Two ancient (and modern) motivations for ascribing exhaustively definite foreknowledge to God: a historic overview and critical assessment

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Abstract: The traditional Christian view that God foreknows the future exclusively in terms of what will and will not come to pass is partially rooted in two ancient Hellenistic philosophical assumptions. Hellenistic philosophers universally assumed that propositions asserting '*x* will occur' contradict propositions asserting '*x* will not occur' and generally assumed that the gods lose significant providential advantage if they know the future partly as a domain of possibilities rather than exclusively in terms of what will and will not occur. Both assumptions continue to influence people in the direction of the traditional understanding of God's knowledge of the future. In this essay I argue that the first assumption is unnecessary and the second largely misguided.

While there are a host of factors that motivate Christians to conclude that God possesses exhaustively definite foreknowledge (EDF), three clearly seem more fundamental than others.[1] The first is *exegetical*: Christians who embrace EDF believe it is taught, or at least implied, in scripture. The second is *philosophical*: Christians who embrace EDF assume that propositions about what 'will' come to pass contradict propositions about what 'will not' come to pass. Thus, propositions about what 'will' or 'will not' come to pass exhaustively describe the future: either '*x* will happen' or '*x* will not happen'. Since all grant that God is perfect and must therefore know reality perfectly, it follows that God must know the future exclusively in terms of what will or will not come to pass. In other words, there can be no 'maybes' for a perfect, omniscient being like God.

A third motivation that leads Christians to embrace EDF is *theological*: Christians who embrace EDF generally assume that a God who foreknows with certainty all that will and will not come to pass exercises significantly more

providential control than a God who does not. If God does not exhaustively foreknow the future as a domain of settled facts, it is often argued, he cannot guarantee that ʻall things work together for the better' and that all events will fit into a divine plan (Romans 8.28; Ephesians 1.11). Many find this consequence not only exegetically problematic but also existentially unacceptable.

In this essay I will briefly review and critically assess the second and third of these motivations.[2] I will argue that both motivations are rooted in several philosophical assumptions that played a significant role in pre-Christian Hellenistic philosophical discussions about divine foreknowledge, fate, and moral responsibility and that were eventually appropriated by Christian theology.[3] I will first review and critique the philosophical motivation for ascribing EDF to God and then turn to the theological motivation for ascribing EDF to God.

The philosophical motivation

Five ancient views on the truth-value of propositions about future contingents
Central to the ancient Graeco-Roman debate about divine foreknowledge, fate, and moral responsibility was the question of the truth-value of propositions about future contingents (PFCs). Ancient perspectives on this question can be loosely grouped into five trajectories of thought (the last three of which, we shall see, are not mutually exclusive).

(1) Chyrissipus and other Stoics argued that, since all propositions must be either true or false, all PFCs must be either true or false. In other words, the principle of bivalence applies to PFCs.[4] On this (and other) grounds Stoics generally concluded that it is impossible for the future to be other than it will be. Whatever will be *will certainly* be. The whole of the future, therefore, is fated and predetermined.[5]

(2) Epicurus and his followers wanted to avoid determinism at all costs, primarily because they believed it undermined moral responsibility. We are only responsible for our actions if our actions are ʻup to us' (*eph hēmin*), and they can only be so if the future is not exhaustively settled.[6] Hence these thinkers denied that bivalence applied to PFCs. PFCs are *neither* true nor false until free agents resolve their truth-value one way or another by making morally responsible choices.[7]

While most non-Stoic thinkers in the ancient world wanted to avoid Stoic-type determinism, most felt that denying the universal applicability of bivalence was too high a price to pay to accomplish this. Not only did this seem counter-intuitive, but the denial of bivalence to PFCs also seemed to undermine divination (which, we shall see, was almost universally accepted) and became associated with the infamously indefensible Epicurean postulation of a random ʻswerve' among atoms.[8] The remaining three views were born out of attempts to avoid determinism while affirming bivalence applies to PFCs.

(3) The first of these final three trajectories of thought was generated by Carneades when he in effect separated the *alethic status* of PFCs from the *ontology* of the future itself.[9] He argued that the fact that PFCs are eternally true or false is not incompatible with the future being ontologically open such that what ends up coming to pass is to some extent up to our free decisions. For Carneades, '*x* will happen at t^*' is true at t just in case '*x* is happening' is true at t^*.

(4) A fourth and much more complicated trajectory of thought goes back to Aristotle's famous discussion of a 'sea battle' in chapter 9 of *On Interpretation*.[10] While the dominant interpretation of this passage among contemporary scholars holds that Aristotle was denying that bivalence applies to PFCs, the dominant interpretation in the ancient world was that Aristotle *affirmed* that PFCs were either true or false but denied they were true or false *in a definite way*.[11] For example, in his commentary on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*, Ammonius writes,

> [Aristotle] simply says that singular propositions concerning the future divide truth and falsity, but not in the same way as propositions concerning the present or the past. For it is not yet possible to say which of them will be true and which will be false in a definite way (*orismenos*), since before its occurring the thing can occur and not occur.[12]

As with many others ancients, Ammonius shared the Epicurean fear that if the future was settled *in a definite way*, it would destroy moral responsibility and undermine providence.[13] Yet, as with most non-Epicureans, it appears Ammonius also did not want to abandon the universal applicability of bivalence.[14]

Unfortunately, none of those who used Aristotle's concept of indefinite truth to retain universal bivalence while avoiding an exhaustively predefined future (e.g. Alconius, Proclus, Ammonius and Boethius) spell out precisely what they mean by it. Mario Mignucci argues that the concept of indefinite truth in these authors simply refers to 'a contingent proposition, i.e. a proposition which denotes an event whose outcome is not yet settled, and at the same time is a simply true proposition'.[15] Mignucci rightly notes that this entails that 'the relation between propositions and facts is not a temporal relation'.[16] The truth-value of PFCs, in other words, is atemporal. The future could therefore be viewed as ontologically (not just epistemologically) unsettled, and yet bivalence still applied to PFCs. By contrast, Alexander of Aphrodisias and others who interpreted Aristotle's concept of indefinite truth to constitute a denial of the applicability of bivalence to PFCs held that 'truth is a totally temporal notion'.[17] PFCs are indefinite in that they are *neither* true nor false *until* free agents resolve them one way or another.

While Mignucci's assessment of the understanding of indefinite truth in the dominant school of thought represented by Ammonius may be correct, I do not see that it renders the concept coherent. There is no difficulty understanding what someone like Alexander of Aphrodisias who (on most accounts) denied that bivalence applies to PFCs meant by claiming the truth-value of PFCs was indefinite. But what does it mean to say that the truth-value of PFCs is indefinite for

those who continue to affirm that PFCs *are* either true or false? One could of course say their truth-value is indefinite *to us*, but as Mignucci himself argues, it seems quite clear that Ammonius, Proclus, and Boethius are claiming more than this.[18] Rather, they are trying to avoid Stoic determinism and preserve moral responsibility by denying that the future is *ontologically* settled. Their concept of indefinite truth was their way of doing this while also retaining the universal applicable of bivalence. But, so far as I can see, their attempt was simply unsuccessful.

