

# THE CONCEPT OF *VERBUM* IN THE WRITINGS OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

## II

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### *L'Immaculée Conception*

THE plan of our inquiry has been, first, to determine the introspective psychological data involved in the Thomist concept of a *verbum mentis* or inner word; secondly, to review the metaphysical categories and theorems in which these introspective data were expressed by Aquinas; thirdly, to follow the extrapolation from the analysis of the human mind to the account of the divine intellect as known naturally; fourthly, to study the theory of the procession of the divine Word. The first task of introspective psychology fell into two parts corresponding to the two different types of inner word, namely, the *quod quid est* or definition, and the *compositio vel divisio* or judgment. Both types proceed from an *intelligere*, but a difference of product postulates a difference of ground; in the preceding article of this series it was argued that the *intelligere* whence proceeds the definition is a direct act of understanding, an insight into phantasm; in the present article the contention will be that the *intelligere* from which the judgment proceeds is a reflective and critical act of understanding not unlike the act of Newman's illative sense.

It may be helpful to indicate at once the parallel between the two types of procession of inner words. Both definition and judgment proceed from acts of understanding, but the former from direct, the latter from reflective understanding. Both acts of understanding have their principal cause in the agent intellect, but the direct act in the agent intellect as spirit of wonder and inquiry, the reflective act in the agent intellect as spirit of critical reflection, as *virtus iudicativa*.<sup>1</sup> Again, both acts of understanding have their instrumental or material causes, but the direct act has this cause in a schematic image or phantasm, while the reflective act reviews not only imagination but also sense experience, and direct acts of understanding, and definitions, to find in all taken together the sufficient ground or evidence for a judgment.

<sup>1</sup> *De Spir. Creat.*, a. 10 ad 8m.

Hence, while the direct act of understanding generates in definition the expression of the intelligibility of a phantasm, the reflective act generates in judgment the expression of consciously possessed truth through which reality is both known and known to be known.

#### COMPOSITION OR DIVISION

*Composito vel divisio* is the usual Thomist name for the second type of inner word. Its origin lies in the Aristotelian use of grammar for the specification of philosophic problems. In the *Categories* one is told to distinguish between simple and composite forms of speech: the latter are illustrated by "the man runs," "the man wins"; the former by "man," "runs," "wins."<sup>2</sup> In the *Perihermeneias* there is set forth the concomitance of truth or falsity in the mind and, on the other hand, linguistic synthesis: one means the true or false not by any single word, not even by the copula, but only by a conjunction of words; apparent exceptions arise, not because any single word by itself really means the true or false, but only because one can at times enounce a single word and have others, as the grammarians say, understood.<sup>3</sup> This passage Aquinas discussed at length, drawing an illuminating distinction between the primary and the consequent meanings of the verb "Est." Primarily, "Est simpliciter dictum significat in actu esse"; but consequently and implicitly, "Est" means the true or false. For the primary meaning of "Est" is the actuality of any form or act, substantial or accidental; but consequently, because actuality involves synthesis with the actuated, and implicitly because the actuated subject is understood when actuality is affirmed, there is the connotation of truth or falsity in this and other verbs.<sup>4</sup>

This distinction may be paralleled by the standard Aristotelian and Thomist division of *ens* into *ens* that is equivalent to *verum* and, on the other hand, *ens* that is divided by the ten categories.<sup>5</sup> But from the viewpoint of a genetic analysis of judgment a priori, though related, distinction must claim our immediate attention. As the name, "compositio," suggests, there is to the judgment a purely synthetic element. It is on this ground that we are told that truth or falsity reside in the

<sup>2</sup> *Categories* 2, 1a 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Periherm.*, I, 3; 16b 19-25.

<sup>4</sup> *In I Periherm.*, lect. 5, *ad fin.*

<sup>5</sup> *In V Met.*, lect 9. §889 ff., §895 ff.; *De Ente et Essentia*, c. 1, *init.*; *et passim.*

conjunction as such and not in the terms that are conjoined. However, besides this element of synthesis, there is to judgment a further element by which synthesis is posited. If one compares the terms of a judgment to matter and the synthesis of the terms to form, then this act of positing synthesis by affirmation or denial may be likened to existence, which actuates the conjunction of matter and form. Without such positing there may be synthesis, as in a question or an hypothesis, but as yet there is no judgment. Again, synthesis, though not posited, may be true or false, but as yet it is not known to be true or false. Finally, as long as synthesis is not posited, the peculiar objective reference of the judgment is lacking; as yet the primary meaning of "Est," the affirmation (or negation) of an "in actu esse," is not involved. In Aristotle, it is true, this distinction between the merely synthetic element in judgment and, on the other hand, the positing of synthesis is not drawn clearly. In Thomist writings, I believe, the use of Aristotelian terminology obscures to some extent a more nuanced analysis. In any case it was only by making this distinction that I was able to organize the materials I had collected, and so the rest of this section will be devoted to the synthetic element in judgment, while following sections will take up successively different aspects of the more important and more difficult element by which synthesis is posited.

With regard to the synthetic element in judgment, certain preliminary distinctions must be drawn: there is the real composition in things themselves; there is the composition of inner words in the mind; there is the composition of outer words in speech and writing. The last of these three is obvious: spoken words are conjoined in a vocal and temporal cadence; written words are joined by using punctuation marks. Roughly parallel to the composition of outer words is the composition of inner words, so that at times, it may be difficult to say which composition is in question, as in the second part of the statement, "esse . . . significat compositionem propositionis quam anima adinvenit coniungens praedicatum subiecto."<sup>6</sup> However, there is no doubt about the existence of an inner composition: it arises from the discursive character of our intellects, which form separate concepts to know first the subject and then the accident, which move from knowledge of the one to knowledge of the other, which attain knowledge of the inherence of

<sup>6</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 3, a. 4 ad 2m.

accidents in subjects by some sort of combination or union of *species*.<sup>7</sup> Finally, the ground and cause of the composition that occurs in the mind and in speech is a real composition in the thing. Thus, the proposition, "Socrates is a man," has its ground and cause in the composition of a human form with the individual matter of Socrates; the proposition, "Socrates is white," has its ground and cause in the composition of a real accident, whiteness, with a real subject, Socrates.<sup>8</sup>

The one point to be noted here is that truth is not merely the subjective, mental synthesis. It is the correspondence between mental and real synthesis. More accurately, in our knowledge of composite things, truth is the correspondence of mental composition with real composition or of mental division with real division; falsity is the non-correspondence of mental composition to real division or of mental division to real composition.<sup>9</sup> But besides our knowledge of composite substances there are three other cases in which the foregoing account of truth suffers modal variations: in our knowledge of simple substances the *incomplexa* are known *complexa*; inversely, when simple substances know composite objects, the *complexa* are known *incomplexa*;<sup>10</sup> finally, in the self-knowledge of the absolutely simple substance, knowing and known are an identity and so truth can be named a correspondence in that case only by the artifice of a double negation; one cannot say that divine intellect is similar to divine being, for similarity supposes duality; one can say only that divine intellect is not dissimilar to divine being.<sup>11</sup> However, for the present, the significance of these modal variations is merely that they serve to stress the fact that mental synthesis is one thing and that judgment involves another. Judgment includes knowledge of truth;<sup>12</sup> but knowledge of truth is knowledge not merely of mental synthesis but essentially of the correspondence between mental synthesis and real synthesis. The immediate issue is the nature of the origin and genesis of the mental synthesis, of the conjunction simply as conjunction in the mind and so as prior to knowledge of its correspondence to real conjunction.

<sup>7</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 7 c. *post med.*

<sup>8</sup> *In IX Met.*, lect. 11, §1898.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, §1896; *In VI Met.*, lect. 4, §1225 ff.

<sup>10</sup> The basic discussion is *In IX Met.*, lect. 11, §1901 ff.; cf. *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 7; q. 8, aa. 14-15; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 14, a. 14, q. 58, aa. 2-4; q. 85, aa. 4-5; II-II, q. 1, a. 2 c; *et loc. par.*

<sup>11</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 16, a. 5 ad 2m.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 2.

Mental synthesis is of concepts. As one defined term proceeds from one insight into phantasm, so two defined terms proceed from two insights. Such multiple insights and definitions may be separate, isolated, atomic. But it also happens that one insight combines with another, or that a first develops so as to include a second. Such a process of developing insight is the whole task of catching on to a science; and, perhaps, it was this very point that obscurely was uppermost in Aristotle's mind when he drew his distinction between the two operations of intellect, namely, knowledge of the indivisible and knowledge of the composite. For he appealed to the naive, evolutionary theory of Empedocles that fancied an initial state of nature in which heads existed apart from necks and trunks apart from limbs; later, concord brought such separate members together into the harmonious wholes of the animals that, by a well-known law, alone have survived. In like manner, Aristotle contended, intellect puts together what before were apart. It is one thing to understand that the diagonal stands to the side of a square as root two to unity; it is another to grasp that that proportion is an irrational; it is a third to see that an irrational cannot be a measure. One may understand in isolation both the nature of measurement and the ratio of the diagonal to the side. But if one also understands the nature of irrationals, one has the scientific middle term for grasping that the diagonal of a square is incommensurable with its side; and in this final state one deals with concepts not in isolation but in intelligible unity; one sees, as it were in a single view, the diagonal as an irrational, and the irrational as an incommensurable.<sup>13</sup>

Note the nature of the conjunction: it is not that two concepts merge into one concept; that would be mere confusion; concepts remain eternally and immutably distinct. But while two concepts remain distinct as concepts, they may cease to be two intelligibilities and merge into one. "Symmetrum et diametrum aliquando separatim et seorsum intellectus intelligit, et tunc sunt duo intelligibilia; quando autem componit, fit unum intelligibile et simul intelligitur ab intellectu."<sup>14</sup> How do two concepts become one intelligibility? Not by a change in the concepts but by a coalescence or a development of insights: where before there were two acts of understanding, expressed singly in two

<sup>13</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 11, §747-49; on irrationals, *In V Met.*, lect. 17, §1020.

<sup>14</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 11, §749.

concepts, now there is but one act of understanding, expressed in the combination of two concepts. This combination of two, as a combination, forms but a single intelligible, a single though composite object of a single act of understanding.

The psychological fact that insights are not unrelated atoms, that they develop, coalesce, form higher unities, was fully familiar to Aquinas. Repeatedly he spoke of an *intelligere multa per unum*: many acts of understanding cannot be simultaneous in one intellect; but one act of understanding can and does grasp many objects in a single view.<sup>15</sup> Understanding a house is not understanding severally the foundation, the walls, and the roof; it is understanding one whole.<sup>16</sup> The object of judgment is not the several terms but the one proposition.<sup>17</sup> Knowledge of first principles is not exclusively a matter of comparing abstract terms or concepts; no less than the terms, the nexus between them may be directly abstracted from phantasm, so that, just as the concept, so also the principle may be the expression of an insight into phantasm.<sup>18</sup> The synthetic character of understanding is illustrated not only in the concept of a whole, such as a house, and in the grasp of a principle, but also in the learning of a science; for the less intelligent type of mind has to have things explained in painful detail, while the more intelligent catches on from a few indications.<sup>19</sup>

Moreover, it is this synthetic character of understanding that is peculiarly evident in the theory of angelic and of divine knowledge. Angels need *species* to know things other than themselves; but the higher angels are higher because they grasp more by fewer *species* than do the lower with more numerous *species*; their acts of understanding are wider in sweep and more profound in penetration.<sup>20</sup> The summit of such sweep and penetration is the divine intellect; for the divine act of understanding is one, yet it embraces in a single view all possibles

<sup>15</sup> *In II Sent.*, d. 3, q. 3, a. 4; *In III Sent.*, d. 14, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 4 c. et 1m; *Quodl.* VII, a. 2; *De Ver.*, q. 8, a. 14; *C. Gent.*, I, 55; *De An.*, a. 18, ad 5m; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 4.

<sup>16</sup> *In VI Met.*, lect. 4, §1229.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*; *In III Sent.*, d. 14, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 4; *De Ver.*, q. 8, a. 14 c. *ad fin.*; *C. Gent.* I, 55 (ed. Leon., XIII, 157a 22 ff.)

<sup>18</sup> See P. Hoenen, "De Origine Primorum Principiorum Scientiae," *Gregorianum*, XIV (1933), 153-84; XIX (1938), 498-514; XX (1939), 19-54; 321-50.

