Thomas Aquinas

The Treatise on Human Nature

Summa Theologiae 1a 75–89

Translated, with Introduction
and Commentary, by
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sensory intentions, for example when someone sees that he is seeing. For this cannot take place through a proper sense, because it cognizes only the form of the sensible thing that makes an impression on it. In this impression seeing is completed, and as a result of this impression another impression follows in the common sense, which perceives the seeing.

Ad 3. Just as one capacity originates in the soul, mediated by another (as was said above [77.7c]), so too the soul is the subject of one capacity, mediated by another. It is in this way that the capacities for phantasia and memory are said to be states of the first sensory capacity.

Ad 4. Although the operation of intellect originates in the senses, nevertheless the intellect cognizes much in a thing apprehended by sense that the sense cannot perceive. The same is true for the estimative power, though in a lesser way.

Ad 5. The cogitative and memory powers have their superiority in a human being not through something proper to the sensory part, but through a kind of affinity and closeness to universal reason, in virtue of some kind of spillover. Consequently they are not different powers, but the same ones, more perfect than in other animals.

Ad 6. Augustine says that spiritual vision is what takes place through the likenesses of bodies, in the absence of those bodies. And so clearly this is common to all inner apprehensions.

Question 79

The Soul’s Intellective Capacities

The next question concerns the intellective capacities, and here there are thirteen points of inquiry:

a1. Is the intellect a capacity of the soul, or the soul’s essence?
a2. If it is a capacity, is it a passive capacity?
a3. If it is a passive capacity, should we posit an agent intellect?
a4. Is the agent intellect part of the soul?
a5. Is there one agent intellect for everyone?
a6. Is memory in intellect?
a7. Is it a different capacity from intellect?
a8. Is reason a different capacity from intellect?
a9. Are higher and lower reason distinct capacities?
a10. Is intelligence a different capacity from intellect?
a11. Are speculative and practical intellect distinct capacities?
a12. Is synderesis a capacity of the intellective part?
a13. Is conscience a capacity of the intellective part?

**Article 1. Is the intellect a capacity of the soul, or the soul’s essence?**

It seems that the intellect is not one of the soul’s capacities, but instead the soul’s very essence:

1. Intellect seems to be the same as mind. But mind is not a capacity of the soul, but its essence. For Augustine says in *De trinitate* IX [ii.2] that “mind” and ‘spirit’ are not relational terms, but pick out the essence.” Therefore the intellect is the soul’s very essence.

2. Different kinds of capacities of the soul are united not in any one capacity, but only in the soul’s essence. But the appetitive and the intellective are different kinds of capacities of the soul, as is said in *De anima* II [414a31–32]. They are, however, both found in the mind: for in *De trinitate* X [xi.18], Augustine locates intelligence and will in the mind. Therefore mind (and intellect) is the soul’s very essence, not one of its capacities.

3. According to Gregory, in his homily on the ascension, a human being uses intellect “with the angels.” But angels are called minds and intellects. Therefore the human mind and intellect is not one of the soul’s capacities, but rather the soul itself.

4. A substance is intellective as a result of being immaterial. But the soul is essentially immaterial. Therefore it seems that the soul is essentially intellective.

**On the contrary.** The Philosopher treats the intellective part as a capacity of the soul, as is clear in *De anima* II [414a31–32].

**Reply.** It is necessary to say, in keeping with earlier claims [Q77], that the intellect is one of the soul’s capacities and not the soul’s very essence. For the essence of the thing operating is the immediate basis of its operation only when that operation is its existence. For just as a

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1 QDV 10.1.
2 Homiliae in evangelia 29.2 (PL 76, 1214b). Cf. 84.3 obj. 1.
3 79.10c31–32.
4 75.2c22–33, 75.5c38–55, 84.2c57–73.
capacity is related to its operation as to its actuality, so essence is related to existence. But only in God's case is his intellective operation the same as his existence. Consequently, it is only in God's case that his intellect is his essence; in created intellectual beings, the intellect is a capacity of the creature using it.

Ad 1. 'Sense' is sometimes taken for the capacity, sometimes for the sensory soul itself. For the sensory soul is named after its most prominent capacity, which is sense. Likewise, the intellective soul is sometimes given the name 'intellect,' inasmuch as this is its most prominent power. (So it is said in De anima I [408b18] that the intellect is a substance.) It is also in this way that Augustine says that the mind is the “spirit” or “essence.”

Ad 2. The appetitive and the intellective are different kinds of capacities of the soul in virtue of their objects' different characters. But the appetitive goes in part with the intellective and in part with the sensory, depending on whether it operates through a corporeal organ or without such an organ. For appetite follows apprehension. Accordingly, Augustine locates will in the mind, and the Philosopher locates it in reason.

Ad 3. There are no other powers in angels except for the intellective power and will, which follows from intellect. And so an angel is called a mind or an intellect because its entire power consists in this. But the soul has many other powers, such as the sensory and the nutritive, and so the cases are not similar.

Ad 4. The immateriality of a created intellective substance is not its intellect. Rather, it has the power of intellect because of its immateriality. As a result, the intellect need not be the soul's substance; instead, it is the soul's power and capacity.

Article 2. Is the intellect a passive capacity? It seems that the intellect is not a passive capacity:

1. Everything is acted on with respect to its matter and acts because of its form. But the intellective power is a result of the immateriality of the

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51a 14.4, 54.2.  
680.1 ad 2.  
7De anima III 9, 432b5; see 87.4c25–26.  
8Ia 19.1c, 59.1c.  
9QDV 16.1 ad 13; InDA III.7.75–90, III.9; III Sent. 14.1.1.2.
substance that possesses it. Therefore it seems that the intellect is not a passive power.

2. The intellective capacity is incorruptible, as was said above [75.6]. But the intellect, if it is passive, is corruptible, as is said in *De anima* III [430a24–25]. Therefore the intellective capacity is not passive.

3. That which acts is loftier than that which is acted on, as Augustine says in *De Genesi ad litteram* XII [xvi.33] and Aristotle says in *De anima* III [430a18–19]. But all the capacities of the vegetative part are active, and they are the lowest of the soul's capacities. Therefore, *a fortiori*, the intellective capacities, the highest of the soul's capacities, are all active.

**On the contrary.** The Philosopher says in *De anima* III [429b25] that the operation of intellect consists in being acted on in a certain way.

**Reply.** There are three ways in which a thing can be said to be acted on. The first way, the strictest, is when a thing has something removed from it that suits it by nature or by its own proper tendency. Examples are when water loses its coldness by being heated, and when a person becomes sick or sad.

In a second, less strict way, someone is said to be acted on as a result of something's being removed from him, regardless of whether that thing suits him. In this way, not only is someone who becomes sick said to be acted on, but also someone who is made well, and not only someone who is made sad, but also someone who is made cheerful. This applies to any way in which something is altered or moved.