(5) Closely related to this fourth trajectory is a strand of thought that took Carneades' distinction between the alethic status of PFCs and the ontology of the future as well as the distinction between definite and indefinite truth and applied them in an innovative, theologically motivated way. A question that Iamblichus, Ammonius, Proclus, and Boethius each wrestled with was: How can God (and/or the gods) who (they assumed) is altogether necessary, unchanging and atemporal, perfectly know a world that is contingent, perpetually changing and temporal? They answered this question by postulating that divine knowledge must be understood not in terms of the nature *of what is known* but in terms of the nature *of the knower.*[19] This view, I would argue, is influenced by a widespread ancient misunderstanding, virtually canonized by Plato, which held that perception involves an active process in which light goes out from our eyes.[20] As perception and knowledge were closely linked in the ancient Hellenic world, knowing also was construed as a process of *acting on* the objects of cognition rather than being *acted on* by them.[21]

This activist view of perception and knowledge allowed these thinkers to conclude that the mode of God's/the gods' perception and knowledge of the contingent, changing world is defined by the necessary, timeless and unchanging nature of God/the gods, rather than by the contingent, temporal changing world that is seen and known. Hence, they were able to assert that God/the gods see and know changing reality in an unchanging way, the indefinite future in a definite way, the contingent future in a necessary way, and ultimately all of time in a nontemporal way. In this way Iamblichus, Ammonius, Proclus, and Boethius were able to reconcile God's EDF (which, given God's atemporality, is only 'foreknowledge' from our perspective) with an ontologically open future and thus with moral responsibility.

Largely through the influence of Augustine and especially Boethius, the view that God's knowledge conforms to God's timeless mode of being rather than the temporal world that God knows quickly established itself as the dominant view in the Christian tradition.[22] In a variety of forms, the assumption that God's knowledge is conditioned exclusively by the mode of the divine being rather than the nature of what is known continues to be dominant, as is evidenced, for example, by the fact that the debate over the open view of the future continues to usually be construed as a debate about *the perfection of God's knowledge* rather than as a

debate about the *content of reality* that (all orthodox Christians within this debate agree) God perfectly knows.[23]

An unnoticed assumption

There are, of course, an abundance of complex, hotly debated issues that surround the traditional Christian view. For example, is it coherent to affirm that God timelessly knows temporal contingencies without His timeless knowledge being conditioned by the temporal contingencies He knows? Why think that a being who lacks any before or after, existing in a single eternal moment, is more perfect than a being who experiences a 'before' and 'after', especially if it is granted that this perfect being is *personal* and *interactive* with agents in history? Is the concept of an atemporal eternity even coherent? Could an atemporal God know what time it is *now*? And, of course, is God's atemporal mode of knowledge logically compatible with libertarian free will?

The literature discussing these and a host of related questions is voluminous and it would take us far outside the limited scope of this present essay to even begin to discuss them.[24] For the purposes of this present essay, I want to instead draw our attention to an unnoticed assumption that historically was a significant driving force in the origination of all five ancient views, including the dominant Neoplatonist and Christian view.

In a word, each of the five views proceed on the assumption that propositions asserting 'x will occur at t^1' logically *contradict* propositions asserting 'x will not occur at t^1.'[25] Since they are contradictory, the two propositions exhaust the alternatives. Hence, one must be true and the other false or bivalence must be deemed inapplicable to PFCs. The assumption thereby seemingly forces one either to accept Stoic determinism, or the Epicurean denial of bivalence, or one or more of the three positions that attempt to steer a middle course between these two views.

While the assumption that 'will' and 'will-not' propositions contradict each other may *seem* obvious, there is no strictly logical reason to accept this. Consider: If 'will' and 'will-not' propositions are logically contradictory and exhaust the alternatives, what are we to make of propositions that assert what 'might' and 'might not' occur? If 'x will occur' and 'x will not occur' exhaust the alternatives, 'x might occur' and 'x might not occur' can only be interpreted as merely asserting the *logical precondition* of propositions asserting what 'will' and 'will not' occur and/or as asserting our ignorance of the truth of both propositions. On this reckoning, 'might' and 'might not' cannot mean that it is *historically* possible (viz. in the *actual* flow of history) that 'x might and might not occur' – for, per this assumption, either 'x will' or 'x will not' occur.

That is to say, 'might' and 'might not' can never be the *final* thing to be said about any possible future state of affairs, for what is also true – and eternally true – about any possible future state of affairs is that it either it will or will not

come to pass. Hence an omniscient God must eternally know whether the state of affairs will or will not come to pass, never that it might and might not come to pass. From a strictly logical perspective, however, there is no necessity to this restricted interpretation of 'might' and 'might not'. That is, there is no logical basis for denying that the future could be *ontologically* open.

One might of course offer *empirical* arguments to the effect that the future is exhaustively definable by 'will' and 'will-not' type propositions. The Stoics, for example, based their deterministic view primarily on alleged evidence from divination, combined with arguments premised on the universality of causation (deterministically understood).[26] So too, if one has other reasons for believing that God possess EDF, then these constitute grounds for interpreting 'might' and 'might-not' type propositions as expressing merely the logical precondition for 'will' and 'will-not' type propositions and/or as expressing our ignorance of the truth value of 'will' and 'will-not' type propositions.[27] What is interesting, however, is that the four non-Stoic positions reviewed above do not generally argue in this fashion. They simply *assume* 'will' and 'will-not' type propositions exhaust the field and then try to argue that this does not imply determinism. In this sense, this assumption drives all five views and, I believe, lies behind all their problematic features.

An alternative assessment of 'will' and 'will not' type propositions[28]

An alternative way of analysing 'will' and 'will-not' type propositions – and thus, by implication, 'might' and 'might-not' type propositions – is to understand 'will' and 'will not' not as contradictories, but as *contraries*. The contradictory of 'x will' is not 'x will not', but rather '*not* [x will]' which is logically equivalent to 'x *might* not'. And the contradictory of 'x will not' is not 'x will' but '*not* [x will not]', which is logically equivalent to 'x *might*.' On the traditional Aristotelian Square of Opposition, the four possible options with their logical relations appear as follows:
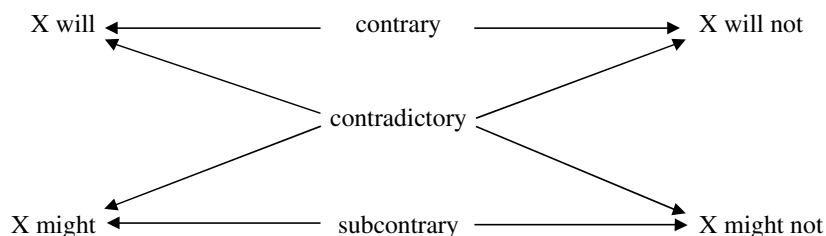
As contraries, 'will' and 'will not' cannot both be true at the same time, but they *can both be false* – just in case it happens to be true that 'might' *and* 'might not' are *both* true at the same time, for subcontraries can, of course, be *conjointly true.* If 'x might' is true, then its contradictory 'x will not' is necessarily false, and if 'x might not' is true, then its contradictory 'x will' is necessarily false. (For the

subaltern relationship between 'x will' and 'x might,' on the one hand, and 'x will not' and 'x might not', on the other, see the Appendix).

