

Book 3

1. Concerning the part of the soul in virtue of which the soul knows and understands¹ [and] whether or not it differs [from other parts of the soul] with respect to spatial magnitude, or rather [only] in intention², we should investigate what its difference³ is and how conceptualizing takes place.⁴ (3. 4, 429a10–13)⁵

1. *Cognoscit et intelligit*: γινώσκει . . . καὶ φρονεῖ, “knows and thinks.” Smith and Barnes (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1984]) omit “thinks” by typographical error. الذي به تدرك النفس و تعقل (ibid. [1954]); “by which the soul perceives and understands.”

2. *Utrum est differens aut non differens in magnitudine, sed in intentione*: εἴτε χωριστοῦ ὄντος εἴτε καὶ μὴ χωριστοῦ κατὰ μέγεθος ἀλλὰ κατὰ λόγον; “whether this is separable from the others in definition only, or spatially as well” (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1984]); أمفارق هو كمفارقة الجسم الجسم؟ أو إنما مفارقتة بالمعنى وليس هو بمفارق البتة؟ (ibid. [1954]); “Is it separate as one body is separate from another? Or is its separation in intention only while it is not in fact separate?” The paraphrasing *Middle Commentary* (2002), 108.6–7, has إن كان مفارقا لسائر قوى النفس بالموضع من البدن والمعنى “whether it is separate from the rest of the faculties of the soul in location and intention.”

3. That is, what is its differentiating characteristic.

4. *Formare per intellectum*: γίνεταὶ τὸ νοεῖν. This phrase corresponds to the Arabic التصور بالعقل, literally “representation by intellect,” which Ivry rightly renders as “conceptualization” in the *Middle Commentary* (2002), at 108.10. It first appears in the present work at [6], where it is rendered by the phrase *ymaginatio per intellectum*, a phrase which also occurs frequently in the Latin of the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, corresponding to the Arabic التصور بالعقل. See Book 1, n. 14. At [220] in the present work, Averroes discusses the human rational ability for intellectual understanding whenever wished and contrasts it with sense perception, which requires an extrinsic object. This ability is characterized by Averroes as *formare* in the Latin, which I also render as “to conceptualize.” At [454], Book 3, Text 21, *formare . . . res indivisibles* corresponds to the Greek ἡ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἀδιαίρετων νόησις (430a26). In the Comment at Book 3, 21, [455], this is paraphrased as *comprehendere autem res simplices non compositas erit per intellecta que non falsantur neque veridicantur, que dicitur informatio*. “That is, apprehending simple composite things will be through intelligibles which are neither false nor true, which is called conceptualization.” Hence, I render both *formare* and *formare per intellectum* by forms of “to conceptualize.” Both *formatio* and *informatio* are rendered as “conceptualization.”

5. Averroes gives no explanation of why he begins the third book of his *Long Commentary* after the completion of Aristotle’s Book 3, chapter 3, on the imagination, rather than at the traditional beginning of Aristotle’s third book (424b22). The division may have been in the Text itself. Gutas (1988), 61, n. 3, mentions that the *De Anima* used by Avicenna began its final book at this point also. The reason for such a division is obvi-

After he had completed the account of what the imaginative power is and why it exists, he began to investigate the rational [power] and to seek how it differs from the other apprehensive powers, namely, from the power of sense and [the power] of imagination. The difference lies in both the first and the final actuality as well as in proper action and affection, since it is necessary that the diverse powers differ in these two respects. Hence, it is evident that they will necessarily differ in the category of action, if they are active, or in the category of affection, if they are passive, or in both if both. Because his intention is just this, he first began to show that the existence of that power is self-evident, namely, that it differs from the other powers of the soul, since it is in virtue of this power that human beings differ from other animals, as has been said in many places. What is in doubt—whether it differs from the other powers in subject as well as in intention, or only in intention⁶—need not be known

ous: Aristotle’s discussion of the rational power begins here, as Averroes says at the beginning of his first Comment. Averroes’ *Middle Commentary*, however, observed the traditional divisions of Aristotle’s book. See *Middle Commentary* (2002), 90, and Book 2, n. 301, above. For a general discussion of the Arabic versions of the *De Anima*, see Elamrani-Jamal (2003) and Puig (2007). Also see the introduction, pp. lxxvi–lxxix.

6. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 1.19–25: بهذه القوة أعني كونها مباينة لسائر قوى النفس هو شيء معروف بنفسه إذ كان بهذه القوة (يتميز) الإنسان من سائر الحيوان*. وأما الشك فيه هل هي . . . قوى أو تفارق بالموضوع . . . كما هي مباينة بالمعنى (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 43); “By this power, I mean its being distinct from the rest [of the powers] of the soul, this is something self-evident since by this power human beings are distinguished from the rest of the animals. What is in doubt regarding it is whether it < . . . > power or separate in subject < . . . > as well as being distinct in notion or it is distinct in notion alone.” At* the Arabic fragment has nothing corresponding to the Latin *ut dictum est in multis locis*, “as has been said in many places.” Sirat and Geoffroy (*Long Commentary Fragments* [2005]) find considerably more text in the fragments. See the note which follows.

Averroes here has in mind 413b13–16. See his discussion at Book 1, Text and Comment 19 (157–158), where he explains the issue: “That those powers in certain animals are the same in subject and different in definition is not difficult. In regard to certain others, however, it is difficult and involves difficulty. Likewise, whether every one [158] of those principles is in the soul or not, in regard to certain [ones] is clear and in regard to certain others obscure.” For Averroes the issue of the rational power and intellect is complex since the subject of knowledge is twofold, the individual person’s theoretical intellect and the separate material intellect. The power is in two subjects, one as a power existing in an individual corporeal subject, the other as a power existing in an incorporeal and immaterial subject. While Aristotle’s distinction between an organ of sense and the sense κατὰ λόγον or λόγῳ might allow for this to be characterized as a logical or notional distinction, Averroes’ understanding of the relationship of the theoretical intellect and the material intellect leaves this as an issue which he rightly characterized as “difficult.”

2. Let us then say that if conceptualizing is just the same as sensing,¹¹ then either [the soul] is affected in some way by the intelligible, or something else similar to this [occurs]. (429a13–15)

After he had recounted that the starting point of the investigation concerning the substance of this power is to investigate the genus of this activity of conceptualizing—knowing the genus precedes knowing the difference—he began first to express doubt (381) as to whether conceptualizing is one of the passive powers, as is sensation, or one of the active powers. If it is one of the passive powers, whether it is passive because it is material in some way and mixed with the body, i.e., it is a power in a body, just as sensation is passive, or is not at all passive because it is neither material nor mixed with the body at all,¹² but [rather] has only [the characteristic of] receptivity from the intention

Averroes got this interpretation of knowing (*cognitio* and *cognoscere*, in each case المعرفة for γινώσκει) as indicating theoretical knowledge (المعرفة النظرية) and understanding (*intelligere*, *intellectus*, الفهم for φρονεῖ) as indicating practical knowledge. The text of Aristotle as Averroes had it does not make this distinction evident. The ultimate source seems to be Themistius, who explains these activities as θεωρίαν καὶ πράξιν, “contemplation and action.” Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 93.32–33; (1996), 117. The Arabic version of Themistius edited by Lyons is corrupt here, but cf. Arabic in *ibid.* (1973), 163.5–8. At Book 3, Text 49 (433a14) *intellectus operativus* corresponds to the Greek ὁ πρακτικός (νοῦς), the practical mind, which is distinguished from theoretical mind by its end, since practical mind concerns action while theoretical mind is concerned with knowing for its own sake. That is, intellect in the sense of practical intellect is something common to all healthy human beings who partake in normal human goal-oriented actions, but the grasp of theoretical knowledge is not common to all human beings. The term “intellect” is equivocal for Averroes, having four or more senses. See [452].

11. See n. 14 for a corresponding Arabic fragment.

12. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 2.4–14: فنقول : لما ابتدأ بالقول ان مبدأ الفحص عن جوهر هذه النفس هو الفحص أولا عن جنس التصور بالعقل ، ولما كانت معرفة جنس الشيء تتقدم المعرفة بفصله ابتدأ يشكك <في> معرفة جنس التصور هل هو من القوى المنفعلة كالحال في الحس أو من القوى الفاعلة ، وإن كان من القوى المنفعلة هل هو من القوى المنفعلة كالحال في الحس أو من القوى الفاعلة ، وإن كان من القوى المنفعلة هل هو منفعل من قبل انه هيولاني بجهة ما ومخالط لجسم أي انه قوة في جسم بمنزلة الحس أم غير منفعل لأنه غير <هيولاني ولا> مخالط جوهر (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 44). Note that while the Arabic has “substance of this soul,” the Latin has “substance of this power.” Sirat and Geoffroy read القوة, faculty or power. See below. The second occurrence of كالحال في الحس أو من القوى الفاعلة is a mistake in the Ben Chehida edition and should be deleted, as evident in the text provided by Sirat and Geoffroy: لما ابتدأ ان مبدأ الفحص عن جوهر هذه القوة / هو الفحص أولا عن جنس التصور بالعقل وكانت معرفة جنس الشيء يتقدم المعرفة بفصله ابتدأ أولا يشكك معرفة / جنس التصور هل هو من القوى المنفعلة كالحال في الحس أو من القوى الفاعلة وإن كان من القوى المنفعلة / هل هو منفعل من / قبل انه

of affection.¹³ And he said: Let us then say that if conceptualizing, etc. That is, let us then say that if we assert that conceptualizing is just the same as sensing, namely, one of the passive powers, to the extent that the first intellective power receives the intelligibles and apprehends them just as the sensing power receives sensibles and apprehends them, then one of the following alternatives is necessary. Either some change and affection occurs to it from the intelligible

(Long Commentary Fragments [2005], 101–102); “Intellective faculty: ‘We say. . .’ Having begun [by saying] that the principle of inquiry concerning this faculty is the inquiry, in the first place, about the genus [to which it belongs] as a thing preceding the knowledge of its difference, he begins first by asking about the subject of the knowledge of the genus of representation: is it among the affective faculties, as sense, or the active faculties? And if it is among the affective faculties, is it affective insofar as it is a faculty of the body? Or [on the contrary] is it in no way affective, insofar as it is not in any way mixed with the body?” My translation of the French.

I prefer to render the Arabic as follows: “Rational faculty: ‘We say. . .’ Having begun [with the understanding] that the starting point of inquiry concerning this power is the inquiry first about the genus of intellectual conceptualizing—for knowledge of the genus of a thing precedes knowledge of its species—he begins first by asking about the knowledge of the genus of conceptualizing: is it among the passive powers, as is the case for sense, or among the active powers? And if it is among the passive powers, is it passive insofar as it is a power in a body? Or is it not passive, insofar as it is not in any way mixed with a body?”

Sirat and Geoffroy understand this to correspond to Book 3, 2.4–10 and 2.11–14. They also find another fragment to correspond to Book 3, 2.10–12: / لأنه هيولاني ومخالط / (ibid., 103); “because it is material and mixed with bodies, that is to say, it is a power in a body.”

13. That is, of the various characteristics manifested by what has the intention or nature of affection, this intellect has only that of receptivity. إلا القبول فقط (Long Commentary Fragments [2005], 107); “if this is receptivity alone.” This corresponds to Book 3, 2.14–15. As Sirat and Geoffroy also indicate on 106, the Long Commentary’s Book 3, 2.8–15, is quite similar to what is found in the Middle Commentary: فنقول إنه إن كان التصور بالعقل موجودا في القوى المنفعلة بمنزلة الإحساس على ما هو الظاهر من أمره فإذا أن يكون انفعاله عن المعقول على نحو انفعال الحواس عن المحسوسات وإما أن يكون أبعد من الانفعال الحقيقي من انفعال الحواس فيكون ليس يوجد فيه شيء من معنى الانفعال الذي “We say that, if conceptualization exists among the passive faculties comparable to sensation, as appears to be its nature, then either its being affected by an intelligible object resembles the passivity whereby the senses are affected by sensible objects, or it is more remote than that true passivity of the senses, such that nothing of the intention of passivity which is in the senses will be found in it.” Middle Commentary (2002), 108.10–14. Sirat and Geoffroy then add إلا القبول فقط, “except receptivity alone,” to the end of this passage. Long Commentary Fragments (2005), 98.

thing, a change similar to the change which occurs to the sense from the sensed object, because the actuality of the sense is a power in the body. Or there occurs no change similar to the change of the senses and to the affection of these by the sensed object, because the first actuality of the intellect is not a power in a body; rather, this does not come about for it at all. He meant this when he said: **or something else similar to this.** That is, or it does not undergo affection equivalent to the affection of the sense, namely, there does not come about for it a change similar to the change which comes about for the sense, but it is only likened to sense in regard to receptivity, because it is not a power in a body.¹⁴

3. It, therefore, must not be something affected, but it does receive the form and is in potency just as that, [while] not [being] that. Its disposition will be according to an analogy: as what senses is in relation to the sensibles, so is the intellect in relation to the intelligibles. (429a15–18) {382}

After he had set forth that first it is necessary to investigate whether this activity of conceptualizing is passive or active, he began to set forth what he

14. الحواس حتى تكون القوة العاقلة: 2.18–32. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 2.18–32. الأولى تقبل المعقولات وتذكرها كما تقبل القوة الحساسة المحسوسات وتذكرها، فقد وجب على هذه القوة أحد أمرين: إما أن يلحقها تغير وانفعال عن المعقول مثل انفعال الحاس وتغيره عند هذه المحسوسات من قبل أن الاستكمال الذي للحس قوة في جسم. وأما أن لا يلحقها تغير وانفعال كالحواس عن المحسوس من قبل الاستكمال الأول للعقل ليس قوة في جسم... الحس لا الحواس. (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 44). في القبول فقط من قبل أنه ليس قوة في جسم حتى يكون القوة العاقلة الأولى تعقل المعقولات وتذكرها / [كما يدرك] {كما تقبل} القوة الحساسة المحسوسات وتذكرها فقد يجب في هذه القوة أحد أمرين إما أن / {يلحقها} تغير وانفعال عن المعقول مثل انفعال الحواس وتغيرها عند قبول المحسوس من قبل / {أن لا} ستكمل الحس قوة في جسم وإلا يلحقها تغير وانفعال كالحواس عن المحسوس من قبل / {أن لا} ستكمل الحس قوة في جسم بل {يفعل} فعلا مخالفا له فما نسبة شبيههما؟؟؟ / ... لا يشبه الحس إلا في القبول فقط من قبل أنه ليس قوة في جسم فنقول إنه يجب (Long Commentary Fragments [2005], 104–105); "... the senses so that the first intellective faculty understands and apprehends the intelligibles, in the same way that the sensitive faculty receives and apprehends sensibles. However, there must come about for this faculty one of two things: either that they bring about a change and an affection on the part of the intelligible, similar to the affection of the senses and their change when they receive the sensible; or they do not bring about change and affection similar to that by which the senses [are affected] on the part of the sensible, from the fact that the first perfection of the intellect is not a faculty in a body; but on the contrary, it accomplishes an action opposed to it [the body], of the sort that the relation of resemblance [between the two (?) ... and that the intellective faculty is not like] the sense except from the perspective of reception, since it is not a faculty in a body. Let us say, then, that it must, etc." My translation of the French. This corresponds to Book 3, 2.18–27 and 31–32. Note that Ben Chehida reads تقبل (receives) in agreement with the Latin (*recipiat*), while Sirat and Geoffroy read تعقل (understands) at the beginning of the passage.

wants to explain, namely, that it is that of a passive power in some way and [yet] that it is not changeable because it is neither a body nor a power in a body.¹⁵ He said: **It, therefore, must not be something affected,** etc. That is, when there has been a thorough investigation of this, it will be apparent that this part of the soul by which conceptualizing comes about must be a power not changeable by the form which it apprehends. Rather, it has of the intention of affection only this alone: it receives the form which it apprehends.¹⁶ [This is] because it is in potency what it apprehends, as [is] what senses, not because it is a determinate particular¹⁷ in act, or a body, or a power of a body, as is what senses. He meant this when he said: **and is in potency just as that, [while] not [being] that.** That is, it is in potency, as is the sense, [but] not because that power is a determinate particular, a body or a power in a body. Next he said: **Its being will be according to the example of sense as what senses is in relation to the sensibles.** It can be understood in this way: it must be among the passive

15. Sirat and Geoffroy print a fragment which they identify as related to the Latin at Book 3, 3.9–11, 4.56–57, 4.60–61, 2.1–2, and 2. 17. {... من القوى المنفصلة بجهة ما} وبجهة م وبجهة ما من الفاعلة وأنه غير متغير / {من قبل} أنه ليس هو قوة في جسم وبعد يقول إنها من القوى / {الفاعلة} لئلا لأنها يخلق المعقولات {بأن يجرداها من المواد} {ويصرح بـ} أن كلاهما غير كائن ولا فاسد ويبين أولا أن فصل الانفعال والقبول موجود فيها / {... إل} تصور بالعقل وبعد يقال ثم فصل الفعل موجود فيها / {... إل} تصور بالعقل بمنزلة {... among the passive faculties under a certain aspect, and under another, those active, and that it is not subject to change, from the fact that it is not a faculty in a body. And next he says that it is among the active faculties because it created the intelligibles in abstracting them from matters. And he explains that neither one nor the other of these are generable or corruptible. It is explicated first that the difference 'passivity and reception' exists in it. And next he says: then the difference 'action' exists in it. To conceive by intellect is similar to the sense." My translation of the French.

16. Sirat and Geoffroy find a similar text in the fragments, though the correspondence is not literal. وبهذا المعنى / من الصورة التي تذكرها / {أنه} عند القبول لا يفعل أصلا / من القوى المنفصلة أعني القبول / فقط (Long Commentary Fragments [2005], 111); "because at the time of the reception, it absolutely does not undergo affection under the effect of the form which it apprehends, and it is according to this meaning only that it is among the affective faculties, I mean to say the reception alone." My translation of the French.