<sup>19</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 55, a. 3 c.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*; *In II Sent.*, d. 3, q. 3, a. 2; *De Ver.*, q. 8, a. 10; *C. Gent.*, II, 98.

and the prodigal multiplicity of actual beings.<sup>21</sup> Finally, it is to such a view of all reality that human intellect naturally aspires. The specific drive of our nature is to understand,<sup>22</sup> and indeed to understand everything, neither confusing the trees with the forest nor content to contemplate the forest without seeing all the trees. For the spirit of inquiry within us never calls a halt, never can be satisfied, until our intellects, united to God as body to soul,<sup>23</sup> know *ipsum intelligere* and through that vision, though then knowing aught else is a trifle,<sup>24</sup> contemplate the universe as well.<sup>25</sup>

If to thirst, however obscurely, for this consummation is natural, still to achieve it is supernatural.<sup>26</sup> But besides supernatural, there is also natural achievement, progress in understanding within the natural ambit of our development. Such progress, as progressing, is reason; for reason is to understanding, as motion is to rest. Reason is not one potency, and understanding another potency; on the level of potency the two are identical; they differ only as process to a term differs from achievement in the term.<sup>27</sup> This point merits illustration.

It is objected, frequently enough, that syllogism does not represent the manner in which, as a matter of fact, we learn and think. This difficulty has its ground, partly in the identity of reason and understanding, partly in the type of examples of syllogism commonly found in the text-books. Syllogism may represent either reasoning or understanding. When we understand, we no longer are reasoning or learning; we have reached the term and apprehend the many as one; but the stock examples of syllogism represent acts of understanding, matters that may have puzzled us long ago, but now are taken for granted. It follows that such syllogisms do not illustrate learning or reasoning

<sup>21</sup> *C. Gent.*, I, 46 ff.; *In I Sent.*, d. 35-36; *De Ver.*, qq. 2-3; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 14, aa. 5-6; q. 15, aa. 1-3.

<sup>22</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 14, a. 1 c.: "... intellectus ... proprium terminum ... qui est visio alicuius intelligibilis."

<sup>23</sup> *C. Gent.*, III, 51.

<sup>24</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 8 ad 4m.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 3, a. 8.

<sup>26</sup> *C. Gent.*, III, 52; see Henri Rondet, "Nature et surnaturel dans la théologie de S. Thomas d'Aquin," *Rech. sc. rel.*, XXXIII (1946), 56-91.

<sup>27</sup> *In II Sent.*, d. 9, q. 1, a. 8 ad 1m; *De Ver.*, q. 15, a. 1; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 8 c.; cf. J. Peghaire, *Intellectus et Ratio selon S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Inst. méd. d'Ottawa, VI; Ottawa and Paris, 1936).

for current consciousness. But take a syllogism in a field in which your grasp is not too ready; define the terms; demonstrate the premises; and you will find that this reasoning is bringing an understanding to birth and that, with understanding achieved, you no longer reason but apprehend the many in a synthetic unity. For instance, why is the diagonal of a square incommensurable with the side? First, what is a measurement? It is a fourfold proportion in which, where M and N are integers,  $M:N :: \text{measurable object}:\text{standard unit}$ . What is the ratio of the diagonal to the side? It is root two. Now demonstrate that there cannot be two integers, M and N, such that  $M/N = \sqrt{2}$ . As long as reasoning continues, understanding is not achieved. But with the reasoning process successfully completed, understanding is achieved: *ratio terminatur ad intellectum*.<sup>28</sup>

It is in its relation to the psychological experience of understanding that reasoning or discourse is characterized by Aquinas. There is a difference between knowing one thing in another, and knowing one thing from knowing another; the former involves a single movement of mind; the latter involves a twofold movement, as in syllogism where first one grasps principles and then conclusion.<sup>29</sup> In the *Summa* the analysis is pushed further by the introduction of a distinction between the temporal and the causal elements in discursive knowledge. In discourse there is temporal succession, for we know first one thing and then another; there also is causal connection, for it is because we know the first that we come to know the second. But in God there is no temporal succession, for he knows all at once; and there is no causal connection between different acts of knowing, for his knowing is a single act. Still, though God's knowledge is uncaused, it does not follow that he does not know causes. For all discursive knowledge

<sup>28</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q. 8, a. 1 ad 2m: "Dicendum quod discursus rationis semper incipit ab intellectu et terminatur ad intellectum; ratiocinamur enim procedendo ex quibusdam intellectis, et tunc rationis discursus perficitur quando ad hoc pervenimus ut intelligamus id quod prius erat ignotum." Note that the phrase "terminatur ad intellectum" is ambiguous; very frequently it refers to a critical return to *intellectus* as *habitus principiorum*; in the text cited it has to mean the arrival at some hitherto unknown object of understanding, which cannot be the object of the naturally known first principles employed in all reasoning. On this issue, see J. Peghaire, *op. cit.*, pp. 261 ff., 269 ff. With regard to the distinction between natural and chronological priority of knowledge of premises over knowledge of conclusions, see *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 2.

<sup>29</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 8, a. 15.



comes to a term in the intuitive apprehension of a field of implications, inter-relations, dependencies; from knowing a second because we know a first, we move to knowing a second in the first; but in God that final state is eternal, for He knows all things in their cause, which is Himself.<sup>30</sup>

Reasoning was not characterized by Aquinas with a reference to a text on formal logic; it was characterized as the development of understanding, as motion towards understanding. This fact throws a light backward on an issue raised in the preceding article. Conceive reasoning in terms of deductive logic and there can be no reasoning unless one already is in possession of the necessary three terms, subject, middle, and predicate. But conceive reasoning as understanding in development and there is not the slightest difficulty about the Thomist view that we have to reason to grasp even the terms: "nam cum volo concipere rationem lapidis, oportet quod ad ipsam ratiocinando perveniam; et sic est in omnibus aliis, quae a nobis intelliguntur, nisi forte in primis principiis."<sup>31</sup> Just how Aquinas reasoned out his concept of a stone, I cannot say; but in the second book of the *Contra Gentiles* there is the magnificent reasoning out of the concept of the human soul; it runs through no less than forty-five chapters;<sup>32</sup> and that long argument provides an excellent example of what exactly Aquinas meant by knowledge of essence. For him, understanding was a knowledge penetrating to the inward nature of a thing. Angels know such essences directly, for they have no senses; but men reach essences only through the sensible doors that surround them; they have to reason from effects to causes and from properties to natures. Hence properly human understanding is named reason, though—it is not to be forgotten—reasoning terminates in understanding inasmuch as inquiry eventually yields knowledge of essence.<sup>33</sup>

Reasoning not merely terminates in understanding; equally it begins from understanding; for unless we understood something, we never should begin to reason at all. Accordingly, to avoid an infinite regress, it is necessary to posit a *habitus principiorum*, also termed *intellectus*, which naturally we possess. Such a natural habit differs both from

<sup>30</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 14, a. 7 c.   <sup>31</sup> *In Ioan.*, cap. 1, lect. 1.   <sup>32</sup> *C. Gent.*, II, 46–90.

<sup>33</sup> *In III Sent.*, d. 25, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 1; cf. *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 12 c; *In VI Eth.*, lect. 5; *Sum. Theol.*, II–II, q. 8, a. 1 c.

acquired habit and from infused habit. The natural habit, though it has a determination from sense, results strictly from intellectual light alone; the acquired habit has in sense not only a determination but also a cause.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the natural habit is more like the infused than the acquired: the infused virtue of faith is not caused but only receives a determination from the preaching of the gospel.<sup>35</sup> This is very subtle, introspective psychology. To grasp it one has to compare two types of first principle. Thus, there is at least a certain self-evidence to the principle of inverse squares; but it is not a self-evidence that can be apprehended without an image of spatial extension. On the other hand, the evidence of the principle of non-contradiction is of a different type; with regard to it, any sensible instance is equally relevant and none is more than an illustration; for this principle does not arise from an insight into sensible data but from the nature of intelligence as such; and so its field of application is not limited to the realm of possible human experience, as the principle of inverse squares is limited to the imaginable and as certain geometrical principles to the Euclidean imaginable.

Nowhere, to my knowledge, did Aquinas offer to give a complete list of naturally known principles. His stock examples are the principle of non-contradiction and of the whole being greater than the part.<sup>36</sup> But it does not follow that the list of such principles is quite indeterminate. As there are naturally known principles, so also there is an object which we know *per se* and naturally. That object is *ens*; and only principles founded upon our knowledge of *ens* are naturally known.<sup>37</sup> The nature of our natural knowledge of *ens* already has been touched upon in the previous article,<sup>38</sup> and to it we shall have to return later in this article. If we are correct in urging that intelligibility is the ground of possibility and that possibility is possibility of being, so that the concept of being is known naturally because it proceeds from any intelligibility in act (= any intelligence in act), then it is equally clear that the principle of non-contradiction is known naturally; for that principle is the natural law of the procession of any concept from

<sup>34</sup> *In II Sent.*, d. 24, q. 2, a. 3 sol.; *De Ver.*, q. 8, a. 15 c. *fin.*

<sup>35</sup> *In III Sent.*, d. 23, q. 3, a. 2 ad 1m.

<sup>36</sup> *In II Met.*, lect. 1, §277, IV, lect. 6, §605; *In II Sent.*, d. 24, q. 2, a. 3 sol.; *et passim.*

<sup>37</sup> *C. Gent.*, II, 83 (ed. Leon., XIII, 523a 26 ff.).

<sup>38</sup> *THEOL. STUD.*, VII (1946), p. 390 f.

intelligence in act, and so it is the first principle ruling all conceptualization, as Aquinas affirmed.<sup>39</sup>

The other stock example of a naturally known principle, namely, that the whole is greater than the part, must be interpreted correctly. It is not to be taken exclusively in terms of quantitative magnitudes; for as non-contradiction is the first principle of conceptualization, so the principle of whole and part is affirmed to be the first principle of all judgment.<sup>40</sup> Judgment is a *compositio*, and its standard of reference is the *ens completum*. As matter is to form, so sense knowledge is to intellectual insight;<sup>41</sup> conceptualization joins intelligible form with common matter, to give the *res*,<sup>42</sup> the combination of both matter and form in a single object. Hence the concept is called the *primo et per se intellectum*,<sup>43</sup> since prior to conceptualization one does not know the thing as thing but only its matter by sense and its form by insight. Still, the concept is always abstract, for it omits the individual matter. Only in the further reflection connected with judging does the intellect know the *ens completum*; yet it does so with such naturalness that the foregoing analysis may seem surprising. Hence, in this sense certainly, it is naturally known that the whole is greater than the part.

This section on the synthetic element involved in judgment may be concluded with a resumé. Insight into phantasm expresses itself in a *quod quid est*. Such an expression *per se* is neither true nor false. Next, many insights into many phantasms express themselves severally in many simple quiddities; none of these singly is true or false; nor are all together true or false, for as yet they are not together. Thirdly, what brings simple quiddities together is not some change in the quiddities; it is a change in the insights whence they proceed. Insights coalesce and develop; they grow into apprehensions of intelligibility on a deeper level and with a wider sweep; and these profounder insights are expressed, at times indeed by the invention of such baffling abstractions as classicism or romanticism, education, evolution, or the *philosophia perennis*, but more commonly and more satisfactorily by the combination, as combination, of simple concepts. Fourthly, such synthetic

<sup>39</sup> *In IV Met.*, lect. 6, §605. <sup>40</sup> *Loc. cit.* <sup>41</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 8 ad 1m (2<sup>o</sup> ser.).

<sup>42</sup> *In IV Met.*, lect. 2, §553: "Sciendum est enim quod hoc nomen *Homo* imponitur a quidditate sive a natura hominis; et hoc nomen *Res* imponitur a quidditate tantum; hoc vero nomen *Ens* imponitur ab actu essendi."

<sup>43</sup> *De Pot.*, q. 9, a. 5 c.

sweep and penetration comes at first blush to the angel, but man has to reason to it; his intellect is discursive. Still it is not pure discourse. Without initial and natural acts of understanding, reasoning would never begin; nor would there be profit or term to reasoning, did it not naturally end in an act of understanding in which the multiple elements of the reasoning process come into focus in a single view. Fifthly, reasoning in its essence is simply the development of insight; it is motion towards understanding. In the concrete such development is a dialectical interplay of sense, memory, imagination, insight, definition, critical reflection, judgment; we bring to bear on the issue all the resources at our command. Still, the more intelligent we are, the more we are capable of knowing *ex pede Herculem*; then the more rapid is our progress to the goal of understanding and the less is our appeal to the stylized reasoning of text-books on formal logic. Again, once we understand, we no longer bother to reason; we take in the whole at a glance. With remarkable penetration Aquinas refused to take as reason the formal affair that modern logicians invent machines to perform. He defined reason as development in understanding; and to that, formal reasoning is but an aid.

