the same nature as the mind. Hence, truth is not in sense.
2. Augustine proves that truth is not known by the bodily senses, and his reasons were set down above. Hence, truth is not in sense.

#### To the Contrary

Augustine says: “Truth manifests that which is.” But that which is, is manifested not only to the intellect, but also to sense. Therefore.

#### REPLY

Truth is both in intellect and in sense, but not in the same way. It is in intellect as a consequence of the act of the intellect and as known by the intellect. Truth follows the operation of the intellect inasmuch as it belongs to the intellect to judge about a thing as it is. And truth is known by the intellect in view of the fact that the intellect reflects upon its own act— not merely as knowing its own act, but as knowing the proportion of its act to the thing. Now, this proportion cannot be known without knowing the nature of the act; and the nature of the act cannot be known without knowing the nature of the active principle, that is, the intellect itself, to whose nature it belongs to be conformed to things. Consequently, it is because the intellect reflects upon itself that it knows truth.

Truth is in sense also as a consequence of its act, for sense judges of things as they are. Truth is not in sense, however, as something known by sense; for, although sense judges truly about things, it does

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not know the truth by which it truly judges. Although sense knows that it senses, it does not know its own nature; consequently, it knows neither the nature of its act nor the proportion of this act to things. As a result, it does not know its truth.

The reason for this is that the most perfect beings, such as, for example, intellectual substances, return to their essence with a complete return: knowing something external to themselves, in a certain sense they go outside of themselves; but by knowing that they know, they are already beginning to return to themselves, because the act of cognition mediates between the knower and the thing known. That return is completed inasmuch as they know their own essences. Hence, it is said in *The Causes*: “A being which is such as to know its own essence returns to it by a complete return.”

Since sense is closer to an intellectual substance than other things are, it begins to return to its essence; it not only knows the sensible, but it also knows that it senses. Its return, however, is not complete, since it does not know its own essence. Avicenna” has given the reason for this by pointing out that the sense knows nothing except through a bodily organ, and a bodily organ cannot be a medium between a sensing power and itself. But powers without any ability to sense cannot return to themselves in any way, for they do not know that they are acting. For example, fire does not know that it is heating.

From this discussion the solutions to the difficulties are clear.

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## ARTICLE X

### In the tenth article we ask: Is there any false thing?

[Parallel readings: *S.T.*, I, 16, aa. 1, 6; *I Sent.*, 19, 5, 1; *IV Metaph.*, lect. 12, n. 681 *seq.*; *V Metaph.*, lect. 22, nn. 1128-29; *VI Metaph.*, lect. 4, n. 1237 *seq.*]

#### Difficulties

It seems not, for

1. According to Augustine: “The true is that which is.” Hence, the false is that which is not. Now, what is not is not a thing. Therefore, no thing is false.
2. It was said that the true is a differentia of being; consequently, the false, like the true, is that which is.— On the contrary, no dividing differentia is interchangeable with that whose differentia it is. Now, as was said, the true is interchangeable with being. Consequently, the true is not a dividing differentia of being, for this would make it possible to call some thing false.
3. Truth is a conformity of thing and intellect. Now, all things are conformed to the divine intellect, since in itself nothing can be other than it is known to be by the divine intellect. Hence, all things are true, and nothing is false.
4. All things possess truth from their forms. For example, one is said to be a true man if he has the true form of a man. But there is nothing which does not have some form, for every act of existing comes from form. Hence, everything is true, and there is no thing which is false.
5. Good and evil are related as true and false are related. Now, since evil is found in things, it has concrete reality only in something good, as Dionysius and Augustine say. Therefore, if falseness is found in things, it can have reality only in what is true. But this does not seem possible, for then the same thing would be both true and false; but this is impossible. This would mean, for example, that man and white are the same because whiteness is made real in a man.

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6. Augustine proposes the following difficulty. If a thing is called false, it is either because it is similar or because it is dissimilar. “If because it is dissimilar, there is nothing that cannot be called false, for there is nothing that is not unlike something else. If because it is similar, all things loudly protest, for they are true because they are similar.” Therefore, falsity cannot be found in things in any way.