In a third, broad way, a thing is said to be acted on simply because that which is in potentiality for something receives what it was in potentiality for, without anything's being taken away. In this way, everything that goes from potentiality to actuality can be said to be acted on, even when it is being completed.

It is in this third way that the operation of our intellect consists in being acted on, as is evident through the following argument:

The operation of intellect, as was stated above [78.1c66], concerns universal being. Therefore one can determine whether the intellect is in actuality or potentiality by determining how the intellect stands relative to universal being. For there is one intellect that stands to universal being as the actuality of all being—this is the divine intellect, the essence of God. All being preexists here, originally and virtually, as in

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1079.1 ad 4.
1177.3c33–36 with note.
its first cause. Consequently, the divine intellect is not in potentiality, but is pure actuality. But no created intellect can stand as actuality relative to all universal being; for, if so, then it would have to be an infinite being. And so every created intellect, by virtue of its very existence, is not the actuality of all intelligible things, but relates to those intelligibles as potentiality to actuality.

But potentiality stands to actuality in two ways. One kind of potentiality is always perfectly actualized; this is how we described the matter of celestial bodies. The other kind of potentiality is not always in actuality, but goes from potentiality to actuality, as do things that undergo generation and corruption. So an angelic intellect is always in actuality with respect to its intelligible objects, but the human intellect, which is ranked the lowest of intellects and is the most remote from the divine intellect's perfection, is in potentiality with respect to intelligible things. It is at first like a tablet on which nothing has been written, as the Philosopher says in De anima III. This is clearly evident from the fact that we understand only potentially at first, whereas later we are made to understand actually. It is clear, therefore, that our intellect's operation consists in being acted on in a certain way: in the third way of being acted on. Consequently, the intellect is a passive capacity.

Ad 1. That objection holds of being acted on in the first and second ways, which are characteristic of prime matter. But the third way of being acted on belongs to anything existing in potentiality that is brought to actuality.

Ad 2. Some say that the passive intellect is sensory appetite, where the soul's passions are found. In Ethics I, as well, sensory appetite is said to be rational by participation, because it "obeys reason." Others say that the passive intellect is the cogitative power, which is called particular reason. Either way, it can be considered passive according to the first two ways of being acted on, inasmuch as this so-called intellect is the actuality of a bodily organ. But the intellect that is

\[12a 58.1c, 58.3c.\]
\[13a 58.1.\]
\[14\text{Themistius, De anima III.5 (105.13–109.3); see Averroës, De anima III.20 (p. 446).}\]
\[15\text{81.3.}\]
\[16\text{Averroës, De anima III.20 (p. 449). See 78.4c.}\]
in potentiality for intelligible things, which Aristotle for this reason calls the possible intellect, is passive only in the third way, because it is not the actuality of a corporeal organ. And as a result it is incorruptible.

Ad 3. That which acts is loftier than that which is acted on, if the acting and the being acted on concern the same object. This is not always the case, however, if they concern different objects. Now the intellect is a power that is passive with respect to all universal being, whereas the vegetative is active with respect to one particular being: the body that forms a composite with the soul. As a result, nothing prevents this sort of passive power from being loftier than that kind of active power.

Article 3. Should we posit an agent intellect?

It seems that we should not posit an agent intellect:

1. Just as the senses are related to sensible things, so our intellect is related to intelligible things. But because the senses are in potentiality for sensible things, we do not posit an agent sense, but only a passive sense. Therefore, since our intellect is in potentiality for intelligible things, it seems that we should not posit an agent intellect, but only a possible intellect.

2. Suppose someone says that there is an agent in the sensory case as well, namely, light. On the contrary, light is required for sight inasmuch as it makes the medium actually luminous. For color is capable in its own right of moving a luminous medium. But in the case of the intellect's operation, no medium is posited that needs to be actualized. Therefore there is no need to posit an agent intellect.

3. An agent's likeness is received in the thing affected according to the mode of the thing affected. But the possible intellect is an immaterial power. Therefore its immateriality suffices for forms to be received in it immaterially. But a form is actually intelligible as a result of its being immaterial. Therefore there is no need to posit an agent intellect for actualizing intelligible species.

17De an. III 4, 429a22.
18ST Ia 54.4; SCG II.77; QDSC 9; CT 83, 87–88; QDA 4; InDA III.10.
19This and the next argument appear in William of Auvergne, Tractatus de anima VII.4 (207ab).
2084.1c67–68.
On the contrary. The Philosopher says in *De anima* III [430a10–15] that, as in every nature, so too in the soul there is something “with which all things are made” and something “with which it makes all things.” Therefore we should posit an agent intellect.

Reply. On Plato’s view,²² there is no need to posit an agent intellect for actualizing intelligible things, although perhaps it is needed for supplying an intelligible light to someone using his intellect, as will be said below [79.4]. For Plato claimed that the forms of natural things subsist without matter, and as a consequence he claimed that they are intelligible, since a thing is actually intelligible as a result of being immaterial. Forms of this sort he called *Species* or *Ideas*. He said that by participation in these, corporeal matter is formed, so that individuals are established naturally in their proper genera and species. By this, too, our intellects [are formed], so that we have knowledge of the genera and species of things.

But because Aristotle did not claim that the forms of natural things subsist without matter, and because forms existing in matter are not actually intelligible,† it followed that the natures or forms of sensible things (the things that intellect understands) are not actually intelligible. But nothing is brought from potentiality to actuality except through something that is actual†—as the senses are actualized by something actually sensible. Therefore he needed to postulate a power on the side of intellect to actualize intelligible things by abstracting the species from material conditions.⁶ And this is why it is necessary to posit an agent intellect.

Ad 1. Sensible things occur in actuality outside the soul, and so there was no need to posit an agent sense. And in this way it is clear that in the nutritive part all the capacities are active,²³ whereas in the sensory part they are all passive,²⁴ and in the intellective part there is an active and a passive component.

Ad 2. There are two views on the effect of light.⁶ Some say that light is required for sight in order to make colors actually visible. On this view, an agent intellect would be required for thinking in the same way and for the same reason that light is required for seeing. According to others, light is required for seeing not because it makes colors actually visible, but because it makes the medium actually luminous, as the

²²84.1c₂⁸⁻₃⁷, 84.4c₃⁴⁻⁵₀.
²³77.₃c₃₃⁻₃₆, with note.
²⁴78.₃c₃₈.
Commentator says in *De anima* II [67]. On this view, the likeness that Aristotle draws between agent intellect and light is to be considered as follows: Just as the one is necessary for seeing, so the other is necessary for thinking, but not for the same reason.

Ad 3. Supposing there is an agent, then it is indeed the case that the agent’s likeness is differently received in different things on account of their different states. But if the agent does not already exist, then the state of the recipient will do nothing in this regard. Now nothing existent in the natural world is actually intelligible (speaking of the nature of sensible things, which do not subsist outside of matter). As a result, the possible intellect’s immateriality does not suffice for thought unless there is an agent intellect, which actualizes intelligible things by means of abstraction.

