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978-0-521-02928-5 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 20 - Pleasure, (1a2ae. 31-39)

Eric D'arcy

Excerpt

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de delectatione

DEINDE CONSIDERANDUM EST de delectatione et tristitia. Circa delectationem vero considerata sunt quatuor:

- primo, de ipsa delectatione secundum se;
- secundo, de causis delectationis;
- tertio, de effectibus ejus;
- quarto, de bonitate et malitia ipsius.

Quaestio 31. de delectatione secundum se

Circa primum quærentur octo:

1. utrum delectatio sit passio;
2. utrum sit in tempore;
3. utrum differat a gaudio;
4. utrum sit in appetitu intellectivo;
5. de comparatione delectationum superioris appetitus ad delectationem inferioris;
6. de comparatione delectationum sensitivarum ad invicem;
7. utrum sit aliqua delectatio non naturalis;
8. utrum delectatio possit esse contraria delectationi.

articulus 1. utrum delectatio sit passio

AD PRIMUM sic proceditur:¹ 1. Videtur quod delectatio non sit passio. Damascenus enim distinguit operationem a passione, dicens quod *operatio est motus qui est secundum naturam, passio vero est motus contra naturam*.² Sed *delectatio est operatio*, ut Philosophus dicit.³ Ergo delectatio non est passio.

2. Præterea, pati est moveri, ut dicitur.⁴ Sed delectatio non consistit in moveri, sed in motum esse; causatur enim delectatio ex bono jam adepto. Ergo delectatio non est passio.

¹cf IV *Sent.* 49, 3, 1, i

²*De Fide Orth.*, 22. PG 94, 941

³*Ethics* VII, 12: 1153a10, and X, 5: 1175b33

⁴*Physics* III, 3. 202a25

^aAquinas's term for the topic of the treatise which occupies Questions 22–48 is *passiones animæ*. I have argued in the Introduction that the best English translation for this is 'The Emotions'. However in 31, 1 and in 35, 1 the Latin *passio* is translated 'passion'. This may help make clear the point that Aquinas assumes that *passio* = *emotion* is a sub-division of Aristotle's tenth category, τὸ πάσχειν, *passio* = *passivity*, *being-acted-upon* (as opposed to the ninth category τὸ ποιεῖν, *actio* = *activity*: cf Introduction). The running together of the two senses is not simply a

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on pleasure

NOW WE MUST STUDY pleasure (31–34) and sorrow (35–39). The questions concerning pleasure fall under four headings:

- first, pleasure itself (31);
- second, its causes (32);
- third, its effects (33);
- fourth, its morality (34).

Question 31. pleasure

Under the first of these headings there are eight points of inquiry:

1. is pleasure a passion?
2. does pleasure occupy time?
3. does pleasure differ from joy?
4. may it occur in the intellectual orexis?
5. the pleasures of the higher orexis compared with those of the lower,
6. the pleasures of the senses compared, one with another,
7. are there any non-natural pleasures?
8. can one pleasure be the contrary of another?

article 1. is pleasure a passion^a?

THE FIRST POINT:¹ I. It would seem that pleasure is not a passion. For Damascene makes a distinction between action and passion; he says, *action is movement in accordance with nature; passion is movement contrary to nature.*² But *pleasure is an activity*, as Aristotle says.^{3b} Therefore pleasure is not a passion.

2. Passion consists in being moved, as Aristotle says.⁴ But pleasure consists, not in being moved, but in having been moved; for it is caused by some good thing once it has been obtained. Pleasure therefore is not a passion.

play upon words; the discussion in this article shows that Aquinas sees a conceptual kinship as well as a verbal identity between the two usages.

^bObjection 1 quotes Aristotle 'Pleasure *is* operatio'; Objection 3 quotes Aristotle 'Pleasure *perfects* operatio'. Note (1) in each case operatio = *ἐνέργεια*, Aristotle's usual word for actuality. (2) In Objection 1 Aquinas says 'in VII and X *Ethics*.' The latter is usually taken to refer to 1175b33: but this rather says 'inseparably', suggesting not identity but union. (3) For the relationship between the accounts of Pleasure in Books VII and X, cf G. E. L. Owen 'Aristotelian Pleasures', PAS 1971–2, p. 135.