17. *Aliquid hoc*. See Book 1, n. 25, and the introduction, pp. lviii–lxi. What is a "this," *aliquid hoc*, is a particular which is a member of a species containing more than one member and which derives its particularity from the contraction of the form to matter in a composite. As such, what is received by a determinate particular or a "this" is particularized by reception into it. This notion is central to Averroes' arguments asserting the necessity of the single, shared material intellect in which understood intentions are not particularized. See [387–388].

powers in such a way that the relation of sense to the sensibles is as the relation of the intellect to the intelligibles. In accord with this there will be a transposition in the order of the account and then it ought to be read in this way: Its disposition must then be according to [this] analogy: as sense is in relation to the sensibles, so is intellect in relation to the intelligibles. [It must be] that it is not something passive with an affection as with the affection belonging to the senses, but rather it receives the form and is just as that in potency, [while] not [being] that. It can be understood [as follows]. Its disposition will be thus: as what senses is in relation to the sensibles, so is the intellect in relation to the intelligibles, i.e., to assert that it is not {383} something passive does not contradict the view that its relation to the intelligible is as the relation of what senses to the sensed. But perhaps in conceding it to have this relation, it will be necessary that it not be changeable. The fact that it is self-evident or nearly so that the intellect has this relation, together with the fact that it is the starting point for knowing that it is not something passive or changeable, compelled us to give this exposition.¹⁸

4. Therefore, if [the intellect] understands all things, it must not be mixed, as Anaxagoras said, as it appears, namely, so that it may know.¹⁹ For if [something] appeared in it, the foreign element appearing in it would be an impediment because it is different. (429a18–20)

After he had asserted that the recipient material intellect ought to be of the genus of passive powers and furthermore²⁰ that it is not changed in the reception because it is neither a body nor a power in a body, he gave a demonstration of this. He said: It is therefore necessary, if it understands, etc. That is, it is therefore necessary, if it apprehends all things existing outside the soul, that before [its] apprehension [of things] it be named for this reason to be in the

18. That is, his understanding of the relevant epistemological and metaphysical principles required Averroes to give this account.

19. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 4.1–3: قال أرسطو: قد يجب أن هو يعقل الأشياء كلها أن يكون غير مخالط كما قال أنكساغورس كيما يعقل . . . > لقبول الصور المعقولة (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 44). The fragments omit “as it appears” and add an interpretive comment: “by receiving the understood forms.” I follow the suggestion of Janssens and read *appareat* with the manuscripts instead of Crawford’s conjecture of *imperet*, following the Greek. Janssens (1998), 722, remarks that the Arabic original may have been *zahara*, which has the primary sense of “to appear” but a secondary sense of “to have power over.” The latter fits the sense of the Greek, but the former is in accord with the Latin manuscripts. His reasoning may be supported by Averroes’ comment “so that it may apprehend” (*ut comprehendat*). That is, it is likely Averroes read the Arabic correctly in accord with the Greek while the Latin translator did not.

20. Cf. Janssens (1998), 722.

genus of passive, not active, powers and that it not be mixed with bodies, namely, [that it be] neither a body nor a natural or animate power in a body, as Anaxagoras said. Next he said: so that it may know, etc. That is, it is necessary that it be unmixed so that it may apprehend and receive all things. For if it is mixed, then it will be either a body or a power in a body, and if it is {384} either of these, it will have its own form and this form will impede its reception of another foreign form. He meant this when he said: If [something] appeared in it, etc. That is, for if it has its own form, then that form will impede its receiving other extraneous forms because they are other than it.

Now we must consider these propositions by which Aristotle makes these two claims about the intellect, namely, that it is in the genus of passive powers and that it is unchangeable because it is neither a body nor a power in a body. For these two claims are the starting points of all the things which are said about the intellect.²¹ And as Plato says, the greatest discussion ought to be in the beginning;²² for the smallest error in the beginning is cause of the greatest error in the end, as Aristotle says.²³

Let us therefore say that the fact that conceptualizing is in some way concerned with receptive powers, as is the case for the power of sense, is evident from the following. Passive powers are able to be moved by that in reference to which they are ascribed; active [powers], however, move that in reference to which they are ascribed.²⁴ A thing moves [something else] only inasmuch as it is in act and it is moved inasmuch as it is in potency, insofar as the forms of things are in act outside the soul. Hence, it is necessary that they move the rational soul inasmuch as it apprehends them, just as, in the case of sensibles, insofar as they are beings in act, they necessarily move the senses and the senses are moved by them. For this reason the rational soul needs to consider the intentions which are in the imaginative power, just as sense needs to view sensibles. But since it seems that the forms of external things move this power in such a way that the mind abstracts them from matters and makes them first to be intelligibles {385} in act after they were intelligibles in potency, on the

21. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 4.25–31: هذه وقد يجب أن ننظر في المقدمات التي بين بها أرسطو هذين الشيئين من أمر العقل أعني أنه داخل في جنس القوى المنفصلة (وأنه) غير متغير من قبل أنه ليس بجسم ولا قوة في جسم فإن هذين المعنيين من (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 44). أمر العقل هما . . . > المبدأ

22. Cf. *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.2, 1095a31–32. There Aristotle may be referring to *Republic*, 511A–C or to the oral teachings of Plato.

23. *De Caelo* 1.5, 271b12–14.

24. That is, the actualization of passive powers lies in their being moved by something external to which the actualization is to be ascribed, while the actualization of active powers lies in their moving themselves in such a way that the actualization is ascribed to the active powers themselves.

basis of this it seems that this soul is active, not passive. Therefore, inasmuch as the intelligibles move it, it is passive, and inasmuch as they are moved by it, it is active. For this reason Aristotle will say later that it is necessary to assert that these two differences are in the rational soul, namely, the power of activity and the power of affection.²⁵ And he says plainly that each part of it is neither generable nor corruptible, as will be evident later.²⁶ But here he began to make known the substance of this passive power, since this is necessary in the doctrine. On the basis of this, then, it is declared that this difference, namely, of affection and reception, exists in the rational power.²⁷

However, that the substance receiving these forms must be neither a body nor a power in a body is evident from the propositions which Aristotle uses in this discussion. One of these is that this substance receives all material forms, something known concerning this intellect. The second is that everything receiving something else must be devoid of the nature of the thing received²⁸ and its substance must not be the same in species as the substance of the thing received. For if the recipient were of the nature of the thing received, then the thing would receive itself and then the mover would be the moved. Thus, it is necessary that the sense receiving color lack color and that receiving sound lack sound. This proposition is necessary and indubitable. From these two [propositions] it follows that this substance which is called the material intellect has none of those material forms in its nature. Because the material forms are either a body or forms in a body, it is evident that this substance which is called the material intellect {386} is neither a body nor a form in a body; it is, therefore, altogether unmixed with matter.²⁹ You ought to know that what he set forth is necessarily so, because that is a substance and what is a recipient of the forms

25. 3.5, 430a13–14 {436}.

26. "It was necessary that the agent intelligence be separate, unmixed and impassible, insofar as it is what makes all forms intelligible. If, therefore, it were mixed, it would not make all forms, just as it was necessary that the material intellect, insofar as it is what receives all forms, also be separate and unmixed. For if it were not separate, it would have this singular form and then necessarily one of two alternatives would come about, either it would receive itself and then the mover in it would be moved, or it would not receive all the species of forms" {441}.

27. See n. 14 for a corresponding Arabic fragment.

28. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 4.63–68: «لا جسم ولا قوة في جسم» و«ذلك ان كل» قابل لشيء من هذا بين بنفسه... «انها تقبل جميع الصور الهيولانية...» (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 44).

29. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 4.73–80: وهذه لا شك فيها فيلزم من هاتين المقولتين ان هذا الجوهر الذي يسمى عقلا هيولانيا ليس في طبيعته واحد من الصور الهيولانية المشار اليها الا «ان» الصور الهيولانية هي أما جسم وأما صورة في جسم فظاهركنهما

of material things or material [forms] does not have a material form in itself, namely, [it is not] a [substance] composed of matter and form. Neither is it again one of the material forms, for material forms are not separable. Nor is it again one of the simple first forms, for those are separable, but [the material intellect] does not . . . receive forms unless they are diverse [from its own nature],³⁰ and inasmuch as they are intelligibles in potency, not in act. [The material intellect] is, therefore, a being which is other than form and matter and the composite of these.³¹ But whether this substance has its own form other in being from material forms has not yet been explained from this discussion. For the proposition saying that the recipient ought to be devoid of the nature of the thing received is understood of the nature of the species of that thing received, not of the nature of its genus, especially its remote [genus] and especially for what is said by equivocation. For this reason we said that in the sense of touch there is found a mean between the contraries which it apprehends; for contraries are other than the means in species. Since such is the disposition of the material intellect, namely, that it is one of the beings,³² that it is a separate potency, and it does not have a material form, it is evident that it is not passive (since passive things, namely, changeable things, are as material forms) and that it is simple, as Aristotle says,³³ and separable. In this way Aristotle understood the nature of the material intellect; and later we will speak about his doubts.³⁴ {387}

5. So it will have no nature except this, namely, what is possible. Therefore that part of the soul which is called the intellect (and I call the intellect that

ان هذا الجوهر الذي يسمى العقل الهيولاني ليس هو جسم ولا قوة في جسم فهو غير مخالط ولا قوة (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 44). Note that the Arabic has «ولا قوة في جسم» while the Latin has *neque forma in corpore*, "nor a form in a body," at Book 3, 4.79.

30. Crawford marks this passage as corrupt. An alternative to my conjectural rendering of this corrupt passage might be to understand the passage as asserting that for the forms to be received in the material intellect they must be separable from matter by the power of intellect. Janssens (1998), 722, conjectures the omission of *habet in se naturam materialem, quae non* by homeoteleuton and provides another reading of this entire section. If his conjectured text is correct, my translation would read "but [the material intellect] does not have in itself a material nature which receives forms only if they are diverse [from its own nature], and inasmuch as they are intelligibles in potency, not in act."

31. "One should hold that it is a fourth kind of being" {409}.

32. This sort of phrasing is used by al-Fârâbî in his *Letter on the Intellect*. See *ibid.*, (1983): 17.9–18.1. It follows Aristotle's lead in passages such as in the next Text, *De Anima*, 429a24, τῶν ὄντων.

33. See 405a13–19 {40}.

34. See {399ff}.

part by which we discern and cogitate³⁵) is not one of the beings in act before it understands. (429a21–24)

After he had explained that the material intellect does not have some form characteristic of material things, he began to define it in the following way. He said it has no nature according to this except the nature of the possibility for receiving intelligible material forms. And he said: **And so it has no nature**, etc. That is, then that part of the soul which is called the material intellect has no nature and being by which it is constituted inasmuch as it is material except the nature of possibility, since it is devoid of all material and intelligible forms.

Next he said: **and I call the intellect**, etc. That is, and I mean here by **intellect** the power of the soul which is truly called intellect, not the power which is called intellect in the broad sense in Greek, namely, the imaginative power, but the power by which we discern theoretical things and cogitate concerning things which will come about by our action.³⁶ Next he said: **it is not one of the beings in act before it understands**. That is, the definition of the material intellect, therefore, is that which is in potency all the intentions of universal material forms and is not any of the beings in act before it understands any of them.

Since that is the definition of the material intellect, it is evident that according to him it differs from prime matter in this respect: it is in potency all the intentions [388] of the universal material forms, while prime matter is in potency all those sensible forms [and is] not something which knows or apprehends [things]. The reason why that nature is something which discerns and knows while prime matter neither knows nor discerns, is because prime matter receives diverse forms, namely, individual and particular forms, while this [nature]³⁷ receives universal forms. From this it is apparent that this nature is not a determinate particular nor a body nor a power in a body. For if it were so, then it would receive forms inasmuch as they are diverse and particular;

35. *Per quod distinguimus et cogitamus*: ὃ διανοεῖται καὶ ὑπολαμβάνει ἡ ψυχὴ. The Latin here lacks the Greek subject and substitutes for "the soul" the first person plural, "we." The fault may lie in the Greek textual tradition since Averroes' alternate translation also lacks this mention of soul: (وهو) فلا محالة أن عقل النفس المسمى عقلا (وهو) الذي يتفكر به فيرى الرأي أيه) ليس بموجود في شيء من الأشياء بالفعل قبل أن يدرك الشيء بفهمه (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]); "So it must be the case that the intellect of the soul called intellect (which is that by which it cogitates so that opinion may be formed regarding anything) is not an existent in act in any of the things before it grasps the thing with its comprehension."

36. Cf. Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 89.26–29, 94.27–29; (1996), 112, 118. The corresponding Arabic text is corrupt.

37. The material intellect.

and if it were so, then the forms existing in it would be intelligibles in potency; and thus it would not discern the nature of the forms inasmuch as they are forms, as is the disposition in the case of individual forms, be they spiritual or corporeal. For this reason, if that nature which is called intellect receives forms, it must receive forms by a mode of reception other than that by which those matters receive the forms whose contraction by matter is the determination of prime matter in them. For this reason it is not necessary that it be of the genus of those matters in which the form is included,³⁸ nor that it be prime matter itself. Since if this were so, then the reception in these would be of the same genus; for the diversity of the received nature causes the diversity of the nature of the recipient. This, therefore, moved Aristotle to set forth this nature, which is other than the nature of matter, other than the nature of form, and other than the nature of the composite. [389]

This same consideration brought Theophrastus, Themistius, and several commentators to hold the opinion that the material intellect is a substance which is neither generable nor corruptible.³⁹ For everything which is generable and corruptible is a determinate particular; but it has already been demonstrated that [the material intellect] is not a determinate particular nor a body nor a form in a body.⁴⁰ This brought them to hold the opinion, as well, that this is the opinion of Aristotle. For that intention, namely, that this intellect is such, is quite apparent to those who regard the demonstration of Aristotle and his words, with reference to the demonstration as we have explained [it] and with reference to [his] words because he said that it is unaffected and he said that it is separable and simple. For these three words are used with regard to it by Aristotle and it is not right—rather it is highly unlikely—for him to use any of

38. That is, it is not a composite form which necessarily has matter included in its definition.

39. Cf. *Short Commentary on the De Anima* (1950), 83–84; (1985), 121–122; (1987), 206–207. Avicenna is grouped with these because he holds for the incorruptibility of the material intellect, but Averroes also characterizes him as contradicting himself because he holds that the material intellect comes into being by generation of the individual and then is eternal. On Theophrastus as available to Averroes, see Gutas (1999b). On Averroes and the Greek Commentators, see the introduction pp. lxxix–lxxxix.

Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 5.53–59: فهذا هو ، اختلاف طبيعة القابلين ، الذي حرك أرسطو الى ادخال هذه الطبيعة التي هي غير طبيعة الهيولي وغير طبيعة الصورة وغير طبيعة المجموع منها. وهذه هي البراهين التي قادت الى ذلك ولهذا قال انه جوهر غير (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 44). The fragment does not specify "Theophrastus, Themistius, and several commentators" as does the Latin, but rather has "These are the demonstrations which force him [Aristotle] to this. On account of this he said that it is a substance neither generated nor corruptible."

40. [387–388].

these [words] in a demonstrative doctrine about something generable and corruptible.

But they later saw Aristotle say that if there is an intellect in potency, there must also be an intellect in act, namely, an agent (it is this which draws out what is in potency from potency into act), and the intellect [must] be drawn out from potency into act (this is what the agent intellect places into the material intellect as artistry places forms pertaining to artistry in the matter of the artisan). Since they saw this later, they held the opinion that this third intellect which the agent intellect places into the recipient material intellect (this is the theoretical intellect) must be eternal. For since the recipient was eternal and the agent eternal, then the product must necessarily be eternal. Because⁴¹ they held this opinion, it happens in reality that {390} it is neither the agent intellect nor the product, since agent and product are understood only with reference to generation in time.⁴² Or it may be said that this "agent" and this "product" are said only by analogy and that the theoretical intellect is nothing but the actuality of the material intellect in virtue of the agent intellect such that the theoretical [intellect] is something composed of the material intellect and the intellect which is in act.⁴³ What seems to be the case, that the agent intellect sometimes understands when it is united to us and sometimes does not un-

41. *Et quia*. The sense requires "while." Perhaps ولاكن corrupted into ولان or was read as such by the translator.

42. "If the world were by itself eternal and existent (not insofar as it is moved, for each movement is composed of parts which are produced), then, indeed, the world would not have an agent at all. But if the meaning of 'eternal' is that it is in everlasting production and that this production has neither beginning nor end, certainly the term 'production' is more truly applied to him who brings about an everlasting production than to him who procures a limited production. In this way the world is God's product and the name 'production' is even more suitable for it than the word 'eternity,' and the philosophers only call the world eternal to safeguard themselves against the word 'product' in the sense of 'a thing produced after a state of non-existence, from something, and in time.'" *Incoherence of the Incoherence* (1930), 162; (1969), 96–97.

43. *Intellectu qui est in actu*. This phrase is used to denote an intellect or power of intellect which is in a state of actuality. As such, it can denote the agent intellect or the acquired intellect. Here I take it to refer to the agent intellect. The phrase *intellectus qui est in actu* occurs only in Book 3, where it is found nine times, here and at {394}, {410}, {430}, {476}, {479}, {483}, and twice at {484}. In its sole appearance in the *De Anima* Text, at Book 3, Text 36 {479}, it corresponds to the Greek ὁ νοῦς . . . ὁ κατ' ἐνέργειαν. At {394} it appears in a quotation of the text of Alexander's *De Intellectu*. At {484–485} Averroes identifies "the intellect which is in act" with the acquired intellect. See the introduction pp. xix–xx, n. 10, and p. xxiv, n. 20; and Book 2, n. 440, regarding the use of *intelligentia agens* and *intellectus agens* to denote the agent intellect. The doctrine Averroes is expounding in the present sentence sounds much like his own doctrine in the *Middle Commentary*.

derstand, results for it because of the mixture, namely, on account of its mixture with the material intellect. From this consideration alone Aristotle was forced to assert [the existence of] the material intellect, not because the theoretical intelligibles are generated and made [to exist].⁴⁴

They confirmed this by the fact that Aristotle insisted that the agent intellect exists for us in the soul, since we seem to strip forms from matter first and then to understand them. To strip them is nothing but to make them intelligibles in act after they were [intelligibles] in potency, to the extent that apprehending them is nothing but receiving them. They saw that this activity of creating and generating intelligibles is due to our will and is able to be augmented in us in accord with the augmentation of the intellect which is in us, namely, the theoretical intellect. And it was already explained that the intellect which creates and generates intelligibles and things understood is the agent intelligence. For this reason they said that the intellect in a positive disposition is that intellect, though sometimes weakness afflicts it and sometimes an addition [accrues to it] because of the mixture. This, therefore, moved Theophrastus, {391} Themistius, and others to hold this opinion about the theoretical intellect and to say that this was the opinion of Aristotle.