**Article 4. Is the agent intellect part of the soul?**

It seems that the agent intellect is not part of the soul:

1. The effect of agent intellect is illumination for the sake of understanding. But this is done through something higher than the soul, according to John 1.9: *it was the true light that illuminates every human being coming into this world*. Therefore it seems that the agent intellect is not part of the soul.

2. The Philosopher says of the agent intellect, in *De anima* III [430a22], that “it is not sometimes thinking, sometimes not thinking.” But our soul is not always thinking: sometimes it thinks and sometimes it does not. Therefore the agent intellect is not part of our soul.

3. The agent and the thing acted on suffice for acting. Therefore if the possible intellect, a passive power, is part of our soul, and likewise for agent intellect, an active power, then it follows that a human being could always understand when he wished, which is clearly false. Therefore the agent intellect is not part of our soul.

4. The Philosopher says in *De anima* III [430a18] that the agent intellect is “in substance an actual being.” But nothing is both in actuality and in potentiality in the same respect. Therefore if the possible intellect, which is in potentiality for all intelligible things, is part of our soul, then it seems impossible for the agent intellect to be part of our soul.

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25ST la 84.4c, 88.1c; II Sent. 17.2.1, 28.1.5; SCG II.76, 78; QDSC 10; QDA 5; QDV 10.6; CT 86; InDA III.10; De unitate.

26William of Auvergne, *Tractatus de anima* VII.3 (206a), VII.4 (208ab).
5. If the agent intellect is part of our soul, it must be a capacity. For it is neither a passive alteration (passio)\(^6\) nor a disposition, since dispositions and alterations do not play the role of an agent with respect to our soul's alterations. (Rather, a passive alteration is the action itself of a passive capacity, whereas a disposition is something that follows from acts.) But every capacity flows from the soul's essence.\(^7\) Therefore it would follow that the agent intellect comes from the soul's essence, and so is not in the soul through participation from some higher intellect. That is unacceptable.\(^8\) Therefore the agent intellect is not part of our soul.

**On the contrary.** The Philosopher says in *De anima* III [430a13–14] that “it is necessary for there to be these differences in the soul” — namely, a possible and an agent intellect.

**Reply.** The agent intellect that the Philosopher describes is part of the soul. To make this clear, keep in mind that it is necessary to posit, above the human intellective soul, a higher intellect from which the soul receives the power to understand. For it is always the case that what (1) participates in something, (2) is movable, and (3) is incomplete, presupposes something prior that is (a) essentially such, (b) unmovable, and (c) complete. But (1) the human soul is said to be intellective by participating in an intellective power.\(^9\) An indication of this is that it is intellective not as a whole, but in part.\(^10\) Also, (2) it reaches an understanding of the truth through inference and motion, by framing arguments.\(^11\) Also, (3) it has an incomplete understanding, both because it does not understand all things, and because with respect to what it does understand, it goes from potentiality to actuality.\(^12\) So there must be some higher intellect by which the soul is helped to understand.

Some, then, have claimed that this intellect, separate in substance, is the agent intellect that by (as it were) illuminating phantasms makes them actually intelligible.\(^13\) But, given that there is some such separate agent intellect, one must still posit in the human soul itself a power taken by participation from that higher intellect, and through which the human soul actualizes intelligible things. In this case as with other complete natural things, in addition to the universal causal agents, dis-

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2777.6.
2884.5c63–65.
2984.5c63–65.
3079.8c.
3179.2c.
tinct powers have been given to complete individuals, powers that have been derived from those universal agents. For it is not the sun alone that generates human beings: humans themselves possess the power to generate human beings, and the same holds true for other complete animals. But, in this lower world, nothing is more complete than the human soul. It must be maintained, then, that the soul has a power derived from a higher intellect, through which it can illuminate phantasms. This is something we recognize through experience, when we perceive ourselves abstracting universal forms from particular conditions, which is to make things actually intelligible. An action belongs to something, however, only on the basis of some principle that inheres in it formally, as was said above when discussing the possible intellect. Therefore the power that is the principle of this action must be something in the soul.

Aristotle, accordingly, compared the agent intellect to light, which is something received in the air, whereas Plato compared the separate intellect influencing our souls to the sun. (Themistius makes this point in his commentary on De anima III.) But according to the teachings of our faith, the separate intellect is God himself, the creator of the soul, in whom alone it achieves happiness, as will be clear below [1a2ae 3.7]. Accordingly, the human soul participates in intellectual light through God, as is said in Psalm 4.7: The light of your face, Lord, is imprinted on us.

Ad 1. That true light illuminates as a universal cause from which the human soul derives through participation one particular power, as was said [c34–37].

Ad 2. The Philosopher says those words not about the agent intellect but about the intellect in actuality. It was of it that he had just remarked, “actualized knowledge is the same as the thing” [430a19–20]. Alternatively, if these words are taken to refer to the agent intellect, then they are said because the fact that we are sometimes thinking and sometimes not thinking is due not to the agent intellect, but to the intellect that is in potentiality.

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32 76.1 ad 1, with note.
33 78.2c47–48.
34 76.1c51–53.
35 103.34–36. See Plato, Republic VI (508b–9b), and Aristotle, De anima III 5, 430a14–17.
Ad 3. If the agent intellect were related to the possible intellect as an active object is related to a capacity (e.g., as something actually visible, to sight), then it would follow that we would immediately understand all things, since the agent intellect is "that with which it makes all things." In fact, however, the agent intellect is not the object, but that which actualizes the objects. In addition to the presence of the agent intellect, this requires (a) the presence of phantasms, (b) the good condition of the sensory powers, and (c) practice in activity of this sort—for one thing grasped by intellect leads to others, as terms lead to propositions and first principles lead to conclusions. And in this connection it makes no difference whether the agent intellect is part of the soul or separated.

Ad 4. The intellective soul is actually immaterial, but is in potentiality for the determinate species of things. Phantasms, in contrast, are the actual likenesses of certain species, but are potentially immaterial. As a result, there is nothing that prevents one and the same soul, inasmuch as it is actually immaterial, from having one power through which it makes things actually immaterial by abstracting from the conditions of individual matter, a power that is called the agent intellect, and another power that receives such species, which is called the possible intellect inasmuch as it is in potentiality for species of this sort.

Ad 5. Since the soul’s essence is immaterial and was created by the supreme intellect, there is nothing to prevent the power it participates in through that supreme intellect (the power by means of which it abstracts from matter) from coming from the soul’s essence, just as the soul’s other capacities do.

Article 5. Is there one agent intellect for everyone?

It seems that the agent intellect is one in everyone:

I. Nothing separate from body is multiplied by multiplying bodies. But the agent intellect is separate, as is said in De anima III [430a22]. Therefore it is not multiplied in the multiple bodies of human beings, but is one in everyone.

2. The agent intellect makes the universal, which is one in many. But that which is the cause of oneness must itself, even more, be one thing. Therefore there is one agent intellect in everyone.

