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Paul T. Durbin

Excerpt

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de actibus intellectivæ partis

CONSEQUENTER CONSIDERANDUM est de actibus* animæ, quantum ad potentias intellectivas et appetitivas: aliæ enim animæ† potentiæ non pertinent directe ad considerationem theologi. Actus autem* appetitivæ partis ad considerationem moralis scientiæ pertinent, et ideo in secunda parte hujus operis de eis tractabitur, in qua considerandum erit‡ de morali materia. Nunc autem de actibus* intellectivæ partis agetur.

In§ consideratione vero actuum, hoc modo procedemus:

primo namque considerandum est quomodo intelligit anima corpori conjuncta;

secundo, quomodo intelligit a corpore separata.

Prima autem consideratio erit tripartita:

primo namque considerabitur quomodo anima intelligit corporalia, quæ sunt infra ipsam;

secundo, quomodo intelligit seipsam, et ea quæ in ipsa sunt;

tertio, quomodo intelligit substantias immateriales, quæ sunt supra ipsam.

Circa cognitionem vero corporalium, tria consideranda occurrunt:

primo quidem, per quid ea cognoscit;

secundo, quomodo et quo ordine;

tertio, quid in eis cognoscit.

*Piana (Ottawa: see Editorial Notes, above) in these three places, adds, *et habitibus*, *et habitus*, and habitual dispositions

†Piana omits *animæ*, of the soul

‡Piana, *erit*

§Piana adds, before this sentence, *Primo quidem de actibus*, *secundo de habitibus*, First of the activities, then of the habitual dispositions

*While the general Latin term is *appetitus*, and the translation seeks to respect this, the reference is to the activities which modern psychology lumps under some such term as 'goal-directed' or (consciously or unconsciously) 'motivated' activity—i.e., human striving in its broadest meaning, from basic biological needs to the highest level of intelligent striving.

‡Translates the Latin *potentia*. Considering the present-day bad repute of 'faculty psychology', which is disparagingly contrasted with more dynamic behavioural

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psychology of intelligence

NEXT TO BE CONSIDERED are the activities of the soul using these intellectual and appetitive^a faculties;^b the other faculties do not directly concern the theologian.^c Moreover, the appetitive activities of the soul ought to be considered in moral science and so will be treated in the *Secunda Pars* where moral matters are taken up. Here, then, only the intellectual activities of the soul will be discussed.

In considering them we will follow this order:

first, how the soul understands while joined to the body (84–88);

then, how it understands when separated from the body (89).

The first set of these discussions will have three parts:

how does the soul know material things,^d which are below its level? (84–86)

how does it know itself and the things contained in it? (87)

how does it understand non-material substances,^e which are above its level? (88)

Three questions come up with regard to knowing material things:

by what means the soul knows them (84);

how and in what order (85); and what it is that is known in them (86).

approaches, it may seem prejudicial to St Thomas to translate *potentia* in this way. In an Aristotelean context *potentia* stands for something thoroughly dynamic. Nevertheless, St Thomas definitely presents a faculty psychology, and it seems better to use the term and attempt in other ways to show its dynamism.

^aThe treatise on human intelligence in this volume is part of what St Thomas refers to as his treatise on man. It presupposes his prior treatment of the soul (1a. 75), its union with the body (76), and its various faculties, cognitive and appetitive (77–83). See Vol. 11. Also Vol. 13, Introduction.

^dI will so translate *corpore*, *corporea*, *corporalia* throughout, so as to make clear the contrast with immaterial reality, crucial to the argument in several places. A ‘body-spirit’ contrast would do in some places but would be misleading in others.

^eSt Thomas’s usage varies; he sometimes speaks of concepts or ideas as non-material *substances* (usually in a context of Platonic Ideas) and not merely as non-material realities.