The questions on this are not few. The first is that this position contradicts what Aristotle asserted, namely, that the relation of what is understood in act to the material intellect is like the relation of what is sensed to what senses. This contradicts truth in itself. For if conceptualization were eternal, then it would be necessary for what is conceptualized to be eternal. Hence, it would be necessary for the sensible forms to be intelligibles in act outside the soul and not [be] material at all.⁴⁵ But this is contrary to what is found regarding those forms.

See the introduction, pp. xxxv–xlii. Cf. the interpretation of de Libera at *Long Commentary*, Book 3 (1998), 193, n. 85.

44. In this context the meaning seems to be that the interaction of the material intellect and the agent intellect is not such that the material intellect by which we know is always in constant reception of intelligibles of material things by way of the "light" of the agent intellect. (At {441} Averroes asserts for himself that the agent intellect understands nothing of things of this material world. For him it is always in act of its own nature and so, in a different sense, always understanding.) Hence, since the material intellect is not always receiving the intelligibles of material things, the cause of the lack of receptivity is not the agent intellect but must have to do with the nature of the material intellect or its reception. The fact of intermittent intellectual receiving indicates that there are two intellects, not the fact that theoretical intelligibles are generated in us. Cf. {450–451}. The reason for the inability of the material intellect to function at all times would be simply because it depends not on the agent intellect alone but also on the internal and external senses to provide intelligibles in potency.

45. Cf. *De Anima* 3.4, 429b27ff, and Book 3, Text and Comment 13 at {427–428}.

Aristotle even says plainly in this book that the relation of that rational discerning power to the intentions of the imagined forms is just as the relation of the senses to the things sensed. For this reason the soul understands nothing without the imagination, just as the senses sense nothing without the presence of the sensible. Therefore, if the intentions which the intellect apprehends from the imagined forms were eternal, then the intentions in the imaginative powers would be eternal. And if those were eternal, then the sensations would be eternal, for the sensations are related to this power just as the intentions which can be imagined are related to the rational power. And if the sensations were eternal, then the things sensed would be eternal or the sensations would be intentions other than the intentions of things existing outside the soul in matter. For it is impossible to assert these same intentions to be sometimes eternal and sometimes corruptible, unless it were possible that a corruptible nature be changed and converted into an eternal one. {392} For this reason it is necessary, if those intentions which are in the soul are of generable and corruptible things, that those [intentions] be generable and corruptible. On this there was lengthy discussion elsewhere.⁴⁶

This, therefore, is one of the impossible things which seem to contradict this opinion, namely, this [opinion of Themistius, Theophrastus, and others] which we asserted: that the material intellect is a power which has not come into being. For it is thought impossible to imagine how intelligibles will have come into being while that [power]⁴⁷ will not have come into being. For when the agent is eternal and the patient is eternal, the product must be eternal. Also, if we assert that the product is generated (this is the intellect which is in a positive disposition), how can we say in reference to this that it generates and creates the intelligibles?

The second question is much more difficult.⁴⁸ It is this: if the material intellect is the first actuality of a human being, as it is explained concerning the definition of the soul, and the theoretical intellect is the final actuality, but a human being is generable and corruptible and [yet also] one in number in virtue of his final actuality by the intellect, then it is necessary that he be so in virtue of his own first actuality. That is, [it must be the case] that I be other than you in virtue of the first actuality in reference to intelligibles and you be

46. Averroes discussed this issue at Book 1, Comment 13 (19). A lengthy discussion is found below in Book 3, Comment 36 (483–486).

47. The material intellect.

48. What is at issue here is whether each person has his or her own material intellect from the start as a rational animal.

Janssens (1998), 723, is likely correct in suggesting one read *impossibilia contingentia* (understanding *sunt* to be suppressed) with manuscripts B and C instead of Crawford's conjectural *contingunt impossibilia*. This does not affect my English translation.

other than I. If not, you would exist in virtue of the being belonging to me and I would exist in virtue of the being belonging to you. Universally a human being would be a being before having existed, and so a human being would not be generable and corruptible inasmuch as he is a human being, but if he were [generable and corruptible], he would be [so] inasmuch as [he is] an animal. For it is thought that just as it is necessary that the final actuality be of this sort if the first actuality will have been a determinate particular and numerable the way individuals are, {393} so too it is necessary for the contrary, namely, that the first actuality be of this sort if the final actuality is numbered in virtue of the numbering of individual human beings.⁴⁹

Many other impossible things result from this position. For if the first actuality were the same for all human beings and [were] not numbered the way these [individuals] are, then it would happen that when I acquire some intelligible, you too would also acquire that same thing, and when I forget some intelligible, you [would] also.

Many other impossible things also result from this position. For it is thought there is no difference between either position insofar as something impossible results, namely, from the fact that we assert that the final [actuality] and the first actuality are of the same sort, namely, [that they are] not numbered the way individuals are. Since we seek to avoid all those impossibilities, we consequently assert that the first actuality is this [particular] intention, namely, [the intention] of an individual human being both generable and corruptible in matter and numbered the way individuals are. [Yet] it was already explained from the demonstration of Aristotle mentioned earlier that [the intellect] is not a determinate particular nor a body nor a power in a body.⁵⁰ How, then, can we escape from this error, or what sort of way is there to solve this question?

Alexander,⁵¹ however, bases his position on this last account and says that

49. De Libera is certainly right to call attention to this text. As it stands in the Latin, it does not make a strong contribution to the argument but merely states that if the first human actuality is individual for each human being, so too the final actuality of knowing is individual for each. But if the final actuality of knowing is individual for each, then the first actuality would be individual for each. This is how I have translated the Latin. I understand Averroes to start here by giving the first of two problematic explanations in relation to individuals. Then he contrasts this with the equally problematic account which would hold that both the first and the final actuality do not belong to human beings as individuals. For his interpretation, de Libera understands *huiusmodi*, "of this sort," to refer ahead to "of the same sort, namely [they are] not numbered the way individuals are." See *Long Commentary, Book 3* (1998), 62–63 and 196–199.

50. {387–388}.

51. Regarding the understanding of Alexander put forth here by Averroes, see the introduction, pp. lxxxi–lxxxiii.

it belongs more to Natural Philosophy, namely, [to] the account which concludes that the material intellect {394} is a generated power such that we understand regarding it the opinion which is held also in regard to the other powers of the soul, that dispositions⁵² come to be in the body per se from mixture and compounding. He says this is not unthinkable, namely, that from a mixture of elements there comes to be such a noble and marvelous thing, though it is far from the substance of the elements because of the great extent of the mixture. He testifies regarding this that it is possible in light of the fact that it appears that the composition which first occurred in elements—the composition of the four simple qualities—even while that composition is small, is the cause of the greatest diversity, inasmuch as one is fire and another is air. Since this is so, it is not implausible that through the multiplicity of composition which is in a human being and in animals, so many diverse powers are made there from the substances of the elements.

He propounded this plainly and in a general way in the beginning of his book *On the Soul*,⁵³ and he enjoined that when considering the soul in the first place one ought to know beforehand the wonders of the composition of the body of a human being. He said also in the treatise which he authored, *On the Intellect According to the Opinion of Aristotle*, that the material intellect is a power made from the compound. These are his words:

“Since, therefore, from this body, when it is mixed in a certain mixture, something will be generated from the whole mixture such that it is fit for being an instrument of that intellect which is in this mixed thing, since it exists in all the body, and that instrument is also a body, then it will be called the intellect in potency. It is a power made from a mixture which occurred in bodies, [a power] disposed to receive the intellect which is in act.”⁵⁴ {395}

52. The Latin Averroes' *praeparatio* renders استعداد and corresponds to Alexander's ἐπιτηδειότης, “suitability, fitness.” See n. 54 and 55 below. Hence, it is a disposition for the reception of forms.

53. Alexander, *De Anima* (1887), 15.26ff.; (1979), 21ff.

54. ὅταν μὲν οὖν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ κραθέντος πῦρ γένηται ἢ τι τοιοῦτον ἐκ τῆς μίξεως, ὥς καὶ ὄργανον δύνασθαι τῷ νῷ τοῦτω παρασχεῖν, ὅς ἐστιν ἐν τῷ μίγματι τοῦτω (διότι ἐστὶν ἐν παντὶ σώματι, σῶμα δὲ καὶ τοῦτο), τοῦτο τὸ ὄργανον δυνάμει νοῦς λέγεται ἐπιτηδειός τις δύναμις ἐπὶ τῇ τοιᾷδε κράσει τῶν σωμάτων γινομένη πρὸς τὸ δέξασθαι τὸν ἐνεργεῖα νοῦν (Alexander, *De Intellectu* [1887], 112.11–16). “When, from the body that was blended, there comes to be fire or something of this sort as the result of the mixture, which is able to provide an instrument for this intellect, which is in this mixture—for it is in every body, and this too is a body—then this instrument is said to be intellect potentially, supervening on this sort of blending of bodies as a suitable potentiality for receiving the intellect that is in actuality” (ibid. [2004], 39–40; [1990], 55–56). Regarding the Arabic version, which is available in two editions, Davidson re-

This opinion regarding the substance of the material intellect is extraordinarily distant from the words and demonstration of Aristotle. [It is distant] from his words where he says that the material intellect is separable, that it does not have a corporeal instrument, and that it is simple and impassible, that is, unable to be affected, and where he praises Anaxagoras because he said that it is not mixed with the body. And [it is distant] from demonstration as it is known on the basis of what we have written.

Alexander expounded the demonstration of Aristotle by which he concluded that the material intellect is not passive nor a determinate particular nor a body nor a power in a body, in such a way that [Aristotle] meant that disposition, not the subject of that disposition. For this reason he says in his book *On the Soul* that the material intellect is more likened to the disposition which is in the tablet unwritten upon than to the tablet which has been disposed [with writing]. He says that this disposition can be said truly not to be a determinate particular nor a body nor a power in a body, and that it is not passive.⁵⁵

marks that “neither edition of the Arabic is wholly adequate. I have translated from my own ad hoc eclectic text, which I base on both editions and their apparatuses, with corrections here and there from the Greek.” Davidson (1992), 7, n. 2. For the Arabic text, see Alexander, *De Intellectu* (1971), 40.3–7. The text is corrupt in the faulty Jarullah manuscript used as base by Finnegan (1956), 181–199; see esp. 195. Also see Geoffroy (2002). Note that although the Latin might allow “intelligible” for *intellectum* here, it is more reasonable to translate *intellectum* as “intellect,” which happens to be in accord with the thought of Alexander as we have it in the Greek and in the extant Arabic: لقبول العقل الذي بالفعل (Alexander, *De Intellectu* [1971], 40.7, and [1956], 195).

55. ἐπιτηδειότης τις ἄρα μόνον ἐστὶν ὁ ὑλικὸς νοῦς πρὸς τὴν τῶν εἰδῶν ὑποδοχὴν εἰκὼς πινακίδι ἀγράφῳ, μᾶλλον δὲ τῷ τῆς πινακίδος ἀγράφῳ, ἀλλ’ οὐ τῇ πινακίδι αὐτῇ. αὐτὸ γὰρ τὸ γραμματεῖον ἤδη τι τῶν ὄντων ἐστὶν. διὸ ἡ μὲν ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ ταύτην ἔχον εἴη μᾶλλον ἂν κατὰ τὸ γραμματεῖον, τὸ δὲ ἄγραφον ἐν αὐτῇ ὁ νοῦς ὁ ὑλικὸς λεγόμενος, ἢ ἐπιτηδειότης ἢ πρὸς τὸ ἐγγραφῆναι. ὥς οὖν ἐπὶ τοῦ γραμματεῖου τὸ μὲν γραμματεῖον πάσχει ἂν ἀντιγραφόμενον, ἐν ᾧ ἢ πρὸς τὸ γραφῆναι ἐπιτηδειότης, ἢ μέντοι ἐπιτηδειότης αὐτὴ οὐδὲν πάσχει εἰς ἐνεργεῖαν ἀγομένη (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐστὶ τι ὑποκείμενον), οὕτως οὐδ’ ἂν ὁ νοῦς πάσχει τι, μηδὲν γε ὦν τῶν ἐνεργείᾳ (Alexander, *De Anima* [1887], 84.24–85.5), “We must say, then, that the material intellect is only a kind of propensity suitable for the reception of intelligible forms; it is like a tablet on which nothing has been written, or (to express this better) more like the blank condition of the tablet than the tablet itself, since the writing surface is an existent. Hence the soul, or the subject to which it belongs, might more properly be compared to the writing surface, and the intellect called material likened to the unmarked condition of the page or its suitability for being written on. Using these terms, we can state the analogy thus: As the surface of a tablet in which there inheres a disposition for being written on would be affected if it were inscribed, but the disposition itself would undergo no change by being actualized, since it is not the subject [of the writing]; so the intellect is

But there is nothing to what Alexander said. For this is truly said of every disposition, namely, that it is neither a body nor this [particular] form in a body. Why, then, of [all] the other [sorts of] dispositions did Aristotle select this for the disposition which is in the intellect, if he did not intend to show us the substance of the thing disposed but rather the substance of the disposition? But it is impossible to say that the disposition is a substance, while we say that the subject of that disposition is neither a body nor a power in a body. What Aristotle's demonstration reaches is an intention different from this one according to which it is said that the disposition is neither a body nor a power in a body.

This is evident from the demonstration of Aristotle. [396] For the proposition saying that everything which receives something must not have anything of the nature of the thing received existing in it in act is evident from the fact that the substance and nature of the thing disposed is able to have this aforementioned thing inasmuch as it is disposed. For the disposition is not the recipient but rather the being of the disposition on the part of the recipient is as [the being] of a proper accident. For this reason, when there is a reception, there will not be a disposition [any more] and the recipient will remain [in existence]. This is evident and thought by all the commentators from the demonstration of Aristotle.

For there are four different ways in which something can be said to be neither a body nor a power in a body. The first is as the subject of intelligibles, and this is the material intellect, the nature of whose being has been demonstrated. The second is the disposition itself existing in matters, and this is close to the way in which it is said that privation without qualification is neither a body nor a power in a body. The third is prime matter, the being of which has also been demonstrated. The fourth is the separate forms, the being of which has also been demonstrated. All these are diverse.

This led Alexander to this far-fetched and obviously erroneous explanation, namely, to evade and take refuge from the questions mentioned above.⁵⁶ We also see that Alexander is bolstered by the fact that the first actuality of the intellect ought to be a generated power on the basis of general accounts said in regard to the definition of the soul, namely, because it is the first actuality of a natural organic body. He says that this definition is true of all the parts of the soul with the same intention. And he gives the reason for this: since to say that all the parts of the soul are forms is [to speak] univocally, or nearly so, and because it is impossible for form, inasmuch as it is the end of a thing having

not a subject which is acted upon because it is none of the things which actually exist." (ibid. [1979], 109–110).

56. I follow the suggestion of Janssens (1998), 723, and read *scilicet evadere et fugere* with manuscripts A and C.

[397] a form, to be separate, then since the first actualities of the soul are forms, they must not be separate. By this he refuted [the position] that there is a separate actuality in the first actualities of the soul, as it is said of the sailor and the ship, or generally that there will be some part which is called an actuality with an intention different from the intention with which it is said elsewhere.⁵⁷ What he supposes is evident concerning general accounts in regard to the soul [is something] Aristotle himself clearly said is not evident in regard to all the parts of the soul. For to say *form* and *first actuality* is to speak equivocally about the rational soul and about the other parts of the soul.

Abû Bakr,⁵⁸ however, in the literal understanding of his discussion, seems to intend for the material intellect to be the imaginative power inasmuch as it is disposed so that the intentions which are in it may be intelligibles in act and [so] that there is no other power [which is] the subject for intelligibles other than that power. Abû Bakr, however, seems to intend this in order to avoid the impossible results [reached] by Alexander, namely, that the subject receiving the intelligible forms is a body made from the elements or a power in a body. Since, if it were so, then it would happen either that the being of the forms in the soul would be the being they have outside the soul, and so the soul will not be apprehending [them] or [it would happen] that the intellect would have a corporeal instrument, if the subject for the intelligibles were a power in a body, as is the case for the senses.

57. Averroes remarks at [405] that Alexander has taken the notion that the soul is the first actuality of the natural organic body and applied it to the material intellect. That is, insofar as the material intellect is a first actuality for knowing awaiting actualization by the agent intellect, then it too must be an actuality of parts or powers of a body. Yet the first actualities here are not of the same sort since one is the life of a material body while the other is the receptivity of an immaterial intellect. See the introduction, p. lxxxii.

58. Abubacher: Abû Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Bâjjah. As noted above, in Book 2 and throughout Book 3 with the exception of the two occurrences in this paragraph, the translator has Avempache for Ibn Bâjjah. Referring to the present account, Davidson writes, "Either by reading out the implications of that statement and similar statements of that sort in Ibn Bâjjah or by drawing on sources no longer extant or still undiscovered—as, for example, Ibn Bâjjah's *De anima*, the published text of which breaks off tantalizingly in the middle of the discussion of the intellect—Averroes reports that Ibn Bâjjah construed the material intellect as a disposition located in the imaginative faculty of the soul." Davidson (1992), 261. For what we have of this work, see Ibn Bâjjah, *Book on the Soul* (1960), (1961). For discussion of the position of Ibn Bâjjah, see the introduction, pp. xxv–xxvii and lxxxix–xciii. Albert the Great apparently understood Abubacher in this paragraph to refer to the physician Abû Bakr Muḥammad Ibn Zakariyāh al-Rāzī (d. 925), known in Latin as Rhazes. See Albertus Magnus, *De Anima* (1968), III, tr. 1, c. 6, 184B–185B. III. For more texts with this identification by Albert, see Bach (1881), 122–129.

A more unthinkable aspect of the opinion of Alexander is that he said that the first dispositions for the intelligibles and for the other later actualities of the soul are things produced from the mixture, not powers produced by an external mover as is well known of the opinion of Aristotle and all the Peripatetics.⁵⁹ For that opinion regarding the apprehensive powers of the soul, {398} if it is as we have understood it, is false. For from the substance and the nature of the elements there cannot come to be an apprehensive discerning power. For if it were possible that there come to be such powers from their nature and without an external mover, then it would be possible for the final actuality, which is the intelligibles, to be something produced from the substance of their elements, as color and taste come to be. This opinion is similar to the opinion of those who deny agent causes and those who allow only material causes: these are those who speak of chance.⁶⁰ Alexander has greater nobility than to believe this, but the questions which were posed to him regarding the material intellect forced him to this [position].