36 Aristotle, De an. III 5, 430a15.

37 See parallel passages for 79.4 (note 25).
3. All human beings share their first intellectual conceptions. But they assent to these through agent intellect. Therefore they all share one agent intellect.

On the contrary. The Philosopher says in De anima III [430a15–17] that the agent intellect is like light. But different subjects of illumination do not have the same light. Therefore different human beings do not have the same agent intellect.

Reply. The truth of this question rests on earlier claims [79.4]. For if the agent intellect were not part of the soul, but were some kind of separate substance, then there would be one agent intellect for all human beings. And this is what those who posit the unity of agent intellect have in mind. If, however, the agent intellect is part of the soul, as a kind of power belonging to it, then it is necessary to say that there are many agent intellects, inasmuch as there are many souls, which are multiplied according to the number of human beings, as was said above [76.2]. For it cannot be that numerically one and the same power belongs to different substances.

Ad 1. The Philosopher proves that the agent intellect is separate through the fact that the possible intellect is separate. For, as he says, "the agent is worthier than the patient." But the possible intellect is said to be separate because it is not the act of any corporeal organ.

And in this way the agent intellect too is said to be separate—not as if it is a separate substance.

Ad 2. The agent intellect causes the universal by abstracting from matter. But this does not require that it be one in all things having an intellect. Instead, it must be one* with regard to its relationship to all the things from which it abstracts the universal, relative to which the universal is one. And this holds of the agent intellect insofar as it is immaterial.

Ad 3. All members of a single species share in [any] action that is due to the nature of that species. As a result, they share in the power that is the principle of that action, although not in such a way that it is numerically the same power in all. But to cognize the first objects of intellect

38Avicenna, Metaphysics I.5.
39Alexander of Aphrodisias, De intellectu; Avicenna, Liber de anima V.5, pp. 126–27 (see 79.6c34, 84.4c53–60); Averroës, De anima III.18–19 (see 88.1c51–54).
40De an. III 5, 430a18–19.
4176.1 ad 1.
is an action that is due to the human species. So all human beings must share in the power that is the principle of this action: this is the power of agent intellect. It does not have to be numerically the same in everyone, but it does, in everyone, have to be derived from one principle. Thus the fact that human beings share in the first objects of intellect demonstrates the unity of the separate intellect (which Plato compares to the sun), but not the unity of the agent intellect (which Aristotle compares to light).

**Article 6. Is memory in intellect?**

It seems that memory is not in the intellective part of the soul:

1. Augustine says in *De trinitate* XII [ii.2] that things pertain to the higher part of the soul that “are not shared by human beings and beasts.” But memory is shared by human beings and beasts. For he says in the same place that “beasts can sense bodily things through the body’s senses, and can commit those things to memory.” Therefore memory does not pertain to the intellective part of the soul.

2. Memory concerns things past. But the past is spoken of with reference to some determinate time. Therefore memory cognizes a thing under the aspect of a determinate time, which is to cognize something under the aspect of the here and now. But this is the role of sense, not of intellect. Therefore memory is not in the intellective part, but only in the sensory part.

3. Memory preserves the species of things that are not actually being considered. But this cannot possibly happen in intellect, because the intellect is actualized through being informed by an intelligible species, and the intellect’s actuality is its actually thinking. Thus the intellect is actually thinking about all the things whose species it has within it. Therefore memory is not in the intellective part.

On the contrary. Augustine says in *De trinitate* X [xi.18] that “memory, intelligence, and will are one mind.”

Reply. It is the nature of memory to preserve the species of things that are not actually being apprehended. So we must first consider whether

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42 ST 1a2ae 67.2; 1 Sent. 3.4.1; III Sent. 26.1.5 ad 4; IV Sent. 44.3.3.2 ad 4 (= ST 3a supp. 70.2 ad 4), 50.1.2; SCG II.74; QDV 10.2, 19.1; QQ 3.9.1, 12.9.1; InIC 13.3; InDMR 2 [Appendix 3].

43 Avicenna, *Liber de anima* V.6 (pp. 147–48).
intelligible species can be preserved in this way in intellect. Avicenna claimed that this was impossible. For he said that this occurs in the sensory part, with respect to certain capacities, inasmuch as they are the actualities of corporeal organs that can preserve some species without any actual apprehension. But in intellect, which lacks a corporeal organ, nothing exists unless intelligibly, and so that whose likeness exists in intellect must be actually thought about. So in this way, according to Avicenna, as soon as someone actually ceases to think about a thing, the species of that thing ceases to be in intellect. If someone wants to think about that thing another time, he must turn toward the agent intellect (which he posited to be a separate substance), so that intelligible species flow from that intellect to the possible intellect. According to him, training and practice in turning toward the agent intellect leaves one with a certain aptitude in the possible intellect for turning toward the agent intellect, and he claimed that this aptitude is dispositional knowledge. So on this view, nothing is preserved in the intellective part that is not being actually thought. Hence memory could not be located in the intellective part, when considered in this way.

But this view is clearly incompatible with what Aristotle says. For in De anima III [429b5-9] he says that "when the possible intellect becomes the singulars in such a way as to be knowing, it is said to be actualized," and he says that "this happens when it can operate on its own. So even then it is in potentiality in a certain way, but not as it was even before learning or discovering." But the possible intellect is said to become the singulars inasmuch as it receives the species of singulars. Therefore, because it receives the species of intelligible things, it has the ability to operate whenever one wants, but it is not the case that it is always operating. For even then it is in potentiality in a certain way—not as it was before being engaged in thought, but in the way in which someone with dispositional knowledge is in potentiality for actually considering a thing.

The position described above is also incompatible with reason. For that which is received in a thing is received according to the mode of the recipient. But the intellect is more stable and unmoving in its nature than is corporeal matter. Therefore if corporeal matter holds onto the forms that it receives not only while it is actually acting

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45Liber de anima V.6 (pp. 147-48). Cf. obj. 3.
46Liber de anima V.6 (pp.148-49). Cf. 84.4c64-66.
47Liber de anima V.6 (pp. 149-50).
through them, but also after it has ceased acting through them, then the intellect receives intelligible species all the more unmovably and enduringly—regardless of whether they are received from sensible things or from the influence of some higher intellect. So consequently, if memory is taken only as the power of preserving species, then one must say that memory is in the intellective part. On the other hand, if the nature of memory is that its object be past, as past, then memory will not be in the intellective part, but only in the sensory part, the part that apprehends particulars. For the past, as past, since it signifies existence under the aspect of a determinate time, pertains to a condition of the particular.

Ad 1. Memory, considered as preserving species, is not [entirely] shared by us and by beasts. For species are preserved not in the sensory part of the soul alone, but rather in the compound, since the power of memory is the actuality of a particular organ. But the intellect is in its own right capable of preserving species, without an accompanying corporeal organ. And so the Philosopher says in De anima III [429a27–28] that "the soul is the locus of species—not the whole soul, but the intellect."