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Quaestio 84. quomodo anima conjuncta intelligat corporalia, quæ sunt infra ipsam

Circa primum quærentur octo:

1. utrum anima cognoscat corpora per intellectum;
2. utrum intelligat ea per essentiam suam, vel per aliquas species;
3. si per aliquas species, utrum species omnium intelligibilium sint ei naturaliter innatæ;
4. utrum effluant in ipsam ab aliquibus formis immaterialibus separatis;
5. utrum anima nostra omnia quæ intelligit, videat in rationibus æternis;
6. utrum cognitionem intelligibilem acquirat a sensu;
7. utrum intellectus possit actu intelligere per species intelligibiles quas penes se habet, non convertendo se ad phantasmata;
8. utrum iudicium intellectus impediatur per impedimentum sensitivarum virtutum.

articulus 1. utrum anima cognoscat corpora per intellectum

AD PRIMUM sic proceditur:¹ 1. Videtur quod anima non cognoscat corpora per intellectum. Dicit enim Augustinus,² quod *corpora intellectu comprehendendi non possunt, nec aliquod corporeum nisi sensibus videri potest*. Dicit etiam³ quod visio intellectualis est eorum quæ sunt per essentiam suam in

¹cf *De veritate* x, 4

²*Soliloquies* x, 6. PL 32, 888

³*De Genesi ad litteram* XII, 24. PL 34, 474

^a*species*, images received from things outside the soul; see note *e* below. Note the progression, from *species* here, to *species intelligibilium* in art. 2, to *species intelligibiles* in art. 7.

^bThe reference is to 'innate ideas'; see art. 3, note *a*.

^ci.e., immaterial substances. 'Non-sensible' here translates the technical Latin *forma separata*; see note *g* below.

^dra. 15, 3 makes further precisions with respect to *rationes* and *exemplaria* among divine ideas; they are not called for here.

^e*species intelligibiles*: this is the technical term for the intellectual-level image used throughout the treatise. A distinction is commonly drawn between an image in the potential state, *species impressa*, and in the actual state, *species expressa*; for St Thomas's own terminology, see Appendix 1.

Because he speaks of *species* in such contexts as the discussion of innate ideas, there was a strong temptation to translate *species intelligibilis* as 'idea'—even though

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Question 84. how the soul, while joined to the body, knows material things

Here there are eight points of inquiry:

1. whether the soul knows material things through the intellect;
2. whether it understands them through its own essence or through species;^a
3. if by means of species, whether the species of all intelligible objects are inborn in the soul's nature;^b
4. whether these species come to the soul through the influence of non-sensible immaterial forms;^c
5. whether the things our soul understands are all seen in the divine ideas;^d
6. whether the soul acquires intellectual knowledge from the senses;
7. whether, using only the species^e it has, without turning^f to sense images,^g the intellect can actually understand;
8. whether intellectual discernment^h is impeded when the sense faculties are impeded.

article 1. does the soul know material things through the intellect?

THE FIRST POINT:¹ It would seem that the soul does not know material things through the intellect. For Augustine says² that *material things cannot be understood by the intellect nor a body seen except by the senses*. Again he says³ that we have intellectual vision only of those things that

Thomists have come to use the term only of the *species expressa*. However, since this could lead to misunderstanding, and since it is possible to transliterate his terminology in an intelligible way alongside 'idea', it was decided to retain 'intelligible species' in some form. The term can also be misleading, however, since what is directly intelligible is not the 'species' itself, but an object by means of it. Thus 'species' will be used with the acceptable English meaning of 'mental image' (see *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* [1963], s.v. 'Species', meaning 3). *Species sensibilis* will be rendered as 'image'.

¹*Convertendo se*: 1a. 89, 1 & 2 will bring out the sense by contrasting the way disembodied or 'separated' soul 'turns to' its objects with the way the soul in the body 'turns to' sense images.

²*phantasmata*, images produced by the three so-called 'internal senses'—imagination (re-presentation of sense images in perception, usually synthesized), cogitative faculty (including the quasi-reasoning process, *ratio particularis*, of which sense knowledge is capable), and sense memory. See Appendix 1.

³Frequently the meaning of *judicium* in the *Summa*.

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, Ia. 84, I

anima. Hujusmodi autem non sunt corpora. Ergo anima per intellectum corpora cognoscere non potest.

2. Præterea, sicut se habet sensus ad intelligibilia, ita se habet intellectus ad sensibilia. Sed anima per sensum nullo modo potest cognoscere spiritualia, quæ sunt intelligibilia. Ergo nullo modo per intellectum potest cognoscere corpora, quæ sunt sensibilia.