### To the Contrary

1. Augustine defines the false as follows: “The false is that which approaches the likeness of something else without being that whose likeness it bears. But every creature bears the likeness of God. Therefore, since no creature is identical with God Himself, it seems that every creature is false.
2. Augustine says that “Every body is a true body and a false unity. Now, a body is said to be false because it imitates unity, yet is not a unity. Therefore, since every creature, in so far as it is perfect, imitates the divine perfection, and, nevertheless, in any perfection which it has, remains infinitely distant from it, it seems that every creature is false.
3. The good, like the true, is interchangeable with being. But the interchangeability of the good and being does not stand in the way of a thing’s being evil. Therefore, the fact that the true is interchangeable with being does not stand in the way of a thing’s being false.
4. Anselm says that there are two kinds of truth in propositions. “The first type occurs when the proposition has the meaning which was given to it.” For example, this proposition, “Socrates sits,” means that Socrates is sitting, whether he is actually sitting or not. “The second type of truth occurs when the proposition signifies that for which it was formed”– and it has been formed to signify that something is when it is. In this respect, a proposition is properly said to be true. In the same way, a thing may be called true when it fulfills its purpose, and false when it does not do so. But everything which falls short of its end does not fulfill its purpose; and, since there are many things of this sort, it seems that many things are false.

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## REPLY

Just as truth consists in an equation of thing and intellect, so falsity consists in an inequality between them. Now, as was said, a thing is related to divine and human intellects. In regard to everything that is positively predicated of things or found in them, it is related to the divine in one way as the measured to its measure; for all such things come from the divine intellect's art. A thing is related in another way to the divine intellect: as a thing known is related to the knower. In this way even negations and defects are equated to the divine intellect, since God knows all these even though He does not cause them. It is clear, then, that a thing is conformed to the divine intellect in whatever way it exists, under any for in whatsoever or even under a privation or a defect. Consequently, it is clear that everything is true in its relation to the divine intellect. Hence, Anselm says: "There is, then, truth in the essence of all things which are, for they are what they are in the highest truth." Therefore, in its relation to the divine intellect, nothing can be false.

In its relation to a human intellect, however, an inequality of thing with intellect, caused in some way by the thing, is occasionally found; for a thing makes itself known in the soul by its exterior appearance, since our cognition takes its beginning from sense, whose direct object is sensible qualities. For this reason it is said in *The Soul*: "Accidents greatly contribute to our knowledge of the quiddity." Consequently, when there are manifested in any object sensible qualities indicating a nature which does not actually underlie them, that thing is said to be false. Hence, the Philosopher says that those things are called false "which are such as to seem to be what they are not, or of a kind which they are not." For example, that is called "false" gold which has in its external appearance the color and other accidents of genuine gold, whereas the nature of gold does not interiorly underlie them. But a thing is not to be the cause of falsity in the soul in the sense that it necessarily causes falsity; for truth and falsity exist principally in the soul's judgment; and the soul, inasmuch as it judges about things, is not acted upon by things, but rather, in a sense, acts upon them. Hence, a thing is not said to be false because it always of itself causes a false apprehension, but rather because its natural appearance is likely to cause a false apprehension.

As was pointed out previously," however, the relation to the divine intellect is essential to a thing; and in this respect a thing is said to

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be true in itself. Its relation to the human intellect is accidental to it; and in this respect a thing is not true, absolutely speaking but, as it were, in some respect and in potency. Therefore, all things are true absolutely speaking, and nothing is false. But in a certain respect, that is, with reference to our intellect, some things are said to be false. Hence, it is necessary to answer the arguments of both sides.