Ad 2. Being past can refer to two things: to the object that is cognized and to the act of cognition. These two are joined together at once in the sensory part, which apprehends a thing through receiving an impression from something sensible that presently exists. As a result, an animal remembers having sensed in the past at the same time that it remembers having sensed some past sensible thing. But with respect to the intellective part, being past applies accidentally to an object of intellect and does not hold per se. For the intellect thinks about a human being qua human being, whereas it is accidental to a human being, qua human being, to be in either the present, the past, or the future.

Yet even in the intellect's case, being past can be taken per se with regard to its act, just as in the case of the senses. For our soul's thinking is a particular act existing at one time or another, depending on whether someone is said to be thinking now, yesterday, or tomorrow. This is not incompatible with its being intellectual, because although such thinking is something particular, it is nevertheless an immaterial act, as was said above about intellect [76.1c162–64]. So just as the intellect thinks about itself, even though it itself is a particular intellect, so it thinks about its own thinking, which is a particular act existing in either the past, the present, or the future. So in this way the nature of
Question 79. Article 7.

memory, inasmuch as it concerns things past, is preserved in intellect inasmuch as it thinks that it has previously thought. But it is not preserved with respect to thinking about the past considered as here and now.⁰

Ad 3. An intelligible species is sometimes only potentially in the intellect, and then the intellect is said to be in potentiality. Sometimes it is there inasmuch as the act is entirely complete, and then the intellect is actually thinking. Sometimes it stands midway between potentiality and actuality, and then the intellect is said to have a disposition.† It is in this way that the intellect preserves species, even when it is not actually thinking.

Article 7. Is intellective memory a different capacity from intellect?⁴⁹

It seems that intellective memory is one capacity, intellect another:

1. Augustine, in De trinitate X [xi.17], locates memory, intelligence, and will in the mind. But it is clear that memory is a different capacity from will. Therefore it is likewise different from intellect.

2. The basis for distinguishing the sensory part’s capacities is the same as that for distinguishing the intellective part’s capacities. But memory in the sensory part is a different capacity from sense, as was said above [78.4c₈₅]. Therefore the intellective part’s memory is a different capacity from intellect.

3. According to Augustine, memory, intelligence, and will are the equals of each other, and one originates in another.⁵⁰ But this could not be, if memory were the same capacity as intellect. Therefore it is not the same capacity.

On the contrary, it is the nature of memory to be the treasury or locus for preserving species. But in De anima III [429a27–28] the Philosopher attributes this to intellect, as was said [79.6 ad 1]. Therefore memory and intellect are not different capacities in the intellective part.

Reply. As was said above [77.₃c₃₀], the soul’s capacities are distinguished by the differing natures (rationes) of their objects: for the nature of any capacity consists in its relationship to that toward which it is ordered, which is its object. It was also said above [59.₄c] that if a capacity in respect of its own nature is related to an object in respect of

⁰QDV 10.3; ST 1a 93.7 ad 3; I Sent. 3.4.1; SCG II.74.

⁵₀De trinitate X.xi.18.
the common nature of that object, then that capacity will not be made
to differ by differences between particular differentiae. The visual
capacity, for example, which relates to its object in respect of the nature
of being colored, is not made to differ by the difference between white
and black. The intellect, however, relates to its object in respect of the
common nature of being: for the possible intellect is “that with which
all things are made.” Consequently, the possible intellect is not differ-
entiated by any differentia among beings.

But the capacities of agent intellect and possible intellect are differ-
entiated. For with respect to the same object, there must be one princi-
ple that is the active capacity, which makes the object actually exist,
and another that is the passive capacity, which is moved by the actually
existing object. So the active capacity is related to its object as actual
being to potential being, whereas conversely the passive capacity is
related to its object as potential being to actual being.

Accordingly, then, there can be no other difference of capacities in
intellect, other than that between possible and agent. And so it is clear
that memory is not a different capacity from intellect. For it belongs to
the nature of a passive capacity to preserve, as well as to receive.

Ad 1. Although it is said in Sentences I, distinction 3, that memory,
intelligence, and will are three “powers,” this nevertheless does not
accord with Augustine’s view. He expressly says in De trinitate XIV
[vii.10] that if memory, intelligence, and will are taken as always being
present in the soul, then “whether or not they are being thought about,
they seem to pertain only to memory. But I am now speaking of the
intelligence by which we understand when thinking, and of the will
that is the love or delight joining child and parent together.” From this
it is clear that Augustine does not take these three for three capacities,
but takes memory for the soul’s dispositional retention, intelligence for
the act of intellect, and will for the act of will.

Ad 2. Past and present can be the proper differentiae distinguishing the
sensory capacities, but they do not distinguish the intellective capaci-
ties, for the reason given above [c27–30; 79.6 ad 2].

Ad 3. Intelligence originates in memory as an act does in a disposi-
tion. And in this way, too, they are equals, but not as one capacity to
another.

51 De an. III 5, 430a14–15.
52 Peter Lombard, Sent. I.iii.2.
53 79.6 ad 3.
Article 8. Is reason a different capacity from intellect?\textsuperscript{54}

It seems that reason\textsuperscript{+} is a different capacity from intellect:

1. It is said in the book \textit{De spiritu et anima} [11] that "when we want to ascend from lower to higher things, we are presented first with sense, then imagination, then reason, then intellect." Therefore reason is a different capacity from intellect, just as imagination is different from reason.

2. Boethius says in \textit{The Consolation of Philosophy} [IV prose 6] that intellect is related to reason as eternity to time. But existing in eternity and existing in time do not belong to the same power. Therefore reason and intellect are not the same capacity.

3. A human being has intellect in common with angels, and the senses in common with brute animals. But reason, which is the special attribute of a human being in virtue of which he is called a rational animal, is a different capacity from sense. Therefore, by similar reasoning, it is a different capacity from intellect, which is attributed specially to angels and is why they are called intellectual.

On the contrary. Augustine says in \textit{De Genesi ad litteram} III [xx.30] that "that by which a human being surpasses nonrational animals is reason, mind, intelligence, or whatever other term there is that more aptly picks it out." Therefore reason, intellect, and mind are one capacity.

Reply. Reason and intellect cannot be distinct capacities in a human being. This is clearly recognized, if the act of each one is considered. For intellection (\textit{intelligere}) is the apprehending of intelligible truth directly,\textsuperscript{°} whereas to reason is to advance from one intellectual object to another so as to cognize the intelligible truth. And thus the angels, because* they completely possess the cognition of intelligible truth (in keeping with the state of their nature), have no need to advance from one object to another; they directly and without inference apprehend the truth about things (as Dionysius says in \textit{Divine Names} 7.2). Human beings, on the other hand, attain the cognition of intelligible truth by advancing from one object to another (as is said in the same passage), and so they are called rational.\textsuperscript{†}

It is clear, then, that reasoning is related to intellection as moving is related to resting, or acquiring to having—one of these is complete, the other incomplete. And because motion always advances from something immovable and stops at some resting point, so it is that human

\textsuperscript{54}QDV 15.1; III Sent. 35.2.2.1; ST 1a 83.4c; InDDN 7.2 §713.
reasoning, in the course of investigation and discovery, advances from certain things that are grasped directly by intellect; these are first principles. Then, in the course of judgment, it returns by analysis to those first principles, and relative to these it examines its discoveries.