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SUMMA THEOLOGICÆ, 1a2æ. 31, I

3. Præterea, delectatio consistit in quadam perfectione delectati; *perficit enim operationem*, ut dicitur.⁵ Sed perfici non est pati vel alterari, ut dicitur.^{6,7} Ergo delectatio non est passio.

SED CONTRA est quod Augustinus ponit delectationem, sive gaudium vel ætiam, inter alias passiones animæ.⁸

RESPONSIO: Dicendum quod motus appetitus sensitivi proprie passio nominatur, sicut supra dictum est.⁹ Affectio autem quæcumque ex apprehensione sensitivi procedens est motus appetitus sensitivi. Hoc autem necesse est competere delectationi. Nam, sicut Philosophus dicit, *Delectatio est quidam motus animæ, et constitutio simul tota et sensibilis in naturam existentem*.¹⁰

Ad cuius intellectum considerandum est quod, sicut contingit in rebus naturalibus aliqua consequi suas perfectiones naturales, ita hoc contingit in animalibus. Et quamvis moveri ad perfectionem non sit totum simul, tamen consequi naturalem perfectionem est totum simul. Hæc autem est differentia inter animalia et alias res naturales, quod aliæ res naturales, quando constituuntur in id quod convenit eis secundum naturam, hoc non sentiunt, sed animalia hoc sentiunt. Et ex isto sensu causatur quidam motus animæ in appetitu sensitivo, et iste motus est delectatio.

Per hoc ergo quod dicitur quod delectatio est *motus animæ*, ponitur in genere. Per hoc autem quod dicitur *constitutio in existentem naturam*, id est in id quod existit in natura rei, ponitur causa delectationis, scilicet præsentia connaturalis boni. Per hoc autem quod dicitur *simul tota*, ostendit quod constitutio non debet accipi prout est in constitui, sed prout est in constitutum esse, quasi in termino motus; non enim delectatio est generatio, prout Plato posuit,¹¹ sed magis consistit in factum esse, ut dicitur.¹² Per

⁵*Ethics* x, 4. 1174b23 and b31

⁶*Physics* VII, 3. 246b2

⁷*De anima* II, 5. 417b2

⁸*De civitate Dei* IX, 5: PL 41, 260 and XIV, 8: PL 41, 411

⁹22, 3

¹⁰*Rhetoric* I, II. 1369b33

¹¹*Philebus* c 32, 53c

¹²*Ethics* VII, 12. 1153a12

⁹The relevant parts of Aquinas's anatomy of the mental powers are summarized in the Introduction, pp. xvii–xx.

¹⁰Note that (1) Aristotle puts this forward only as a hypothesis worth examining. (2) *Motus* here translates Aristotle's *κίνησις*, his usual word for *change*, including local motion (whereas in 1^a and 3^a *operatio* = *ἐνέργεια* actuality. (3) *Constitutio* translates Aristotle's *κατάστασις* setting down (typically, after agitation); *constitutio* conveys no such suggestion.

¹¹cf J. Burnet *The Ethics of Aristotle* (London, 1900) p. 449: 'Seeing is taken as the type of an *ἐνέργεια*, which is complete in every instant, as opposed to a *κίνησις* or 'process' which is *ἀτελής*. Aristotle's favourite way of expressing the completeness of an activity in any instant of it is by saying that the present and

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3. Pleasure consists in some sort of perfection in the one who enjoys it; *it makes an operation perfect*, as Aristotle says.⁵ But to be perfected is not to be passive, or to undergo alteration: as Aristotle points out in other places.^{6,7} Pleasure is therefore not a passion.