3. Præterea, intellectus est necessariorum et semper eodem modo se habentium. Sed corpora omnia sunt mobilia et non eodem modo se habentia. Anima ergo per intellectum corpora cognoscere non potest.

SED CONTRA est quod scientia est in intellectu. Si ergo intellectus non cognoscit corpora, sequitur quod nulla scientia sit de corporibus. Et sic peribit scientia naturalis, quæ est de corpore mobili.

RESPONSIO: Dicendum, ad evidentiam hujus quæstionis, quod primi philosophi qui de naturis rerum inquisiverunt putaverunt nihil esse in mundo præter corpus. Et quia videbant omnia corpora mobilia esse, et putabant ea in continuo fluxu esse, æstimaverunt quod nulla certitudo de rerum veritate haberi posset a nobis. Quod enim est in continuo fluxu per certitudinem apprehendi non potest, quia prius labitur quam mente dijudicetur: sicut Heraclitus dixit quod *non est possibile aquam fluvii currentis bis tangere*, ut recitat Philosophus.⁴

His autem superveniens Plato, ut posset salvare certam cognitionem veritatis a nobis per intellectum haberi, posuit præter ista corporalia aliud genus entium a materia et motu separatum, quod nominabat *species* sive

⁴*Metaphysics* IV, 5. 1010a13

^a*sunt per essentiam suam in anima*: the paraphrase conveys the sense, which is a contrast with things that are ‘virtually’, *per effectum*, in the soul by means of effects produced in it through the body.

^b*scientia*, Greek *epistēmē*: the ideal knowledge according to Plato, and to Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics*, the certain and evident knowledge through ‘causes’ (see below note *m*), derived syllogistically from self-evident, true, better-known premises in such a way as to guarantee the truth of the conclusion. Since this ideal is generally denied today except for abstract logic and mathematics, the argument falls rather flat; it takes for granted that natural science, to be ‘science’ in this strict sense, must be demonstratively certain. *Scientia*, standing alone, cannot be translated as ‘science’ without misleading the modern reader—hence the translation ‘demonstrative knowledge’. On the other hand, anything other than ‘natural science’ for *scientia naturalis* would also be misleading.

^cThe Greek Pre-Socratics. The schematic historical approach, such as follows, is often used in the *Summa* to bring out the Aristotelean position. See Appendix 6 for St Thomas’s place in the history of theories of knowledge.

^dThis view of Heraclitus, though hallowed by centuries of tradition, has recently

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really exist in the soul.^a But material things are not of this kind. Therefore the soul cannot know them through the intellect.

2. Again, as sense knowledge is to intelligible objects, so is intellectual knowledge to sensible objects. But the soul, by means of sense knowledge, can in no way know spiritual realities, and intelligible objects are of this kind. Neither therefore can the soul in any way know material things by means of the intellect, since such things belong to the order of sensible objects.

3. Again, the objects of intellectual knowledge are necessary and always the same. But all material realities are changeable and not always the same. Therefore the soul through the intellect cannot know material things.

ON THE OTHER HAND, there is the fact that demonstrative knowledge^b is found in the intellect. Had the intellect no knowledge of material things, it could not have demonstrative knowledge of them. Thus there would be no natural science dealing with changeable material beings.

REPLY: For evidence on this question we should note that the earliest philosophers^c who inquired into the nature of things thought there was nothing in the world except material reality. Since they recognized that all material things are changeable and thought of them as being in continual flux, they concluded that we can have no certainty about the truth of things. For what is in continual flux cannot be known with certainty—it will have disappeared before the mind can discern it. Heraclitus^d said, *It is impossible to step twice into the same river*, so Aristotle reports.⁴

Coming after these men, Plato, trying to save the fact that we can have certitude in knowing the truth, maintained that there were, in addition to the material things around us,^e another class^f of beings, separate^g from

been challenged; cf G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven: *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers*. Cambridge, 1957.

^aA circumlocution standing for St Thomas's use of *ista* ('these') and its counterpart *illa* ('those', which will be translated 'somewhere else'—not necessarily in a place apart, but separate from material, sensible things in some sense; see note *h*).