Let us then return to our [own discussion] and say that perhaps these are the questions that led Ibn Bâjjah to say this regarding the material intellect. But it is evident that what occurs to him is impossible. For the imagined intentions are what move the intellect, not what are moved. For it is explained that they are such that their relation to the discerning rational power is just as the relation of what is sensed to what senses, not as of what senses to the positive disposition which is sensation. If it were what receives the intelligibles, then the thing would receive itself and the mover would be the moved.⁶¹ [But] it was already explained that it is impossible that the material intellect have a form

59. Averroes has in mind Aristotle's famous mention of τὸν νοῦν . . . θύραθεν, reason or intellect which enters human beings from outside, at *Generation of Animals* 2.2, 736b27.

60. Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* 2.4, 196b5–6, where Aristotle says, "Others there are who believe that chance is a cause, but that it is inscrutable to human intelligence, as being a divine thing and full of mystery." When Averroes comments on this text of the *Physics*, he may have in mind the Occasionalist view that things do not of themselves have causal natures but depend on God for their existence at every moment. There he remarks that the quiddity of a thing could not be known and that this would be a divine matter (*res divina*). *Long Commentary on the Physics* (1962), 66rA-B. This is in accord with his critique of Occasionalism found in his *Explanation of the Sorts of Proofs in the Doctrines of Religion* (1998), 166; (1947), 291–292; (2001), 83–84.

61. That is, the imagination would be both what gives rise to intelligibles by providing intentions of material things (mover) and what receives intelligibles (moved) if the receptive material intellect is to be identified with the imagination. As indicated in the introduction, pp. xxv–xxvii, Averroes adopted the view of Ibn Bâjjah in his *Short Commentary on the De Anima*.

in act, since its substance and nature is to receive forms inasmuch as they are forms. {399}

All the things which can be said regarding the nature of the material intellect seem to be impossible, except what Aristotle said, to whom also no few questions occur. One concerns the fact that the theoretical intelligibles are eternal. The second is the most formidable of them, namely, that the final actuality of a human being is numbered the way individual human beings are and the first actuality is one in number for all [human beings].⁶² The third is the question of Theophrastus, namely, that it is necessary to assert that this intellect has no form and it is necessary to assert also that it is a being; and if not, there would be neither a reception nor a disposition. For the disposition and reception result from the fact that they are not found in a subject. Since it is a being and does not have the nature of a form, then it remains that it has the nature of prime matter, which is altogether unthinkable, for prime matter is neither apprehensive nor discerning. How can this be said regarding something the being of which is such that it is separate?⁶³

Since there are all those things [which can be raised regarding the material intellect], for this reason it seemed [best] to me to write what seemed to me to be the case on this topic. If what appears to me is not complete, it will be a start for a complete account. So I ask my brothers seeing this exposition to write down their doubts and perhaps in that way what is true regarding this will be found out, if I have not yet found [it]. If I have found [it], as I suppose, then it will be clarified through those questions. For truth, as Aristotle says, is fitting and gives testimony to itself in every way.⁶⁴

The question addressing how the theoretical intelligibles will be generable and corruptible while their agent and {400} recipient will be eternal and [that of] what the need is for setting forth an agent [intellect] and a recipient intellect if there is not something generated there, this question would not occur if there were not another thing here which is the cause that the theoretical intel-

62. The issue here is that all human beings are from birth rational in definition by species, yet they reach their full actuality of intellect only individually.

63. These issues are raised by Theophrastus in a long text quoted by Themistius. See Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 107.30–108.7; (1973), 195–196; (1996), 133. The Arabic of the account of Theophrastus is translated by Dimitri Gutas in Huby (1999), 120.

64. Aristotle, *Prior Analytics* 1.32, 47a5–6: δεῖ γὰρ πᾶν τὸ ἀληθὲς αὐτὸ ἐαυτῷ ὁμολογοῦμενον εἶναι πάντῃ. "For everything that is true must in every respect agree with itself." (ibid. [1984]) لأنه يجب أن يكون الحق شاهداً لنفسه ومتفقاً من كل جهة (ibid. [1948]). Cf. Averroes' *Faṣl al-Maqāl* in *Decisive Treatise* (1959), 13: بل يوافق، فإن الحق لا يضاد الحق، بل يشهد له; "Truth does not contradict truth but rather is consistent with it and bears witness to it." My translation. For a discussion of this, see Taylor (2000b).

ligibles are generated. Now, however, because those intelligibles are constituted through two things, one generated and the other not generated, what was said regarding this follows naturally. Conceptualizing, as Aristotle says, is just as apprehending by sense. But apprehending by sense is something which is actualized through two subjects, one the subject in virtue of which the sense is⁶⁵ true (this is the thing sensed outside the soul) and the other the subject in virtue of which the sense is an existing form (this is the first actuality of the sense organ). Hence, the intelligibles in act must also have two subjects, one the subject in virtue of which they are true, namely, the forms which are true images, and the other that in virtue of which the intelligibles are among the beings in the world, and this latter is the material intellect. For there is no difference regarding this between sense and intellect except that the subject of the sense in virtue of which it is true is outside the soul and the subject of the intellect in virtue of which it is true is inside the soul. This was said by Aristotle regarding this intellect, as will be seen later.⁶⁶

This intellect's subject, which is its mover in some way, is what Ibn Bâjjah held to be the recipient, because he found it sometimes to be intellect in potency and sometimes to be intellect in act—that is, the disposition of a recipient subject—and he thought the converse [as well].⁶⁷ {401} That proportionality is found to be more exact between the subject of vision which moves [vision] and the subject of the intellect which moves [intellect]. For just as the subject of vision moving [vision], which is color, moves it only when color is made to exist in act through the presence of light after it was in potency, so too the imagined intentions move the material intellect only when the intelligibles are made to exist in act after they were in potency. For this reason Aristotle had to posit the agent intellect, as will be seen later.⁶⁸ It is this which draws out these intentions from potency into act. Therefore, just as color which is in potency is not the first actuality of the color which is the apprehended intention but rather the subject actualized through that color is vision, so too the subject

65. Crawford lists no variants for *fit* ("comes to be"). The sense of the argument which follows indicates the likelihood that this was originally *sit* ("is"). For my translation I read this as *sit*.

66. See {409–412}. On this topic see the insightful remarks of Michael Blaustein (1984), 63ff. Also see Blaustein (1986). The notion of the intelligibles being true in virtue of a subject external to the soul is discussed in the *Short Commentary on the De Anima* (1985), 116–117 and (1987), 203–204; and the notion of the subject by which the intelligibles exist as such is mentioned at (1985), 125 and (1987), 210. Ibn Bâjjah is inspiration for this. See Ibn Bâjjah, *Treatise on the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man* (1942), 15–16; Spanish, 33–35; (1968), 163–164; (1981), 188.

67. The text is problematic here and far from clear. See Janssens (1998), 724.

68. 430a10ff. Book 3, Text and Comment 17 {436ff}.

actualized through the thing understood is not the imagined intentions which are intelligibles in potency, but rather the material intellect, which is actualized through the intelligibles. And so it is + that the relation of [the material intellect] to [the intelligibles] + is as the relation of the intention of color to the power of vision.⁶⁹

Since all those things are as we recounted, it happens that those intelligibles which are in act, namely, the theoretical [intelligibles], are generable and corruptible only in virtue of the subject in virtue of which they are true, not in virtue of the subject in virtue of which they are one of the beings, namely, the material intellect.⁷⁰

The second question, how the material intellect is one in number in all individual human beings, neither generable nor corruptible, and the intelligibles [are] existing in it in act (this is the theoretical intellect), [yet it is also] enumerated in virtue of the numbering of individual human beings, generable {402} and corruptible through generation and corruption of individuals, this question is very difficult and has the greatest ambiguity.

For if we hold that this material intellect is enumerated through the numbering of individual human beings, it will happen that it is a determinate particular or a body or a power in a body. When it is a determinate particular, it will be an intention intelligible in potency. But an intention intelligible in potency is the subject moving the recipient intellect, not the subject moved. Therefore, if the recipient subject is held to be a determinate particular, it will happen that the thing receives itself, as we said,⁷¹ which is impossible.

Also, if we concede that it receives itself, it would happen that it would receive itself insofar as it is different. Thus, the power of the intellect will be the same as the power of sense, or there will be no difference between the being of a form outside the soul and [the being of one] in the soul.⁷² For this indi-

69. Crawford marks this passage as corrupt. What one would expect here is rather that the relation of the material intellect to the intelligibles is as the relation of the power of vision to the intention of color.

70. That is, here intelligibles exist as intelligibles in act only in the material intellect. If it were not for intellect, the intentions would remain at the level of intelligibles in potency, that is, at the level of imagination or at the level of forms in things, both of which are corruptible particulars.

71. {385}, {398}.

72. That is, intellect's power for receiving forms will be just as sense's power for receiving forms—namely, that an intention different in being is received in the sense as the actuality of the sense from the sensed object. If such were not the case and the being of the form in the sensed object were the same as the being in the soul, then they would not differ in being at all. Clearly this latter cannot be so. But neither can it be the case that intellect receives the forms just as sense does, since sense receives them in

vidual matter receives the forms only as these [determinate particular forms] and individual [forms]. This is one of the things which attest that Aristotle holds this intellect not to be an individual intention.⁷³

If we hold that it is not enumerated through the numbering of individuals, it will happen that its relation to all the individuals existing in their final actuality in generation is the same. Hence, if any of those individuals acquired some intelligible, then that intelligible must be acquired by all of them. Consider whether the conjoining of those individuals is owing to the conjoining of the material intellect with them. Now, the conjoining of a human being with a sensible intention is owing to the conjoining of the first actuality {403} of sense with one who is receptive of the sensible intention. But the conjoining of the material intellect with all human beings existing in act in their final actuality at some time ought to be the same conjoining; for there is nothing to cause difference in the relation of conjoining between these two conjoinings. If this is so, I say, then when you have acquired some intelligible, it is necessary that I also would acquire that intelligible, which is impossible.

It makes no difference whether you hold that the final actuality generated in any individual is made the subject for that intellect, namely, [the actuality] in virtue of which the material intellect is united [to individuals] and [hold that] it is from this [actuality] as a form separable from its subject with which it is conjoined, if there is such a thing, or whether you hold that this actuality is one of the powers of the soul or [one] of the powers of the body, [still] the same impossible consequences result.

For this reason one should hold the opinion that if there are some living things whose first actuality is a substance separate from its subjects, as is thought concerning the celestial bodies,⁷⁴ it is impossible that there be found

their determinate particularity and individuality while intellect receives forms as intelligibles in act, which allows for the aspect of universality which makes science possible.

73. That is, the material intellect cannot be a determinate particular as an individual being because it would then have to receive things as particular individuals receive them—that is, in accord with its own individuality and not in accord with the universality which knowledge requires. In that case, they would become intelligibles in potency, not in act. This understanding is central to Averroes' teaching that there cannot be a plurality of material intellects—that is, that it is not possible for each human being to have his or her own material or possible intellect as Avicenna held.

74. "And generally, since it is clear that the activity of this body is eternal, it is also clear concerning the nature of its form that it does not subsist in a subject, and that its subject is simple, not composed of matter and form, for if the latter were the case, the celestial body would be generated and corruptible." *De Substantia Orbis* (1986), 72. As Geoffroy makes clear, analogy with the celestial bodies and souls is central to Averroes'

more than one individual from one species of these. For, if among these, namely, from the same species, we find more than one individual, for instance, with regard to a body moved by the same mover, then the being of these [others] would be useless and superfluous, since the motion of these [bodies] would be owing to an intention which is the same in number.⁷⁵ For example, for there to be more than one ship in number for one sailor at the same time is useless; and similarly for there to be more than one tool in number of the [very] same kind of tools for one artisan is useless.⁷⁶

This is the intention of what was said in the first book of *On the Heavens and the World*,⁷⁷ namely, that if there were another world, there would be another celestial body. If there were another celestial body, then it would have a mover different {404} in number from the mover of this celestial body. And if this were so, then the mover of the celestial body would be material and numbered in virtue of the numbering of the celestial bodies, namely, because it is impossible that a mover singular in number belong to two bodies different in number. For this reason the artisan does not use more than one instrument since only a unique activity results from it. Generally it is thought that the impossible things which result for this position result for our position because the intellect which is in a positive disposition is one in number.⁷⁸ Ibn Bâjjah already listed most of these in his short work, which he called *The Conjoining of the Intellect with Human Beings*.⁷⁹ Since this is so, how then is there a way to solve this difficult question?

Let us say, then, that it is evident that a human being is intelligent in act only

mature doctrine of the material intellect. See Geoffroy and Steel (2001), 48–51, 68–69; 261. Also see the introduction, pp. xlvff.

75. The argument here is that a plurality of celestial souls of the same species causing the one movement of a single celestial body would be superfluous since only one soul is required. For Averroes the distinct celestial movements are indicative of distinct intentions in distinct celestial souls which receive those intentions from contemplation of distinct separate intellects. Regarding the celestial bodies, souls, and intellects, see Endress (1995) and Twetten (1995).

See n. 78 below.

76. That is, it is useless for the artisan to have multiple copies of the same tool at hand since he can use only one when in the very actuality of exercising his skills.

77. *De Caelo* 1.8–9. He probably has specifically in mind the discussion at 1.8, 277b8–13, though the argument here goes well beyond that text. See his comments on this text in his *Long Commentary on the De Caelo* (2003), 164–165 where he discusses conceptualization on the part of the movers of the heavens.

78. That is, if the same applies analogically to Averroes' doctrine of the intellect, then the intellect in a positive disposition would be one, not many.

79. Ibn Bâjjah, *Treatise on the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man* (1942), 14–16; Spanish, 31–35; (1968), 161–164; (1981), 186–189.

owing to the conjoining of the intelligible with him in act. It is also evident that matter and form are united to one another in such a way that the composite of these is a singular thing, and [this is likewise so] to the greatest extent [in the case of] the material intellect and the intention which is intelligible in act. For what is composed from these is not some third thing different from these as it is for other things composed of matter and form. Therefore, it is impossible for there to be a conjoining of the intelligible with human beings except through the conjoining of each of those two parts with [human beings], namely, of the part which is related to one as matter and of the part which is related to another as form.⁸⁰

Since it was explained among the doubts mentioned earlier that it is impossible for the intelligible to be united with each human being and be numbered in virtue of the numbering of these by way of the part which belongs to it as matter, namely, the material intellect, {405} then it remains that the conjoining of intelligibles with us human beings is through the conjoining of the intelligible intention with us (these are the imagined intentions), namely, of the part which is related to it in us in some way as form. For this reason the statement that a boy is intelligent in potency can be understood in two ways, one because the imagined forms which are in him are intelligible in potency, the second because the material intellect which is naturally constituted to receive the intelligible of that imagined form is receptive in potency and conjoined with us in potency.⁸¹

It has therefore been explained that the first actuality of the intellect differs from the first actualities of the other powers of the soul and that this word "actuality" is said of these in an equivocal way, contrary to what Alexander thought.⁸² For this reason Aristotle said in regard to the definition of the soul that it is the first actuality of a natural organized body, because it was not yet evident whether the body is actualized through all the powers in the same way or [whether] there is some [power] among these in virtue of which the body is not actualized, and if [that other power] is actualized, it will be in another way.

However, the disposition for intelligibles which is in the imaginative power is similar to the dispositions which are in the other powers of the soul, namely, [similar] to the first actualities of the other powers, inasmuch as each of these

80. That is, the material intellect and the agent intellect. Note that I remove Crawford's insertion of *scilicet intellecto*.

81. That is, the boy is intelligent in potency in virtue of (a) the imagined intentions in him which are intelligible in potency, and (b) the material intellect that is in potency with respect to those imagined intentions which are able to become intelligible in act when they come to exist in the material intellect.

82. Cf. {396–397}.

two [sorts of] dispositions is generated through the generation of an individual, corrupted through its corruption, and generally numbered through its numbering. They differ in this: one is a disposition in a mover insofar as it is a mover, namely, the disposition which is in the intentions {406} imagined;⁸³ the other is a disposition in the recipient and is a disposition which is in the first actualities of the other parts of the soul.⁸⁴

Owing to this similarity between these two dispositions, Ibn Bâjjah thought that there is no disposition for the thing coming to be understood except the disposition existing in the imagined intentions. But these two dispositions differ as [much as] the earth from the heavens. For one is the disposition in the mover insofar as it is a mover and the other is a disposition in the moved insofar as it is moved and receptive.

For this reason one should hold the opinion, which already was apparent to us from the account of Aristotle, that in the soul there are two parts belonging to the intellect, one is the recipient whose being is explained here, the other is the agent which is what makes the intentions which are in the imaginative power to be movers of the material intellect in act after they were movers in potency, as will be apparent later from the account of Aristotle.⁸⁵ [Also from Aristotle it is apparent] that these two parts are neither generable nor corruptible and that the agent is related to the recipient as form to matter, as will be explained afterwards.⁸⁶

For this reason Themistius held the opinion that we are the agent intellect and that the theoretical intellect is nothing else but just the conjoining of the agent intellect with the material intellect.⁸⁷ It is not as he thought. Rather, one

83. "The imaginative form is the first mover in man." Ibn Bâjjah, *Treatise on the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man* (1942), 12; Spanish, 29; (1968), 159; (1981), 185.

84. The intentions imagined there constitute an active predisposition insofar as they are intelligible in potency, while in other parts of the soul there are first actualities which are predispositions for receptivity.

85. {438–439}.

86. {409ff}.

87. Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* 100.16–21; (1973), 182.1–7; (1996), 124–125. "We, then, are either the potential intellect or the actual [intellect]. So if, in the case of everything that is combined from what is potential and actual, something (*to tode*) and what it is to be something (*to tôide einai*) are distinct, then the I (*to egô*) and what it is to be me (*to emoi einai*) will also be distinct, and while I am the intellect combined from the potential and the actual [intellects], what it is to be me comes from the actual [intellect]. Thus while the intellect combined from the potential and the actual [intellects] is writing what I am [now] discursively thinking about and composing, it is writing not *qua* potential but *qua* actual [intellect], for the activity from the [potential intellect] is channelled to it." Todd also translated this text in *ibid.* (1990), 93–94. Note that Todd changed

should hold the opinion that there are three parts of the intellect in the soul, one is the receptive intellect, the second is that which makes [things], and the third is the product [of these]. Two of these three are eternal, namely, the agent and the recipient; the third is generable and corruptible in one way, eternal in another way.⁸⁸

On the basis of this account we have held the opinion that the material intellect is one for all human beings and also {407} on the basis of this we have held the opinion that the human species is eternal, as was explained in other places.⁸⁹ The material intellect must not be devoid of the natural principles common to the whole human species, namely, the primary propositions and singular conceptions common to all [human beings]. For these intelligibles are unique according to the recipient and many according to the intention received.⁹⁰

his mind regarding the referent of αὐτῷ in τὸ γὰρ ἐνεργεῖ ἐκεῖθεν αὐτῷ ἐποχρετεύεται. In the 1990 translation Todd understood the referent to be the actual intellect, while in the 1996 translation he understood the referent to be the potential intellect. This revision seems to be correct since Themistius is speaking of the activity of the composite human being, which, while traced to the actual intellect, is existing in the composite only via the actual intellect's actualization in the potential intellect.