ON THE OTHER HAND Augustine discusses pleasure, and joy or gladness, along with the other passions of the soul.⁸

REPLY: We have seen that the term *passion* is applied quite properly to movements of the sensory orexis.^{9c} Now any feeling that arises from sense-perception is a movement of the sensory orexis; and this is precisely the case with pleasure. As Aristotle says, *Pleasure is a movement of the soul, perceptibly establishing one in a condition which is in harmony with one's nature, and which is an instantaneous whole.*^{10d}

To understand this definition, one must bear in mind that animals, like inanimate things, often attain various perfections which actualize their various natural potentialities; and although being in movement towards such actualization is a gradual process, the actual attainment of it is not: it is a whole, complete at a given instant. There is, of course, a difference between animals and inanimate things: when the latter came to be established in some condition which is in harmony with their nature, they do not perceive it. Animals however do, and the perception gives rise to a movement in the sensory orexis; and that movement is what we call *pleasure*.

In saying, therefore, that pleasure is a *movement of the soul*, one is giving its genus. The expression *establishing one in a condition which is in harmony with one's nature* gives the cause of pleasure, viz. the actual possession of some good for which one has a natural propensity. The expression *an instantaneous whole* indicates that the 'establishing' in question refers, not to the process of coming to be established, but to the condition of having been established—of having reached a destination, so to say: for pleasure is not something in process of coming into being, as Plato held;¹¹ rather, it is something completed, as Aristotle held.^{12e} The expression *perceptibly* rules out the various perfections attained by non-sentient creatures, which are incapable of enjoying pleasure.

the perfect tense can be simultaneously used of it. If I look at a thing for some time, I can say both *ὄρω* and *έώρακα* at any moment, but if I am building a house, I cannot say *ᾠκοδομηκα* till the process (*κίνησις*) is finished. . . . If we see a thing at all, we see it just as much one moment as the next; there is no more a pleasure in one moment than another; it is complete in every *νῦν*. The essence of a process (*κίνησις*) is that it is completed in time; a complete *ένέργεια* is independent of time.' cf J. L. Ackrill, 'Aristotle's Distinction between *Energeia* and *Kinesis*' in *New Essays on Plato and Aristotle*, ed. R. Bambrough (London, 1965), pp. 136–141.

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 1a2ae. 31, 2

hoc autem quod dicitur *sensibilis*, excluduntur perfectiones rerum insensibilium, in quibus non est delectatio.

Sic ergo patet quod cum delectatio sit motus in appetitu animali consequens apprehensionem sensus, delectatio est passio animæ.

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod operatio connaturalis non impedita est perfectio secunda, ut habetur.¹³ Et ideo quando constituitur res in propria operatione connaturali et non impedita sequitur delectatio, quæ consistit in perfectum esse, ut dictum est.¹⁴ Sic ergo cum dicitur quod delectatio est operatio, non est prædicatio per essentiam, sed per causam.

2. Ad secundum dicendum quod in animali duplex motus considerari potest: unus secundum intentionem finis, qui pertinet ad appetitum; alius secundum executionem, qui pertinet ad exteriorem operationem. Licet ergo in eo qui jam consecutus est bonum in quo delectatur cesset motus executionis, quo tendit ad finem, non tamen cessat motus appetitivæ partis, quæ, sicut prius desiderabat non habitum, ita postea delectatur in habito. Licet enim delectatio sit quies quædam appetitus, considerata præsentia boni delectantis, quod appetitui satisfacit, tamen adhuc remanet immutatio appetitus ab appetibili, ratione cuius delectatio motus quidam est.

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod quamvis nomen passionis magis proprie conveniat passionibus corruptivis et in malum tendentibus, sicut sunt ægri tudines corporales, et tristitia et timor in anima, tamen etiam in bonum ordinantur aliquæ passiones, ut supra dictum est.¹⁵ Et secundum hoc delectatio dicitur passio.

articulus 2. utrum delectatio sit in tempore

AD SECUNDUM sic proceditur:¹ 1. Videtur quod delectatio sit in tempore. *Delectatio enim est motus quidam*, ut Philosophus dicit.² Sed motus omnis est in tempore. Ergo delectatio est in tempore.

2. Præterea, diuturnum vel morosum dicitur aliquid secundum tempus. Sed aliquæ delectationes dicuntur morosæ. Ergo delectatio est in tempore.