As I read them, this is precisely what Iamblichus, Proclus, Ammonius, and others were groping toward with their vague concept of the indefinite truth of PFCs. Without denying bivalence, they were attempting to affirm something *in between* 'will' and 'will not'. Unfortunately, their assumption that 'will' and 'will not' are contradictories rather than contraries prevented them from doing so with logical consistency.

For example, in his commentary on Aristotle's *de Interpretatione* 9, Ammonius says that what he is asking is 'whether every contradiction divides truth and falsity in a definite way, or [whether] there is some contradiction which divides them in an indefinite way (*aoristo*s)'.[29] He answers by asserting that propositions containing future contingents 'divide … truth and falsity, however not in a definite but [in] an indefinite way'. Unfortunately, Ammonius, like everybody else at the time, was yet considering 'will' and 'will not' as contradictories rather than contraries, as is clear from his very next sentence: 'It is necessary that Socrates tomorrow *either will or will not* bathe and it is not possible that both or neither are true.'[30]

I suggest that what Ammonius wants – and what the concept of 'indefinite truth' is *trying* to provide – is a way both to affirm for the sake of bivalence, and to deny for the sake of morally responsible free will, that it is settled that Socrates will or will not bathe tomorrow. Unfortunately, by applying bivalence to 'will' and 'will not' rather than 'will' and 'might not,' on the one hand, and 'will not' and 'might,' on the other, neither Ammonius nor anyone else who reflected along these lines could carve out a logical space to consistently have it both ways.

Once we reject the assumption that 'will' and 'will not' are contradictory and thus exhaust the alternatives regarding PFCs, we can see that there are three, not just two, possible states of affairs regarding the future: 'will,' 'will not', and 'might and might not'. As Tom Belt, Alan Rhoda, and I have demonstrated elsewhere, when its contrary, subcontrary, and subaltern relationships are illustrated, the traditional Square of Opposition is transformed into a hexagon of logical relations (comprised of three versions of the original Aristotelian square, as illustrated in the Appendix).

Positing a threefold rather than a twofold analysis of possible states of the future allows us to avoid Stoic determinism, but without having to bite the counter-intuitive Epicurean bullet of denying bivalence. Regarding all PFCs, we can affirm that either a proposition or its contradictory is true. That is, either 'x will occur' or 'x might not occur'; either 'x will not occur' or 'x might occur'; *and* either 'x might and might not occur' or 'x will or will not occur'. This also allows us to avoid determinism without having to accept the various philosophical conundrums associated with views (3)–(5).

What this means for omniscience

This analysis obviously has important ramifications for our understanding of the content of God's knowledge. For if we grant that 'might' and 'might-not' type propositions may be conjointly true – and thus that 'will' and 'will-not' type propositions may be conjointly false – then an omniscient being would perfectly know the future in terms of what may and may not come to pass to the extent that the future is comprised of historically (not just logically) possible future events, and would perfectly know the future in terms of what will or will not come to pass to the extent that the future is comprised of events that in fact will (certainly) or will not (certainly) come to pass. The truth-value of propositions about what may and may not come to pass obviously changes if and when circumstances that once made a future event merely possible now make it certain to occur or not, and an omniscient God would, of course, instantly know when this shift occurred.[31]

The issue of the precise extent to which the future is at any given time 'open' – i.e. comprised of 'might and might-not' historical possibilities – and the extent to which it is at any given time settled – i.e. comprised of 'will' or 'will-not' settled facts – is one that could only be inferred by humans on empirical, not logical, grounds. What is important, however, is that once one accepts that propositions asserting what 'will' and 'will not' occur are contraries, not contradictories, it can no longer be held hat omniscience means, by definition, that God possesses EDF. Consequently, there is no longer any difficulty asserting that God is omniscient and affirming the universal applicability of bivalence while at the same time denying that the future is exhaustively settled.

The theological motivation

We turn now to the theological motivation for ascribing EDF to God. If God does not know the future exhaustively as a realm of settled facts, does this not significantly undermine his providential control of the world?

Foreknowledge and providence in the Ancient World

As with the philosophical motivation, the theological motivation for ascribing EDF to God did not originate with Christianity. To the contrary, the association of foreknowledge with providential assurance was a central aspect of the Hellenistic debate over the issue of divine foreknowledge, fate, and moral responsibility. The debate largely centred around the practice of divination which was part of the social fabric of Graeco-Roman culture. As Luther Martin notes, divination and other practices 'established and maintained the structure of [Hellenistic] society'.[32] 'The social identity of Greece', he continues, 'was commemorated at its oracular shrines with their pan-Hellenic framework of cosmic fate and their practices of divination, a practice which continued to exemplify

popular piety until the establishment of Christianity, and beyond'.[33] While divination was occasionally ridiculed by certain sceptical philosophers (e.g. Carneades and Cicero), it was almost universally accepted by academics and lay people alike and was widely regarded as the main proof that the gods were concerned with and involved in human affairs.[34] Indeed, the alleged success of divination played a central role in the Stoic argument that God's providential hand governs all things, determining the whole of the future.[35]

As we noted above, one of the primary reasons few accepted the Epicurean open view of the future was that, not only did it require the counterintuitive rejection of bivalence, but it was believed to contradict divination and therefore undermine divine providence.[36] And this undermining of providence understandably put fear in the hearts of many ancient Greeks and Romans, just as it seems to do for many people today. So highly was divination esteemed that, with very few exceptions, even many of those who espoused an open future (including the Christian Calcidius!) were at pains to show how their philosophies could account for its success and therefore provide an adequate account of divine providence.[37]

This association of divination with providential security was widely adopted by the early Church. To be sure, early orthodox Christians uniformly reject divination *practices* and, at least up until Augustine, vigorously attacked all forms of determinism. Yet the association of providence with the conviction that God knows the future exclusively in terms of what will and will not come to pass was almost uniformly adopted from the start. When the early Fathers refer to divine foreknowledge, it is almost always in a context where they are concerned with either proving Christ's deity from Old Testament prophecies (now understood along the lines of Hellenistic divination – that is, as prognostications) or in contexts where they are discussing God's providential control of the future.[38]

Foreknowledge and providence today

So far as I can see, the widespread Hellenistic assumption that the gods lose significant providential control if they do not know the future as exhaustively settled remains with us to this day. Aside from exegetical objections, the single most frequent criticism raised against the open view in the polemical literature is that it *undermines confidence in providence.* To illustrate, this criticism permeates Bruce Ware's book, *God's Lesser Glory.* According to Ware, the open view of God posits a 'limited, passive, hand-wringing God', who can do little more than hope for the best.[39] '[W]hat is lost in open theism', Ware contends,

> … is the Christian's confidence in God … . When we are told that God … can only guess what much of the future will bring … [and] constantly sees his beliefs about the future proved wrong by what in fact transpires … . Can a believer know that God will triumph in the future just as he has promised he will?[40]

Inasmuch as the need for security strongly influences the faith of most people today, as it did in ancient Greece, this type of argumentation is psychologically effective. But is it valid? I do not believe that it is.