88. The agent intellect and the material intellect are eternal. The theoretical intellect is eternal insofar as the theoretical intelligibles are in the material intellect and generable and corruptible insofar as the theoretical intelligibles are in human individual knowers for Averroes.

89. Averroes may be referring to *Epistle 1 On Conjunction*, where he speaks of the possibility of the material intellect being "a substance one in number for all human beings in itself, but many by accident, which is not the case for material forms." Geoffrey and Steel (2001), 210. Also see *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* (1952), 1487–1490; (1962), 302I–303D; (1984), 103–105. In his *Commentary on the De Intellectu of Alexander*, Averroes sets forth his doctrine that العقل الهولاني هو قوة واحدة مشتركة للنفوس الشخصية ("the material intellect is one power shared by individual souls") and that the theoretical intelligibles are فاسدة ولا فاسدة ("in its essence ungenerable and incorruptible"). *Commentary on the De Intellectu of Alexander* (2001), 29. On Averroes' position in this work also see Davidson (1992), 293–295. Davidson suggests as relevant *Incoherence of the Incoherence* (1930), 180; (1969), 108.

90. For Averroes here the intelligibles are described as the same but received individually into differing individuals. The common conceptions and first principles of understanding here seem to be the first principles of demonstration—that is, such as that a thing cannot both be and not be at the same time in the same respect—attained via sense perception. Averroes' understanding of these seems to follow the accounts of al-Fārābī and Avicenna, who hold that these are communicated to all human beings by the separate agent intellect. This terminology and this understanding of primary or first intelligibles are dependent on the thought of al-Fārābī. In *The Perfect State*, al-Fārābī speaks of first intelligibles and the voluntary intelligibles which can be brought about

Therefore, according to the way by which they are unique, they are necessarily eternal, since being does not desert the subject received, namely, the mover which is the intention of the imagined forms,⁹¹ and for this there is no impediment on the part of the recipient. Therefore, generation and corruption belong to these only owing to the multiplicity accruing to them, not owing to the way by which they are unique. For this reason, since in relation to some individual, one of the first intelligibles is corrupted through the corruption of its subject insofar as it is united with us and true, it is necessary that this intelligible not be without qualification corruptible but [rather be] corruptible in relation to any given individual. In this way we can say that the theoretical intellect is one in all [human beings].

Since consideration is given to those intelligibles insofar as they are simply beings, not with reference to some individual, and insofar as they are not sometimes understood and sometimes not, but rather always [understood], they are truly said to be eternal. It is as if that being is intermediate for them between being which perishes and being which persists.⁹² For according to the multiplicity and diminution accruing to them from final actuality [in indi-

later. "The presence of the first intelligibles in man is his first perfection, but these intelligibles are supplied to him only in order to be used by him to reach his ultimate perfection, i.e. felicity." Al-Fārābī, *Principles of the Opinions of the People of the Virtuous City* (1985), 204–205. See Druart (1997a). The same sort of description of the primary propositions is given by Avicenna at Ibn Sīnā, *Kitāb al-Nafs* (1959), 49; (1972), 96–97. Also see Averroes' *Short Commentary on the De Anima* (1950), 79.15–16; (1985), 115.13–14; (1987), 202, where he writes of المعقولات التي لا ندري متى حصلت ، ولا كيف حصلت , "the intelligibles which are such that we do not know when they arose nor how they arose." Later, at {496–497}, Averroes distinguishes between these first principles of the understanding, which he calls natural intelligibles, and voluntary intelligibles. Also see {506}.

91. The words *cum esse non fugiat a subiecto recepto, scilicet motore, qui est intentio formarum ymaginatarum* ("since being does not desert the subject received, namely, the mover which is the intention of the imagined forms") are far from clear. What it is precisely to which "the subject received" corresponds is problematic. Averroes has already established the necessity of the material intellect's eternal existence and set forth his view that the human species is eternal. His point may be that the subject into which the intentions are received as intelligible in act always exists as knower and so the mover, "the intention of the imagined forms," must always exist. He draws the consequences of this in the following paragraphs, where he asserts that human beings will always exist to provide intentions for the material intellect.

92. Cf. Averroes' *Commentary on the De Intellectu of Alexander* (2001), 29–30, where he writes that وجودها كأنه وجود متوسط بين الوجود الشخصي والوجود الذي هو صورة مفارقة بإطلاق; "their existence is as an existence intermediate between individual existence and the existence which is a separate form absolutely."

vidual human beings] they are generable and corruptible, while insofar as they are unique in number [in the material intellect] they are eternal.

This will be the case if it is not asserted that the disposition in regard to the final actuality in human beings is just as the disposition in regard to {408} the intelligibles common to all [human beings], namely, that worldly being is not devoid of such individual being.⁹³ For that this is impossible is not evident. Rather, one saying this can have a reason sufficient and able to quiet the soul. For since it is the case that wisdom exists in some way proper to human beings, just as it is the case that [various] kinds of arts exist in ways proper to human beings, it is thought that it is impossible that the whole habitable world shun philosophy, just as one should hold the opinion that it is impossible for [the whole habitable world] to shun the natural arts. For if some part of [the habitable world], for example, the northern quarter of the earth, were to be devoid of them, namely, the arts, the other quarters will not be devoid of them, because it was explained that habitation⁹⁴ is possible in the southern as in the northern quarters. Perhaps, then, philosophy is found in the greater part of the subject⁹⁵ in every era, as a human being is found [to come about] from a human being and a horse from a horse.⁹⁶ The theoretical intellect, therefore, is neither generable nor corruptible in this way. And generally it is for the agent intellect creating the intelligibles just as [it is] for the discerning recipient intellect. For insofar as the agent intellect never rests from generating and creating without

93. Intelligibles are able to be present in members of the human species, though they exist independent of any perishable individual and are unchanging. As is evident in what follows, Averroes is here asserting that there will always exist at every time one or more individual human beings supplying intentions which are intelligibles in potency for the material intellect. The same teaching is found in *Epistle 1 On Conjunction*, where he asserts that it is not necessary that each and every human being have intellectual knowledge but only that it be manifested in the species. See Geoffroy and Steel (2001), 218.

94. That is, human habitation and the consequent presence of the natural arts can be found in the southern part as well as in the northern.

95. As de Libera notes in his preface to *Long Commentary Fragments* (2005), at 11, n. 2, it is evident that the Latin translator read the Arabic موضع as *maudu'* (subject, *subiecti*) instead of *maudi'* (place). Hence, the sense in the Arabic is that philosophy is found in most places. In this de Libera is following the remarks of Janssens (1998), 721.

96. That is, philosophy exists in every age as a human activity. Even if it seems to be hardly evident in some societies and eras, still it is an endeavor which is generated and passed on inevitably by individual human beings, just as humans generate humans and horses horses. This is because of the eternal nature of intellectual activity in the material intellect.

qualification, even if some subject is removed from this, namely, from generation, so it is concerning the discerning intellect.⁹⁷

Aristotle indicates this in the beginning of this book when he says: **And conceptualizing⁹⁸ and contemplating are diverse, such that something else undergoes corruption internally, but it in itself does not suffer corruption.**⁹⁹ He means by **something else** human imagined forms. He means by **conceptualizing** {409} the reception which is always [existent] in the material intellect. Concerning this he intended to raise doubts in this passage and in that other, when he said: **We do not remember because that is not passive; the passive intellect, however, is corruptible and without this it understands nothing.**¹⁰⁰ He means by **the passive intellect** the imaginative power, as he will later explain.¹⁰¹ And generally that notion appeared from extrinsic considerations, namely, that soul—the theoretical intellect—is immortal.

97. That is, strictly speaking, the agent intellect is distinct and continues to carry out its activity. And similarly, the material intellect is a being in its own right and distinct from transient individuals: it does not cease to exist when one or another individual perishes.

98. *Formare per intellectum*: At Book 1, Text 66 {88}, the corresponding term is instead *intelligere*. The corresponding Greek there is καὶ τὸ νοεῖν δὴ καὶ τὸ θεωρεῖν (408b24).

99. **To understand and to contemplate are distinguished when something else inside undergoes corruption, but it is in itself** {89} **affected by nothing.** Book 1, Text 66 {88–89} (408b24–25). Note that “it,” *ipsum*, is neuter nominative and must refer to the activity of intellect. Crawford lists no variants for this difficult reading. See Book 1, n. 252, regarding the mistranslation of this text.

100. Note the difference between the Latin here and the Latin at Book 3, Text 20. Here we have: *Et non sumus memores, quia iste est non passivus; intellectus autem passivus est corruptibilis, et absque hoc nichil intelligit*. Later we read: *Et non memoramur, quia iste est non passibilis, et intellectus passibilis est corruptibilis, et sine hoc nichil intelligitur*. “We do not remember, because that is not passible, while the passible intellect is corruptible, and without this nothing is understood.” Book 3, Text 20 {443} (430a24–25). This difference is likely due to the understanding of the translator, which is more subtle in the later text.

101. Aristotle’s remarks at Book 3, Text 20 (430a24–25), that “the passible intellect is corruptible and without this nothing is understood” {443} are interpreted by Averroes as referring to “the forms of the imagination insofar as the cogitative power proper to human beings acts upon them.” {449} This power is “a kind of reason,” *aliqua ratio* {449}, thanks only to its connection to the material intellect. But it is a kind of reason which is bound up with the body for Averroes, a “particular material power,” *virtus particularis materialis* {476}. Thomas Aquinas follows Averroes in calling this “cogitative power” (*vis cogitativa*) “the passive intellect” (*intellectus passivus*) and “particular reason” (*ratio particularis*) and describes this bodily power as “what gathers particular intentions”

Hence, Plato said that the universals are neither generable nor corruptible and that they exist outside the mind. The account is true in this way [which was just explained] and false with respect to the intent of his words. This latter is the sense which Aristotle worked to refute in the *Metaphysics*.¹⁰² Generally that intention in reference to the soul is the part which is true in the probable propositions which attribute to soul both kinds of being, namely, mortal and non-mortal. For it is impossible for probable things to be completely false.¹⁰³ The ancients recounted this and all the religious laws alike reflect it.

The third question (how the material intellect is a being and [yet] is not one of the material forms nor even prime matter) is resolved in this way. One should hold that it is a fourth kind of being. For just as sensible being is divided into form and matter, so too intelligible being must be divided into things similar to these two, namely, into something similar to form and into something similar to matter. This is [something] necessarily present in every separate intelligence which understands something else.¹⁰⁴ And if not, then there would be no multiplicity [410] in separate forms.¹⁰⁵ It was already explained in First Philosophy that there is no form free of potency without qualification except the First Form, which understands nothing outside itself.¹⁰⁶ Its being is its quiddity. Other

(*quae est collativa intentionum particularium*). Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de anima* (1996), q. 13 resp., 118.266–267.

102. *Metaphysics* 1.9, 990a32ff.

103. Cf. *Epistle 1 On Conjunction* in Geoffroy and Steel (2001), 214, 270. In his n. 63, Geoffroy cites Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 8, 1047b3–5, and Averroes' Commentary on that passage indicating the meaning that what is possible must necessarily be realized at some time. His reference is to *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* (1952), 1139–1140.

104. That is, this division of what is analogous to form and what is analogous to matter, or of act and potency, must be present in any separate intellect which is capable of knowing anything outside itself. For insofar as it is an intelligence with itself as its object, it need have no potency. But insofar as it is in potency for knowing something other than its own essence or nature, it must have a certain materiality or potency for receiving form which contains essentially a reference to something outside the nature of that particular intelligence, namely, God. The exception among the separate substances or intelligences is God, who, in thinking the highest being, thinks nothing outside himself.

105. That is, there will not be a plurality of separate forms or intellects.

106. The "separate forms" to which he refers here are the separate intelligences. The "First Form" is God for Averroes. Averroes holds that the separate substances or intelligences are distinguished from one another in virtue of their potency for knowledge, a certain equivocal "materiality" found in each which is sufficient to allow their distinction from one another and to make reasonable the assertion that there is a multiplicity of separate substances. This doctrine is also found in the *Incoherence of the Incoherence*. "The difference between the First's understanding of Itself and the understanding of

forms, however, are in some way different in quiddity and being.¹⁰⁷ If it were not for this genus of beings which we have come to know in the science of the soul, we could not understand multiplicity in separate things, to the extent that unless we know here the nature of the intellect, we could not know that the separate moving powers ought to be intellects.¹⁰⁸

This was unknown to many modern [thinkers] to the extent that they denied what Aristotle says, in the Eleventh Book of First Philosophy, that the separate forms moving the bodies must be in accord with the number of celestial bodies.¹⁰⁹ To this extent knowledge of the soul is necessary for knowledge of First Philosophy. That receptive intellect must understand the intellect which is in act. For while it understands material forms, it is even more befitting that it

themselves which the rest of the intellects have is that the First Intellect understands Itself as existing through Itself, not as what is related to a cause, while the rest of the intellects understand themselves as being related to their cause so that plurality enters into these in this way. For it is not necessary that they all be in one grade of simplicity since they are not in a single grade in regard to the First Principle and none of them exists simply in the sense in which the First is simple, because the First is considered to exist by Itself, while they are in related existence." *Incoherence of the Incoherence* (1930), 204; (1969), 122. My translation. Cf. *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* (1952), 1696–1697; (1962), c. 51, 335H; (1984), 192–193, where Averroes follows Aristotle in stressing that what requires something other than itself is less than the most excellent of all entities. In his *Short Commentary on the De Anima* in the context of his summary of the views of Ibn Bājja he writes that "The First Intellect is the most simple of all the intellects and neither is It caused at all nor does It conceptualize (ولا يتصور) anything external to Its own essence." *Short Commentary on the De Anima* (1950), 93; (1985), omitted; (1987), 218–219, My translation.

107. *Essentia eius est quidditas eius; alie autem forme diversantur in quiditate et essentia quoquo modo*. With the First Form (الصورة الأولى) as its probable antecedent, this is in all likelihood ما هيته فهو وجودها. Cf. [422], where Averroes is concerned to assert the simplicity of all immaterial substances and there states that "in simple beings the quiddity and being are the same." As indicated in n. 128 below, in the corresponding passage of the *Middle Commentary* (2002), 113.17, Averroes asserts that إن الأشياء البسيطة الوجود والماهية فيها هو شيء واحد بعينه "the existence and essence of simple things are one and the same."

108. In this, then, lies the reason why the study of the soul is more worthy and more noble than other studies and why it should precede others: we understand the nature of intellect first through understanding the nature of intellect in ourselves, and only when something of that understanding has been achieved can there be any understanding of intellect in higher beings. See Book 1, Text 1 (402a1–4) [3], with n. 11 there also, and the introduction, pp. liif.

109. *Metaphysics* 12. 8, 1073a26–38. Book 11 in Averroes corresponds to Book 12 because Book 11 of the *Metaphysics* was not available to Averroes.

understand immaterial forms. What it understands of separate forms, for example, of the agent intelligence, does not impede it from understanding material forms.

The proposition saying that the recipient ought to have in act nothing of what it receives is not said without qualification but conditionally. [This is] because it is not necessary that the recipient be nothing at all in act but rather that it not be in act something of what it receives, as we said earlier.¹¹⁰ Rather, you ought to know that the relation of the agent intellect to that intellect is [the same as] the relation of light to the transparent [medium], and the relation of the material forms {411} to [the material intellect] is [the same as] the relation of color to the transparent [medium]. For just as light is the actuality of the transparent [medium], so the agent intellect is the actuality of the material [intellect]. Just as the transparent [medium] is not moved by color and does not receive it except when there is light, so too that intellect does not receive the intelligibles which are here except insofar as it is actualized through that [agent] intellect and illuminated by it. Just as light makes color in potency to be in act in such a way that it can move the transparent [medium], so the agent intellect makes the intentions in potency to be intelligible in act in such a way that the material intellect receives them. This, then, is how the material intellect and the agent [intellect] should be understood.

When the material intellect is united with us¹¹¹ insofar as it is actualized through the agent intellect, we then are united with the agent intellect. This disposition is called acquisition and the acquired intellect,¹¹² as we will see later.¹¹³ That way in which we posited the being of the material intellect solves all the questions resulting from our holding that the intellect is one and many. For if the thing understood in me and in you were one in every way, it would happen that when I would know some intelligible, you would also know it, and many other impossible things [would also follow]. If we assert it to be many, then it would happen that the thing understood in me and in you would be one in species and two in individual [number]. In this way the thing understood will have a thing understood and so it proceeds into infinity.¹¹⁴ Thus, it

110. {385–386}.

111. I read *copulatus nobiscum* with manuscripts A and C, following Janssens (1998), 724.

112. *Adeptio et intellectus adeptus*.

113. See {445}, but especially the extended discussion of the thought of Alexander of Aphrodisias on this at {482–485}.

114. That is, if there is a unity in species but the object in the intellect is different in each individual, then an infinite regress would arise insofar as the object understood in any one mind would have a higher unity which yet again when understood would be grasped differently by different individuals, and so forth. It is better, then, to say

will be impossible for a student to learn from a teacher unless the knowledge which is in the teacher is a power generating and creating the knowledge which is in the student, in the way in which one fire generates another {412} fire similar to it in species, which is impossible. That what is known is the same in the teacher and the student in this way caused Plato to believe that learning is recollection. Since, then, we asserted that the intelligible thing which is in me and in you is many in subject insofar as it is true, namely, the forms of the imagination, and one in the subject in virtue of which it is an existing intellect (namely, the material [intellect]), those questions are completely resolved.