3. Præterea, passiones animæ sunt unius generis. Sed aliquæ passiones animæ sunt in tempore. Ergo et delectatio.

SED CONTRA est quod Philosophus dicit quod *secundum nullum tempus accipiet quis delectationem*.³

¹³*De anima* II, I. 412a10, 22¹⁴In the Reply¹⁵1a2ae. 23, I and 4¹cf IV *Sent.* 49, 3, I, iii. *De veritate* VIII, 14 ad 12. *In Ethic.*, X, lectio 5²*Rhetoric* I, II. 1369b33³*Ethics* X, 4. 1174a17

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Since therefore pleasure is a movement of the sensory orexis which arises from some sense-perception, it is a passion of the soul.

Hence: 1. Unimpeded natural activity is a secondary perfection, to use Aristotle's phrase.¹³ Once therefore a thing is established in such activity, pleasure arises; for it consists in a condition which has been completely attained, as we have seen.¹⁴ Thus when one says that pleasure is an activity one is not giving its essence, but its cause.

2. In an animal, there are two sorts of movement to be considered: one, that involved in intending some end, which is a movement of the orexis; the other, that of executing that intention, which is a matter of external activity. The latter movement ceases, of course, when the animal attains the good which gives it pleasure. But the movement within the orexis does not cease: where previously it was desiring what it did not have, now it is enjoying what it has attained. From one point of view, then—namely, considering the fact that the pleasurable good which satisfies the orexis is now in its possession—pleasure consists in being at rest. But there is also the fact that the orexis is in a new condition which is being brought about by the object now actually working on it; and from that point of view, pleasure is a kind of movement.

3. The term *passion* does indeed apply more properly to those passions which have a deleterious, harmful tendency: for example, ailments in the body, distress and fear in the soul. Nevertheless, we have seen that some passions are directed towards what is good;¹⁵ and it is in that sense that pleasure is called a passion.

article 2. does pleasure occupy time?

THE SECOND POINT:¹ 1. It would seem that pleasure does occupy time. For *pleasure is a form of movement*, as Aristotle says.² But all movement occupies time; so therefore must pleasure.

2. A thing is called 'protracted' or 'lasting' only if it occupies time. But pleasures are sometimes said to be 'protracted'. Therefore pleasure occupies time.

3. The emotions fall under a single genus. But some of them certainly occupy time; so too, then, must pleasure.

ON THE OTHER HAND Aristotle says, *Pleasure is a whole, and at no time can one find a pleasure whose definition will be realized only if the pleasure lasts longer.*^{3a}

^aI have here translated Aristotle's complete sentence; St Thomas's extract is misleading.—For a translation and discussion of Aristotle's whole passage, cf Ackrill, loc. cit.

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 1a2ae. 31, 3

RESPONSIO: Dicendum quod aliquid contingit esse in tempore dupliciter: uno modo, secundum se; alio modo, per aliud, et quasi per accidens. Quia enim tempus est numerus successivorum, illa secundum se dicuntur esse in tempore, de quorum ratione est successio, vel aliquid ad successionem pertinens, sicut motus, quies, locutio, et alia huiusmodi.

Secundum aliud vero, et non per se, dicuntur esse in tempore illa de quorum ratione non est aliqua successio, sed tamen alicui successivo subjacent. Sicut esse hominem de sui ratione non habet successionem, non enim est motus, sed terminus motus vel mutationis, scilicet generationis ipsius; sed quia humanum esse subjacet causis transmutabilibus, secundum hoc hominem esse est in tempore.

Sic igitur dicendum est quod delectatio secundum se quidem non est in tempore: si* est enim delectatio in bono jam adepto, quod est quasi terminus motus. Sed si illud bonum adeptum transmutationi subjacet, erit delectatio per accidens in tempore. Si autem sit omnino intransmutabile, delectatio non erit in tempore nec per se, nec per accidens.

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod, sicut dicitur,⁴ motus dupliciter dicitur. Uno modo, qui est *actus imperfecti*, scilicet existentis in potentia in quantum huiusmodi, et talis motus est successivus et in tempore. Alius autem motus est *actus perfecti*, id est existentis in actu, sicut intelligere, sentire et velle et huiusmodi, et etiam delectari. Et huiusmodi motus non est successivus, nec per se in tempore.