### Answers to Difficulties

1. The definition, “The true is that which is,” does not perfectly express the intelligible character of truth. It expresses it, as it were, only materially, unless *is* here signifies the affirmation of a proposition, and means that a thing is said to be true when it is said to be or to be understood as it is in reality. Taken in this sense, the false may be said to be that which does not exist; it is not as it is said or understood to be. And this type of falsity can be found in things.
2. Properly speaking, the true cannot be a differentia of being, for being does not have any differentia, as is proved in the *Metaphysics*. But in some sense the true, as well as the good, is related to being in the manner of a differentia, since it expresses something about being which is not expressed by the noun being; and in this sense the meaning of being is indeterminate with respect to the meaning of the true. Consequently, the meaning of the true is compared to the notion of being somewhat as a differentia is compared to its genus.
3. That argument must be conceded, since it treats a thing in its relation to the divine intellect.
4. All things have some form, yet not everything has that form whose characteristics are externally manifested by sensible qualities; and it is in regard to these that a thing is said to be false if it is naturally apt to produce a false estimation about itself.
5. As is clear from what has been said, something outside the soul is said to be false if it is naturally such as to give a false impression of itself. But what is nothing is not capable of making any impression, since it does not move a knowing power. What is said to be false, therefore, must be a being; and since every being, in so far as it is a being, is true, falsity must exist in things and be based upon some truth. For this reason Augustine says” that a tragedian representing true persons in

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dramas would not be false without being a true tragedian. Similarly, a painting of a horse would not be a false horse were it not a true picture. It does not follow, however, that contradictories are true, because the affirmation and the negation in expressing the true and the false do not refer to the same reality.

6. A thing is said to be false in so far as, by its nature, it is likely to deceive. When I say deceive, however, I mean an action that brings on some defect; for nothing can act except to the extent that it is being, and every defect is non-being. Moreover, everything has some likeness to the true to the extent that it is a being; and in so far as it does not exist it departs from this likeness. Consequently, this deceiving as implying action arises from likeness; but the defect it implies (and in which the intelligible character of falsity formally consists) arises from unlikeness. Hence, Augustine says that falsity arises from unlikeness.

### Answers to Contrary Difficulties

1. The soul is not so constituted as to be deceived by any likeness whatsoever, but only by a considerable resemblance which makes it difficult to discover the unlikeness. Hence, the soul is deceived by similarities, more or less great, according to the varying degrees of its acuteness in discovering unlikenesses. A thing, however, should not be said to be absolutely false because it leads into error, however much it may do that, but only because it is such as to deceive many or highly intelligent men. Now, although creatures bear some resemblance to God in themselves, so great is the dissimilarity between the two that only because of great stupidity could it happen that a mind would be deceived by such similarity. Hence, from the similarity and dissimilarity between creatures and God, it does not follow that all creatures should be called false.
2. Some have thought that God is a body; and, since He is the unity by which all things are one, they consequently thought that body was unity itself, because of its likeness to unity. Therefore, a body is called a false unity for this reason, that it has led or could lead some into the error of believing it to be unity.
3. There are two kinds of perfection, first and second. First perfection is the form of each thing, and that by which it has its act of existing. Nothing is without it while it continues in existence. Second perfec-

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tion is operation, which is the end of a thing or the means by which a thing reaches its end; and a thing is sometimes deprived of this perfection. The note of truth in things results from first perfection; for it is because a thing has a form that it imitates the art of the divine intellect and produces knowledge of itself in the soul. But the note of goodness in things results from its second perfection, for this goodness arises from the end. Consequently, evil, but not falsity, is found in things absolutely.

4. According to the Philosopher, "the true itself is the good of the intellect, for an operation of intellect is perfect because its concept is true. And since a proposition is a sign of what is understood, truth is its end. But this is not the case with other things, and so there is no similarity.



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## ARTICLE XI

### In the eleventh article we ask: Is falsity in sense?

[Parallel readings: See readings given for q. 1, a. 9.]