Of course, it cannot be denied that a conception of God who meticulously *determines* the whole of history, such as we find both in Stoicism and in the classical Augustinian-Calvinist tradition, provides more assurance to believers that everything is going 'as planned' than can a God who grants libertarian free will to agents. Most non-Calvinists of course argue that this extra 'assurance' is purchased at an unacceptably high price, for it requires, among other things, that we accept all evil as part of God's providential plan. But more importantly, this is not what is at issue in the debate about God's foreknowledge. Rather, the issue is over whether God gains any significant providential advantage simply by virtue of knowing the future exhaustively as a domain of settled facts (what will and will not come to pass) as opposed to a domain that includes possibilities (what might and might not come to pass). And the answer to this specific question, I argue, is that He does not, *provided one agrees that God possesses unlimited intelligence.*[41]

Of course, we humans are much less in control of a future we know to be comprised of possibilities than we are a future we know to be comprised only of settled facts. But the reason for this is that we only possess a finite amount of intelligence. Hence, the more possibilities we have to anticipate and prepare for, the thinner we have to spread our limited intelligence to anticipate them. This is why playing a formidable opponent in an important game of chess, for example, is much more stressful than (say) working on an assembly line.

By contrast, if God is omniscient, there is no limit to his intelligence. This entails that God does not have a finite amount of intelligence that must be 'spread thin' to cover various possibilities. Rather, if God possesses *unlimited* intelligence, God can attend to *each* and *every one* of any number of possibilities as though each and every one was the *only* possibility – viz. as though each was an absolute certainty.[42] For a God of unlimited intelligence, therefore, there is no functional difference between anticipating a possibility and anticipating a certainty. God prepares for 'maybes' as effectively as He does 'certainties'. Indeed, a God of unlimited intelligence anticipates 'maybes' *as though* each was a 'certainty'. If you ever have the misfortune of playing God at chess, you will most certainly lose. For however you may choose to move, God has been anticipating *that very move* and preparing a response to it, as though you *had* to make this move, from the onset of the game – indeed, from before the foundation of the world (for possibilities are eternal, hence eternally known by an omniscient God).

This means that, whatever comes to pass, an open theist can say as confidently as a person who ascribes EDF to God that God had been anticipating *this very event* from before the foundation of the world, as though the event had to happen.

It is just that the open theist would add that, because God possesses unlimited intelligence, God did not need to foreknow the event as an eternally settled fact in order to anticipate it *as though* it was an eternally settled fact. Any number of other events could have occurred instead of the event that came to pass, and if any other event had come to pass, the open theist would be saying the exact same thing *about it.*

In the light of God's unlimited intelligence, an open theist can affirm that every event happens *with* a divine purpose without having to assert that everything happens *for* a divine purpose. God brings an eternally prepared purpose *to* events, but God does not bring about (or specifically allow) all events *for* an eternal purpose. The open theist can thus remain as confident as any free will theist who ascribes EDF to God that God can bring good out of evil and fit all events into a divine plan. But she can do so without having to make God complicit in evil.

A question of resources

One might reply that, while a God who possessed unlimited intelligence but lacked EDF could anticipate possibilities as effectively as certainties, He could not be as efficient at utilizing resources in anticipating future events as He could if He possessed EDF. To return to the chess analogy, a God who foreknew with certainty how His opponent was going to move wouldn't need to expend resources putting contingency plans in place for every *possible* move His opponent might make. While open theists can believe as strongly as a person who ascribes EDF to God that God has an eternally prepared response for any event that comes to pass, only the person who ascribes EDF to God can further affirm that God has been preparing a response *exclusively* for this event.

I think the objection must be granted. At the same time, it does not seem to me that the additional providential advantage that EDF gives God is all that significant. Since both views affirm libertarian free will, both must grant that God's eternally prepared response to events is merely *the best possible* (or *as good as possible* just in case there is no *uniquely best* response possible) given the creational constraints God must work around. Had individuals chosen differently, both views must grant, a more ideal response might have been possible. Indeed, had individuals chosen differently, there might be no event requiring God to respond in the first place. Hence, the difference between free-will theists who affirm EDF and those who deny EDF boils down to a disagreement over the scope of logically possible resources available to God as He prepares his best possible response to future events, given the constraints the kind of world He decided to create place upon him.[43]

Moreover, since both views affirm the assuredness of God's ultimate victory, whatever slight providential advantages the EDF perspective might offer us must

be considered penultimate. That is, both views confess that God will ingeniously weave all events into a God-glorifying unity under Christ (Ephesians, 1.10), and that, when the eschaton has come, we'll regard all the sufferings of this present epoch as unworthy of comparison to the joy we then experience (Romans 8.18). Eschatologically speaking, therefore, whatever providential advantages EDF might grant God are trivial.

Yet, for the purpose of this present paper, perhaps the most important reply to the above objection is that this is not the level at which the providential argument against open theism has generally been waged, either in ancient or in modern times. The issue has not been that a God who lacked EDF might merely have a narrower range of logically possible resources to draw from as He prepares the best possible response to future events, but that a God who lacked EDF can't be providentially assuring *at all*. As we noted above, many contemporary Christians argue that a God who faces a future partially comprised of possibilities must be a 'limited, passive, hand-wringing God' who can only 'guess at what much of the future will bring', and whom Christians can't trust to 'triumph in the future'.[44] And in reply to *this* sort of all-to-common argument, we need only point out that the charge presupposes that God is limited in intelligence. Only a god of limited intelligence would need to foreknow all that comes to pass in order to avoid wringing His hands in worry or in order to be assured of triumphing in the future.

Conclusion

I have argued that both the philosophical and the theological motivations for ascribing EDF to God are derived from, and rooted in, misguided Hellenistic philosophical assumptions that pre-date Christianity. There's no strictly logical reason why we should not regard 'will' and 'will-not' propositions as contraries rather than contradictories, and thus no reason to assume 'will' and 'will-not' propositions exhaustively define the future. Hence, there is no strictly logical reason to deny that the future is partly comprised of events that might and might not occur and that God, being omniscient, therefore knows the future partly as a domain of what might and might not come to pass. Yet, a God of unlimited intelligence does not lose any significant providential advantage because of this fact. Whatever comes to pass, God has been preparing for it from all eternity as though it had to come to pass.

Appendix: The hexagonic logic of an open future

[Adapted from G. Boyd, A. Rhoda, and T. Belt 'The hexagon of opposition: thinking outside the Aristotelian box', unpublished manuscript]

Let Z and Q be propositional operators standing for 'it will come to pass that' and 'it might and might not come to pass that', respectively. Let S be a description of a future state of affairs.