It is clear, however, that resting and moving are not traced back to distinct capacities, but to one and the same, even in the case of natural things. For it is through the same nature that a thing is moved to a place and rests in that place. A fortiori, then, it is through the same capacity that we engage in intellection and reasoning. And so it is clear that in a human being reason and intellect are the same capacity.

**Ad 1.** That list corresponds to the order of acts, not to the difference in capacities. Anyway, that book has no great authority.

**Ad 2.** The reply is clear from what was said. For eternity is related to time as the immovable to the movable. That is why Boethius related intellect to eternity and reason to time.

**Ad 3.** Other animals are so beneath human beings that they cannot reach any cognition of the truth, which is what reason investigates. A human being, in contrast, does reach a cognition of the intelligible truth that angels cognize, but incompletely. And thus the cognitive power of angels is not of a different genus from the cognitive power of reason, but is related to it as the complete to the incomplete.

**Article 9. Are higher and lower reason distinct capacities?**

It seems that higher and lower reason are distinct capacities:

1. Augustine says in *De trinitate* XII [vii.12] that an image of the Trinity is in the higher part of reason, not in the lower. But the soul's parts are its capacities. Therefore higher and lower reason are two capacities.

2. Nothing originates in itself. But lower reason originates in higher, and is regulated and directed by it. Therefore higher reason is a different capacity from lower reason.

3. The Philosopher says in *Ethics* VI [1139a5–15] that the soul's capacity for knowledge, by which the soul cognizes necessary things, is a different principle and a different part of the soul from the capacity for forming opinions and for [practical] reasoning, by which it cognizes contingent things. He proves this through the fact that "sections of the soul are different in genus if they are directed to things different

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55QDV 15.2; ST 1a2ae 74.9; II Sent. 24.2.2.
in genus." The contingent and the necessary, however, are different in

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genus, just as the corruptible and the incorruptible are. Now since the

necessary is the same as the eternal, and the temporal the same as the

contingent, it seems that what the Philosopher calls the capacity for

knowledge is the same as the higher part of reason, which, according

to Augustine, is aimed at "contemplating and consulting the eternal."\(^{56}\) It also seems that what the Philosopher calls the capacity for

[practical] reasoning or forming opinions is the same as lower reason,

which, according to Augustine [ibid.], is aimed at managing temporal

affairs. Therefore higher and lower reason are different capacities of

the soul.

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4. Damascene says that "opinion comes from imagination; then mind,

judging whether the opinion is true or false, judges the truth (and

hence the mind is named after measuring\(^0\)); therefore, regarding things

that it has already made a judgment and true determination about, it is
called intellect."\(^{57}\) So therefore the capacity for forming opinions,

which is lower reason, is different from mind and intellect, which can

be understood as higher reason.

On the contrary. Augustine says in *De trinitate XII* [iv.4] that higher

and lower reason are not distinguished, "except through their func-

tions." Therefore they are not two capacities.

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Reply. Higher and lower reason, as they are taken by Augustine, cannot

in any way be two capacities.\(^*\) For he says that higher reason is what

aims at "contemplating and consulting the eternal":\(^{58}\) *contemplating*,
inasmuch as it considers eternal things in themselves; *consulting*, inasmuch as it draws rules of action from them. Lower reason, in contrast, is

what he says is aimed at temporal things. These two—temporal and

eternal things—relate to our cognition in this way: that one of them is a

means of cognizing the other. For in the course of discovery,\(^\circ\) we

achieve a cognition of eternal things through temporal things—as the

Apostle writes in Romans 1.20: *the invisible things of God are clearly

seen, understood through the things that have been made*. In the course

of judgment,\(^\circ\) in contrast, we make judgments about the temporal

through what we have already cognized of the eternal, and we manage

the temporal in accord with our conceptions of the eternal.

\(^{56}\) *De trinitate* XII.vii.12.

\(^{57}\) *De fide orthodoxa* II.22.

\(^{58}\) *De trinitate* XII.vii.12.
Now it can happen that the means, and that which is reached through the means, pertain to different dispositions. For example, inde-monstrable first principles pertain to a disposition of intellection, whereas conclusions derived from these pertain to a disposition of knowledge. Also, from the principles of geometry someone can reach conclusions in another area of knowledge, such as the science of perspective. But both the means and the ultimate conclusion pertain to the same capacity, reason. For the act of reason serves as a kind of movement reaching from one thing to another, and it is the same movable thing that crosses through the medium and reaches the end point. And so higher and lower reason are one and the same capacity of reason. But they are distinguished, according to Augustine, by the functions of their acts and by their different dispositions. For wisdom is attributed to higher reason, knowledge to lower reason.

Ad 1. One can speak of parts according to any method (rationem) of partition. Higher and lower reason, then, are said to be partitioned insofar as reason is divided into different functions, and not because they are different capacities.

Ad 2. Lower reason is said to be derived from higher reason, or to be regulated by it, inasmuch as the principles that lower reason uses are derived and guided by the principles of higher reason.

Ad 3. The capacity for knowledge that the Philosopher refers to is not the same as higher reason, since necessary objects of knowledge are found even in the temporal, which is what natural and mathematical knowledge concerns. But the capacity for forming opinions and for [practical] reasoning extends to less than does lower reason, because it concerns only contingent things. Furthermore, we should not maintain absolutely that there is one capacity by which the intellect cognizes necessary things and another by which it cognizes contingent things. For it cognizes both with respect to the same aspect of the object: being and true. And so the intellect has a complete cognition of necessary things, which have complete existence in truth, because it reaches their quiddity, through which it picks out their proper accidents. On the other hand, it has an incomplete cognition of contingent things, just as they have incomplete existence and truth. But being complete and incomplete in actuality do

5979.8c33–34.
60 De trinitate XII.xiv.22.
6179.11 ad 2, with note.
not make the *capacity* differ, but make the *act* differ, as regards the manner of acting, and consequently make the principles of the acts differ, as well as the dispositions themselves.

So the Philosopher posited two sections of the soul, the capacity for knowledge and the [practical] reasoning capacity, not because they are two capacities, but because they are differentiated by their different aptitudes for receiving different dispositions. It is this difference that he means to investigate there. For contingent and necessary things, even if they differ in their proper genera, still agree in the common nature of being, which is what the intellect is concerned with.\(^62\) They relate to this being in different ways, as complete and incomplete.

**Ad 4.** Damascene’s distinction holds in terms of a difference in acts, not a difference in capacities. For opinion signifies an act of intellect that arrives at one of two contradictory views with misgivings about the other.\(^63\) Judging or measuring is an act of intellect that applies principles that are certain to an examination of the things proposed. (The term ‘mind’ comes from this.) Intellection, finally, consists in adhering with a kind of approval to things already judged.