^fA modernism, but preferable to the transliteration 'genus'. Though 'class' is often used in a nominalist sense opposed to Aristotelean *genus*, its official meaning is neutral, and it better expresses the meaning in the present context. (See below, art. 2, note *o*.)

^g*separatum*: a technical term which is difficult to translate. It means 'apart from' though not necessarily in the sense of 'in a place apart'. It sometimes means simply 'in a state different from' something else, as the immaterial differs from the material. 'Separate' (*not* 'separated') will serve as well as any other English term if it is understood in this technical sense. However, wherever the context will allow, 'immaterial' will be used rather than 'separate'.

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SUMMA THEOLOGICÆ, Ia. 84, 1

deas, per quarum participationem unumquodque istorum singularium et sensibilibum dicitur vel homo vel equus vel aliquid hujusmodi. Sic ergo dicebat scientias et definitiones et quidquid ad actum intellectus pertinet non referri ad ista corpora sensibilia, sed ad illa immaterialia et separata; ut sic anima non intelligat ista corporalia, sed intelligat horum corporalium species separatas.

Sed hoc dupliciter apparet falsum. Primo quidem quia, cum illæ species sint immateriales et immobiles, excluderetur a scientiis cognitio motus et materiæ (quod est proprium scientiæ naturalis), et demonstratio per causas moventes et materiales.

Secundo autem,* quia derisibile videtur ut, dum rerum quæ nobis manifestæ sunt notitiam quærimus, alia entia in medium afferamus, quæ non possunt esse earum† substantiæ, cum ab eis differant secundum esse: et sic, illis substantiis separatis cognitis, non propter hoc de istis sensibilibus iudicare possemus.

Videtur autem in hoc Plato deviasse‡ a veritate, quia, cum æstimaret omnem cognitionem per modum alicujus similitudinis esse, credidit quod forma cogniti ex necessitate sit in cognoscente eo modo quo est in cognito. Consideravit autem quod forma rei intellectæ est in intellectu universaliter et immaterialiter et immobiliter: quod ex ipsa operatione intellectus apparet, qui intelligit universaliter et per modum necessitatis cujusdam; modus enim actionis est secundum modum formæ agentis. Et ideo existimavit quod oporteret res intellectas hoc modo in seipsis subsistere, scilicet immaterialiter et immobiliter.

Hoc autem necessarium non est. Quia etiam in ipsis sensibilibus videmus quod forma alio modo est in uno sensibilibum quam in altero: puta cum in uno est albedo intensior, in alio remissior, et§ in uno est albedo cum dulcedine, in alio sine dulcedine. Et per hunc etiam modum forma sensibilis alio modo est in re quæ est extra animam, et alio modo in sensu, qui suscipit formas sensibilibum absque materia, sicut colorem auri sine auro. Et similiter intellectus species corporum, quæ sunt materiales et

*Piana omits *autem*‡Piana: *deviare*†Piana: *eorum*§Piana adds *cum*

‡Greek *idea* and *eidos* are rather well transliterated into Latin by *idea* and *species*, but it has become customary in English to refer to Platonic Ideas and Forms (capitalized).

§A technical term in Plato's philosophy, the meaning of which is disputed. Aristotle (*Metaphysics* I, 6 and 9. 987b13, 991a20, 992a25) says that Plato never clarified its meaning. None the less, St Thomas uses the term and gives something of the sense in which he does so in art. 4.

†A technical term, contrasted with 'universal'. Ideas are universal, material beings singular.

‡*causas*, but to translate as 'causes'—something very often done—is misleading.

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matter and change, which he called Ideas or Forms.^b By participation^l in these, all singular,^j sensible objects around us get their designation as 'man', 'horse', etc. Accordingly, Plato held that demonstrative knowledge, definitions, and everything else pertaining to the activity of the intellect has reference, not to sensible material things around us, but to separate immaterial objects somewhere else. Thus the soul would understand, not the material things around us, but their immaterial Forms.