2. Ad secundum dicendum quod delectatio dicitur morosa vel diuturna secundum quod per accidens est in tempore.

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod aliae passiones non habent pro objecto bonum adeptum, sicut delectatio. Unde plus habent de ratione motus imperfecti quam delectatio. Et per consequens magis delectationi convenit non esse in tempore.

articulus 3. utrum delectatio differat a gaudio

AD TERTIUM sic proceditur:¹ 1. Videtur quod gaudium sit omnino idem quod delectatio. Passiones enim animae differunt secundum objecta. Sed idem est objectum gaudii et delectationis, scilicet bonum adeptum. Ergo gaudium est omnino idem quod delectatio.

2. Præterea, unus motus non terminatur ad duos terminos. Sed idem est motus qui terminatur ad gaudium et delectationem, scilicet concupiscentia. Ergo delectatio et gaudium sunt omnino idem.

*The Leonine edition omits *si*

⁴*De anima* III, 7. 431a6

¹cf. III *Sent.* 26, 1, 3 and 27, 1, 2 ad 3 and 49, 3, 1, iv. *De veritate* XXVI, 4 ad 5. CG, I, 90

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REPLY: There are two ways in which X may be said to occupy time: of its own essential nature; or indirectly and accidentally. For time is the numbering of things that succeed one another: therefore X is said to occupy time, of its essential nature, if the notion of succession, or of something that involves succession is of its essence: motion, repose, speech, and the like.

X will be said to occupy time only indirectly, and not of its own nature, however, if the motion of succession is not of its own essence, yet is dependent upon something in which that motion is essential. Thus succession is not part of the essential concept of *being human*, since being human is not a change, but the term of a change or process, viz. generation; still, since being human means being subject to changing processes, being human does occupy time.

Accordingly, we must say that *occupying time* is not part of the essential concept of pleasure, since the object of pleasure is a good one now possesses, which is rather like the completion of a process. However if that good is itself subject to change, the pleasure may be said to occupy time indirectly; if it is completely immune to change, the pleasure will not be said to occupy time, either of its own essential nature, or even indirectly.

Hence: 1. Aristotle says that there are two senses of *movement*. First,⁴ it can mean *the actualization of something still incomplete*, i.e. of something existing in potentiality, as such; in this sense movement does involve succession, and occupies time. Second, it can mean that *the actualization of something complete*, i.e. of something actually existing: e.g. thinking, feeling, willing, and the like: and also, feeling pleasure. Such movement does not involve succession and does not, of its essential nature, occupy time.

2. Pleasure is said to be protracted or lasting in so far as it occupies time indirectly.

3. The object of pleasure is a good already possessed; that of the other emotions is not. They are therefore much more in the nature of uncompleted movement; accordingly it is much less of the nature of pleasure to occupy time.

article 3. does pleasure differ from joy?

THE THIRD POINT:¹ 1. It would seem that pleasure and joy are identical. For different emotions have different objects; but pleasure and joy have the same object, viz. something desired now possessed. Therefore pleasure and joy are identical.

2. One movement cannot terminate at two different points. But one and the same movement, viz. desire, terminates both in joy and in pleasure. They must therefore be identical.

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 1a2ae. 31, 3

3. Præterea, si gaudium est aliud a delectatione, videtur quod pari ratione et lætitia et exultatio et jucunditas significant aliquid aliud a delectatione; et sic erunt omnes diversæ passionēs. Quod videtur esse falsum. Non ergo gaudium differt a delectatione.

SED CONTRA est quod in brutis animalibus non dicimus gaudium. Sed in eis dicimus delectationem. Non ergo est idem gaudium et delectatio.

RESPONSIO: Dicendum quod gaudium, ut Avicenna dicit, est quædam species delectationis.² Etenim considerandum quod, sicut sunt quædam concupiscentiæ naturales, quædam autem non naturales, sed consequuntur rationem, ut supra dictum est,³ ita etiam delectationum quædam sunt naturales, et quædam non naturales, quæ sunt cum ratione. Vel, sicut Damascenus⁴ et Gregorius Nyssenus⁵ dicunt, *Quædam sunt corporales, quædam animales*; quod in idem redit. Delectamur enim et in his quæ naturaliter concupiscimus ea adipiscentes, et in his quæ concupiscimus secundum rationem. Sed nomen gaudii non habet locum nisi in delectatione quæ consequitur rationem; unde gaudium non attribuimus brutis animalibus, sed solum nomen delectationis.