#### JUDGMENT

The act of judgment is not merely synthesis but also positing of synthesis. The preceding section argued that the pure synthetic element in judgment arises on the level of direct understanding and consists in the development of insights into higher unities. The present section will study the more elementary aspects of the act of positing the synthesis. This act may be characterized by the fact that in it there emerges knowledge of truth. So far we have considered the mental *compositio* in its basic stage; we now have to consider knowledge of the correspondence between the mental and the real *compositio*.

The issue, then, is not knowledge as true or false but knowledge as known to be true or false. Even sense knowledge may be true or false. Just as good and bad regard the perfection of the thing, so true and false regard the perfection of a knowing. True knowing is similar, false is dissimilar, to the known. But though sense knowledge must be either similar or dissimilar to its object, it neither does nor can include knowledge of its similarity or dissimilarity. Again, a concept must be

either similar or dissimilar to its object; but intellectual operation on the level of conceptualization does not include knowledge of such similarity or dissimilarity. It is only in the second type of intellectual operation, only in the production of the second type of inner word, that intellect not merely attains similitude to its object but also reflects upon and judges that similitude.<sup>44</sup>

Such reflection presents a familiar puzzle. To judge that my knowing is similar to the known involves a comparison between the knowing and its standard; but either the standard is known or it is not known; if it is known, then really the comparison is between two items of knowledge, and one might better maintain that we know directly without any comparing; on the other hand, if the standard is not known, there cannot be a comparison. This dilemma of futility or impossibility frightens the naive realist, who consequently takes refuge in the flat affirmation that we know, and that is all there is about it. It perhaps will not be out of place to indicate at once that Aquinas met this issue in a different manner.

He admitted the necessity of a standard in judgment: "nomen mentis a mensurando est sumptum";<sup>45</sup> "iudicium autem de unoquoque habetur secundum illud quod est mensura eius."<sup>46</sup> Not only did he admit the necessity of a standard, but also he does not seem to have considered as standard either of the alternatives against which the above dilemma is operative; for his standard was neither the thing-in-itself as thing-in-itself and so as unknown, nor was it some second inner representation of the thing-in-itself coming to the aid of the first in a futile and superfluous effort to be helpful. The Thomist standard lay in the principles of the intellect itself: "nomen mentis dicitur in anima, sicut et nomen intellectus. Solum enim intellectus accipit cognitionem de rebus mensurando eas quasi ad sua principia."<sup>47</sup> Just what is meant by intellect measuring things by its own principles, can appear only in the sequel. Three points are to be considered, though only two of the three in the present section. First, something must be said on the effect of such measuring by a standard, namely, on assent and certitude. Secondly, something must be added with regard to such measurement on the common criteriological level; namely, granted that some judgments

<sup>44</sup> *In VI Met.*, lect. 4, §1232-36; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 16, a. 2 c.

<sup>45</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 1 c.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 9 c.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 1 c.

are true, how can we tell the true from the false? Or, in other words, even if no judgments really are true, still some are at least subjectively necessary; what then are the grounds and motives of such subjective necessity? Thirdly, there remains the critical issue; granted the subjective necessity of some judgments as knowable and known, how does the mind proceed from such immanent coercion to objective truth and, through truth, to knowledge of reality? In the investigation of Thomist thought on these questions we may hope to discover the nature of the procession of the second type of inner word from an *intelligere*.

On assent we may be brief. It is an act of the possible intellect.<sup>48</sup> It is, accordingly, contrasted with consent which is an act of the will. The good is in things, but the true is in the mind; consent is a motion of the will with respect to the thing, but assent is a motion of the intellect with respect to a conception.<sup>49</sup> Again, the object of an assent is either side of a contradiction. We do not assent to simple quiddities; again, we do not assent when we doubt or merely opine. We assent to first principles, to demonstrable conclusions, to the affirmations of reliable authority.<sup>50</sup> Assent occurs when we judge a conception of the thing to be true.<sup>51</sup> It must be motivated; thus intellectual light moves us to assent to first principles, and first principles in turn move us to assent to demonstrable conclusions.<sup>52</sup> In a word, assent appears to be identical with judgment but to emphasize its subjective and reflective aspects; it is the judgment as a personal act, committing the person, and a responsibility of the person; it is the judgment as based upon an apprehension of evidence, as including an awareness of its own validity, as a truth in the subject rather than as a truth absolutely and as a *medium in quo* reality is apprehended.<sup>53</sup>

Assent or judgment, on the criteriological level, is reached by a *resolutio in principia*. Unfortunately, this expression is ambiguous. At times it is connected with the contrast between the *via compositionis* and the *via resolutionis*, that is, between the different orders in which a

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 14, a. 1 c.

<sup>49</sup> *De Malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 14m.

<sup>50</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 14, a. 1 c.

<sup>51</sup> *De Malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 14m.

<sup>52</sup> *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 3, a. 1 ad 4m.

<sup>53</sup> See *In III Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 3; *De Ver.*, q. 14, a. 1; *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 3, a. 1; *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q. 2, a. 1. On truth as a *medium in quo*, cf. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 3, a. 4 ad 2m.

science might be studied. Thus one might study chemistry only in the laboratory in a series of experiments that followed the history of the development of the science; one would begin from common material objects, learn the arts of qualitative and quantitative analysis, and very gradually advance to the discovery of the periodic table and the sub-atomic structures. But one might begin at the other end with pure mathematics, then posit hypotheses regarding electrons and protons and neutrons, work out possible atomic and then molecular structures, develop a method of analysis, and finally turn for the first time to real material things. Both of these lines of approach are mere abstractions, for actual thinking oscillates dialectically between the two methods. Still, even if they are abstractions, they merit names, and the former is the *via resolutionis* while the latter is the *via compositionis*.<sup>54</sup> It is this *via resolutionis* that is meant by the *resolutio in principia*, when we are told that the right way to know that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles is not to take the proposition on faith but to resolve it as a conclusion to its first principles.<sup>55</sup>

However, there is another meaning to the expression, *resolutio in principia*, and in this case it coincides with the *via iudicii* as opposed to the *via inventionis vel inquisitionis*. This is a distinct contrast, for the *via inventionis* may be the *via compositionis*<sup>56</sup> and it may be the *via resolutionis*.<sup>57</sup> On the other hand, the *via iudicii* has to do with the reflective activity of mind assaying its knowledge. There are truths that naturally are known; they form the touch-stone of other truth; and judging is a matter of reducing other issues to the naturally known first principles.<sup>58</sup> Thus, in demonstrations certitude is attained by a

<sup>54</sup> *In II Met.*, lect. 1, §278.

<sup>55</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 12, a. 1 c; q. 15, a. 3 c.

<sup>56</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 8 c.: "Ratiocinatio humana secundum viam inquisitionis vel inventionis, procedit a quibusdam simpliciter intellectis, quae sunt prima principia."

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 9 c.: "Secundum viam inventionis, per res temporales in cognitionem devenimus aeternorum, secundum illud Apostoli, 'invisibilia Dei per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur.'"

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 8 c.: "Ratiocinatio humana . . . in via iudicii resolvendo redit ad prima principia, ad quae inventa examinat." *Ibid.*, a. 12 c.: "Ratiocinatio hominis, cum sit quidam motus, ab intellectu progreditur aliquorum, scilicet naturaliter notorum absque investigatione rationis, sicut a quodam principio immobili; et ad intellectum etiam terminatur, in quantum iudicamus per principia naturaliter nota de his quae ratiocinando inveniuntur." Cf. note 28 *supra*.

resolution to first principles;<sup>59</sup> such a resolution is the efficient cause of the certitude;<sup>60</sup> until the resolution reaches the first principles, doubt is possible, but once it has reached them, doubt is excluded.<sup>61</sup> For in the demonstrative sciences the conclusions are so related to the principles that, were the conclusions false, the principles would have to be false; hence the mind is coerced by its own natural acceptance of the principles to accept the conclusions as well.<sup>62</sup> With regard to the *quod quid est* and with regard to principles known immediately from such knowledge of quiddity, intellect is infallible; but with regard to further deductions intellect may err; still, such error is excluded absolutely, whenever a correct *resolutio in principia* is performed.<sup>63</sup>

This reflective activity of judging has its psychological conditions. People who syllogize in their sleep regularly find on awakening that they have been guilty of some fallacy.<sup>64</sup> Though dreamers may be aware that they are dreaming,<sup>65</sup> still their self-possession is never more than partial.<sup>66</sup> It is because the ligature of the senses in sleep prevents proper judging that moral fault in that state is not imputed.<sup>67</sup> The existence of such a psychological condition points to the conclusion that judging is an activity involving the whole man. Knowledge of the *quod quid est* takes us outside time and space; but the act of *compositio vel divisio* involves a return to the concrete. In particular, whatever may be hymned about eternal truths, human judgments always involve a specification of time.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, since truth exists only in a mind, and since only the mind of God is eternal, there can be but one eternal truth.<sup>69</sup> In our minds truth ordinarily consists in the application of abstract universals to sensible things, and such an application involves a temporal qualification.<sup>70</sup> Even when thought rises to the third degree of abstraction, our expressions retain a temporal connotation; and this is only natural, for the proper and proportionate object of our intellects is the nature of sensible things, and it is by an extrapolation from sensible natures that we conceive any other.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>59</sup> *In II Sent.*, d. 9, q. 1, a. 8 ad 1m.

<sup>60</sup> *In III Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 1.

<sup>61</sup> *In II Sent.*, d. 7, q. 1, a. 1 c.

<sup>62</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 22, a. 6 ad 4m; q. 24, a. 1 ad 18m.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, q. 1, a. 12 c.

<sup>64</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 8 ad 2m.

<sup>65</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 12, a. 3 ad 2m.

<sup>66</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 8 ad 2m.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, "Sed contra."

<sup>68</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 11, §749-51; *In IX Met.*, lect. 11, §1899 f.

<sup>69</sup> *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 3; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 16, a. 7.

<sup>70</sup> *C. Gent.*, II, 96, *ad fin.*, (ed. Leon., XIII, 572b 18-38).

<sup>71</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 8 c.



A free and full control of our senses as well as of our intellects is, then, a necessary condition of judgment.<sup>72</sup> But sense is relevant to judgment in another fashion, for sense is the beginning of our knowledge; what we know by sense determines judgment, though it does so decreasingly as we ascend the degrees of abstraction. Automatically, the natural scientist who neglects sense falls into error; his work is to judge things as they are presented to the senses. On the other hand, the mathematician is not to be criticized because no real plane surface touches no real sphere at just one point; the criterion of mathematical judgment is not sense but imagination. Similarly, metaphysical entities are not to be called into question because they cannot be imagined; for metaphysics transcends not only sense but imagination as well.<sup>73</sup>

Judgment, then, may be described as resulting, remotely and as it were materially, from developing insight which unites distinct quiddities into single intelligibilities, but proximately and as it were formally, from a reflective activity of reason. This reflective activity involves the whole man, and so it is conditioned psychologically by a necessity of being wide awake. Again, human knowledge has a two-fold origin—an extrinsic origin in sensitive impressions, and an intrinsic origin in intellectual light in which virtually the whole of science is pre-contained.<sup>74</sup> Hence the reflective activity whence judgment results is a return from the syntheses effected by developing insight to their sources in sense and in intellectual light. The latter element of the return is mentioned more frequently; it is described as an instance of “ratio terminatur ad intellectum”; and as the context makes clear, the *intellectus* in question is the *habitus principiorum*,<sup>75</sup> the naturally known first principles that peculiarly are an effect of intellectual light.

However, as we have seen, the phrase, “ratio terminatur ad intellectum,” has another and distinct meaning. It also refers to the fact that reason is understanding in process, that reasoning ends up as an act of understanding.<sup>76</sup> This definition of reasoning holds no less of reflective

<sup>72</sup> Discussion of this issue had its origin in the skeptical problem, How do we know we are not asleep? See *In IV Met.*, lect. 14, §698; lect. 15, §708 f. It was extended by a consideration of the resultant theological problem, How can we trust prophetic judgment performed in ecstatic trance? See *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q. 173, a. 3 c. et ad 3m; q. 172, a. 1 ad 2m; *De Ver.*, q. 12, a. 3 ad 2m.

<sup>73</sup> *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 6, a. 2 c. (ed. Mand., III, 132, f.).