The three possible states of the future ('will', 'will not', and 'might and might not') have a *contrary* relationship that can be illustrated as follows:
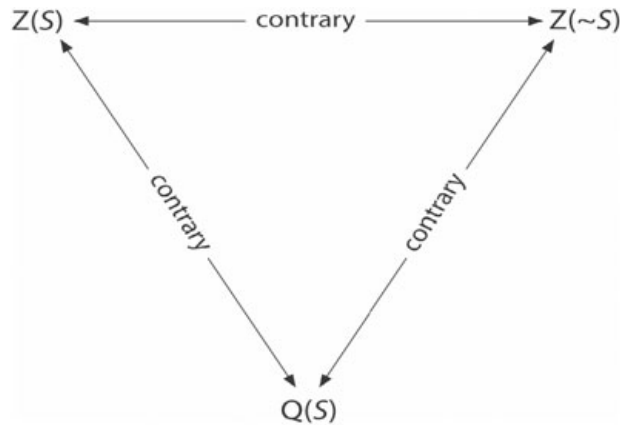
As contraries that exhaust the field of future states, one must be true and the other two false [(S) [(Z(S) $\lor$ Z ($\sim$S) $\lor$ Q(S)]. From this we derive three theorems:

$$\text{I.} \quad Z(S) \leftrightarrow \sim Z(\sim S) \land \sim Q(S)$$
$$\text{II.} \quad Z(\sim S) \leftrightarrow \sim Z(S) \land \sim Q(S)$$
$$\text{III.} \quad Q(S) \leftrightarrow \sim Z(S) \land \sim Z(\sim S)$$

The contradictory of each of these three possible future states [$\sim$Z(S), $\sim$Z($\sim$S), $\sim$Q(S)] have a *subcontrary* relationship with each other that can be illustrated as follows:
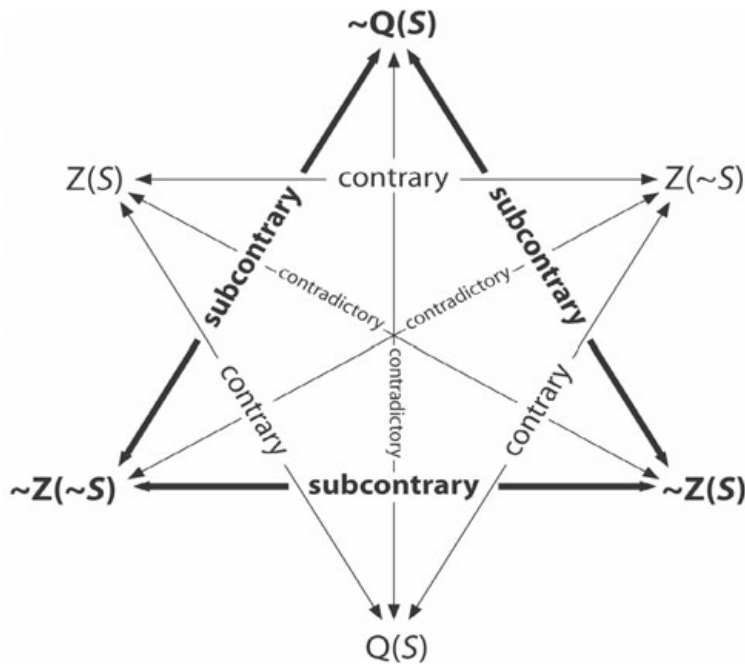
Since Q(S) entails both ∼Z(S) and ∼Z(∼S) (by Theorem III), it is clear ∼Z(S) and ∼Z(∼S) are conjointly true when Q(S)is true. It is equally clear that ∼Z(S) and ∼Z(∼S) cannot be conjointly false. At the same time, Z(S) and Z(∼S) cannot be conjointly true (by Theorems I and II) while ∼Z(S) and ∼Z(∼S) cannot be conjointly false. The same results obtain *mutatis mutandis* for the other pairs, ∼Z(S) and ∼Q(S); ∼Z(∼S) and ∼Q(S). Hence, for each pair, it is possible that both be true and not possible that both be false, which is why it is necessary to identify their relationship as subcontrary.

We should further note that each of the six poles expressing the three possible future states and their contradictories have *subaltern* relations with each other that can be illustrated as follows:
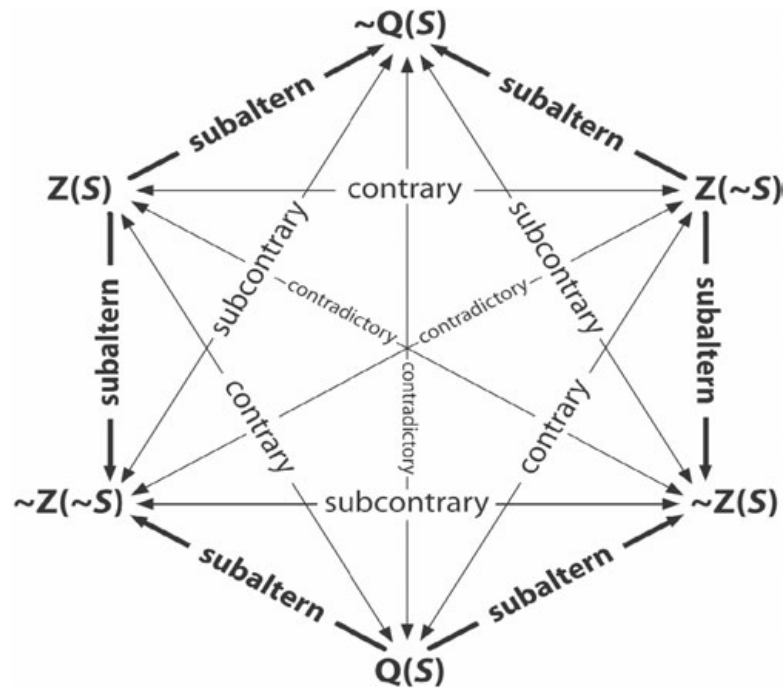
If Z(S) is true, the subaltern ∼Z(∼S) is necessarily true. The same applies to the relationship between Z(S) and the adjacent ∼Q(S). Likewise, if Z(∼S) is true, the subaltern ∼Z(S) is also true while the same subaltern relationship exists between Z(∼S) and ∼Q(S). Lastly, Q(S) has subaltern relations with the adjacent propositions such that if Q(S) is true, both subalterns ∼Z(∼S) and ∼Z(S) are true.

Finally, it is perhaps worth noting that the Hexagon is comprised by three versions of the Aristotelian Square of Opposition, each expressing the contradictory, contrary and subaltern relationships that pertain to each of the three possible future states.
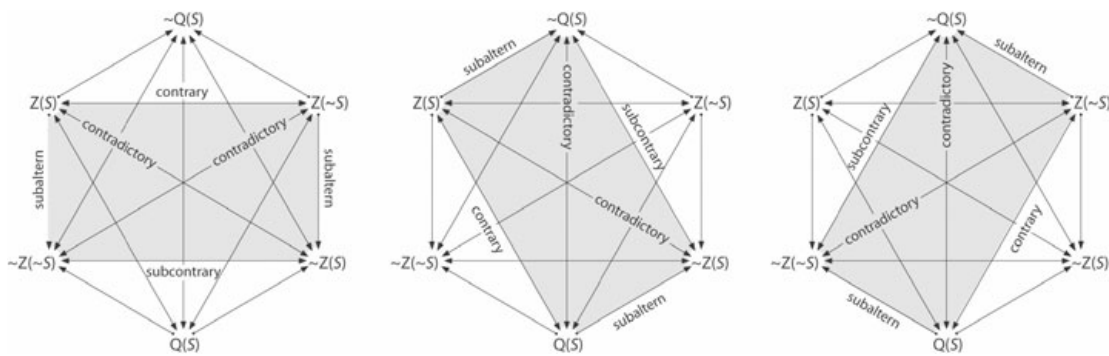
Once we abandon the logically arbitrary exclusion of 'might and might-not' propositions from making ontological claims about possible future states and thus grant that Z(S), Z ($\sim$S), and Q(S) are equally primitive, it becomes clear that an adequate schemata of all possible logical relations between propositions expressing possible future states requires three distinct versions of the Square of Opposition, each oriented around one of the three logically primitive possible future states. When coordinated with the contradictory, contrary, subcontrary and subaltern relationships that obtain between propositions expressing these three possible future states, the three squares form a Hexagon of Opposition.