Omne autem quod concupiscimus secundum naturam possumus etiam cum delectatione rationis concupiscere; sed non e converso. Unde de omnibus de quibus est delectatio, potest esse gaudium in habentibus rationem. Quamvis non semper de omnibus est gaudium; quandoque enim aliquis sentit aliquam delectationem secundum corpus, de qua tamen non gaudet secundum rationem. Et secundum hoc patet quod delectatio est in his* plus quam gaudium.

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod cum objectum appetitus animalis sit bonum apprehensum, diversitas apprehensionis pertinet quodammodo ad diversitatem objecti. Et sic delectationes animales, quæ dicuntur etiam gaudia, distinguuntur a delectationibus corporalibus, quæ dicuntur solum delectationes; sicut et de concupiscentiis supra dictum est.⁶

2. Ad secundum dicendum quod similis differentia invenitur etiam in concupiscentiis; ita quod delectatio respondeat concupiscentiæ, et gaudium respondeat desiderio, quod magis videtur pertinere ad concupiscentiam animalem. Et sic secundum differentiam motus est etiam differentia quietis.

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod alia nomina ad delectationem pertinentia sunt imposita ab effectibus delectationis: nam lætitia imponitur

*The Leonine omits *his*

²*De anima* IV, 5, 21va ³1a2ae. 30, 3

⁴*De Fide orthodoxa* II, 13. PG 94, 929

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3. If *gaudium* (joy) differs from *delectatio* (pleasure), then by the same token so must *laetitia*, *exultatio*, and *jucunditas*; they must all be different emotions. But that is surely not the case; so joy cannot differ from pleasure.

ON THE OTHER HAND there is the fact that we ascribe to dumb animals pleasure, but not joy: so they cannot be identical.

REPLY: Joy is one species of pleasure, as Avicenna says.² For as we have seen, some desires are physical, whereas others are not, but arise from the exercise of reason.³ In the same way, some pleasures are physical, whereas others are not, but accompany the exercise of reason. Damascene⁴ and Gregory of Nyssa⁵ say, *There are pleasures of the body, and there are pleasures of the mind*: which amounts to the same thing. *Pleasure* comes from obtaining the object either of physical or of rational desire; but the term *joy* is in place only when applied to pleasures that arise from the exercise of reason.³ Thus we ascribe to dumb animals pleasure, but not joy.

Whatever we desire physically can also be the object of rational desire and pleasure: but not *vice versa*. Whatever things therefore can be objects of pleasure can in rational beings be objects of joy. However, it is not always joy that we take in them; one sometimes feels physical pleasure without enjoying it rationally. 'Pleasure' therefore applies to more cases than does 'joy'.

Hence: 1. Since the object of the rational orexis is something perceived as good, different sorts of perception involve different sorts of object. There is therefore a distinction to be made between pleasures involving the mind, which are also called joys, and pleasures of the body, which are called simply pleasures. We made a similar distinction with regard to desires.⁶

2. One must distinguish correspondingly different kinds of desire: pleasure corresponds to desire pure and simple, joy to that desire which goes with the exercise of reason. Thus, different sorts of movement terminate in different sorts of rest.

3. These other Latin words for pleasure derive from the effects which pleasure produces. The term *laetitia* derives from *dilatatione cordis*,

²In fact Nemesius of Emesa, *De natura hominis* 18. PG 40, 677

³1a2ae. 30, 3 ad 2

⁴St Thomas's anatomy of, and terminology for, the mental powers are summarized in the Introduction to this volume.

⁵The reply to this objection indicates that St Thomas has here taken *sensibilis* as the genitive of *sensibile*, i.e. a noun phrase. However, what Aristotle actually wrote was *κινήσαν . . . ἀθροῶν καὶ αἰσθητήν*, a sudden and perceptible settling-down.