**Article 10. Is intelligence a different capacity from intellect?**\(^64\)

It seems that intelligence† is a different capacity from intellect:

1. It is said in the *De spiritu et anima* [11] that “when we want to climb from lower to higher things, we are presented first with sense, then imagination, then reason, then intellect, and finally intelligence.” But imagination and sense are distinct capacities. Therefore so are intellect and intelligence.

2. Boethius says in *The Consolation of Philosophy* V [prose 4] that “a human being is viewed by sense in one way, imagination in another, reason in a third, and intelligence in still one more.” But intellect is the same capacity as reason.\(^65\) Therefore it seems that intelligence is a different capacity from intellect, just as reason is a different capacity from imagination and sense.

3. Acts are prior to capacities, as is said in *De anima* II [415a18–19]. But intelligence is an act that is separate from the other acts attributed

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\(^62\)78.1c\textsuperscript{66}, 79.7c\textsuperscript{27–28}.

\(^63\)Avicenna, *Liber de anima* V.1 (p. 79).

\(^64\)InDA I.8; SCG III.42.

\(^65\)79.8.
to the intellect. For Damascene says that “the first motion [of intellect] is called intelligence; intelligence concerning something is labeled intention; that which endures and shapes the soul to what is understood is called contemplation; contemplation that dwells on the same thing, and examines and judges itself, is called phronesis (i.e., wisdom); phronesis when expanded produces thought, i.e., the speech ordered internally, from which they say comes the speech put forth by the tongue.”

Therefore it seems that intelligence is a specific kind of capacity.

**On the contrary.** The Philosopher says in *De anima* III [430a26–27] that “intelligence concerns indivisible things, in which there is nothing false.” But this sort of cognition pertains to intellect. Therefore intelligence is not a different capacity from intellect.

**Reply.** The term ‘intelligence,’ strictly speaking, signifies the act of intellect that is intellection. But in various books translated from Arabic, the separate substances that we call angels are called intelligences—perhaps because substances of this sort are always actually engaged in intellection—whereas in books translated from Greek they are called intellects or minds. It follows, then, that intelligence is distinguished from intellect not as one capacity from another, but as an act from a capacity. For the philosophers do also identify this sort of division. For they sometimes posit four intellects: agent intellect, possible intellect, dispositional intellect, and achieved intellect. Of these four, agent and possible intellect are distinct capacities, just as in all cases an active capacity is different from a passive one. The other three are distinguished in terms of being three states of possible intellect. Sometimes it is merely in potentiality, and so it is called the possible intellect; sometimes it is in first actuality (knowledge), and then it is called dispositional intellect; sometimes it is in second actuality (considering), and then it is called actualized intellect or achieved intellect.

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66 *De fide orthodoxa* II.22.
68 la 58.1.
69 E.g., Pseudo-Dionysius, *Celestial Hierarchy* ch. 2.
71 79.7c32–37.
72 79.6 ad 3.
Ad 1. If that authority is to be acknowledged, then intelligence is being treated as an act of intellect. In this way it is divided against intellect, just as act is divided against capacity.

Ad 2. Boethius takes intelligence for an act of intellect that transcends the act of reason. Thus he says in the same place [prose 5] that "reason belongs only to the human kind, just as intelligence belongs solely to the divine." For it is distinctive of God that without any investigation he understands all things.

Ad 3. All those acts that Damascene lists belong to one intellective capacity. This capacity first apprehends something directly, and this act is what he is calling intelligence. Second, it relates what it apprehends to cognizing or doing something else, and this is what he labels intention. When it persists in exploring what it intends, this is labeled contemplation. And when it examines what it had contemplated in light of things that are certain, this is called knowing or being wise, which belongs to phronesis or wisdom. (For judging belongs to wisdom, as is said in Metaphysics I [982a18].) Then, as a result of holding something for certain, as already examined, it thinks about how it could make that clear to others. This is the ordering of internal speech, from which comes external speech.

For not every difference in acts produces a difference in capacities, but only those that cannot be reduced to a single principle, as was said above [78.4c43-44].

Article 11. Are speculative and practical intellect distinct capacities? It seems that speculative and practical intellect are distinct capacities:

1. The capacities for apprehending and for moving are distinct kinds of capacities, as is clear in De anima II [414a31-32]. But speculative intellect is for apprehending only, whereas practical intellect is for moving. Therefore they are distinct capacities.

2. The distinct character (ratio) of the object distinguishes the capacity. But the object of speculative intellect is what is true, whereas the

731a 14.7, 79.2c37-41.
7479.8c23-24.
7579.8c35-40.
76QDV 3.3; InNE VI.2; InDA I.1.56-62, III.15; InPA I.41.136-45 (§362); III Sent. 23.2.3.2.
7777.3c27-30.
object of practical intellect is what is good, and these differ in character. Therefore speculative and practical intellect are distinct capacities.

3. In the intellective part, practical intellect is related to speculative just as the estimative power is related to the imaginative in the sensory part. But the estimative differs from the imaginative as one capacity from another, as was said above [78.4c]. Therefore so does practical intellect differ from speculative.

On the contrary. It is said in De anima III [433a14–15] that speculative intellect is made practical by its extension. But one capacity is not changed into another. Therefore speculative and practical intellect are not distinct capacities.

Reply. Practical and speculative intellect are not distinct capacities. The reason for this is that (as was said above [77.3c42–59]) something does not make a capacity differ when it is accidentally related to that feature of an object that the capacity is concerned with. For it holds accidentally of something colored that it is a human being, or is large or small, and so all things of this sort are apprehended by the same visual capacity. Now it holds accidentally of something apprehended by intellect that it is or is not related to a task; it is in this connection that speculative and practical intellect differ. For speculative intellect apprehends something without relating it to a task, but only to a consideration of its truth. Practical intellect, in contrast, is said to be what relates to a task the thing it apprehends. This is what the Philosopher says in De anima III [433a15], that speculative intellect differs from practical “in terms of its end.” And so each is denoted by its end: the one speculative and the other practical—i.e., task oriented.

Ad 1. Practical intellect is for moving not in that it carries out the movement, but in that it directs the movement, which it can do because of the way in which it apprehends things.

Ad 2. What is true and what is good include one another. For what is true is something good, otherwise it would not be worthy of appetite (appetibile), and what is good is something true, otherwise it would not be intelligible. Therefore, just as an object of appetite can be true insofar as it has the character of a good (for example, when someone has an appetite to cognize the truth), so an object of practical intellect is a good that can be related to a task under its aspect as something true. For practical intellect cognizes the truth, just as speculative intellect does, but it relates that cognized truth to a task.
Ad 3. There are many differentiae distinguishing the sensory capacities that do not distinguish the intellective capacities, as was said above [77.3 ad 4].