#### Difficulties

It seems that it is not, for

1. As is said in *The Soul*: “The intellect is always correct.” Now, since the intellect is the superior part of man, his other parts must also pursue correctness— just as the disposition of lower bodies in the universe depends on the motion of the higher bodies. Therefore, sense, which is the inferior part of the soul, will also always be correct there is, then, no falsity in it.
2. Augustine says: “Our eyes do not deceive us: they can report to the mind only their own modification, And if all the bodily senses report as they are affected, I do not know what more we can require of them.” Hence, there is no falsity in the senses.
3. Anselm says: “It seems to me that truth or falsity is not in the sense but in opinion.” This confirms our thesis.

#### To the Contrary

1. Anselm says: “Truth is, indeed, in our senses, but not always; for they sometimes deceive us.
2. According to Augustine: “A thing is called false because it is far from being a likeness of the true, even though it does in some way imitate the true.” Now, a sense has at times a likeness of certain things other than they are in reality. For example, when the eye is pressed, one thing is sometimes seen as two. Consequently, there is falsity in sense.
3. The answer was given that sense is not deceived with regard to proper sensibles, but only with regard to common sensibles.— On the contrary, whenever something is apprehended about a thing other than

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it is, the apprehension is false. Now, when a white body is seen through a green glass, the sense apprehends it other than it is, for it sees it as green and judges accordingly— unless a higher judgment is present, detecting the falsity. Therefore, sense is deceived even with regard to proper sensibles.

## REPLY

Our knowledge, taking its start from things, proceeds in this order. First, it begins in sense; second, it is completed in the intellect. As a consequence, sense is found to be in some way an intermediary between the intellect and things; for with reference to things, it is, as it were, an intellect, and with reference to intellect, it is, as it were, a thing. Hence, truth or falsity is said to be in sense in two respects. The first is in the relation of sense to intellect. In this respect, the sense is said to be true or false as a thing is, namely, in so far as it causes a true or false judgment in the intellect. The second respect is in the relation of sense to things. In this, truth and falsity are said to be in sense as they are said to be in the intellect, namely, in so far as the sense judges that what is, is or is not.

Hence, if we speak of a sense in the first meaning, in a way there is falsity in sense, and in a way there is not. For sense, in itself, is a thing; and it also passes judgment on other things. If, in its relation to the intellect, it is considered as a thing, then there is no falsity in sense; for a sense reveals its state to the intellect exactly as it is affected. Hence, Augustine says, in the passage referred to: “The senses can report to the mind only how they are affected.” On the other hand, if sense is considered in its relation to the intellect as representing some other thing, it may be called false in view of the fact that it sometimes represents a thing to the intellect other than it actually is. For, in that case, as we said about things, it is such as to cause a false judgment in the intellect— but not necessarily, since the intellect judges on what is presented by sense just as it judges about things. Thus, in its relation to the intellect, sense always produces a true judgment in the intellect with respect to its own condition, but not always with respect to the condition of things.

If sense is considered in its relation to things, however, then there are truth and falsity in sense in the manner in which these are in the intellect. For truth and falsity are found primarily and principally in the judgment of the intellect as it associates and dissociates, and in the

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formation of quiddities, only in their relation to the judgment following upon this formation. Hence, truth and falsity are properly said to be in sense inasmuch as it judges about sensible objects, but inasmuch as it apprehends a sensible object, there is not properly truth or falsity, except in the relation of this apprehension to the judgment, in so far as a judgment of this or that sort naturally follows upon a particular apprehension.

The judgment of sense about certain things—for example, proper sensibles—takes place spontaneously. About other things, however, it takes place by means of a certain comparison, made in man by the cognitive power, a sense power, whose place in animals is taken by a spontaneous estimation. This sensitive power judges about common sensibles and accidental sensibles. However, the spontaneous action of a thing always takes place in one way, unless by accident it is impeded intrinsically by some defect or extrinsically by some impediment. Consequently, the judgment of sense about proper sensibles is always true unless there is an impediment in the organ or in the medium; but its judgment about common or accidental sensibles is sometimes wrong. Thus, it is clear how there can be falsity in the judgment of sense.