The way Ibn Bâjjah thought to solve the questions arising from the fact that the intellect is one or many, namely, the way which he gave in his treatise entitled *The Conjoining of the Intellect with Human Beings*, is not a way fit for resolving that question. For the intellect which he demonstrated in that treatise to be one, when he worked to resolve that question, is different from the intellect which he demonstrates there also to be many, since the intellect which he demonstrated to be one is the agent intellect inasmuch as it is necessarily a form of the theoretical intellect. But the intellect which he demonstrated to be many is the theoretical intellect itself. This name, however, namely, “intellect,” is said equivocally of the theoretical and the agent [intellects].¹¹⁵

For this reason, if that which is understood concerning this word “intellect” in two opposed accounts—namely, concluding that the intellect is many and concluding that the intellect is one—is an intention which is not equivocal, then what he gave later in regard to this—that the agent intellect is one and the theoretical is many—does not resolve this question. If {413} what is understood in these two opposite accounts concerning this word intellect is an equivocal intention, then the problem will be sophistical, not subject to argument. For this reason we should believe that the questions which that man raised in that treatise are resolved only in this way, if those problems are not sophistical but subject to argument. In this way the question regarding what he was uncertain about concerning the material intellect—whether it is external or united—is resolved. Since this has been explained, let us return to the exposition of Aristotle’s account.

6. For this reason it must not be mixed with the body. For if it were mixed with the body, then it would be in some disposition, either hot or cold, or it

that each individual mind grasps the same intelligible thing. This argument is from Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 104.2–14; (1973), 189.2–15; (1996), 129. But another source is Ibn Bâjjah, *Treatise on the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man* (1942), section 8; 14–15; Spanish, 32–33; (1968), 162–163; (1981), 187.

115. Ibn Bâjjah, *Treatise on the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man* (1942), 13–14; Spanish, 30–32; (1968), 162; (1981), 187.

would have some instrument¹¹⁶ as does sense. Yet¹¹⁷ it is not so. Those, therefore, saying the soul is the place of forms did speak rightly. But [it is] not the whole [soul] but rather the part which understands, and the forms [are] not in actuality, but rather in potency. (429a24–29)

This is another demonstration that the material intellect is not a determinate particular nor a body nor a power in a body. He said: **For this reason it was necessary**, etc. That is, because its nature is what we have recounted, it was right and necessary that it not be mixed with the body, that is, that there is no power in it in virtue of which it is mixed with the body, as was explained.¹¹⁸ Next he gave [414] a second reason for this. He said: **For if it were** mixed, etc. That is, for if it were a power in a body, then it would be a disposition and a bodily quality. And if it were to have quality, then that quality either would be ascribed to what is hot or what is cold (namely, to the compound in what is a compound), or it would be a quality existing in a compound only added to the compound, as it is for the sensitive soul and for things similar to it, and thus it would have a bodily instrument.¹¹⁹ Next he said: **But it is not so**. That is, but [the material intellect] does not have the quality ascribed to what is hot and what is cold nor does it have an instrument. Therefore it is not mixed with the body. You ought to consider in regard to the consequence and the refutation whether they require demonstration or not. Let us say then: but that the consequent of what follows upon the antecedent is true is evident from what was mentioned earlier. For it was explained that every power in a composite body either is ascribed to primary qualities, namely, to the form of the compound, or it will be a power existing in the compounding form, and thus it will necessarily be an organic soul. But the refutation is evident also from what was mentioned earlier, for it was explained that there is no instrument different from the instruments of the five senses (where it was explained that there is no sixth sense).¹²⁰ Generally, if intellect were a living power in a body, then either it would be a sixth sense or something consequent upon a sixth sense, namely, something whose relation to a sixth sense is as the relation of imagina-

116. *Instrumentum*: ὄργανόν, "organ."

117. Janssens (1998), 724, notes that *modo* corresponds to the Greek νῦν, "now."

118. See [387–388].

119. That is, if it is a bodily quality, then this predisposition which arises from the compound of bodily parts would be either a quality such as hot or cold, which are accidental qualities attributed to a subject, or a quality which arises from the compound as something additional to the blend. For example, the sensible soul is something over and above the compound of bodily parts. If the material intellect were either of these alternatives, it would be a bodily instrument.

120. See [325ff].

tion to the common sense.¹²¹ That the material intellect is not a power ascribed to the compound is evident [415] from what was mentioned earlier, for since the sensitive soul is not a power ascribed to the compound, how much more is this so for the intellect!

If [the material intellectual power] were ascribed to the compound, then, as Aristotle says, the being of the form of the stone in the soul would be the same as its being outside the soul,¹²² and so the stone would be something which apprehends, and many other impossible things would follow for this position. Some people were uncertain about what was said (namely, that the intellect does not have an instrument) because it was said that the imaginative power is in the anterior of the brain, the cogitative power in the middle, and the power of memory in the posterior. This was not only said by physicians but is said in *Sense and Sensibilia*.¹²³ But Galen and other physicians¹²⁴ reasoned regarding this that those powers are in those places by virtue of an argument of concomitance, which is an argument which causes one to hold an opinion, not a true argument.

But it was already explained in *Sense and Sensibilia* that such is the order of those powers in the brain through a demonstration giving the being and the cause.¹²⁵ But that does not contradict what was said here. For the cogitative power according to Aristotle is an individual discerning power, namely, because it discerns something only in an individual way, not in a universal way. For it was explained there that the cogitative power is only a power which discerns the intention of a sensible thing from its imagined image. That power is one which is such that its relation to those two intentions, namely, to the image of the thing and to the intention of its image, is just as the relation of the common sense to the intentions of the five senses.¹²⁶ The cogitative power, therefore, is of the genus of powers existing in bodies. Aristotle explicitly said

121. The common sense and the imagination use the same instrument but are different actualities or powers. Cf. *Sense and Sensibilia* 7, 449a14–19.

122. That is, the activity of thought (composing receptive potency with received form) attributed to the material intellect would also have to be attributed to things.

123. Cf. *Short Commentary on the Parva Naturalia* (1949), 57–59; (1961), 26–27; (1972), 42–43. The reference may be to the discussion at *De Memoria* 1, 449b29ff.

124. Reference not found.

125. That is, there have been demonstrations of the fact and of the reason for the fact.

126. The common sense unites what is received from the five senses and also has its own operation related to the common sensibles. Cf. *Sense and Sensibilia* 7, 449a14–19. Similarly, the cogitative power unites the reports of imagination in the image and performs its own operation of discernment, by which it grasps the denuded individual intention and places it in memory.

this in that book, when he placed the individual discerning powers in four orders. In the first he placed {416} the common sense, next the imaginative power, next the cogitative power, and after that the power of memory. He set forth the power of memory as the more spiritual, then the cogitative, then the imaginative, and after that the sensible. Although, therefore, a human being properly has a cogitative power, nevertheless this does not make it that this power is rational and discerning, for [the rational power] discerns universal intentions, not individual ones. This was explicitly said by Aristotle in that book.¹²⁷ If, therefore, the discerning rational power were a power in a body, it would happen that it would be one of those four powers, and so it would have a bodily organ. Or it would be an individual discerning power different from those four. But it was already explained there that this is impossible. Because Galen thought that this cogitative power is rational and material, the argument of concomitance made him err in regard to this. For because the rational power belongs to human beings and the cogitative belongs to them, it was thought on account of the conversion of the universal affirmative that the cogitative power is the rational power.¹²⁸ One of those who erred in regard to this is Abu al-Faraj in his *Commentary on [Aristotle's] Sense and Sensibilia*.¹²⁹ Next he said: **Those, therefore, saying the soul is the place of forms did speak rightly.** That is, since it was explained that it is not mixed with some body, then those describing the soul as the place of forms spoke correctly, although in making known its substance they did not accept more than that similarity and congruity which there is between it and a place. Next he said: **But [it is] not the whole [soul] but rather the part which understands.** {417} That is, but that similarity ought not to be taken in understanding all the parts of the soul, but only in regard to the rational soul, for the other parts of the soul are forms in matter, while the rational part is not. Next he said: **And the forms [are] not in actuality, but rather in potency.** That is, but place is different from the soul which discerns and understands insofar as a place is none of these things which exist in it, while the rational material soul is the forms existing in it, not in act,

127. Aristotle is by no means as explicit about this in the *Parva Naturalia* as Averroes indicates here. But Averroes discusses just this in detail in his *Short Commentary on the Parva Naturalia* in the section on Aristotle on dreams. See *Short Commentary on the Parva Naturalia* (1949), 109–113; (1961), 46–48; (1972), 79–82.

128. This is the fallacy of false cause, which involves the second figure syllogism with two affirmative premises, leading to a conclusion which is not necessary or, as Averroes puts it, yields an opinion, not a true argument. It is a version of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*. Cf. {513} and Book 3, n. 301.

129. Abelfarag Babilonensis. Abu al-Faraj Ibn al-Tayyib's *Commentary on Sense and Sensibilia* is not extant. Peters (1968), 46, remarks that it is mentioned by Hajji Khalifah and cited by a disciple of Avicenna. See the introduction, p. xcvi.

but in potency. He did this lest someone understand from this description that the genus taken in this is the true genus, not a rhetorical one. But human beings are forced in regard to such things which are understood only by analogy to make them known through such rhetorical genera.

7. **But the fact that the impassibility in sensing and in conceptualizing¹³⁰ is not similar is evident in the sense.**¹³¹ **For the sense cannot sense after a strong sensible object, for instance, after loud sounds, after bright colors, or after strong scents. But when the intellect has understood something highly intelligible, then it will understand what is below that first object not less well but rather better. For what senses is not outside the body, while [the intellect] is separate.** (429a29–b5)

After he had explained that the material intellect is not mixed with matter, he began to make it known that this fits the appearances. For this is a necessary condition for necessary demonstrations, namely, that things apparent to sense do not differ from what is seen through reason. And he said: **But the fact that the impassibility, etc.** That is, but the fact that the privation of change {418} existing in sense is not similar to the privation of change existing in intellect, as had been demonstrated by reason, this is [something] also evident from the appearances. For the privation of change in intellect ought to be pure and the privation of change in sense is not so, since sense is a material power. Next he said: **For the sense cannot sense, etc.** That is, the indication of this is that sense is unable to sense its sensibles coming to it when it has sensed something strong and has immediately retreated from it to a different sensible, for instance, when the sense of hearing has retreated from a loud sound, sight from bright color, or smell from a strong scent. The reason for this is the affection and change which occurs for what senses from the strong sensible object. And the reason for this change is that it is a power in a body. After he had demonstrated what is seen regarding the change in the sense, he began to make it known that the contrary is the case for the intellect. And he said: **But when the intellect has understood something highly, etc.** That is, but when the intellect has understood something highly intelligible, then it will understand more easily something which is not highly intelligible. Hence, it follows that it is not affected nor is it changed by something highly intelligible. After he had demonstrated that these are different in this regard, he gave

130. *Privatio passionis in sentiente et in formatione per intellectum: ἡ ἀπάθεια τοῦ αἰσθητικοῦ καὶ τοῦ νοητικοῦ*, "the impassibility of the sensitive faculty and that of the faculty of thought." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

131. The Greek is more specific in mentioning that this is evident in consideration of what senses (the sense organ) and the sense itself: ἐπὶ τῶν αἰσθητῶν καὶ τῆς αἰσθήσεως.

the reason. He said: **For what senses is not outside the body, while [the intellect] is separate.** That is, the reason for this is what was explained earlier, namely, that what senses is not outside the body, while the intellect is separate. We can set out this account as a third demonstration per se, but {419} one less powerful. For when we have said that if the intellect is changed essentially, not accidentally and through the mediation of something else (for this was conceded in the case of the intellect), it is necessary that the change occur for it in the course of its proper activity (which is to understand), just as it is in the case of sense. And if it is not changed per se and essentially, it must not be a power in a body at all. For every receptive power in some body ought to be changed insofar as it is receptive.

For this reason one must not object to this argument on the basis of the fact that some change occurs in the intellect due to the change belonging to the powers of the imagination, and especially [due to a change occurring in] the cogitative power. For fatigue is thought to happen to the intellect in this way but it is so only accidentally. For the cogitative power is of the genus of sensible powers. But the imaginative, cogitative, and memorative powers are only in place of the sensible power, and for this reason there is no need for them except in the absence of the sensible [power]. They all cooperate to present an image of the sensible thing, so that the separate rational power¹³² may behold it and extract the universal intention and after that receive it, that is, apprehend it. And perhaps, as we said, he presented this account to verify the earlier demonstrations.

8. And when it has in this way been any of these, namely, as knowledge is said in act (and this will occur when he has been able to understand in virtue of himself), then he will also be in potency in a certain way, but not in the same way by which he was previously [in potency], before he had knowledge or discovered [something]. He is then able to understand in virtue of himself.¹³³ (429b5–9) {420}

132. That is, the material intellect in cooperation with the agent intellect.

133. Although it is almost certainly not what Averroes himself read in his Arabic manuscript of the *De Anima*, I translate the Latin as edited by Crawford here and in the quotation of this text on {420}. However, Averroes' Comment shows he understood this text to concern self-knowledge and that he read an Arabic text with the same meaning as what we find in the alternate Arabic translation: *ويمكنه في ذلك الوقت أن يعقل نفسه* (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]); "and in this moment he would be able to know himself." Manuscript A omits *per* here and so is in accord with the generally accepted Greek version. *Per se* would be in accord with the Greek text published by Ross, who follows Bywater in emending δὲ αὐτὸν to δι' αὐτοῦ. See Aristotle, *De Anima* (1961), 292, and also see Owens (1976), who argues for the traditional interpretation found in the Greek manuscript tradition.

When each of the intelligibles is in it in such a way that it is said in regard to the knower that he is a knower in act, that is, when the intelligibles have been in him as beings in act (this occurs for the intellect when it has been able to understand in virtue of itself, not when it has understood in virtue of something else). What he stated is the difference between proximate active powers and remote ones, for those proximate to act are those which act in virtue of themselves and do not need something drawing them out from potency into act, while remote ones need [something else]. For this reason he said that when the intellect has been in this disposition, then it will be a potency in a way, that is, then this word potency will be said of it not truly but by analogy. Next he said: **And he has been able to understand in virtue of himself.** That is, when the intellect has been in this disposition, then it will understand itself insofar as it is nothing else but the forms of the things, inasmuch as it draws them out from matter. It is as if it understands itself in an accidental way, as Alexander says,¹³⁴ that is, insofar as it happens to the intelligibles of things that they have been it, that is, its essence. This is contrary to the disposition in separate forms, for since their intelligible is not different from them in terms of the intention in virtue of which they are intelligibles belonging to that intellect, for this reason they understand themselves essentially and not accidentally. This is found more perfectly in the First Knower, who understands nothing outside Himself. We can expound that passage in accord with what al-Fārābī says in his treatise *On the Intellect and the Intelligible*.¹³⁵ This is that when the intellect has been in act, it will be one of the beings and it will be able to understand itself through an intention which it will abstract from itself, insofar as it abstracts the intentions of things which are outside the soul. Thus the intelligible will have intelligibles. We will later investigate whether or not this is possible.¹³⁶ {421}

9. And since magnitude is one thing and the being of a magnitude another and water is one thing and the being of water another, and so for many other cases (but not for all, for in certain cases the being of flesh is the same as the flesh), [the soul] must ascertain [these] in virtue of two [distinct powers] or in virtue of a different disposition [of a single power]. For there is no flesh without matter, but, as is the case for snubness, it is a determinate particular and in a determinate particular.¹³⁷ (429b10–14)

134. Alexander, *De Anima* (1887), 109.4–23, esp. 109.17; (1979), 141–142.

135. Al-Fārābī, *Letter on the Intellect* (1983), 19.1ff.; (1973), 216ff.; (1974), 99ff.

136. {434ff}.

137. *Aliquid hoc et in aliquo hoc*: τὸδε ἐν τῷδε, "a this in a this" (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1984]); تلك الماهية هي في ذلك الشخص (ibid. [1954]); "a thing in a thing." المشار إليه, "a particular essence is in a given individual" (*Middle Commentary* [2002]), 113.22. Cf. Book 1, n. 24, and the introduction, p. lvi.

After he had completed the demonstration making known the substance of the material intellect and had given the difference between it and the substance of a material sentient being, he also began to give the difference between the intellect in act and the imagination in act. For it is thought that the imagination itself is the intellect, and especially when we say that its relation to the intellect is as the relation of the sensible to the sense, namely, because it moves it, and it is thought that the mover and the moved ought to be of the same species. And he began to say: **And since magnitude is one thing**, etc. That is, and since this individual is one thing and the intention in virtue of which this individual is a being, namely, its quiddity and form, is another thing. For instance, this water is one thing and the intention, that is, the form in virtue of which this water is a being, is different from the water. Next he said: **and so for many other cases**. That is, and this occurs in a similar way in many things, namely, in all things composed of matter and form. He said **but not for all** to make an exception of separate things and generally simple incomposite things. Next he said: **for in certain cases the being of flesh is the same as the flesh**. That is, the reason why these two intentions are not found in all beings is [422] that in simple beings the quiddity and being are the same, so that, for instance, the being of flesh is the same as flesh, because [what is analogous to] the intention of flesh in these [simple beings] is not in matter.¹³⁸ After he had introduced the antecedent in this account, he gave the consequent. He said: **[the soul] must ascertain [these]**, etc. That is, after it had been explained that sensible beings are divided into a twofold being, namely, into this singular and its form, the ascertaining power, that is, the apprehending [power], must apprehend these things either in virtue of two powers or in virtue of one but [one operating] in two different dispositions. It will, however, be with two powers when it has

138. *Quiditas et essentia in entibus simplicibus est idem*. The same is found in the corresponding passage of the *Middle Commentary* (2002), 113.17: *فإن الأشياء الباسطة الوجود: "for the existence and essence of simple things are one and the same."* Since the simple entities are the immaterial and separate intellects, the meaning must be that if they were able to be said to have some essential nature—for example, X—then in them the being of X and X would be the same. This is because they are not forms in subjects but rather just simple forms. Averroes seems compelled to state it this way because he is closely following a faulty translation of Aristotle's text, but the meaning is clear enough. There is no distinction of being or essence from subject such that these simple beings would be composite. Rather, in these the actual being of the simple entity is identical to its essence. Nevertheless, it should be noted that at [410] he asserts that "It was already explained in First Philosophy that there is no form free of potency without qualification except the First Form, which understands nothing outside itself. Its being is its quiddity. Other forms, however, are in some way different in quiddity and being." Cf. Book 3, nn. 106 and 107.

apprehended each of those per se, namely, the form alone and the individual alone; but it will be in virtue of one power and a different disposition when it has apprehended the divergence which there is between these two intentions. For what apprehends the divergence between the two, as was explained, must be one in one way and many in another way. That is the disposition of the intellect in apprehending the divergence which there is between the form and the individual, for it apprehends the form per se and it apprehends the individual through the mediation of sense. It therefore apprehends the divergence between these in virtue of a disposition which is diverse, just as the common sense apprehends the divergence between the sensibles in virtue of a diverse disposition, namely, that of a particular sense. But because the intellect does not apprehend those forms except with their matters, for this reason it apprehends them through a disposition which is diverse.¹³⁹ And after he had revealed that the soul must apprehend these two intentions in virtue of a diverse power and apprehend the divergence of these through a single [423] power but according to a diverse disposition, he gave the reason why the soul needs a diverse disposition to apprehend those two intentions. He said: **For there is no flesh without matter**. That is, the reason why the form is not apprehended by the intellect except with matter—the consideration which makes it apprehend it by a different disposition—is that the forms do not exist without matter. For the form of flesh is never denuded of matter, but [rather] it is always understood with matter,¹⁴⁰ as snubness with nose, since snubness is a determinate particular in a determinate particular. So too it is regarding sensible forms, namely, that they are a determinate particular in a determinate particular.