Notes

1. By *exhaustively definite foreknowledge* (EDF) I refer to the traditional view that, whatever else God knows, He knows the future exhaustively as a domain of what *will* or *will not* come to pass, rather than a domain that includes what *may* and *may not* come to pass. The view that God's knowledge of the future includes what *may* and *may not* come to pass is today commonly labelled 'open theism' or (my preference) 'the open view of the future'.

2. The first motivation has been extensively covered. For works defending the open view of the future on exegetical and other grounds, see e.g. C. Pinnock *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of God's Openness* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2001); C. Pinnock *et al. The Openness of God* (Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994); R. Rice *God's Foreknowledge and Man's Free Will* (Minneapolis MN: Bethany, 1985); J. Sanders *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence* (Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998); G. Boyd *God of the Possible: A Biblical Introduction to the Open View of God* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2000); *idem Satan and the Problem of Evil: Constructing a Warfare Theology* (Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001). For works defending EDF on exegetical and other grounds, see S.Roy *How Much Does God Foreknow?* (Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006); B. Ware *God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism* (Wheaton IL: Crossway, 2001); M. J. Erickson *God the Father Almighty: A Contemporary Exploration of the Divine Attributes* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1998); W. L. Craig *The Only Wise God: The Compatibility of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Freedom* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1987); J. Frame *No Other God: A Response to Open Theism* (Phillipsburg NJ: P&R, 2001); N. Geisler & H. W. House *The Battle for God: Responding to the Challenge of Neotheism* (Grand Rapids MI: Kregel, 2001). For a listing of more technical philosophical works on issues surrounding EDF, see n. 24.

3. This essay is in essence a report on one aspect of an ongoing research project to be published as a two-volume work entitled *The Myth of the Blueprint* (Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, forthcoming).

4. Bivalence is the principle that stipulates that a proposition is either true or false (Tp or Fp). It is now customary to distinguish bivalence from the closely related law of the excluded middle that stipulates that either a proposition or its contradiction is true (Tp or –Tp). Ancients did not consistently distinguish between these two principles, but as it concerns the truth value of PFC's it seems to me they most often

had bivalence in mind. Either it is true that '*x* will occur' or it is false that '*x* will occur' which, they (mistakenly, I shall argue) uniformly take to entail that, at every point prior to *t*, either *x* will or will not occur at *t*.

5. For discussions, see M. Ressor 'Necessity and fate in Stoic philosophy', in J. M. Rist (ed.) *The Stoics* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1978), 187–202; J. M. Rist *Stoic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), ch. 7; R. W. Sharples (tr. and comm.) *Cicero: On Fate* (*De Fato*) & *Boethius: The Consolation of Philosophy iv.507, V* (*Philosophiae Consolationis*), (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1991), 12–15.

6. As is commonly noted, early discussions concerning fate and moral responsibility centred on the meaning of affirming that actions are 'up to us', not on the idea that humans possess a distinct 'will' that is, or is not, free. There is no consensus, however, on when exactly the concept of 'free will' arose. For several competing views, see S. Bobzien 'The inadvertent conception and late birth of the free-will problem', *Phronesis*, **43** (1998), 133–175; P. Hurby 'The first discovery of the free will problem', *Philosophy*, **43** (1967), 353–362; C. Kahn 'Discovering the will: from Aristotle to Augustine', in J. M. Dillon & A. A. Long (eds) *The Question of 'Eclecticism': Studies in Later Greek Philosophy* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1988), 234–259; R. Sorabji 'The concept of the will from Plato to Maximus the Confessor', in T. Pink & M. W. F. Stone (eds) *The Will and Human Action: From Antiquity to the Present Day* (New York NY: Routledge, 2004), 6–23; and especially A. Dihle,*The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1982).

7. On the Epicurean view of PFCs, see Cicero *On Fate* IX.18.9; X.21; XVI.37; *idem Academics*, II.97; *idem On the Nature of the Gods*, I.25, 70. This view was espoused not only by the Epicureans but arguably by Aristotle, Alexander of Aphrodisias (and other Peripatetics), Calcidius, Nicrostatus, and, if Proclus is to be trusted, by Porphyry (*Comm.in Timaeius* 1.352.12). See M. Mignucci 'Ammonius on future contingent propositions', in M. Frede & G. Striker (eds) *Rationality in Greek Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 305–306; R. Sorabji *Necessity, Cause and Blame: Perspectives on Aristotle's Theory* (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 93, 124; R. W. Sharples 'Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De Fato*, Some Parallels', *Classical Quarterly*, **28** (1978), 243–266, 260–263; *idem Cicero & Boethius*, 25. In contemporary times most (but not all) theologians who deny that God possesses EDF have done so along Epicurean lines.

8. For discussions on the atomic swerve and free will, see N. Gulley 'Lucretius on free will', *Symbolae Osioenses*, **65** (1990), 37–52, 46–51; J. Purinton 'Epicurus on free volition and the atomic swerve', *Phronesis*, **44** (1999), 293–299.

9. On Carneades' view, see Cicero *On Fate*, XVII–XX, XXVII. For discussions, see A. A. Long *Hellenistic Philosophy*, 2nd edn (London: Duckworth, 1986), 102–103; R. W. Sharples (tr. and comm.) *Alexander of Aprophdisias On Fate* (London: Duckworth, 2003 [1983]), 11. It should be noted that Carneades and Cicero both denied the gods possess EDF, but unlike the Epicureans, Alexander of Aphrodisias and (apparently) Calcidius, this was not because they denied that bivalence applies to PFCs, but because they did not think the truth of PFCs *was knowable*. This view is defended by William Hasker in *God, Time and Knowledge* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1989).

10. The crucial passage is *On Interpretation*, IX.19a36–38. The literature discussing Aristotle's *On Interpretation*, IX is massive. Several of the discussions I have found most helpful are R. Sorabji *Necessity, Cause and Blame*, ch. 5; W. L. Craig *The Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents from Aristotle To Suarez* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), ch. 1; V. R. McKim 'Fatalism and the future: Aristotle's way out', *Review of Metaphysics*, **25** (1972), 80–111; G. Anscombe 'Aristotle and the sea battle', *Mind*, **64** (1956), 1–15; C. Strang 'Aristotle and the sea battle', *Mind*, **69** (1960), 447–465; G. Fine 'Truth and necessity in *De Interpretatione* 9', *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, **1** (1984), 23–47; J. van Eck, 'Another interpretation of Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* IX: a support for the so-called second oldest or ''Mediaeval'' interpretation', *Vivarium*, **26** (1988), 19–38. See also Mignucci 'Ammonius', esp. 302–303.