<sup>74</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 6 c., *ad fin.*

<sup>75</sup> See J. Peghaire, *op. cit.*, pp. 269–72.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261 ff. Cf. note 28 *supra*.

than of direct thought; and we may infer that the reflective activity of reason returning from the synthesis of quiddities to its origin in sense and in naturally known principles terminates in a reflective act of understanding, in a single synthetic apprehension of all the motives for judgment, whether intellectual or sensitive, in a grasp of their sufficiency as motives and so of the necessity of passing judgment or assenting. For no less than the first type of inner word, the second also proceeds from an *intelligere*.<sup>77</sup> No less than the procession of the first type, the procession of the second is an *emanatio intelligibilis*.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, much more palpably in the latter than in the former is there the determination of reasonableness by sufficient reason, for clearly judgment arises only from at least supposed sufficient ground. We assent to first principles because of intellectual light, to conclusions because of their necessary connection with principles; but because of probabilities we no more than opine; for however strong probabilities may be, they are not a sufficient determinant of reason, do not coerce assent, do not yield a perfect judgment.<sup>79</sup>

The general outline of Thomist analysis of human intellect is now, perhaps, discernible. There are two levels of activity, the direct and the reflective. On the direct level there occur two types of events: there are insights into phantasm which express themselves in definitions; there is the coalescence or development of insights which provide the hypothetical syntheses of simple quiddities. On the reflective level these hypothetical syntheses are known as hypothetical; they become questions which are answered by the *resolutio in principia*. This return to sources terminates in a reflective act of understanding, which is a grasp of necessary connection between the sources and the hypothetical synthesis; from this grasp there proceeds its self-expression which is the *compositio vel divisio*, the judgment, the assent.

#### WISDOM

We have now to penetrate more deeply into our subject. The finer points of Thomist Trinitarian theory cannot be grasped from the analogy of the mere mechanism of human intellect. Again,

<sup>77</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 3, a. 2 c; q. 4, a. 2 c; *De Pot.*, q. 8, a. 1 c; q. 9, a. 5 c; *Quodl.* V, a. 9 c; *In Ioan.*, cap. 1, lect. 1.

<sup>78</sup> See the preceding article of this series, *THEOL. STUD.*, VII (1946), p. 380 ff.

<sup>79</sup> *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 3, a. 1 ad 4m (ed. Mand., III, 64).

without a consideration of profounder issues connected with the nature of judgment, it is impossible to assemble and present all the evidence to be found in Thomist writings for the interpretation of his thought that we are offering. Accordingly, an attempt is to be made to integrate with the foregoing what Aquinas has to say of the habit and virtue of wisdom. For wisdom is the virtue of right judgment.<sup>80</sup> Wisdom has to do with knowledge of the real as real,<sup>81</sup> while it is in judgment that we know reality.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, I should say that wisdom, the act of reflective understanding, and the act of judgment are related as habit, second act, and the act that proceeds from act.

There are, then, three habits of speculative intellect.<sup>83</sup> Most easily recognized of the three is the habit of science, which has to do with the demonstration of conclusions. However, demonstration does not admit indefinite regress, and so there must be some prior

<sup>80</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 1, a. 6 c.: "Sapientis est ordinare et iudicare." Cf. *ibid.*, q. 79, a. 10 ad 2m; II-II, q. 45, a. 1 c; aa. 2 et 5.

<sup>81</sup> *In IV Met.*, lect. 5, §593. Remember that first philosophy is really wisdom (*In I Met.*, lect. 3, §56).

<sup>82</sup> *In I Sent.*, d. 19. q. 5, a. 1 ad 7m. "... cum sit duplex operatio intellectus: una quarum dicitur a quibusdam imaginatio intellectus, quam Philosophus (In III de An., lect. 11) nominat intelligentiam indivisibilium, quae consistit in apprehensione quidditatis simplicis, quae alio etiam nomine formatio dicitur; alia est quam dicunt fidem, quae consistit in compositione vel divisione propositionis: prima operatio respicit quidditatem rei; secunda respicit esse ipsius." Cf. *In Boet de Trin.*, q. 5, a. 3. The *duplex operatio* corresponds to the twofold inner word; on the former, see also *In III Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 1; *De Ver.*, q. 14, a. 1; *De Spir. Creat.*, a. 9 ad 6m; *In I Periherm.*, lect. 1 et 5; *In I Post. Anal.*, lect. 1; *In IV Met.*, lect. 6, §605; VI, lect. 4, §1232. M. Gaston Rabeau in his erudite and very stimulating work, *Species: Verbum* (Bibl. thomiste, XXII [Paris: Vrin, 1938] p. 159, note 5), would urge that there must be a *species intelligibilis* of existence prior to its affirmation in judgment. His argument is that to affirm existence of essence one must first have the *species* of existence. It overlooks the fact that existence is the act, the exercise, of essence; that to know essence is to know its order to its act of existence; but, though potential knowledge of existence is contained in the grounds of existential judgment and so is prior to judgment, actual knowledge of the act of existence of any given essence cannot be had prior to the judgment; and there is no existence that is not the act of some essence. To put the point differently, M. Rabeau might argue that without a prior *species* of existence one would not know what one was affirming when one affirmed it; but this is to overlook the essentially reflective character of the act of judgment, which proceeds from a grasp of sufficient grounds for itself. A third line of consideration is the following dilemma: Is the *species* of existence one or is it many? If one what happens to the analogy of *ens*? If many, how do the many differ from the content "act of essence" where act is an analogous concept and essence is any or all essences we know?

<sup>83</sup> The following is based mainly on *In VI Eth.*, lect. 5.

habit that regards first principles. In fact, two such prior habits are affirmed, intellect and wisdom; and these two seem related much as are the two types of act already described, namely, the act of direct understanding and the act of reflective understanding. For the habit of intellect regards the first principles of demonstrations, while the habit of wisdom regards the first principles of reality. The habit of intellect is comparatively simple: grasp of first principles of demonstrations results from knowledge of their component terms; if one knows what a whole is and what a part is, one cannot but see that the whole must be greater than its part; the habit of such seeing is the habit of intellect. On the other hand, the habit of wisdom has a dual role. Principally, it regards the objective order of reality; but in some fashion it also has to do with the transition from the order of thought to the order of reality. Principally, it regards the objective order of reality; for the wise man contemplates the universal scheme of things and sees each in the perspective of its causes right up to the ultimate cause. While art orders human products, and prudence orders human conduct, science discovers the order which art prudently exploits; but there is a highest, architectonic science, a science of sciences—and that is wisdom.

Still, wisdom is not merely an ontology or natural theology; it also has some of the characteristics of an epistemology. The habit of intellect is the habit of knowing the first principles of demonstrations; but knowledge of first principles is just a function of knowledge of their component terms. If the simple apprehension of these terms is a matter of direct understanding, still it is wisdom that passes judgment on the validity of such apprehensions and so by validating the component terms validates even first principles themselves.<sup>84</sup> Again, science depends upon the habit of intellect for the theorematic web of interconnections linking conclusions with principles; but wisdom passes judgment upon that connection. Hence both intellect and science depend upon the judgment of wisdom. Intellect depends upon wisdom for the validity of the component terms of principles; science depends upon wisdom for the validity of its consequence from intellect;<sup>85</sup> so that wisdom, besides being in its own right the science of the real as real, also is “*virtus quaedam omnium scientiarum.*”<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*; *Sum. Theol.*, I-II, q. 66, a. 5 ad 4m.

<sup>85</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I-II, q. 57, a. 2 ad 2m.

<sup>86</sup> *In VI Eth.*, lect. 5.

It would seem fair to conclude that, with regard to speculative intellectual habits, Aquinas drew the same distinctions that, in the preceding section, we were led to draw with regard to speculative intellectual acts. Where Aquinas spoke of the habits of intellect, science, and wisdom, we were led to distinguish between direct understanding, the development of direct understanding, and reflective understanding. For the characteristics ascribed by Aquinas to the habits of intellect, science, and wisdom, may be ascribed also to acts of direct understanding that grasp the intelligibility of data represented schematically in the imagination, to acts of developing understanding that spin the logical network of science, and to acts of reflective understanding in which judgment is passed upon the validity of direct understanding and of its development, and thereby the transition is effected from a mental construction on an imagined basis to knowledge through truth of reality.

Acknowledgement of an epistemological element in the habit of wisdom goes back to its classical exposition in the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle. First philosophy really is wisdom; only the pretensions of the sophists led the wise to name their pursuit not wisdom itself but love of wisdom.<sup>87</sup> The comparison of lower and higher animals, of animals and men, of men of experience with men of science, brings one to the conclusion that wisdom is a matter of knowing causes.<sup>88</sup> Again, the six characteristics which common consent would attribute to the wise man may all be deduced from the assumption that wisdom is a speculative science concerned with ultimate causes and principles.<sup>89</sup> Further, it is the desire to know causes that moves men, as of old, so also today to the search and study of philosophy;<sup>90</sup> and it is the achievement of knowledge of causes that is meant by science.<sup>91</sup> Hence, the remainder of the first book of the *Metaphysics* is devoted to an examination of the four causes. But for a resumption of the objective view-point so established, one must leap to book six (E). There one finds an account of the real, followed by accounts of substance or essence,<sup>92</sup> of potency and act,<sup>93</sup> of unity and opposition,<sup>94</sup> and of the separate substances.<sup>95</sup> But the intervening books two to five are gnoseological, methodological, almost epistemological. Knowledge of

<sup>87</sup> *In I Met.*, lect. 3, §56.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 1.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 2.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 3.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 4, §70.

<sup>92</sup> *In VII et VIII Met.*

<sup>93</sup> *In IX Met.*

<sup>94</sup> *In X Met.*

<sup>95</sup> *In XII Met.*

causes has to be true. But truth is peculiar; no one is totally without it, but no one possesses it in full.<sup>96</sup> Again, no one can make any great contribution to it; but many in collaboration, especially in the collaboration that extends over time and operates through the accumulations of a stable culture, can assemble a rather notable achievement.<sup>97</sup> One may say that philosophers are in the position of people walking the streets; to know the façades of houses is easy, but to know their interiors difficult. So, too, there are palpable truths and hidden truths.<sup>98</sup> In particular, knowledge of the separate substances is hard to come by, for in their regard we are just owls in daylight,<sup>99</sup> for the separate substances are pure intelligibilities, but our intellects are built to know intelligibility, not in its pure form, but only as informing sensible matter.

Still, the problem is not desperate; just as there exist dialectical techniques, unknown even at the time of Socrates, by which we can determine the methodology of the study of contraries without previous knowledge of their essences,<sup>100</sup> so, too, may we approach the larger issue of universal reality even though much of it is hidden from us. Thus, truth and reality are parallel: what has a cause of its reality, also has a cause of its truth;<sup>101</sup> again, as the reality that grounds other reality is the more real, so the truth that grounds other truth is the more true,<sup>102</sup> as an infinite regress in the demonstration of truths is untenable, so also is an infinite regress in the grounding of one reality by another.<sup>103</sup> There is, then, something of which the reality is most real and the truth most true, and it is the object of wisdom.<sup>104</sup>

There follow methodological considerations. Different sciences have to be tackled in different manners.<sup>105</sup> The approach to metaphysics lies in collecting and completing the list of metaphysical problems.<sup>106</sup> Such a list leads one to the definition of first philosophy: it is concerned with ultimate reality. But the science dealing with ultimate reality also will deal with any instance of the real as real,<sup>107</sup> so that first philosophy is the science of being, substance and accident,

<sup>96</sup> *In II Met.*, lect. 1, §275. <sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, §276 <sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, §277. <sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, §285.

<sup>100</sup> *Met.*, M, 4 (1078b 25 ff.).

<sup>101</sup> *In II Met.*, lect. 2, §298.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, §292 ff.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 3 et 4.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 2, §292 ff.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 5.

<sup>105</sup> *In III Met.*, lect. 1-15.

<sup>107</sup> *In IV Met.*, lect. 5, §593.

unity, multiplicity, and opposition.<sup>108</sup> Nor is this the whole story. The first philosopher has to treat, not only of the real as real, but also of the first principles of demonstrations.<sup>109</sup> He is not to skimp this task. He must be satisfied with the validity of the principles of non-contradiction and excluded middle.<sup>110</sup> He must envisage the problem of appearance and reality.<sup>111</sup> Above all, he must scrutinize each of the terms entering into the first principles which intellect grasps and on which his science rests,<sup>112</sup> for "cognitio et veritas principiorum indemonstrabilium dependet ex ratione terminorum. . . Cognoscere autem rationem entis et non entis, et totius et partis, et aliorum quae consequuntur ad ens, ex quibus sicut ex terminis constituuntur principia indemonstrabilia, pertinet ad sapientiam."<sup>113</sup>

It is to be observed that the Aristotelian concept of wisdom, or first philosophy, while it does contain an epistemological element, still can hardly be said to raise the critical problem. Aristotle was content with a generalization of the criteriological issue. For him it was enough that one cannot but think according to the principle of non-contradiction, and that that impossibility was only part of the more general impossibility that is known through knowing the principle itself.<sup>114</sup> Again, the wise man knows the difference between appearance and reality. He is ready to refute the sophistries that would confound the two, but he is not prepared to discuss how our immanent activities also contain a transcendence. Aristotelian gnoseology is brilliant but it is not complete: knowledge is by identity; the act of the thing as sensible is the act of sensation; the act of the thing as intelligible is the act of understanding; but the act of the thing as real is the *esse naturale* of the thing and, except in divine self-knowledge, that *esse* is not identical with knowing it.