Article 12. Is synderesis a capacity of the intellective part? It seems that synderesis is a specific capacity distinct from others:

1. Things that fall under a single division seem to belong to a single genus. But in Jerome’s gloss on Ezekiel 1, synderesis is divided from the irascible, concupiscible, and rational, which are capacities. Therefore synderesis is a capacity.

2. Opposites belong to a single genus. But synderesis and sensuality seem to be opposed, since synderesis always inclines toward what is good, whereas sensuality always inclines toward what is bad. (That is why it is signified by the serpent, as Augustine makes clear in De trinitate XII [xii–xiii].) Therefore it seems that synderesis is a capacity just as sensuality is.

3. Augustine says in De libero arbitrio [II.x.29] that in our natural power for judgment there are certain “rules and seeds of the virtues, both true and unchangeable.” But this is what we call synderesis. Therefore, since the unchangeable rules by which we judge belong to reason in its higher part, as Augustine says in De trinitate XII [ii.2], it seems that synderesis is the same as reason. And so it is a capacity.

On the contrary. Rational capacities are open to opposites, according to the Philosopher. Synderesis, however, is not open to opposites, but inclines one only to what is good. Therefore synderesis is not a capacity. For if it were a capacity then it would have to be a rational capacity, since it is not found in brute animals.

Reply. Synderesis is not a capacity, but a disposition—even though some have claimed that synderesis is a capacity higher than reason, and others have said that it is reason itself, not qua reason but qua

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78 QDV 16; II Sent. 24.2.3.
79 81.1 obj. 2 & ad 2, with note.
81 Sensual appetite; see 81.1.
82 Met. IX 2, 1046b4–5; see 82.1 obj. 2.
83 William of Auxerre, Summa aurea II.12.

nature. To make this clear we must take into account, as was said above [79.8c35-40], that human reasoning, since it is a kind of motion, sets off from an intellection of some things (those naturally known without rational investigation), as from a certain immovable principle, and also ends up at an intellection insofar as, through principles naturally known per se, we make judgments about things that we discover by reasoning. It is plain, however, that just as speculative reason reasons about speculative matters, so practical reason reasons about possible actions (operabilibus). Therefore, just as principles about speculative matters are naturally imparted to us, so are principles about possible actions. But the first principles about speculative matters naturally imparted to us do not belong to any specific capacity, but to a specific disposition which is called the intellection of principles (as is clear in Ethics VI [1140b31-41a8]). Accordingly, principles concerning possible actions that are naturally imparted to us belong not to a specific capacity, but to a specific natural disposition, which we call synderesis. Thus synderesis is said to incite us toward what is good, and to scold us about what is bad, inasmuch as through first principles we move on to discover things and we make judgments about those discoveries. Therefore it is clear that synderesis is not a capacity, but a natural disposition.

Ad 1. Jerome's division is concerned with the distinction among acts, not the distinction among capacities. But a single capacity can have distinct acts.

Ad 2. The opposition between sensuality and synderesis is likewise concerned with the opposition between acts—not between distinct species of a single genus.

Ad 3. Unchangeable reasons of this sort are the first principles of possible actions; with respect to these it is not possible to err. They are attributed to reason as their capacity, and to synderesis as their disposition. That is why we naturally make judgments through both reason and synderesis.

Article 13. Is conscience a capacity of the intellective part?

It seems that conscience is a capacity:

I. Origen says that conscience is "the correcting and guiding spirit associated with the soul, by which it is separated from bad things and

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84 Followers of Alexander of Hales, Summa theologica II.1.418 (vol. 2, p. 493).
85 79.9c5, with note.
86 QDV 17; II Sent. 24.2.4.
adheres to good things." But 'spirit in the soul' refers either to some capacity, or to the mind itself (as in Ephesians 4.23: *be renewed in the spirit of your mind*), or to the imagination (and so an imaginary vision is called spiritual, as is clear in Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* XII [xii.25–26]). Therefore conscience is a capacity.

2. Nothing is subject to sin except a capacity of the soul. But conscience is subject to sin. For it is said of some in Titus 1.15 that *their mind and conscience are defiled*. Therefore it seems that conscience is a capacity.

3. It is necessary for conscience to be either an act, a disposition, or a capacity. But it is not an act, since then it would not always remain in a human being. Nor is it a disposition, since then conscience would not be some one thing, but many. For we are guided in our actions through many cognitive dispositions. Therefore conscience is a capacity.

On the contrary, conscience can be set aside, whereas a capacity cannot. Therefore conscience is not a capacity.

Reply. Conscience, properly speaking, is not a capacity but an act. This is clear both (1) on the basis of its name and (2) from the things we attribute to conscience in our common ways of speaking.

(1) For conscience, in terms of the word's own proper character, implies the relationship of knowledge to something: for 'conscience' means *knowledge with another* (*cum alio scientia*). But the application of knowledge to something takes place through some act. So it is clear from the very nature of its name that conscience is an act.

(2) The same is evident from the things that are attributed to conscience. For conscience is said to bear witness, to bind, to incite, and also to accuse, to torment, or to rebuke. And all of these follow the application of some of our cognition or knowledge to the things that we do. This application occurs in three ways:

- First, inasmuch as we recognize that we have or have not done something. As Ecclesiastes 7.23 says: *your conscience knows that you have often spoken evil of others*. In this regard, conscience is said to bear witness.

- It is applied in another way inasmuch as we judge through our knowledge* that something should or should not be done. In this regard, conscience is said to incite or to bind.

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87 *In Romanos II.9* (PG 14, 893B).
• It is applied in a third way inasmuch as we judge through knowledge* that something that was done was or was not done well. And in this way conscience is said either to excuse or to accuse or torment.

It is clear, however, that all of these result from an actual application of knowledge to the things that we do. Properly speaking, then, 'conscience' refers to an act.

But because a disposition is the basis for an act, the term 'conscience' is sometimes attributed to the first natural disposition, synderesis. Thus Jerome, in his gloss on Ezekiel 1, refers to syneresis as "conscience," Basil refers to conscience as "the natural power for judgment," and Damascene says that it is "the law of our intellect." For it is not unusual to refer to causes and effects through each other.

Ad 1. Conscience is said to be a spirit insofar as 'spirit' is used for mind. For it is a kind of dictate of the mind.

Ad 2. Defilement is said to be in conscience not as its subject, but as something cognized is in the cognition—inasmuch, that is, as someone knows himself to be defiled.

Ad 3. An act, even if it does not always remain in its own right, still always remains in its cause, which is the capacity and its dispositions. But the dispositions that inform conscience, even if there are many of them, all draw their efficacy from one first disposition—namely, from the disposition for first principles that is called synderesis. Hence this disposition especially is sometimes referred to as conscience, as was said above [c.47-49].

**Question 80**

The Appetitive in General

Next we must consider the appetitive capacities. And here there are four things to be considered:

Q80. The appetitive in general.

Q81. Sensuality.

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89*Homily 12 (PG 31, 405C).
90*De fide orthodoxa IV.22.
91*79.12c.