11. On the dominant ancient interpretation, see Sharples *Alexander On Fate*, 11–12; *idem* 'Some parallels', 263–264; *idem Cicero & Boethius*, 29; R. Gaskin 'Alexander's sea battle: a discussion of Alexander of Aphrodisias *De Fato* 10', *Phronesis*, **38** (1993), 75–94, 76. Sharples makes a strong case that the first to make use of the distinction between 'definite' and 'indefinite' truth was Alexander of Aphrodisias (*Quaestiones*, I. 4 12.13ff.), though he seems to have understood 'indefinite' to entail a denial of bivalence. See R. W. Sharples (tr.) *Alexander of Aphrodisias: Quaestiones 1.1–2.15* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 35, cf. 32. See also Sorabji, *Necessity, Cause and Blame*, 111–113, 124. There is much

debate about whether *Quaestiones* I.4 actually goes back to Alexander or is the writing of one of his disciples, but the point need not concern us presently.

12. *In Interpretatione*, 130.20.6, cited in Mignucci, 'Ammonius', 281. On this, see Bobzien 'Inadvertent conception', 155. For an English translation (with original Greek text) of Ammonius' commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation* 9, see G. Seel *Ammonius and the Seabattle: Texts, Commentary and Essays* (New York NY: de Gruyter, 2000).

13. See *In Interpretatione*, 130.23–33.

14. So Mignucci 'Ammonius', 298. Dorothea Frede argues against this, however, in 'The sea-battle reconsidered: a defence of the traditional interpretation', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 3 (1983), 43–45.

15. Mignucci 'Ammonius', 302.

16. *Ibid.*, 297.

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.*, 288–289.

19. On the issue of who originated this view, why it was developed, and how it was modified by various parties, see the excellent article by M. Mignucci 'Logic and omniscience: Alexander of Aphrodisias and Proclus', *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy*, 3 (1985), 219–246. See also P. Huber *Die Vereinbarkeit von göttlicher Vorsehung und Menschlicher Freiheit in der Consolatio Philosophiae des Boethius* (Zurich: Juris, 1976), 20–59; H. R. Patch 'Necessity in Boethius and the Neoplatonists', *Speculum*, 10 (1935), 399; P. Courcelle *La Consolation de Philosophie dans la tradition littéraire* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1967), 216–221; Sorabji, *Necessity, Cause and Blame*, 124; and Sharples *Cicero & Boethius*, 26–27. On the concern for reconciling the immutable knowledge of the gods with transient reality, see e.g. Proclus *Elements of Platonic Theology*, I.15, 21, and the discussion in Mignucci 'Omniscience', 237–239.

20. See Plato *Sophist*, 248–249 and *Timaeus*, 45d. The view is also reflected in Alcinous *Didaskalikos*, XVIII.1, and Gellius *Noctes Atticae*, V.16.4. This understanding of vision is arguably behind Jesus' reference to the eye as 'the lamp of the body' (Matthew, 6.22; Luke, 11.34).

21. On the close association of perception and knowledge, see Aristotle *On the Soul*, 429a, and Maximus *Philosophical Oration*, VI.1 and XI.8–9.

22. See Mignucci 'Ammonius', 245; Sharples *Alexander on Fate*, 28–29.

23. Thus, evangelical critics of the open view continue to publish books with titles like (Roy) *How Much Does God Foreknow?* and (Erickson) *What Does God Know and When Does He Know it?* despite the uniform repeated insistence on the part of openness theologians that they unequivocally affirm that God *always* knows *everything*.

24. For several helpful collections of essays on these issues, see T. Morris (ed.) *The Concept of God* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); J. M. Fischer (ed.) *God, Foreknowledge and Freedom* (Ithaca NY & London: Cornell University Press, 1989), and especially G. Ganssle & D. Woodruff (eds) *God and Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). On issues surrounding divine eternity, see P. Helm *Eternal God* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); B. Leftow *Time and Eternity* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1991); A. Padgett *God, Eternity and the Nature of Time* (New York NY: St Martin's Press, 1992); N. Wolterstorff 'God everlasting', in C. J. Orlebeke & L. Smedes (eds) *God and the Good* (Grand Rapids MI: Eedmans, 1975); and N. Kretzmann 'Eternity', *The Journal of Philosophy*, 78 (1981), 429–458. On issues surrounding omniscience and libertarian free will, see A. Prior 'The formalities of omniscience', *Philosophy*, 37 (1962), 114–129; N.Pike 'Divine omniscience and voluntary actions', *The Philosophical Review*, 74 (1965), 27–46; E. Stump 'Prophecy, past truth and eternity', *Philosophical Perspectives*, 1 (1991), 395–324; Hasker *God, Time, and Knowledge*; *idem* 'A philosophical perspective,' in Pinnock *et al.* *The Openness of God*, 126–154; A. Rhoda, G. Boyd, & T. Belt 'Open theism, omniscience, and the nature of the future', *Faith and Philosophy*, 23 (2006), 432–459; L. Zagzebski *The Dilemma of Freedom and Foreknowledge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), and most recently, K. Rogers *Anselm on Freedom* (Oxford and New York NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 146–184. It should also be acknowledged that issues surrounding divine simplicity, immutability and impassibility also factor strongly into these discussions. For a sampling of helpful works on these issues, see E. Stump and N. Kretzmann 'Absolute simplicity', *Faith and Philosophy*, 2 (1985), 353–382; C. M. Hughes, *On a Complex Theory of a Simple God: An Investigation in Aquinas' Philosophical Theology* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1989); T. Morris, 'Properties, modalities, and God', *The Philosophical Review*, 93 (1984), 35–55; R. Swinburne *The Coherence of Theism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977); R. Creed *Divine Impassibility*

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), and N. Wolterstorff 'Suffering love', in T. Morris (ed.) *Philosophy and the Christian Faith* (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 196–237.

25. Cicero (*On Fate*, XVI) illustrates clearly the universally shared assumption when he writes, 'it is necessary in the case of two opposed things [*contrariis duabus*] – and by 'opposed' [*contraria*] here I mean those one of which asserts something and the other denies it – it is necessary, against Epicurus' wishes, that one of these be true, the other false, as ''Philoctetes will be wounded'' was true for all ages beforehand, ''he will not be wounded'' false … .'

26. On the Stoic use of divination to support their view of providence, see esp. Cicero *On Divination*, I.38; I.82. On the Stoic argument for determinism based on the universality of causality, see citations and discussion in Long *Hellenistic Philosophy*, 163–164; M. Dragona-Monachou 'Providence and fate in Stoicism and Prae-Neoplatonism', *Philosophia*, **3** (1973), 262–300, 262–267; Ressor 'Necessity', 200.

27. I'm thinking here, for example, of arguments for EDF based on biblical prophecy or other data from scripture or arguments based on the perfection of God's being. On the first set of arguments, see n. 2. On the second set, see n. 24. One difficulty associated with the second set of arguments is that they often *assume* that the future is exhaustively defined by 'will' and 'will-not' type propositions. Hence arguments that a perfect being must possess EDF because of the perfection of his knowledge often end up being circular.