But, while it should be granted that Aristotle was content with criteriology, it remains that he opened a door to further speculation

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 1-4.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 5, §595.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 5-10, 16, 17.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 11-15.

<sup>112</sup> *In V Met.*, lect. 1-22.

<sup>113</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I-II, q. 66, a. 5 ad 4m.

<sup>114</sup> *In IV Met.*, lect. 6, §606: "Ex hoc enim quod impossibile est esse et non esse, sequitur quod impossibile sit contraria simul inesse eidem, ut infra dicitur. Et ex hoc quod contraria non possunt simul inesse, sequitur quod homo non potest habere contrarias opiniones, et per consequens quod non possit opinari contradictoria esse vera, ut ostensum est."

along the same line. Such speculation may appear to modern Schoolmen a very alien thing, a fascinating but perilous distraction born of Cartesian doubt and Kantian criticism. But Aquinas could have had no such prejudice; his predecessors were neither Descartes nor Kant but Aristotle and Augustine. If the very logic of the Aristotelian position makes it clear that our knowledge of forms, whether sensible or intelligible, can be accounted for by identity, still the same logic forces the conclusion that our knowledge of essence and of existence has to be differently grounded. "Sensibile in actu est sensus in actu, et intelligibile in actu est intellectus in actu. Ex hoc enim aliquid sentimus vel intelligimus, quod intellectus noster vel sensus informatur in actu per speciem sensibilis vel intelligibilis. Et secundum hoc tantum sensus vel intellectus aliud est a sensibili vel intelligibili, quia utrumque est in potentia."<sup>114a</sup> But the problem of knowledge, once it is granted that knowledge is by identity, is knowledge of the other. As long as faculty and object are in potency to knowing and being known, there is as yet no knowledge. Inasmuch as faculty and object are in act identically, there is knowledge indeed as perfection but not yet knowledge of the other. Reflection is required, first, to combine sensible data with intellectual insight in the expression of a *quod quid est*, of an essence that prescind from its being known, and then, on a deeper level, to affirm the existence of that essence. Only by reflection on the identity of act can one arrive at the difference of potency. And since reflection is not an identity, the Aristotelian theory of knowledge by identity is incomplete.<sup>115</sup>

But it is well to grasp just where the strength of the Aristotelian position lies. One might side with Plato and say knowing of its nature is knowing the other. But this brings up insoluble difficulties with regard to knowledge in the absolute being; for even Plato was forced to admit, in virtue of his assumptions, that absolute being, if it knows, must undergo motion.<sup>116</sup> That difficulty does not exist

<sup>114a</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 14, a. 2 c.

<sup>115</sup> Hence to the Aristotelian theorem of knowledge by immateriality Aquinas had to add a further theorem of knowledge by intentionality. The difference between the two appears clearly in the case of one immaterial angel knowing another immaterial angel without the former's knowledge being the latter's reality. See *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 56, a. 2 ad 3m.

<sup>116</sup> Plato, *Sophistes*, 248 e.



for the Aristotelian. Maintain that knowing is identity, and it follows that "in his quae sunt sine materia idem est intelligens et intellectum."<sup>117</sup> The unmoved mover may remain unmoved and yet know, because, with knowing an identity, the being and knowing of the absolute coincide.

Aquinas was quite aware of this profound cleavage between Platonist and Aristotelian gnoseology: "Et hoc quidem oportet verum esse secundum sententiam Aristotelis, qui ponit quod intelligere contingit per hoc quod intellectum in actu sit unum cum intellectu in actu. . . . Secundum autem positionem Platonis, intelligere fit per contactum intellectus ad rem intelligibilem. . . ." <sup>118</sup> Quite clearly, Aquinas opted systematically for the Aristotelian position. It was a problem for him that God should know anything distinct from the divine essence,<sup>119</sup> and that problem he solved by appealing to the analogy of the human inner word.<sup>120</sup> Rational reflection has to bear the weight of the transition from knowledge as a perfection to knowledge as of the other.

The Thomist validation of rational reflection is connected with the Augustinian vision of eternal truth. Augustine had argued that we know truth not by looking without but by looking within ourselves. Still, we all may know the same truths, and you do not know them by looking within me, nor I by looking within you, so that knowledge of truth is not merely a matter of looking each within himself. Our inward glance really is directly upward to what is above us, and it is in a vision of one eternal truth that all can find the same truth. Now the Platonism of this position is palpable, for its ultimate answer is not something that we are but something that we see; it supposes that knowledge essentially is not identity with the known but some spiritual contact or confrontation with the known. Such a view Aquinas could not accept. One knows by what one is. Our knowledge of truth is not to be accounted for by any vision or contact or confrontation with the other, however lofty and sublime. The ultimate ground of our knowing is indeed God, the eternal Light; but

<sup>117</sup> *De Anima*, III, 4 (430a 3 f.). Cf. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 87, a. 1 ad 3m.

<sup>118</sup> *C. Gent.*, II, 98, ad fin. (ed. Leon., XIII, 582b 13, 22).

<sup>119</sup> *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 2 ad 1m; *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 3 ad 1m; *C. Gent.*, I, 51, "Adhuc"; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 14, a. 5 ad 2m.

<sup>120</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 3, a. 2; *C. Gent.*, I, 53; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 15, a. 2 c.

the reason why we know is within us. It is the light of our own intellects; and by it we can know because "ipsum enim lumen intellectuale quod est in nobis, nihil est aliud quam quaedam participata similitudo luminis aeterni."<sup>121</sup>

The act of the thing as sensible is the act of sensation; the act of the thing as intelligible is the act of understanding; but we can proceed from these identities to valid concepts of essence and true affirmations of existence, because such procession is in virtue of our intellectual light, which is a participation of eternal Light. Such is the Thomist ontology of knowledge. But is there also a Thomist epistemology? It is all very well to validate rational reflection by attributing the light of our intellects to the eternal Light that is God. But such a procedure presupposes that already we know validly both ourselves and God. As an ontology of knowing it is satisfactory; as an epistemology, it is null and void. Is one to say that Aquinas was innocent of modern, critical complications? Or is one to say that, since we know by what we are, so also we know that we know by knowing what we are? While we cannot here discuss that issue to the satisfaction of epistemologists, neither can we omit it entirely; for it is the highest point in rational reflection, and it was in rational reflection that Aquinas found the created analogy to the eternal procession of the divine Word.<sup>122</sup>

Now there happens to be a text in which Aquinas did maintain that our knowledge of truth is derived from our knowledge of ourselves. Sense knowledge, because unreflective, is irrelevant to the procession of the Word.<sup>123</sup> For exactly the same reason, namely, because it is not reflective, sense does not include knowledge of truth. On the other hand, intellect does include knowledge of truth because it does reflect upon itself: "secundum hoc cognoscit veritatem intellectus quod supra se ipsum reflectitur."<sup>124</sup> Sense knowledge is true; sense is aware of its own acts of sensation. But sense, though true and though conscious, none the less is not conscious of its own truth; for sense does not know its own nature, nor the nature of its acts, nor their proportion to their objects. On the other hand, intellectual knowledge is not merely true but also aware of its own truth.

<sup>121</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 5 c.

<sup>123</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>122</sup> *C. Gent.*, IV, 11.

<sup>124</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 9 c.

It is not merely aware empirically of its acts but also reflects upon their nature; to know the nature of its acts, it has to know the nature of their active principle, which it itself is; and if it knows its own nature, intellect also knows its own proportion to knowledge of reality. Further, this difference between sense and intellect is a difference in reflective capacity. In knowing, we go outside ourselves; in reflecting, we return in upon ourselves. But the inward return of sense is incomplete, stopping short at a merely empirical awareness of the fact of sensation. But the intellectual substance returns in upon itself completely. It is not content with mere empirical awareness; it penetrates to its own essence.<sup>125</sup>

I cannot take this passage as solely an affirmation of the reflective character found in every judgment.<sup>126</sup> Not in every judgment do we reflect to the point of knowing our own essence and from that conclude our capacity to know truth. Rather, in this passage Aquinas subscribed, not obscurely, to the program of critical thought: to know truth we have to know ourselves and the nature of our knowledge, and the method to be employed is reflection. Still, it is one thing to subscribe to the critical program and quite another to execute it; to what extent such execution is to be found in the writings of Aquinas, is the issue next before us. In tackling it, we shall have in view another end as well, namely, a justification of the procedure followed in these articles, a presentation of the evidence for our belief that the Thomist theory of intellect had an empirical and introspective basis.

#### SELF-KNOWLEDGE OF SOUL

From Aristotle Aquinas derived a method of empirical introspection. In the second book of the *De Anima*, after defining soul in general, there arose the problem of distinguishing different kinds of soul. But souls differ by difference in their potencies. Since potency is knowable only inasmuch as it is in act, to know the different potencies it is necessary to know their acts. Again, since one act is distinguished from another by the difference of their respective objects, to know different kinds of acts it is necessary to discriminate between different kinds of objects. Knowledge of soul, then, begins from a distinction

<sup>125</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>126</sup> Cf. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 16, a. 2, or *In VI Met.*, lect. 4, §1236.

of objects; specifying objects leads to a discrimination between different kinds of act; different kinds of act reveal difference of potency; and the different combinations of potencies lead to knowledge of the different essences that satisfy the generic definition of soul.<sup>127</sup>

Thus the human soul does not know itself by a direct grasp of its own essence; that is the prerogative of God and of the angels.<sup>128</sup> Did man know his own soul in such immediate fashion, the roundabout process through objects, acts, and potencies would be superfluous.<sup>129</sup> The fact is that human intellect is *in genere intelligibile* just a potency; unless its potency is reduced to act, it neither understands nor is understood.<sup>130</sup> On the other hand, the acquisition of an understanding of anything, of any habitual scientific knowledge, makes our intellects habitually capable not only of understanding the scientific object in question but also of understanding itself.<sup>131</sup> We can know what understanding is by understanding anything and reflecting on the nature of our understanding; for the *species* of the object understood also is the *species* of the understanding intellect. It was by scrutinizing both the object understood and the understanding intellect that Aristotle investigated the nature of possible intellect. And, indeed, we can have no knowledge of our intellects except by reflecting on our own acts of understanding.<sup>132</sup> Evidently, the Aristotelian and Thomist program is not a matter of considering ocular vision and then conceiving an analogous spiritual vision that is attributed to a spiritual faculty named intellect. On the contrary, it is a process of introspection that discovers the act of insight into phantasm and the *quod quid est* as an expression of the insight, that almost catches intellect in its forward movement towards the quiddity and in its backward reference to sense for the concrete realization of the quiddity.<sup>133</sup>

If the *Commentary on the De Anima* adds to the Aristotelian text the enrichment due to a fully developed metaphysical system, there is to be found in the independent Thomist writings not a few additional points of introspective psychology. Of these the most fundamental is the distinction between what we should call an empirical awareness

<sup>127</sup> *In II de An.*, lect. 6, §304-308.

<sup>128</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 11, §726.

<sup>129</sup> *In II de An.*, lect. 6, §308.