As regards the apprehension of the senses, it must be noted that there is one type of apprehensive power, for example, a proper sense, which apprehends a sensible species in the presence of a sensible thing; but there is also a second type, the imagination, for example, which apprehends a sensible species when the thing is absent. So, even though the sense always apprehends a thing as it is, unless there is an impediment in the organ or in the medium, the imagination usually apprehends a thing as it is not, since it apprehends it as present though it is absent. Consequently, the Philosopher says: “Imagination, not sense, is the master of falsity.”

## Answers to Difficulties

1. In the macrocosm the higher bodies do not receive anything from the lower. just the opposite occurs. In man, the microcosm, the intellect, which is superior, does receive something from sense. Hence, no parallel can be made.

2-3- Our previous discussion will easily answer the other difficulties.

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## ARTICLE XII

### In the twelfth article we ask: Is falsity in the intellect?

[Parallel readings: *S.T.*, I, 17, 3; 58, 5; 85, 6; *I Sent.*, 19, 5, 1, ad 7; *C.G.*, I, 59; III, 108; *III De anima*, lect. 11, nn. 746-51, 760-64; *I Perih.*, lect. 3, nn. 3-10; *VI Metaph.*, lect. 4, nn. 1223 *seq.*, esp. n. 1241; *IX Metaph.*, lect. 11, n. 1896 *seq.*]

### Difficulties

It seems not, for

1. The intellect has two operations. By one it forms quiddities, and, as the Philosopher says, 'the false is not in this. By the other it joins and separates, and the false is not in this either, as is clear from Augustine's saying: "No one has intellectual knowledge of false things. Consequently, falsity is not in the intellect.
2. According to Augustine: "Whoever is deceived does not understand that in which he is deceived. The intellect is always true, therefore, and there can be no falsity in it.
3. Algazel says: "Either we understand something as it is or we do not understand. But whoever understands a thing as it is truly understands it. Therefore, the intellect is always true, and there is no falsity in it.

### To the Contrary

The Philosopher says: "Where there is a joining of concepts, there the true and the false begin to be." Hence, falsity is found in the intellect.

### REPLY

The name intellect arises from the intellect's ability to know the most profound elements of a thing; for to understand (*intelligere*) means to read what is inside a thing (*intus legere*). Sense and imagination know only external accidents, but the intellect alone penetrates to the interior and to the essence of a thing. But even beyond this, the intellect, having perceived essences, operates in different ways by rea-

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soning and inquiring. Hence, intellect can be taken in two senses.

First, it can be taken merely according to its relation to that from which it first received its name. We are said to understand, properly speaking, when we apprehend the quiddity of things or when we understand those truths that are immediately known by the intellect, once it knows the quiddities of things. For example, first principles are immediately known when we know their terms, and for this reason intellect or understanding is called “a habit of principles.” The proper object of the intellect, however, is the quiddity of a thing. Hence, just as the sensing of proper sensibles is always true, so the intellect is always true in knowing what a thing is, as is said in *The Soul*. By accident, however, falsity can occur in this knowing of quiddities, if the intellect falsely joins and separates. This happens in two ways: when it attributes the definition of one thing to another, as would happen were it to conceive that “mortal rational animal” were the definition of an ass; or when it joins together parts of definitions that cannot be joined, as would happen were it to conceive that “irrational, immortal animal” were the definition of an ass. For it is false to say that some irrational animal is immortal. So it is clear that a definition cannot be false except to the extent that it implies a false affirmation. (This twofold mode of falsity is touched upon in the *Metaphysics*. Similarly, the intellect is not deceived in any way with respect to first principles. It is plain, then, that if intellect is taken in the first sense— according to that action from which it receives the name intellect— falsity is not in the intellect.

Intellect can also be taken in a second sense— in general, that is, as extending to all its operations, including opinion and reasoning. In that case, there is falsity in the intellect. But it never occurs if a reduction to first principles is made correctly.

From this discussion, the answers to the difficulties are clear.