10. [The soul], therefore, ascertains hot and cold through what senses. And the things which are in flesh are likened to those which belong to that. It ascertains what the being of flesh is in virtue of something else, or according to the disposition of a spiral line, as long as it lasts.¹⁴¹ (429b14–18)

139. That is, while intellect must apprehend them as intelligibles without matters, its apprehension of them with their natural matters takes place by way of its use of sense. Judgments, then, which concern the specific or generic classification of individuals, will require intellect and the particular powers in a body.

140. That is, the intellectual consideration of a material form necessarily requires that reference to matter be contained in the understanding of that form, since matter is contained in the definition of the thing insofar as it is the definition of a physical entity.

141. The corresponding Greek has τῷ μὲν οὖν αἰσθητικῷ τὸ θερμὸν καὶ τὸ ψυχρὸν κρίνει, καὶ ὁ λόγος τις ἢ σὰρξ· ἄλλω δέ, ἥτοι χωριστῶς ὡς ἡ κεκλασμένη ἔχει πρὸς αὐτὴν ὅταν ἐκταθῇ, τὸ σαρκὶ εἶναι κρίνει. "Now it is by means of the sensitive faculty that we discriminate the hot and the cold, i.e. the factors which combined in a certain ratio constitute flesh: the essential character of flesh is apprehended by something dif-

Since it is necessary that diverse things be ascertained in virtue of diverse powers (in virtue of what senses and the like the soul ascertains hot and cold and the like), then analogously it is necessary that the thing existing in flesh in virtue of which flesh is what it is, not that in virtue of which it is hot or cold,¹⁴² be like the power apprehending it and it must ascertain [this] in virtue of another power. And he said: **are likened to those which belong to that**, because the relation which is of an intention to an intention, {424} namely, of an individual [intention] to a universal [intention], is just as the relation of a power apprehending one of these to the power apprehending the other. Since the two intentions must be diverse, the powers must be diverse. The understanding power, therefore, is not the imaginative power, since it was already explained that what is apprehended on the part of the imaginative power and the sensible power is the same thing. Next he said: **It ascertains what the being of flesh is in virtue of something else, or according to the disposition of a spiral line**, etc. That is, it must ascertain the form in virtue of another power. And this will be from this power either in virtue of a disposition similar to a straight line, since it will have understood the first form existing in this single thing, or according to the disposition similar to a spiral line, when it has been turned about, in seeking to understand also the quiddity of that form, then the quiddity of that quiddity, until it reaches the simple quiddity in that thing. For instance, initially it understands the quiddity of flesh, then it seeks to understand the quiddity of that quiddity, then the quiddity of that quiddity. This will go on until it finds the quiddity in the quiddity and it will not cease until it reaches the simple form. He meant this when he said: **as long as it lasts**, that is, the understanding of

ferent either wholly separate from the sensitive faculty or related to it as a bent line to the same line when it has been straightened out." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation has *فبالحس يقضى على الحار والبارد ، وبموضع النطق يقال ما جزء اللحم ويقضى على الغيرية : إما كشيء مفارق وإما كخط أعوج عند نفسه إذا مر هكذا قضاؤه على* (ibid. [1954]); "By sense it judges the hot and the cold and by way of reason what is called the flesh part. It judges distinction: either as something separate or as a line bent upon itself when it has thus reached its term in accord with what belongs to the part of the flesh." Averroes seems not to be fully aware of the corrupt status of the text of Aristotle. Rather, he devises an interpretation (perhaps inspired by Ibn Bâjjah) in which he understands the notion of intellect being likened to a spiral line to represent what seems almost a Platonic view of dialectic (*Republic* 6, 511b–d) with intellect moving from quiddities through quiddities to quiddities until it finally reaches a simple form itself. See {424}. In his *Middle Commentary*, there is nothing corresponding to this text of Aristotle. Note, however, that Averroes seems to have had some awareness that there may have been faults in the manuscript of Aristotle's Text here and in the one which follows. See his remarks at the end of the next Comment at {426}.

142. That is, in virtue of its form, not in virtue of its subject.

the intelligible will go on in a similar way in regard to flesh as long as it will be possible in regard to flesh that its quiddity have a quiddity.¹⁴³

11. **And also in the case of things existing in mathematics, the straight is like snubness, for it has continuous quantity. According to being,**¹⁴⁴ **however, the being of the straight is different from this.**¹⁴⁵ **If, therefore, {425} [the soul] ascertains**¹⁴⁶ **[the being of something], it then does so in virtue of something else and because its disposition is different. And generally the disposition of things which are in the intellect is the same as [that of] things separate from matter.** (429b18–22)

This understanding on the part of the intellect is found not only in regard to material things, but also in regard to mathematical things. For because the straight is in what is continuous, just as snubness is in a nose, insofar as the intellect understands snubness in composition with a nose, so too it is necessary that it understand the quiddity of the straight in composition with what is continuous. He said: **And also in the case of things**, etc. That is, and the being of the straight and its like from among mathematical things is similar to the being of snubness in a nose, for the straight is in what is continuous just as snubness is in a nose. Next he said: **According to being, however,**¹⁴⁷ **the being in the straight is different from the quiddity of the continuous, although one of them is found only in the other.** Next he said: **If, therefore**, etc. That is, when, therefore, we have asserted that in mathematics there are also two things of which one is in the other, then the soul does not ascertain these except through another power, or through the same [power] but nevertheless through a disposition which is diverse, since it understands these only with the thing, although it does not understand them with sensible matter. For it should be known that the disposition possessed by the intellect which [disposition] is diverse in it when it apprehends the first sensible forms of things, [this disposition] belongs to it in virtue of the senses. And the disposition which is diverse in it in virtue of the apprehension of the quiddity and form belongs to it as a disposition diverse in itself, not in virtue of the senses. For this reason Aristotle likens it to a spiral line in this disposition, while Plato [likens it] to a circular line,¹⁴⁸ and by this disposition he understands the forms

143. Cf. Averroes' discussion of Ibn Bâjjah on {491–492}.

144. *Secundum autem esse*: τὸ δὲ τί ἦν εἶναι.

145. The Greek text here has: "its constitutive essence is different, if we may distinguish between straightness and what is straight: let us take it to be two-ness." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

146. *Experimentatur*: κρίνεται.

147. Although Crawford does not italicize this, I read it as a quotation of the Text since these are the exact words used in the Text.

of mathematical things, since he does not allow a sensible magnitude to be involved in the understanding of these. {426} Next he said: **And generally the disposition of things**, etc. That is, as it seems to me, and generally the disposition of things which the intellect apprehends is found in [the intellect] in the way in which they are in themselves in reference to proximity and distance by separation from matter. Those, therefore, which are remote from matter are able to be separated by the intellect without matter, although they may have being only in matter, as it is in the case of mathematics. And those of them which are proximate to matter will not be able [to be separated]. When, then, he said as [that of] **things separate from matter**, he means according to the mode of being in things separate from matter in the order in which they exist with respect to separation, if that account is complete in the manuscript.

12. **And someone will doubt that the intellect is simple and impassible and that it is impossible for it to have something in common with something else, as Anaxagoras said. How, therefore, is it understood that conceptualizing is an affection? For because there is something common to both, it is thought that one of them acts and the other is affected.** (429b22–26)

After he had given the difference between understanding and imagining, he returned to express uncertainty concerning the passible intellect. He said: **And someone may be uncertain**, etc. That is, and one is uncertain regarding what was said, that the material intellect is simple and impassible, because it is not thought that it has anything in common with a material thing, as Anaxagoras said, and as was explained earlier.¹⁴⁹ The question, however, is how it is understood that conceptualizing is an affection, that is, [is] of the genus of passive powers, {427} and has nothing in common with the thing by which it is affected. For it is thought that one acts and the other is affected in virtue of something common to the agent and to the patient. For unless there were matter, there would be no affection. And when we will have asserted the intellect not to be matter nor to be in matter, how then will we understand [this] when we also hold that understanding is an affection, not an activity? We are therefore between two considerations: either we do not assert that understanding is in the category of affection or we assert that the material intellect has something in common with the body, to the extent that the form of the imagination which moves it is common to the body.

13. **And also is it in itself intelligible? For either intellect will belong to the other things (if it is not an intelligible in another way, but what is**

148. *Timaeus* 37Bff.

149. See Book 1, Comment 31 at {40}.

conceptualized is one in its form) or there will be in it a mixture from something which has made it intelligible, as is the case for other things.¹⁵⁰ (429b26–29)

That is the second uncertainty about the material intellect, whether it is intelligible in itself, not in virtue of a nature existing in it, to the extent that the intellect and the intelligible in it will be the same in every way, as is the disposition in the case of separate things, or is the intelligible of it different from it in some way. And he said: **And also is it in itself**, etc. That is, and also is it that which is the intelligible of it. For it must be one of these two alternatives: either the other things which are outside the soul have intellect (if the intellect is the intelligible of it in every way and is not a different way in the case of understanding things, but understanding is the same in regard to all {428} things), or it is not intelligible per se, but in virtue of the intention in what made it intelligible, as is the disposition in things which are outside the soul. He was silent, as it seems, about what follows from this position, namely, that the intellect in itself is not something which has understanding.¹⁵¹ The short account of the uncertainty, as it seems, is the following: for either it will be an intelligible just as the other separate intelligible things, and so the things which are outside the soul will have understanding, or it will be intelligible as are the other things which are outside the soul, and thus it will in itself not be something which understands or apprehends.¹⁵²

14. **Let us say, therefore, that affection, as was seen earlier, is a general notion and that the intellect is somehow the intelligibles in potency, but not in actuality, until it understands. And what happens in the case of the intel-**

150. The corresponding Greek is clearer: "For if thought is thinkable *per se* and what is thinkable is in kind one and the same, then either thought will belong to everything, or it will contain some element common to it with all other realities which makes them all thinkable." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

151. That is, the intellect will have understanding only when it has received the intelligible, not as an intelligible in its own right. If so, it differs from other separate intellects in this regard.

152. Other separate intelligible things, scil. the self-thinking separate intellects, have intellectual understanding of themselves as intelligibles in act. The material intellect has as its function the grasping of intelligibles in act which derive from the world. If, then, the material intellect in the same way thinks things which are intelligibles in act and thinks things of the world, then the things of the world must be intelligibles in act essentially. If they are so essentially, then they are also intellects in act essentially and thereby have understanding. If, on the other hand, the material intellect is intelligible as are things outside the soul in the world, it would be an intelligible in potency, not in act, and so would not have understanding.

lect ought to follow such a pattern, namely, as the tablet is disposed for drawing, [but is] not at all drawn upon in act. (429b29–430a2)

After he had presented these two questions concerning the material intellect, he began to resolve them, and first [he resolves] the first, saying: How is it that we understand that the material intellect is something simple and unmixed with anything, when we hold the opinion that understanding is an affection, and [yet] it was already explained in the general accounts that things which act and are affected have a subject in common?¹⁵³ And he said: **Let us say, therefore, that affection**, etc. That is, and that question is resolved by means of the knowledge that the term affection, which we used earlier in regard to the question, is more general than something said in regard to material things because [this latter] is [something which is] passive. Next he expounded (429) what this term affection signifies in the case of the intellect. He said: **that the intellect is somehow the intelligibles in potency**, etc. That is, that general intention of affection in the case of the intellect is nothing but that something is in potency in the intellect, not in act until it understands. And also to say that it is in potency is [to speak] in a manner different from those [ways] according to which it is said that material things are in potency. This is what we said earlier, that it should be understood here that these terms, namely, *potency*, *reception*, and *actuality*, are said equivocally of these in relation to material things. For the diversity of that intention, namely, [of the intention] of the reception which is in the intellect, from the reception which is in material things is a thing to which reason leads. Hence, one should not hold the opinion that prime matter is the cause of reception considered without qualification, but [that it is] the cause of the changeable reception which involves the reception belonging to a singular thing. The cause of reception considered without qualification is that nature. And in this way it was possible for heavenly bodies to receive the separate forms and understand them, and it was possible for separate intelligences to be actualized per se with respect to one another. And if not, it would not be possible to understand there [among the heavenly bodies] any thing receptive or able to be received. Hence we see that what is free of this nature [of receptivity] is the first thing which has understanding.¹⁵⁴

153. That is, the actuality of the agent as agent and the actuality of the patient as patient take place in the same subject—namely, in the patient. The patient, then, is the common subject for an actualization which is one in being but two in description. This is the topic of discussion in *Physics* 3.3, 202a12–29.

154. What is completely free of such potency is the first thinking entity—namely, God. See below (520), where God is described as pure actuality, *pura actio*. In his *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Averroes also characterizes the First as pure actuality: *فانه فعل محض*. *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* (1952), 1599; (1984), 151. This char-

By asserting that nature [to be such as this], the following question is resolved: How is plurality understood and how are the separate forms understood to be many, with the intellect being the same as the intelligible in these? After he had made known the way of affection in the case of the intellect and that it is said equivocally in regard to the intellect and in regard to material things, he began to give an example from sensible things in virtue of which that intention is understood in regard to the material intellect. Although it is not true [for the separate intellects in precisely the same way], nevertheless it provides a way (430) for understanding. This manner of teaching is more necessary in regard to such things, although it is rhetorical. And he said: **And what happens in the case of the intellect**, etc. That is, and it should be understood that what we said concerning this general intention, namely, [concerning] the affection which is in the intellect, which¹⁵⁵ is just reception without a change, just as the reception of the drawing on the tablet. For just as the tablet is not affected by the drawing and there occurs no change to it by this but there is only found in it of the intention of the affection that it is actualized by the drawing after [the tablet] was drawn upon in potency, so too is there this disposition in the case of the material intellect. This example which he provided is very similar to the disposition of the intellect which is in potency with the intellect which is in act. For just as the tablet has no drawing in act nor in potency proximate to act, so too in the material intellect there is none of the intelligible forms which it receives, neither in act nor in potency proximate to act. And I call here *potency proximate to act* a disposition intermediate between a remote potency and a final actuality. This is so that there is in it no intention which is intelligible in potency. This is proper to the intellect alone. For the first actuality of a sensory power is something in act with respect to a remote potency and is something in potency¹⁵⁶ with respect to a final actuality. For this reason Aristotle likened the first actuality of sense

acterization of the First is not reflected in the Latin translation of the text of Aristotle in the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*. See the 1574 text (1962), v. 8, 319G, for the corresponding Latin. However, in this printing, v. 8, 321 C–D, in his Comment we find *illud quod movet primum motum, cum sit non motum, quia est actus purus sine aliqua potentia*, which corresponds to *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* (1952), 1610: *ان الذي يحرك* *المتحرك الاول* *اذ هو غير متحرك من قبل انه فعل محض ليس فيه قوة اصلا*; “that which moves the first moved while being unmoved because it is pure actuality completely free from any potentiality” (ibid. [1984], 156).

155. I follow Janssens (1998), 725, in reading *quae* with all the manuscripts rather than Crawford’s conjecture of *quod*.

156. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 14.58–65: وهذا المثال شبيه المناسب جدا لحال العقل الذي بالقوة مع العقل الذي بالفعل ووجه الشبه انه كما ان اللوح ليس فيه من الكتابة شيء موجود لا بالفعل ولا بالقوة القريبة من الفعل كذلك العقل الهيولاني ليس فيه شيء من الصورة المعقولة التي لا بالفعل ولا بالقوة القريبة من الفعل وذلك لأن لا يكون

to the geometer when he is not using geometry. For we know certainly that we have a sensible power existing in act, although then we are sensing nothing. The manner of similarity of that example to what was said by Aristotle in regard to the material intellect has been explained.¹⁵⁷

To say, however, that the material intellect is similar to the disposition which is in the tablet, not to the tablet insofar as it is what is disposed, as Alexander expounded {431} this account,¹⁵⁸ is false. For the disposition is a certain privation and has no nature of its own except owing to the nature of the subject and for this reason it was possible for the dispositions to be different in each being. Oh, Alexander, you figured that Aristotle intends to demonstrate to us the nature of the disposition alone, not the nature of what is disposed (the nature of that disposition is not proper to it, if it has been possible [to know it] without knowing the nature disposed), but [with regard to] the nature of the disposition considered without qualification, in what sort of thing would it be? But I am ashamed of this account and of this fantastic exposition. For if Aristotle meant to demonstrate the nature of the disposition which is in the intellect through all the aforementioned accounts in regard to the material intellect, either he must mean to demonstrate through them the nature of the disposition considered without qualification or the nature of the proper disposition. It is impossible, however, that the nature of the disposition proper to the intellect be demonstrated without the nature of the subject, since the disposition proper to each subject is consequent upon the actuality and form it has from it. But knowing the nature of the disposed subject must necessarily be through knowledge of the nature of the disposition. And if he meant by these accounts to demonstrate the nature of the disposition considered without qualification, then that is not something proper to the intellect and all this is confusion. For every disposition, insofar as it is a disposition, is truly said to be nothing in act [apart] from these things which it receives and [to be] something which is impossible, and it is truly said to be neither a body nor a power in a body.

How, therefore, can we expound that what Aristotle intended to demonstrate

فيه معنى هو بالقوة معقول وهذا شيء يخص العقل وحده لا كالحس فان الاستكمال الأولي هو شيء ما بالفعل بالإضافة الى قوة بعيدة وشيء ما بالقوة (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 45). The Arabic text omits Book 3, Comment 14.65–67: “And I call . . . and a final actuality.” It appears that the Latin translator’s Arabic text was faulty with لا كالحس, “unlike sense.” The Arabic differs slightly: “This is proper to the intellect alone, unlike sense. For the first actuality is something in act with respect to a remote potency and is something in potency. . . .” Also note that there is nothing in the Arabic corresponding to the Latin *quas recipit*, “which it receives,” at Book 3, Comment 14.64.