<sup>130</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 11, §725.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 8, §704.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 11, §724.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 8, §713.

of our inner acts and a scientific grasp of their nature. The scientific grasp is in terms of objects, acts, potencies, essence of soul. It is reached only by study; it is a matter of which many are ignorant, on which many have erred; it is universal knowledge; it is knowledge that we attain only discursively, but angels and devils intuitively, so that even the devils know the essence of our souls better than we do ourselves.<sup>134</sup> This scientific knowledge is what philosophers acquire by arguing from the universality of concepts to the immateriality and other properties of the soul;<sup>135</sup> it is the knowledge that Aquinas himself set forth in masterly fashion in the long argument that begins in chapter forty-six of the second book of the *Contra Gentiles* to end only in chapter ninety. On the other hand, empirical knowledge of our own souls is knowledge of the existence of their acts,<sup>136</sup> knowledge of what is proper to the individual,<sup>137</sup> knowledge of the inner movements of the heart which are hidden from the intuitive, but exclusively essential, knowledge of the devils.<sup>138</sup> Of this self-knowledge Aristotle spoke in the *Ethics* when he remarked that one perceives one's own seeing and hearing and moving and understanding.<sup>139</sup> When such knowledge is in act, it is a matter of our knowing ourselves as in act by our acts;<sup>140</sup> for it is not the eye that sees nor the intellect that understands, but the man by means of his eyes sees and by means of his intellect understands.<sup>141</sup> On the other hand, empirical self-knowledge may be considered not as act but as habit. Now, just as we habitually know we possess a habit of science not by a further habit but simply by our ability to produce the acts of the habit, similarly for the habitual possession of empirical self-knowledge we need nothing more than the soul itself, which is present to itself and capable of eliciting conscious acts.<sup>142</sup>

The relation of empirical to scientific self-knowledge is marked clearly enough; the former is the basis of the latter. The appeal to

<sup>134</sup> *In I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 4, a. 5 sol.; *In III Sent.*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 2 ad 3m; *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 8 c; *C. Gent.*, II, 75 (ed. Leon., XIII, 475a 45 ff.); *C. Gent.*, III, 46; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 87, aa. 1-4; and for the devils' knowledge of us, *De Malo*, q. 16, a. 8 ad 7m.

<sup>135</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 8 c.

<sup>136</sup> *In III Sent.*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 2 ad 3m.

<sup>137</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 8.

<sup>138</sup> *De Malo*, q. 16, a. 8 ad 7m.

<sup>139</sup> *Ethics*, IX, 9 (1170a 29-34).

<sup>140</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 8.

<sup>141</sup> *De Spir. Creat.*, a. 10 ad 15m; cf. *In I de An.*, lect. 10, §152; *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 6 ad 3m; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 75, a. 2 ad 2m.

<sup>142</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 8; cf. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 87 a. 1.

experience in Thomist psychological theory, though without the benefit of a parade of modern methodology, none the less is frequent and even not inconspicuous. The standard argument against the Averroists was the affirmation, "hic homo intelligit": deny such a proposition and, since you too are an instance of *hic homo*, you put yourself out of court as one who understands nothing; but admit it and you must also admit that each individual has his own private *intellectus possibilis* by which he understands.<sup>143</sup> Equally in affirming the immanence of an agent intellect in each of us, the appeal to experience is employed: if we had no experience of abstracting intelligibilities and receiving them in act, then it never would occur to us to talk and argue about them.<sup>144</sup> Again, with regard to our knowledge of separate substances, the issue is settled "secundum Aristotelis sententiam quam magis experimur," and "secundum modum cognitionis nobis expertum."<sup>145</sup> Finally, the introspective method employed in this and the preceding article may be said to rest upon an explicit statement: "anima humana intelligit se ipsum per suum intelligere, quod est actus proprius eius, perfecte demonstrans virtutem eius et naturam";<sup>146</sup> grasp the nature of your acts of understanding and you have the key to the whole of Thomist psychology. Indeed, you also have what Aquinas considered the key to Aristotelian psychology: "unde et supra Philosophus per ipsum intelligere et per illud quod intelligitur, scrutatus est naturam intellectus possibilis."<sup>147</sup>

But, I think, one can go further than this. For Aquinas the term "intellectual light" is not simply a synonym for the Aristotelian term "agent intellect." He debated with the Avicennists whether agent intellect was immanent or transcendent. But he never thought

<sup>143</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 7, §690: "Manifestum est enim quod hic homo intelligit. Si enim hoc negetur, tunc dicens hanc opinionem non intelligit aliquid, et ideo non est audiendus: si autem intelligit, oportet quod aliquo formaliter intelligat. Hic autem est intellectus possibilis, de quo Philosophus dicit: 'Dico autem intellectum quo intelligit et opinatur anima.' " Cf. *In II Sent.*, d. 17, q. 2, a. 1; *De Unit. Intellectus*, §71-79; *De Anima*, a. 2; *De Spir. Creat.*, a. 2; *Comp. Theol.*, c. 85; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 76, a. 1 c.

<sup>144</sup> *C. Gent.*, II, 76 (ed. Leon., XIII, 482a 35 ff.); *De Spir. Creat.*, a. 10 c; *De Anima*, a. 5 c; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 4 c., *ad fin.*

<sup>145</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 88, a. 1 c.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 2 ad 3m. Note that *intelligere* is the *proprius actus* not only of the human soul but of the separate substances as well (*C. Gent.*, II, 97). Also, that repeatedly God is *ipsum intelligere*.

<sup>147</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 9, §724.

of debating whether intellectual light is immanent or transcendent. Indeed, when he argued that agent intellect was immanent, he was arguing for an identification of agent intellect with the ground of intellectual light. Hence he could frame his conclusion in this significant fashion: "unde nihil prohibet ipsi lumini animae nostrae attribueri actionem intellectus agentis; et praecipue cum Aristoteles intellectum agentem comparet lumini."<sup>148</sup> Both the nature of agent intellect and, in particular, Aristotle's comparison of agent intellect with light, lead one to identify agent intellect with the immanent cause of what we call the flash of understanding, the light of reason. What is, then, this *lumen animae nostrae*?

First, the mere fact that one is understanding something, does not make it inevitable that one reflexly directs one's attention to the intellectual light involved in the act.<sup>149</sup> Secondly, whenever an object is understood, it is understood only as illustrated by the light of agent intellect and received in possible intellect. Just as corporal light is seen in seeing any color, so also intelligible light is seen in apprehending any intelligibility. Again, just as corporal light is seen, not as an object, but in knowing an object, so also intelligible light is seen, not as an object, but "in ratione medii cognoscendi."<sup>150</sup> Thirdly, intellectual light is a medium not in the sense that it is a known object by means of which another object is known; it is a medium in the sense that it makes other objects knowable. Just as the eye need not see light except in so far as colors are illuminated, so a medium in the given sense need not be known in itself but only in other known objects.<sup>151</sup> Fourthly, with these restrictions we may say that the light of agent intellect is known *per se ipsum*. The soul does not know its own essence by its own essence; but in some fashion it does know its own intellectual light by its own intellectual light, not indeed to the extent that that light is an object, but inasmuch as that light is the element making *species* intelligible in act.<sup>152</sup>

There is, then, a manner in which the light of our souls enters within the range of introspective observation. The most conspicuous instance seems to be our grasp of first principles. Scientific con-

<sup>148</sup> *C. Gent.*, II, 77; *ad fin.*

<sup>149</sup> *Quodl.* X, a. 7 ad 2m.

<sup>150</sup> *In I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 4, a. 5 sol.

<sup>151</sup> *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. I, a. 3 ad 1m (ed. Mand., III, 37).

<sup>152</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 8 ad 10m (2<sup>no</sup> ser.).

clusions are accepted because they are implied by first principles; but the assent to first principles has to have its motive too, for assent is rational; and that motive is the light that naturally is within us.<sup>153</sup> Again, the light of agent intellect is said to manifest first principles, to make them evident.<sup>154</sup> In that light the whole of science virtually is ours from the very start.<sup>155</sup> Just as conclusions are convincing because principles are convincing, so our intellectual light derives its efficacy from the *prima lux* which is God.<sup>156</sup> Hence the divine and the human teachers may collaborate without any confusion of role. The human teacher teaches inasmuch as he reduces conclusions to principles; but all the certitude we possess, whether of conclusions or of principles, comes from the intellectual light within us by which God speaks to us.<sup>157</sup>

However, the experienced effects of intellectual light as the evidence of principles, the motive of assent, the immanent ground of certitude, are not the only instances in which intellectual light, in its indirect fashion, enters into the range of consciousness. It is constitutive of our very power of understanding.<sup>158</sup> It is the principle of inquiry and of discourse; man reasons discoursing and inquiring by his intellectual light, which is clouded with temporal continuity because man obtains his knowledge from sense and imagination.<sup>159</sup> As the principle of inquiry, intellectual light is the source of that search for causes which reveals the natural desire of man for the beatific vision.<sup>160</sup> Our knowledge has a twofold source—an extrinsic origin on the level of sense, but an intrinsic origin in the light of our intellects.<sup>161</sup> Sense is only the *materia causae* of our knowledge.<sup>162</sup> The object of understanding is supplied and offered to us, as it were materially, by the imagination; formally, as object of understanding, it is completed by intellectual light.<sup>163</sup> Perhaps, agent intellect is to be given the

<sup>153</sup> *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 3, a. 1 ad 4 m (ed. Mand., III, 64).

<sup>154</sup> *In III Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, a. 1 ad 4m; cf. *C. Gent.*, III, 46, "Amplius."

<sup>155</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 6 c., *ad fin.*: "In lumine intellectus agentis nobis est quodammodo omnis scientia originaliter indita."

<sup>156</sup> *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 1, a. 3 ad 1m (ed. Mand., III, 37).

<sup>157</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 11, a. 1 ad 13m.

<sup>158</sup> *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 1, a. 3 c (ed. Mand., III, 35): "... lux naturalis, per quam constituitur vis intellectiva, ..."

<sup>159</sup> *In II Sent.*, d. 3, q. 3, a. 4 ad 4m.

<sup>160</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I-II, q. 3, a. 8 c.

<sup>161</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 6 c. *ad fin.*

<sup>162</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 6 c. *ad fin.*

<sup>163</sup> *In II Sent.*, d. 20, q. 2, a. 2 ad 2m. One might suggest that sense data as not illu-



function of the subconscious effect of ordering the phantasm to bring about the right schematic image that releases the flash of understanding; for agent intellect is to phantasm, as art is to artificial products.<sup>164</sup> When the soul is separated from the body, there are neither senses nor imagination; then *species*, bestowed by the separate substances, are received directly in the possible intellect; but the power of understanding is had by the agent intellect.<sup>165</sup>

With regard to the act of understanding itself, at all times a distinction is drawn between possible intellect, habit of science, and the actuation of this habit; but in earlier writings there is a further distinction introduced within the habit of science between an element of light and, on the other hand, *species* as element of determination.<sup>166</sup> Though this distinction does not recur in the same form in later writings, equivalent affirmations are to be found. Both agent intellect and phantasm concur in producing the act of understanding, but in their coöperation each has its respective role. Just as corporal light, it was supposed, did not include in itself the various colors of the spectrum but only reduced to act either the colors themselves or the *diaphanum* through which the colors were perceived, similarly agent intellect did not include the specific determinations of the various natures of material things but only was capable of making any such nature intelligibile in act.<sup>167</sup> Hence, while phantasm caused in possible intellect the determination of the act of understanding, agent intellect caused the element of immaterialization, of intelligibility in act.<sup>168</sup>

This distinction seems relevant to the distinction between the

minated by agent intellect are the mere data of the positivist, whereas sense data as illuminated are partial knowledge of hylemorphically conceived reality. For the positivist, any knowledge apart from sense data is merely subjective; for the Aristotelian, intellectual knowledge is as objective as sensitive; and the illumination of phantasm is the assumption that there is an intelligibility to be known.

<sup>164</sup> *De Anima*, a. 5 c. It would seem that this influence of agent intellect on phantasm is mediated by the sensitive potency named the *cogitativa*. See *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 78, a. 4 ob. 5a et ad 5m.

<sup>165</sup> *De Anima*, a. 15 ad 9m.

<sup>166</sup> *In I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 5, a. 1 ad 1m; *In III Sent.*, d. 14, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 2; *ibid.*, sol. 3; *Quodl.* VII, a. 1, *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 6; q. 18, a. 8 ad 3m.

<sup>167</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 10, §739; *De Malo*, q. 16, a. 12 ad 1m et ad 2m.

<sup>168</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 10, §737 ff.; *C. Gent.*, II, 77; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 4 ad 4m; *De Spir. Creat.*, a. 10 ad 4m; *De An.*, a. 5 c.

twofold inner word, between concept in the narrower modern sense and, on the other hand, judgment. For we read that human intellectual operation is perfected in two manners, by intelligible *species* and by intellectual light; in virtue of the former we have our apprehensions of things; but in virtue of the latter we pass judgment upon our apprehensions.<sup>169</sup> Now we have seen that the inner word, whether definition or judgment, is the self-expression of the self-possessed act of understanding: the definition is the expression both of and by an insight into phantasm; the judgment is the expression both of and by a reflective act of understanding. On the division enounced above, these two types of expression have their grounds respectively in the two elements of determination and light found in the act of understanding. Inasmuch as the act of understanding grasps its own conditions as the understanding of this sort of thing, it abstracts from the irrelevant and expresses itself in a definition of essence. But inasmuch as the act of understanding grasps its own transcendence-in-immanence, its quality of intellectual light as a participation of the divine and uncreated Light, it expresses itself in judgment, in a positing of truth, in the affirmation or negation of reality.