This may be shown to be false for two reasons. Because first, since the Ideas are immaterial and unchanging, demonstrative knowledge of change and matter (such as is characteristic of natural science) would be ruled out, as would any demonstration in terms of material or changeable explanatory principles.^k

Because secondly it would seem ludicrous, in seeking knowledge of things that are evident to us, to bring in as a means other realities which could not be of the essence of these evident things since they are of an essentially different order. Thus even if these immaterial substances were known, we would not thereby be able to know^l anything about the sensible things around us.

It would seem that, in this matter, Plato strayed from the truth because—aware that all knowledge comes by way of likenesses—he believed the form of the thing known must necessarily be in the knower exactly as it is in the thing known. Now he recognized that the form of a thing understood is in the intellect in a universal, immaterial, and unchanging way. This is apparent from the mode of operation of the intellect, which must understand in terms of universality and at least some sort of necessity; for ways of acting correspond to the form of the agent. Thus Plato concluded that the things understood must exist in themselves in this same way, namely, in an immaterial and unchanging way.

But there is no necessity for this. Even in sensible things we observe that the same form can be in different sensible objects in different ways; for instance, whiteness can be more intense in one thing than another, and whiteness can be associated with sweetness in one thing but not in another. Furthermore, the same is true of the form of a sensible object: it exists in a different way in the thing outside than it does in sense knowledge, which receives sensible forms without their matter—for instance, the colour of gold without the gold itself. Similarly, the intellect receives material and changeable species of material things in an immaterial and unchanging

^l'Explanation' would be the most accurate translation, but there are reasons why it could also be misleading. Hence the use of the generic 'principle' (*causæ* are a kind of principle, according to Aristotle and St Thomas), with a qualifying adjective *'judicare*, to discern intelligently.

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SUMMA THEOLOGICÆ, Ia. 84, 2

mobiles, recipit immaterialiter et immobiliter, secundum modum suum: nam receptum est in recipiente per modum recipientis.

Dicendum est ergo quod anima per intellectum cognoscit corpora cognitione immateriali, universali et necessaria.

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod verbum Augustini est intelligendum quantum ad ea quibus intellectus cognoscit, non autem quantum ad ea quæ* cognoscit. Cognoscit enim corpora intelligendo, sed non per corpora, neque per similitudines materiales et corporeas, sed per species immateriales et intelligibiles, quæ per sui essentiam in anima esse possunt.

2. Ad secundum dicendum quod, sicut Augustinus dicit,⁵ non est dicendum quod, sicut sensus cognoscit sola corporalia, ita intellectus cognoscit sola spiritualia: quia sequeretur quod Deus et angeli corporalia non cognoscerent. Hujus autem diversitatis ratio est, quia inferior virtus non se extendit ad ea quæ sunt superioris virtutis; sed virtus superior ea quæ sunt inferioris virtutis excellentiori modo operatur.

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod omnis motus supponit aliquid immobile: cum enim transmutatio fit secundum qualitatem, remanet substantia immobilis; et cum transmutatur forma substantialis, remanet materia immobilis. Rerum etiam mutabilium sunt immobiles habitudines: sicut Socrates etsi non semper sedeat, tamen immobiliter est verum quod quodcumque† sedet in uno loco manet. Et propter hoc nihil prohibet de rebus mobilibus immobilem scientiam habere.

articulus 2. utrum anima per essentiam suam corporalia intelligat

AD SECUNDUM sic proceditur:¹ I. Videtur quod anima per essentiam suam corporalia intelligat. Dicit enim Augustinus² quod anima *imagines corporum convolvit et rapit factas in semetipsa de semetipsa: dat enim eis formandis quiddam substantiæ suæ*. Sed per similitudines corporum corpora intelligit. Ergo per essentiam suam, quam dat formandis talibus similitudinibus, et de qua eas format, cognoscit corporalia.

2. Præterea, Philosophus dicit³ quod *anima quodammodo est omnia*. Cum ergo simile simili cognoscatur, videtur quod anima per seipsam corporalia cognoscat.

*Piana adds *intellectus*†Piana: *quando*¹*De civitate Dei* XXII, 29. PL 41, 800²*cf II Sent.* 3, 2, 2, 1; *III Sent.* 14, 1, 2. *De veritate* VIII, 8. CG II, 98.³*De Trinitate* x, 5. PL 42, 977⁴*De Anima* III, 8. 431b20