28. My reflections in this section have been formed in dialogue with Alan Rhoda and Thomas Belt who share the credit for whatever merit the argument has. For a further development of this theme, see Rhoda, Boyd & Belt, 'Open theism', 432–459, and G. Boyd, A. Rhoda and T. Belt, 'The hexagon of opposition: thinking outside the Aristotelian box' (unpublished mss). The analysis of 'will,' 'will-not', and 'might and might-not' propositions being proposed here was (to the best of my knowledge) first articulated by Charles Hartshorne in 'The meaning of ''is going to be''', *Mind*, **74/293** (1965), 46–58; cf. *idem*, *Insights and Oversights of Great Thinkers* (Albany NY: State University of New York Press, 1983), 45. It was in some respects also anticipated by Colin Strang in 'Aristotle and the sea battle', *Mind*, **69/276** (1960), 447–465.

29. *In Interpretatione*, 131.204, cited in Mignucci 'Ammonius', 281.

30. *In Interpretatione*, 139.15–17, cited in Mignucci 'Ammonius', 282 (emphasis added). See also *In Interpretatione*, 139.32–140.4; 140.11–13. Frede attempts to argue that Ammonius' concept of 'indefinite truth' was actually just a rather diplomatic way of denying bivalence ('Sea-battle reconsidered', 43). Given the logic of his system (as well as that of Alconius, Proclus, and Boetheius), I grant that this is what Ammonius *should* have held – given the universally shared assumption that 'will' and 'will not' are contradictories rather than contraries. But passages such as *In Interpretatione*, 139.15–17 as well as the fact that Ammonius clearly ascribes EDF to the gods (136.1–7, cf. 133.20) make Frede's interpretation of Ammonius unlikely.

31. As Hartshorne notes, 'will' and 'will-not' type propositions can only change from false to true while 'might' and 'might-not' type propositions can only change from true to false. If propositions are temporally indexed, however, there is no change in truth values; Hartshorne 'The meaning of ''is going to be''', 49–50.

32. L. H. Martin 'Fate, futurity and historical consciousness in Western antiquity', *Historical Reflections*, **17** (1991), 151–169, 164.

33. *Ibid.*, 168. This essay does a splendid job of contrasting the typical, divination-influenced Greek view of the future as exhaustively settled with the Hebraic view that understood time to flow from a settled past toward a somewhat open future. For several helpful orienting studies on divination in the ancient Graeco-Roman world, see W. R. Halliday *Greek Divination: A Study of its Methods and Principles* (London: Macmillan, 1913); D. Collins 'Nature, cause, and agency in Greek magic', *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, **133** (2003), 17–49. See also the comment of C. W. Fornara *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1983), 77. The best single source for the widespread practice of divination in the Graeco-Roman world is, of course, Cicero's *On Divination*.

34. On the nearly universal acceptance of divination among philosophers, see Cicero *On Divination*, I.3–4, 6. On divination expressing the gods' providential concern for humans, see I.6, 15–16, 35, 38, 41, 56. For Cicero's critical assessment of this connection, see II.8, 48–50.

35. See e.g. Cicero *On Divination*, I.82–84. For other discussions, see Mignucci 'Logic and omniscience', 225; M. Colish *The Stoic Tradition From Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 31–33; S. Sambursky *Physics of the Stoics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), 65–71; D. Amand *Fatalisme et Liberté dans Antiquité Grecque* (Louvain: Bibliotheque de l'Université, 1945), 571–86; J. B. Gould *The Philosophy of Chrysippus* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 144–145; A. A. Long & D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), I, *Translations*, 343, and Sharples 'Some parallels,' 245–249. It is worth noting that Chrysippus wrote two books on divination as well as three works on fate, all of which are unfortunately lost.

36. Mignucci ('Ammonius', 299 [emphasis added]) illustrates the point when he writes: 'Ammonius and the late Neoplatonic philosophers had a strong theological reason for admitting predictions. The gods are provident and they must know the world on which they exert their beneficial influence in such detail that nothing escapes their attention. *Therefore* even future contingent events must be known to them, and Ammonius does not waver in maintaining that the gods know future contingent events and that predictions are possible.'

37. Calcidius insightfully argues that, far from undermining prophecies, they are given more practical value if interpreted as *conditional predictions* that will come to pass *if* things do not change; see J. Den Boeft *Calcidius On Fate: His Doctrine and Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 34–35. This sort of reasoning is found at a number of points in Alexander of Aphrodisias. See e.g. *On Fate*, e.g. VI.171.7; XVII.188.11; XXXI.202.28; and *Massima* 179.16; 182.28; 185.33; 186.8. Cicero and Carneades make much of the argument that if prophecies tell us what *will certainly* come to pass, they are useless, at best, if not positively harmful. 'For the prediction of an evil is only beneficial when we can point out some means of avoiding it or mitigating it'; *On Divination*, II.25, cf. II.8. On the importance of accounting for divination and oracles in the ancient world (because of their widespread acceptance), see W. C. Greene *Moira: Fate, Good, and Evil in Greek Thought* (New York NY: Harper & Row, 1944), 375–376; Mignucci, 'Omniscience', 229–230, 235. This was a one of the central driving forces behind those who wanted to interpret Aristotle's *On Interpretation*, IX in a way that avoided denying bivalence (see Mignucci 'Ammonius', 299–300).

38. In sharp contrast to the Hellenistic understanding of prophecy, prognostication played a minor role in Hebrew prophecy which was mostly concerned not with forecasting an inevitable future but with warning people about a *possible* future that would come to pass *if people did not change their ways*. See, e.g. Jeremiah, 18.1–10. Nor is prognostication implied in most of the Gospel passages that present Jesus as 'fulfilling' various Old Testament passages. Even a cursory examination of the Old Testament passages appealed to in the Gospels reveal that in most cases there is nothing predictive about them. As Paul Eddy and I have argued elsewhere, when Gospel authors claim Jesus 'fulfilled' an Old Testament passage, they usually (but not always) mean simply that Jesus illustrates the point or principle of the passage in a superlative way. See P. R. Eddy & G. A. Boyd *The Jesus Legend: A Case for the Historical Reliability of the Synoptic Jesus Tradition* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 2007), 345–346.

39. Ware *God's Lesser Glory*, 216.

40. *Ibid.*, 20–21.

41. Space does not allow for a discussion of the different sorts of foreknowledge various thinkers ascribe to God (e.g. whether or not God knows counterfactual conditionals of creaturely freedom). Nor would such distinctions affect the thrust of my present argument.

42. Tom Morris argued along these lines when he maintained that God can possess immutable intentions that are conditioned upon possible future human free decisions, though Morris did not apply his argument to the issue of divine providence. See Morris 'Properties, modalities, and God', 46–49.

43. In this respect the disagreement between open theists and free-will theists who affirm EDF is similar to the long-standing debate between Arminians who espouse simple foreknowledge and Molinists who also affirm God's knowledge of counterfactuals of creaturely freedom. For representatives of this debate, see the essays by W. L. Craig and D. Hunt in J. Bielby & P. Eddy (eds) *Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views* (Downers Grove IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001). I should also note that, for the purposes of this essay, I am overlooking issues surrounding the logical coherence of the conception of God responding to eternally settled facts in order to bring about a more desirable future (which, of course, must also have been eternally settled). On this see J. Sanders 'Why simple foreknowledge offers no more providential control than the openness of God', *Faith and Philosophy*, **14** (1997), 26–40, and Hasker *God, Time and Knowledge*, 55–58.

44. Ware *God's Lesser Glory*, 216, cf. 20–21.