Now this relation of intellectual light to judgment goes beyond the Aristotelian theory of agent intellect. Aristotle had argued that, since we understand now in potency and now in act, there must be in us both an active and a passive principle of understanding.<sup>170</sup> This active principle is like a habit, but as Aquinas noted, it is not to be confused with the *habitus principiorum*.<sup>171</sup> Unlike Plato, Aristotle did not consider that the essences of material things existed separately, and were of themselves intelligible in act; hence he had to have a cause to effect their immaterialization, to reduce them from potential to actual intelligibility.<sup>172</sup> Like the possible intellect, the agent intellect is separable, impassible, unconfused with matter; but as well it is of its nature ever in act.<sup>173</sup> Though it is a participation of the intellectual light of the separate substances, still it is an immanent

<sup>169</sup> *De Malo*, q. 16, a. 12 c.

<sup>170</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 10, §728.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, §729; cf. *In II Sent.*, d. 17, q. 2, a. 1 sol.; *De An.*, a. 5 c.

<sup>172</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 10, §730 f.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, §732 f. Cf. *In II Sent.*, d. 3, q. 3, a. 4 ad 4m; *In III Sent.*, d. 14, q. 1, a. 1, sol. 2 ad 2m; *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 8 ad 11m; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 54, a. 1 ad 1m.

and private possession of each of us.<sup>174</sup> In a word, Aquinas had no scruples about fitting the Aristotelian text into a context of contemporary medieval speculation; but even so he did not manage in his *Commentary* to relate agent intellect to judgment.

That relation is affirmed clearly and repeatedly in his independent writings. For it is the light of intellect that replaces the Augustinian vision of eternal truth; and regularly one reads that we know, we understand, we judge all things by a created light within us which is a participation, a resultant, a similitude, an impression of the first and eternal light and truth.<sup>175</sup> Nor is the relation of intellectual light to judgment confined to such general affirmations. The range of a cognitional potency is fixed by the light under which it operates: ocular vision extends to all colors; the human soul can know all that falls under the light of agent intellect; the prophet knows by the divine light that manifests anything, corporal or spiritual, human or divine.<sup>176</sup> Knowing truth is a use or act of intellectual light,<sup>177</sup> and so judgment occurs according to the force of that light.<sup>178</sup> Hence the prophet judges according to an infused light, and the essence of prophecy lies in such judgment; for a prophet need not be the recipient of a revelation but only pass judgment on data revealed to another; such was the case of Joseph, who judged Pharaoh's dreams;<sup>179</sup> such also perhaps was the case of Solomon, who judged with greater certitude and from a divine instinct what naturally is known about nature and human morals.<sup>180</sup>

In particular, there is a relevance of intellectual light to the critical problem, for it is by intellectual light that we can get beyond mere relativity to immutable truth and that we can discern appearance from reality.<sup>181</sup> As already has been seen, it is by reflection on the nature of intellect and especially on the nature of the active principle

<sup>174</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 10, §734-39.      <sup>175</sup> *In IV Sent.*, d. 49, q. 2, a. 7 ad 9m; *Quodl. X*, a. 7 c.; *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 1, a. 3 ad 1m; *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 4 ad 5m; q. 10, a. 8 c. *ad fin.*; q. 11, a. 1 c. *ad fin.*; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 11 ad 3m; q. 16, a. 6 ad 1m; q. 84, a. 5; q. 88, a. 3 ad 1m; *De Spir. Creat.*, a. 10 c. et ad 8m.

<sup>176</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q. 171, a. 3 c; cf. I-II, q. 109, a. 1 c.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 109, a. 1 c. *init.*

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 173, a. 2 c.

<sup>179</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 12, a. 7 c.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 12 c.

<sup>181</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 6 ad 1m: "Requiritur enim lumen intellectus agentis per quod immutabiliter veritatem in rebus mutabilibus cognoscamus, et discernamus ipsas res a similitudinibus rerum."

of intellectual light that we come to know truth.<sup>182</sup> But it is somewhat hazardous to attempt to specify the exact course of such reflection. Aquinas himself did not offer an account of the procedure he would follow; so it is only by piecing together scattered materials that one can arrive at an epistemological position that may be termed Thomistic but hardly Thomist. However, two basic points may be thought to be sufficiently clear. Epistemological reflection will involve a sort of reasoning, but that reasoning is not a deduction, since no premises may be assumed, but rather a development of understanding by which we come to grasp just how it is that our minds are proportionate to knowledge of reality. This point follows from the analysis of judgment already given; it squares with the nature of the problem; it need not be enlarged. The other point has to do with the precise content of the act of reflective and critical understanding. It should seem that this act consists in a grasp of the native infinity of intellect; for on the one hand, Thomist thought does stress that native infinity, and, on the other hand, from such infinity one can grasp the capacity of the mind to know reality.

Thomist thought stresses the native infinity of intellect; for the nature of intellect as active is *potens omnia facere*; as passive, it is *potens omnia fieri*. This is not merely an Aristotelian commonplace which Aquinas endlessly repeated; he also knew how to transpose and apply it in rather startling fashion. Any finite act of understanding has to be a *patis*, because intellect as intellect is infinite.<sup>183</sup> Because of its infinite range, the object of intellect must be *ens*;<sup>184</sup> this object cannot be unknown;<sup>185</sup> it is known *per se* and naturally.<sup>186</sup> As there are different types of intellect, so there are different modes of knowing *ens*. Since understanding is by identity and *ens* includes all reality, only infinite understanding can be the direct and immediate apprehension of the proper object of intellect, *ens intelligibile*.<sup>187</sup> Man's intellect is potency. But as the hand is the instrument capable of using any instrument, so the human soul is the form capable of

<sup>182</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 9 c.

<sup>183</sup> *In III Sent.*, d. 14, q. 1, a. 1, qc. 2 c; *C. Gent.*, II, 98; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 2 c.

<sup>184</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 3 ad 4m; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 7 c.

<sup>185</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 11, a. 1 ad 3m.

<sup>186</sup> *C. Gent.*, II, 83 (ed. Leon., XIII, 523a 26 ff.).

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, 98.

receiving any form.<sup>188</sup> While God is *totum ens* without qualification,<sup>189</sup> man is *totum ens* only *quodammodo*.<sup>190</sup> Hence in his direct acts of understanding man enters into identity with the intelligibility of only this or that material nature; it is in an act of reflective understanding in which the nature of understanding is itself understood as *potens omnia facere et fieri*, that man becomes capable of grasping the analogous concept of *ens*. For to know being and not-being, whole and part, and the other concepts that flow from the concept of being, pertains not to the direct habit of intellect nor the derived habit of science but to the reflective and critical habit of wisdom.<sup>191</sup> For the concept of *ens* is not just another concept, another *quod quid est*, another but most general essence; the concept of *ens* is any concept, any *quod quid est*, any essence, when considered not as some highest common factor nor again simply in itself but in its relation to its own *actus essendi*,<sup>192</sup> which is known in the act of judgment.<sup>193</sup> Only on condition that human intellect is *potens omnia facere et fieri* is the concept of all concepts really commensurate with reality—really the concept of *ens*. On the other hand, if intellect is *potens omnia facere et fieri*, then since we know by what we are, *per se* and naturally we do know *ens*, further, since we know we know by knowing what we are, it is by reflection on the nature of intellect that we know our capacity for truth and for knowledge of reality.<sup>194</sup> But the native infinity of intellect as intellect is a datum of rational consciousness. It appears in that restless spirit of inquiry, that endless search for causes which, Aquinas argued, can rest and end only in a supernatural vision of God.<sup>195</sup> It appears in the absolute exigence of reflective thought which will assent only if the possibility of the contradictory

<sup>188</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 13, §790.

<sup>189</sup> *C. Gent.*, II, 98.

<sup>190</sup> *In III de An.*, lect. 13, §790.

<sup>191</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I-II, q. 66, a. 5 ad 4m.

<sup>192</sup> *De Ente et Essentia*, cap. 1 (ed. Roland-Gosselin, p. 4). This is the account of *ens* in the principal meaning of the term: not as *ens per accidens*, nor as *ens* that is equivalent to the truth of a proposition (*est* in the sense of *yes*), but as *ens* that is divided by the ten categories. In this meaning *ens* is equivalent to real essence, and so there is the definition of essence: "Essentia dicitur secundum quod per eam et in ea ens habet esse." Cf. *In V Met.*, lect. 9, for the classical account.

<sup>193</sup> *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 1 ad 7m: "Prima operatio (intellectus) respicit quidditatem rei; secunda respicit esse ipsius." The *esse* known in the second operation, judgment, is the real; there is an *esse* pertaining to the quiddity as such, but (*loc. cit.*) "quidditatis esse est quoddam esse rationis."

<sup>194</sup> Hence *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 9 c.

<sup>195</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I-II, q. 3, a. 8 c.

proposition is excluded.<sup>196</sup> Just as Thomist thought is an ontology of knowledge inasmuch as intellectual light is referred to its origin in uncreated Light, so too it is more than an embryonic epistemology inasmuch as intellectual light reflectively grasps its own nature and the commensuration of that nature to the universe of reality.<sup>197</sup>

A comment may be permitted; for in the measure one grasps the character and implication of the act by which intellectual light reflects by intellectual light upon intellectual light to understand itself and pronounce its universal validity, in that measure one grasps one of the two outstanding analogies to the procession of an infinite Word from an infinite Understanding. On the other hand, the foregoing argument, precisely because it clung closely to Thomist texts to avoid all unnecessary appearance of airy speculation, is apt to find little echo in a modern mind. Two remarks may increase the resonance. First, our knowledge of the real is not knowledge of some note or aspect or quality of things. The whole of each thing is real; and by reality we mean nothing less than the universe in the multiplicity of its members, in the totality and individuality of each, in the inter-relations of all. To know the real is to know the universe. As our intellects are potential, so our knowledge of the real is a development. The child has to learn to distinguish sharply between fact and fiction; the young man has not yet acquired a sufficiently nuanced grasp of human living for the study of ethics to be profitable; each of us, confronted with something outside the beaten track of our experience, turns to the expert to be taught just what it is. Still, in all this progress we are but discriminating, differentiating, categorizing the details of a scheme that somehow we possessed from the start. To say that any X is real is just to assign it a place in that scheme; to deny the reality of any Y is to deny it a place in the universal scheme.

But how do we grasp the scheme itself? At its root it is just the principle of excluded middle: X either is or else is not. And in its details the scheme is just the actuation of our capacity to conceive any essence and rationally affirm its existence and its relations. Since within that scheme both we ourselves and all our acts of conceiving and of judging are no more than particular and not too important

<sup>196</sup> *In Boet. de Trin.*, q. 3, a. 1 ad 4m.

<sup>197</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 9 c.

items, the critical problem—and this is our second remark—is not a problem of moving from within outwards, of moving from a subject to an object outside the subject. It is a problem of moving from above downwards, of moving from an infinite potentiality commensurate with the universe towards a rational apprehension that seizes the difference of subject and object in essentially the same way that it seizes any other real distinction. Thus realism is immediate, not because it is naive and unreasoned and blindly affirmed, but because we know the real before we know such a difference within the real as the difference between subject and object. Again, the critical problem has the appearance of insolubility only because the true concept of the real is hidden or obscured, and in its place there comes the false substitute that by the real we mean only another essence, or else that by the real we mean the object of modern existentialist experience—the mere givenness of inner or outer actuality, which truly is no more than the condition for the rational transition from the affirmation of possible to the affirmation of actual contingent being.

#### THE UNITY OF WISDOM

Wisdom, as first philosophy, deals at once with the real as real and with the first principles of demonstrations.<sup>198</sup> It is, in the very definition of its object, a duality. So far from mitigating that violent contrast of object and subject, the current pedagogical convenience of separate books and courses on metaphysics and on epistemology rather tends to make it appear ultimate and irreducible. But being is not just one thing, with knowing quite another. We know by what we are; we know we know by knowing what we are; and since even the knowing in “knowing what we are” is by what we are, rational reflection on ourselves is a duplication of ourselves. In us the principle and term of that doubling are not identical. In the procession of the divine Word the principle and the term of the doubling are identical, but the relations of principle to term and of term to principle remain real, opposed, subsistent, eternal, equal personalities—Father and Son in the consubstantiality of intellectual generation.<sup>199</sup> Even in the Godhead the duality of wisdom is not overcome utterly; even

<sup>198</sup> *In IV Met.*, lect. 5, §595.

<sup>199</sup> *C. Gent.*, IV, 11.

there in some sense one may speak of a *sapientia genita*.<sup>200</sup> But though the duality of wisdom never disappears totally, yet it tends towards that limit. Some remarks on the approach towards the limit are our concluding concern.

There is a common element to all our acts of understanding. It is a pure quality, coming to be when we inquire *quid sit* and *an sit*, partially realized when we directly understand some essence and again when we reflectively understand the necessity of affirming its existence. This pure quality is intellectual light. But in its pure form we have no experience of it. It never is just inquiry but always inquiry about something. It never is pure understanding but always understanding this or understanding that. Even so, we may discern it introspectively, just as externally we discern light in seeing color. But while the external and corporal light that strikes and stimulates our eyes could not be produced, even in fanciful thought, to an infinity, there is to intellectual light an inner *nisus* towards the infinite. Aristotle opened his *Metaphysics* with the remark that naturally all men desire to know. But Aquinas measured that desire to find in the undying restlessness and absolute exigence of the human mind that intellect as intellect is infinite, that *ipsum esse* is *ipsum intelligere* and uncreated, unlimited Light, that though our intellects because potential cannot attain naturally to the vision of God, still our intellects as intellects have a dynamic orientation, a natural desire, that nothing short of that unknown vision can satisfy utterly. For Augustine our hearts are restless until they rest in God; for Aquinas, not our hearts, but first and most our minds are restless until they rest in seeing Him.

The basic duality of our wisdom is between our immanent intellectual light and the uncreated Light that is the object of its groping and its straining. The same duality is also the basic instance of the opposition and distinction between what is first *quoad nos* and what is first *quoad se*: ontologically the uncreated Light is first; epistemologically our own immanent light is first, for it is known not by some *species* but *per se ipsum* as the actuating element in all intelligible

<sup>200</sup> The difficulty with this expression is that *sapientia* is identical with the divine essence, and the divine essence is neither generating nor generated. See *In I Sent.*, d. 10, q. 1, a. 1 ad 4m; d. 32, q. 2, aa. 1 & 2; *De Ver.*, q. 4, a. 2 ad 2m; a. 4 ad 4m; a. 5 c. med.; *C. Gent.*, IV, 12; *In I Cor.*, cap. 1, lect. 5, *ad fin.*; *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 34, a. 1 ad 2m et ad 4m



*species*. Known with this qualified immediacy, it justifies itself as the potentially boundless base whence we can posit and through our positing know the universe; and as the principle of our knowledge of reality, it also is the most convincing sample in us of the stuff of which the Author of the universe and of our minds consists. Between these poles, the highest in us and in God the most like us, our wisdom moves to knowledge of itself and of its source. Were our wisdom substantial, it would not be subject to that type of duality. But in fact it is accidental, a perfection that relates us to Perfection. Not only is it accidental, but also it is acquired gradually. Towards it we are moved in a dialectical oscillation, envisaging more clearly now one pole and now another, with each addition to either at once throwing more light on the other and raising further questions with regard to it.

Perhaps in this connection we may note most conveniently a particular aspect of the soul's self-knowledge. The most nuanced account of this is to be found in the *De Veritate*,<sup>201</sup> where three types of self-knowledge are distinguished. There is the empirical self-knowledge, actual or habitual, based upon the soul's presence to itself; there is the scientific and analytic self-knowledge that proceeds from objects to acts, from acts to potencies, from potencies to essence; but besides this pair with which we are already familiar, there is also a third. It lies in the act of judgment which passes from the conception of essence to the affirmation of reality. Still, it is concerned not with this or that soul, but with what any soul ought to be according to the eternal reasons; and so the reality of soul that is envisaged is not sorry achievement but dynamic norm. Now knowledge of the norm, of the ought-to-be, cannot be had from what merely happens to be and, too often, falls far short of the norm. Normative knowledge has to rest upon the eternal reasons. But this resting, Aquinas explained, is not a vision of God but a participation and similitude of Him by which we grasp first principles and judge all things by examining them in the light of principles.<sup>202</sup>

Wisdom through self-knowledge is not limited to the progress from empirical through scientific to normative knowledge. Beyond the wisdom we may attain by the natural light of our intellects, there is a

<sup>201</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 8 c.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

further wisdom attained through the supernatural light of faith, when the humble surrender of our own light to the self-revealing uncreated Light makes the latter the loved law of all our assents. Rooted in this faith, supernatural wisdom has a twofold expansion. In its contact with human reason, it is the science of theology which orders the data of revelation and passes judgment on all other science.<sup>203</sup> But faith, besides involving a contact with reason, also involves a contact with God. On that side wisdom is a gift of the Holy Spirit, making us docile to His movements in which, even perceptibly, one may be "non solum discens sed et patiens divina."<sup>204</sup>

Our account of the introspective data underlying an interpretation of Thomist trinitarian theory would be incomplete if it contained no mention of the possible relevance of mystical experience. Early in the *Sentences*,<sup>205</sup> in discussing the *imago Dei* in the human soul, it is asked whether knowledge and love of God and of self are constantly in act. In the *Summa* this question is answered negatively for the peremptory reason that everyone now and then goes to sleep.<sup>206</sup> But in the early work the answer is affirmative, and it is given in two forms—first in a context of Augustinian terms, secondly in a context of Aristotelian terms. It would seem that the difference between the two is not merely terminological; for the second account is introduced by the statement: "Alio tamen modo secundum Philosophos intelligitur quod anima semper se intelligit."<sup>207</sup> Not only does this not sound like the preface to a repetition of the same doctrine in different terms, but also the view of the philosophers, which follows, seems to move on a different plane. It is no more than the view, outlined above, of our perception of intellectual light not as an object but as a medium in our acts of understanding. It amounts to saying that the soul is present to itself in rational consciousness. But from that presence to oneself it is not too easy a step to the presence of God to oneself. Philosophic thought can achieve it through the theorem, mentioned in the preceding article,<sup>208</sup> of divine ubiquity. But it takes a rather marvellous grasp of that metaphysical theorem

<sup>203</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 1, a. 6 c. et ad 2m; cf. a. 8 c.

<sup>204</sup> *In III Sent.*, d. 15, a. 2, a. 1, qc. 2; d. 35, q. 2, a. 1; *De Ver.*, q. 26, a. 3 ad 18m; *De Div. Nom.*, IV, 2; *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q. 45, a. 2 c.

<sup>205</sup> *In I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 4, a. 5 c.

<sup>206</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 93, a. 7 ad 4m.

<sup>207</sup> *In I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 4, a. 5 c.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 4 c.

for constant actual knowledge and love of God to result. In fact, it is rather in the preceding, Augustinian statement that such knowledge and love receive attention. The knowledge in question is not a *discernere* which distinguishes one object from another, nor a *cogitare* which relates the parts of one object to the whole, nor any *intelligere* that fixes attention in a determinate fashion; what is affirmed is some simple and continuous intuition in virtue of presence by which the soul knows and loves both itself and God in some indeterminate manner. Now it is true that, apart from prying introspection, self-knowledge within rational consciousness is neither a *discernere*, nor a *cogitare*, nor an *intelligere* with a fixed object. But must one not enter into the domain of religious experience to find this awareness of one's spiritual self prolonged into an awareness of God? That prolongation does not seem to be a datum within the range of ordinary introspection; on the other hand, one can give Aquinas' words a very satisfactory meaning if one reads the descriptions of mystical writers on the habitual felt presence of God.<sup>209</sup>

A similar, if less acute, question arises in the *De Veritate*, where one reads that the presence of God in the mind is the memory of God in the mind.<sup>210</sup> Such a statement has a mystical ring inasmuch as a presence that is a memory seems to be a known presence. However, the same passage concludes with a remark that confines the interpreter within the range of ordinary experience. A necessary condition of understanding is within nature, and we are told that from the divine presence in the soul intellect receives the light necessary for understanding.<sup>211</sup> Further, if one goes back to Aquinas' explicit accounts of the term, *memoria*, one finds that it is habitual knowledge,<sup>212</sup> and even that the mind is present to itself and God present to the mind before any *species* are received from sense, so that the human *imago Dei* has its constitutive *memoria* before any conscious intellectual act is elicited.<sup>213</sup> To the casual reader it may seem that a presence of God which is a memory must be a known presence; but Aquinas' own explanation of his terms does not substantiate that conclusion.

Perhaps the following series of propositions will do justice to the question: To what extent is mystical experience relevant to the

<sup>209</sup> E.g., A. Poulain, *Des grâces d'oraison* (éd. 10<sup>ème</sup>, Paris, 1922), chaps. V et VI.

<sup>210</sup> *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 7 ad 2m.

<sup>211</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 3 c.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 2 ob. 5a et ad 5m.

Thomist concept of the *imago Dei*? First, the Thomist description of that experience, in its general form, does supply in an extremely simple fashion the required triad of the *imago*. "Taste and see how the Lord is sweet." "Taste" refers to inner experience, to an *experientia consortii divini*; it supplies the *memoria* in act. "See" refers to a consequent judgment, to a *certitudo intellectus*; it supplies the inner word. "How the Lord is sweet" refers to the second effect of the experience, the ineffable act of love, the *securitas affectus*; it gives the third element of the triad.<sup>214</sup> Secondly, while one should admit the possible relevance of mystical experience to an interpretation of the *imago* and even the deep influence of mysticism upon Aquinas and his thought, one is not to leap from possibility to affirmation of fact. Whatever is true, Aquinas certainly was not exclusively a theologian of the mystical. He was deeply interested in nature; his merit lay in embracing all and in drawing all distinctions; and indubitable references to mystical experience in his discussions of the *imago* at best are few and, at least by later Theresan standards, anything but explicit. Finally, on Aquinas' own testimony, the image of God is found in men universally. It is found in those without the actual use of reason; it is found in sinners; it is found, clear and fair, in those in the state of grace.<sup>215</sup> It should seem that essentially Thomist theory of the trinitarian processions is in its basic analogy not mystical but psychological. Though the created image becomes clearer as the use of reason develops, though it becomes fairer as grace is added to reason, though it becomes manifest as special graces reveal the potentialities of our *consortium divinum*, still these differences strictly are accidental; they have to do with the development of wisdom and of love in man and not with the essence of what develops.

#### CONCLUSION

This second article in the series completes the first part of our inquiry into the concept of *verbum* in the writings of St. Thomas. In this first part the principal aim has been to build a bridge from the mind of the twentieth-century reader to the mind of the thirteenth-century writer. Both possess psychological experience; in both that

<sup>214</sup> *In Ps.* 33, v. 9. Cf. F. D. Joret, *La contemplation mystique d'après s. Thomas d'Aquin* (Bruxelles, 1923), pp. 117, 126.

<sup>215</sup> *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 93, a. 8 ad 3m.

experience is essentially the same; both can by introspection observe and analyse such experience. At once the assumption of the method employed and the contention derived from the data assembled in these two articles have been that Aquinas did practice psychological introspection and through that experimental knowledge of his own soul arrived at his highly nuanced, deeply penetrating, firmly outlined theory of the nature of human intellect. Hence the light of intellect, insight into phantasm, acts of defining thought, reflective reasoning and understanding, acts of judgment, are above all psychological facts. The inner word of definition is the expression of an insight into phantasm, and the insight is the goal towards which the wonder of inquiry tends. The inner word of judgment is the expression of a reflective act of understanding, and that reflective act is the goal towards which critical wonder tends. The former answers the question, *quid sit?* The latter answers the question, *an sit?* No doubt, as expressed by Aquinas, these psychological facts are embedded in metaphysical categories and theorems. But without first grasping in some detail the empirical content so embedded, one risks, if not emptying the categories and theorems of all content, at least interpreting them with an impoverished generality that cannot bear the weight of the mighty superstructure of trinitarian theory. Conversely, it will be found, I believe, that our preliminary concern with psychological fact will lend a sureness, otherwise unattainable, to the interpretation of the metaphysical categories; for the Thomist application of metaphysics to the tasks of psychological analysis cannot be studied in some preliminary vacuum. That application exists only in psychological contexts; and it is easier to interpret metaphysics as applied to psychology when one is aware of the psychological facts involved. Without such awareness interpretation has to limp along on more or less remote and certainly non-psychological analogies. Finally, we beg to observe, the point at which conclusions can be drawn has not yet been reached. If the interpretation of the applied metaphysics depends upon the psychology, so too the interpretation of the psychology depends upon the applied metaphysics. There remains, then, a whole series of questions to be considered before we may claim to have satisfied the data on *verbum* found in Thomist writings.