157. Cf. {135–136}.

158. See {395ff}.

to us here concerning the nature of the material intellect [is] what is common to all recipients, namely, [all those things] in which there is a disposition for receiving {432} any kind of form, and [that he did] not [intend] to demonstrate the nature of what is disposed through knowledge of the nature of the disposition proper to it? Unless the material intellect were only a disposition, without some subject, which is impossible, for the disposition indicates a disposed subject. Hence Aristotle, when he found the disposition which is in the intellect to be diverse from the others, judged in a precise way that the nature which is a subject for it differs from the other disposed natures. What is proper to that subject of disposition is that there is in it none of the intentions intelligible in potency or in act. Hence it was necessary that it not be a body nor a form in a body. And since it is not a body nor a power in a body, it will also not be the forms of the imagination, for those are powers in bodies and they are intentions intelligible in potency.¹⁵⁹ Since the subject of that disposition is neither a form of the imagination nor a mixture of elements, as Alexander intended, nor can we say that some disposition is stripped from a subject, we rightly see that Theophrastus, Themistius, Nicolaus,¹⁶⁰ and others among the ancient Peripatetics hold faster to the demonstration of Aristotle and preserve his words to a greater degree. For since they attend to the accounts and words of Aristotle, none could bring these to bear upon the disposition itself alone nor upon the thing subject to the disposition [as] if we had asserted it to be a power in a body, while saying that it is simple, separate, impassible, and unmixed with the body. If that were not the opinion of Aristotle, it would be necessary that it be held that it is the true opinion. But on account of what I say, no one ought to doubt that this is the opinion of Aristotle. {433} For all those who hold this opinion believe only on account of what Aristotle said. For this is so difficult that if Aristotle’s account of this were not found, then it would be very difficult to come upon it, or perhaps impossible, unless someone such as Aristotle were found. For I believe that this man was a model in nature and the exemplar which nature found for showing the final human perfection in the material realm.¹⁶¹ Perhaps the opinion ascribed to Alexander was contrived by him

159. This is precisely Averroes’ own position in the *Short Commentary on the De Anima*. See the introduction, pp. xxiii–xxviii.

160. This is presumably a reference to “On the Philosophy of Aristotle,” by Nicolaus of Damascus (d. ca. 25 CE), a work translated into Syriac in the ninth century. For detailed discussion of the text, its tradition in Arabic and Syriac, and its use by Averroes, see Nicolaus of Damascus in the primary sources.

161. Cf. Endress (2005), 251. This often-cited passage is frequently understood out of context. Note that while praising Aristotle himself as an extraordinary work of nature for his high intellectual achievement, Averroes in the previous lines states that it is not mere authority that governs this judgment but rather intellectual excellence: “If that

alone and in his time it was unthinkable and rejected by everyone. For this reason we see Themistius dismissing it altogether and avoiding it just as we guard against unthinkable things. This is contrary to what happens for modern [thinkers], for no one is knowing and perfect in their eyes unless he is an Alexandrian.¹⁶² The reason for this is the notoriety of that man and because he is believed¹⁶³ to be one of the good commentators. Although al-Fârâbî, while he was the greatest among them, followed Alexander in this intention, he also added to this opinion something unthinkable. For in his *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*¹⁶⁴ he seems to deny that there is conjoining with the separate intelligences. He says that this is the opinion of Alexander and that it should not be held that the human end is anything but theoretical perfection.¹⁶⁵ Ibn Bâjjah, however, expounded his own account and said that his opinion is the opinion of all the Peripatetics, namely, that conjoining is possible and that it is the end [for human beings]. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why we see that the customs and habits of most of those devoting themselves to philosophy in this time are corrupt. This has other causes not unknown to those giving themselves over to study of practical philosophy.¹⁶⁶ {434}

15. It too is intelligible, just as the intelligibles. For the conceptualizing and that which is conceptualized in these things which are without matter

were not the opinion of Aristotle, it would be necessary that it be held that it is the true opinion." Still, in his *Middle Commentary on the Prior Analytics* Averroes writes, "How wonderful is this man and how different is his nature from human natures generally. It is as though divine art (*sinâ'ah*) brought him forth so as to inform us, humans, that ultimate perfection is possible in the human species perceptibly and demonstrably. Such [a person] is not human, that is why the ancients used to call him divine." Translated in Fakhry (2001), 41, from Ibn Rushd, *Middle Commentary on the Prior Analytics* (1982), 213. 20–24.

162. That is, a follower of Alexander.

163. Janssens (1998), 725, suggests *credimus* ("we believe [him]") in lieu of *creditur* following manuscripts A, C, D, and G.

164. See the introduction, pp. lxx and lxxxvii.

165. That is, al-Fârâbî is reported to have moved late in life to the view that human perfection consists in the perfection of human intellects by knowledge, not in reaching a state of conjoining with separate intellects. See Davidson (1992), 71. This teaching has obvious eschatological consequences. Regarding al-Fârâbî's lost *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*, see the introduction, p. xlv, n. 84, and p. lxxxvii, n. 162.

166. Averroes could be complaining that too much concern by contemporary philosophical thinkers has been given over to theoretical study and the perfection of the intellect to the neglect of the proper character formation which must precede true intellectual excellence. His target may be a familiar one: Avicenna. Regarding Avicenna, see Gutas (1988). Regarding the views of al-Fârâbî, see Druart (1997a).

are the same. For theoretical knowledge and what is known are the same in this way. (430a2–5)

He was uncertain about the material intellect as to whether what is intelligible in it is the intellect itself or something else in some way. If the intellect in it is the very thing intelligible, it must be intelligible per se, not through an intention in it; and if it were in some way something else, it must be intelligible through an intention in it. He began to explain that it is intelligible through an intention in it, just as other things intelligible, but it differs from these in that this intention is in itself the intellect in act, while in the case of other things it is the intellect in potency. He said: **It too is intelligible, just as the intelligibles.**¹⁶⁷ That is, it is intelligible through an intention in it just as other intelligible things. Next he gave a demonstration of this. He said: **For the conceptualizing, etc.** That is, it is necessary that it be an intelligible through an intention in it, because the conceptualizing and that which is conceptualized are the same in immaterial things. And if that intellect were an intellect per se, it would follow that theoretical knowledge and what is known would be the same, which is impossible [in this case].¹⁶⁸

16. We must investigate why it is not always understanding. In the case of what has matter, however, any of the intelligibles is only in potency. These, therefore, will not have intellect (for in relation to those intellect is only as a potency belonging to those when they have been separated from matter), while [intellect does belong] to that, since it is intelligible. (430a5–9) {435}

It is necessary to investigate why it does not always understand in such a way that its intelligibles are the intellect in itself. The reason for this is that with respect to those intelligibles which do not have matter, their intelligible is the intellect in itself and it is always understanding. But for those things which have matter, each of the intelligibles is in it in potency and for this reason material intelligible things do not understand. He meant this when he said: these, **therefore, do not have intellect.** That is, for this reason material intelligibles do not have intellect. What is missing from the account is understood through its opposite and through this word, **while**, which indicates division. It is as if he says:

167. The difference between the Lemma's *intelligibilis* and the Comment's *intellectum* here is likely indicative of the difficulty the Latin translator had in rendering soundly the Arabic *ma'qûl*. The alternate translation has [sic] *المعقولة* وهو أيضا معقول مثل سائر المعقولة (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]), "It too is intelligible just as the rest of the intelligibles," substituting the plural *المعقولات* for the singular *المعقولة*.

168. That is, in the case of the separate immaterial intellects, intellect and its intelligible are per se the same, while in the case of the material intellect this cannot be so because it knows things of the world by way of intentions of those things in it.

the reason for this is because the intelligible of what does not have matter exists always and in act, while the intelligible of what has matter is in potency.

Next he said: **These, therefore, do not have intellect**, etc. That is, those intelligibles, then, on account of this, namely, because they are intelligible in potency, do not have intellect. For intellect is not ascribed in reference to them but in reference to the form of those as separate from matter. For this reason those forms in relation to these [material things] will not be intelligible in act, that is, will not be apprehended by these [material things] nor will they be [actually] understanding in virtue of these [material things]. In relation to what separates them from their matters they will be intelligible in act and in virtue of these [intellect] will be understanding and in virtue of that same intention those will not be understanding. This is the conclusion of the account resolving the question mentioned earlier. For that account forced us to one of two alternatives: on the one hand, if intellect were identical with the intelligible in the material intellect, [then it would be the case] that other things which are outside the soul would have understanding; on the other hand, if [the intellect] is different [from the intelligible in the material intellect, then it would be the case] that it is intelligible in virtue of an intention in it, [and] hence it will require [another] intellect in order to be thought, and this proceeds in infinite regress.¹⁶⁹ {436}

The resolution of this question, therefore, lies in the fact that the intention in virtue of which the material intellect comes to be intellect in act exists such that it is intelligible in act. But the intention in virtue of which the things which are outside the soul are beings is such that they are intelligible in potency, and if they were [intelligible] in act, then they would [themselves] have understanding.

17. And because, just as in nature there is something in every genus which is matter (and this is what is all those things in potency) and something else which is a cause and agent (and this is that on account of which it brings about anything, as the disposition of artistry to matter), these differences must exist in the soul. (3.5, 430a10–14)

After he had explained the nature of the intellect which is in potency and [the nature of the intellect] which is in act and had given the difference between it and the power of the imagination, he began to explain that it is necessary for there to be a third kind of intellect, namely, the agent intelli-

169. That is, if the objects thought (the things outside the soul) are identical with thought, then each would be thinking. And if they are not identical but rather are different, then the only way thought can be thought is in virtue of another higher intellect. But an infinite regress is generated if in that intellect what is thought and what thinks are different.

gence¹⁷⁰ which makes the intellect which is in potency to be intellect in act. And he said that the assertion that the agent intelligence is in this genus of beings is just as the disposition [found] in all natural beings. Just as it is necessary in any genus of natural and generable things that there be three things from the nature of that genus and ascribed to it, namely, the agent, the patient, and the product, so ought it to be in the case of the intellect. And he said: **And because, just as in nature**, etc. That is, and because this is just as it is the case in natural things. That is to say, and because the consideration of the soul is a consideration of what is natural, because the soul is one of the natural beings, while it is common to natural beings that they have {437} matter in any genus (namely, what is in potency all the things which are in that genus), and [that they have something else] which is a cause and agent (this is that on account of which everything which is of that genus is generated, as the artistry is to the matter), then it is necessary that there be these three differences in the soul.

18. It is necessary, therefore, that in [the soul] there be the intellect which is intellect insofar as it is made everything, and the intellect which is intellect insofar as it makes it understand everything, and the intellect insofar as it understands everything, as a positive disposition, which is like light.¹⁷¹ **For light in a way also makes colors which are in potency to be colors in act.** (430a14–17)

170. Note that Averroes' understanding here seems to be influenced by the faulty Text 18, which follows below. As indicated in the introduction, pp. xix–xx, n. 10, the terms *intelligentia* and *intellectus* translate one Arabic word, *العقل*, so any distinction is from the mind of the Latin translator. See the introduction, n. 209; Book 2, n. 138; and Book 3, n. 43.

171. This account of three intellects is absent from the Greek text of Aristotle and absent from Averroes' alternate translation. It is also not mentioned by Averroes in the corresponding passage in his *Middle Commentary*. See *Middle Commentary* (2002), 116. The Greek text has καὶ ἔστιν ὁ μὲν τοιοῦτος νοῦς τῷ πάντα γίνεσθαι, ὁ δὲ τῷ πάντα ποιεῖν, ὡς ἔξιν τις, οἷον τὸ φῶς. "And in fact thought, as we have described it, is what it is by virtue of becoming all things, while there is another which is what it is by virtue of making all things: this is a sort of positive state like light." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The Hebrew (ibid. [1994]) corresponds well with the Greek and thereby reveals that Averroes' primary translation is faulty here. The text seems to have suffered two corruptions, something verified by consultation of the Hebrew translation, which is from the same tradition as the Arabic translation. First, consider "and the intellect insofar as it understands everything, as a positive disposition, which is like light," for the Latin *et intellectus secundum quod intelligit omne, quasi habitus, qui est quasi lux*. The Latin *intelligit* likely renders the Arabic *يعقل*, a corruption of *يفعل*, "makes," corresponding to the Greek *ποιεῖν*, "making." Second, what was perhaps a marginal gloss on the originally sound version of this text may have been moved from the margin into the text—namely, the phrase, "and the intellect which is intellect insofar as it makes

Since those three differences must be found in the part of the soul which is called intellect, it is necessary that there be in it a part which is called intellect insofar as it is made everything by way of likeness and reception. There must also be in it a second part which is called intellect insofar as it makes that intellect which is in potency to understand everything in act. For the reason why it makes the intellect which is in potency to understand all things in act is nothing other than that it is in act; for this fact, that it is in act, is the cause that it understands all things in act. And there must also be in it a third part which is called intellect insofar as it makes every intelligible in potency to be an intelligible in act. He said: **It is necessary, therefore**, etc. He means by that the material intellect. This, therefore, is his description mentioned earlier.¹⁷² Next he said: **and . . . the intellect insofar as it makes it understand everything**. He means {438} by that what comes to be, which is in a positive disposition. This [latter] pronoun can be understood to refer to the material intellect, as we said, and can be understood to refer to the human being who is the one understanding. It is necessary to add in the account: insofar as it makes it understand everything in its own right and when it wishes.¹⁷³ For this is the definition of a positive disposition, namely, that what has a positive disposition understands in virtue of it what is proper to itself in its own right and when it wishes, without it being the case that it needs something external in this. Next he said: **and the intellect insofar as it understands**, etc. He means by that the agent intelligence. When he said this: **it understands everything, as a certain positive disposition**, he means that it makes everything intelligible in potency to be intelligible in act after it was in potency, as a positive disposition and form. Next he said: **like light**, etc. Now he gives the way on the basis of which it was necessary to assert the agent intelligence to be in the soul. For we cannot say that the relation of the agent intellect in the soul to the generated intelligible is just as the relation of the artistry to the art's product in every way. For art imposes the form on the whole matter without it being the case that there was something of the intention of the form existing in the matter before the artistry has made it. It is not so in the case of the intellect, for if it were so in the case of the intellect, then a human being would not need sense or imagination for apprehending intelligibles. Rather, the intelligibles would enter into the material intellect from the agent intellect, without the material intellect needing to behold sensible forms. And neither can we even say that the imagined intentions are solely what move the material intellect and draw it out from potency into act. For if it were so, then

it understand everything," et intellectus qui est intellectus secundum quod facit ipsum intellegere omne. See Taylor (1999a). Cf. Davidson (1992), 317, n. 10.

172. {387}.

173. Cf. {220ff}, {439-440}, {495-496}, {499}.

there would be no difference between the universal and the individual, and then the intellect would be of the genus of the imaginative power. Hence, in view of our having asserted that the relation of the imagined intentions {439} to the material intellect is just as the relation of the sensibles to the senses (as Aristotle will say later), it is necessary to suppose that there is another mover which makes [the intentions] move the material intellect in act, and this is nothing but to make [the intentions] intelligible in act by separating them from matter.

Because this intention, which forces the assertion of an agent intellect different from the material intellect and different from the forms of things which the material intellect apprehends, is similar to the intention on account of which sight needs light, in view of the fact that the agent and the recipient are different from light, he was content to make this way known by means of this example. It is as if he says: and the way which forced us to suppose the agent intellect is the same as the way on account of which sight needs light. For just as sight is not moved by colors except when they are in act, which is not realized unless light is present since it is what draws them from potency into act, so too the imagined intentions do not move the material intellect except when the intelligibles are in act, because it is not actualized by these unless something else is present, namely, the intellect in act.¹⁷⁴ It was necessary to ascribe these two activities to the soul in us, namely, to receive the intelligible and to make it, although the agent and the recipient are eternal substances, on account of the fact that these two activities are reduced to our will, namely, to abstract intelligibles and to understand them. For to abstract is nothing other than to make imagined intentions intelligible in act after they were [intelligible] in potency. But to understand is nothing other than to receive these intentions. For when we found the same thing, namely, the imagined intentions, is transferred in its being from one order into another,¹⁷⁵ we said that this must be

174. That is, the agent intellect.

175. *Idem transferri in suo esse de ordine in ordinem*. Averroes surely has in mind al-Fârâbî's explanation in his *Letter on the Intellect*: وإذا حصلت معقولات بالفعل فليس وجودها: من حيث هي معقولات بالفعل هو وجودها من حيث هي صور في مواد ووجودها في نفسها ليس هو وجودها من حيث هي معقولات بالفعل. "But when they become intelligibles in actuality, then their existence, insofar as they are intelligibles in actuality, is not the same as their existence insofar as they are forms in matters. And their existence in themselves [as forms in matters] is not the same as their existence insofar as they are intelligibles in actuality." Al-Fârâbî, *Letter on the Intellect* (1983), 16; (1973), 216; (1974), 98. A description of this transference of intelligibles from potency to act is given in al-Fârâbî's *The Perfect State*, where he writes, "Neither in the rational power nor in what nature gives (أعطي) is there something sufficient to become by itself an intellect in actuality. Rather, to become an intellect in actuality it needs something else to transfer it (ينقلها) from potentiality to actuality. However, it becomes an intellect in actuality

from an agent cause and a recipient cause. The recipient, however, is the material [intellect] and the agent is [the intellect] which brings [this] about.

We found that we act in virtue of these two powers of intellect {440} when we wish; and nothing acts except through its form; [so] for this reason it was necessary to ascribe to us these two powers of the intellect. The intellect which is responsible for abstracting and creating the intelligible necessarily precedes in us the intellect which is to receive it. Alexander says that it is more correct to describe the intellect which is in us through its agent power, not through the patient [power], since affection and reception are common to the intellect, the senses, and discerning powers, while activity is proper to [intellect]. It is better that the thing be described through its activity.¹⁷⁶ I say: this would be necessary in every way only if this name affection were said in a univocal way in regard to these, but in fact it is said only equivocally.

All the things said by Aristotle in regard to this are so that the universals have no being outside the soul, [for that sort of separate being] is what Plato intended. For if it were so, then there would be no need to assert the agent intellect.

19. And that intellect is also separate, unmixed, and impassible, and in its substance it is activity. For the agent is always more noble than the patient

when the intelligibles arise in it. The intelligibles which are in potentiality become intelligibles in actuality when they come to be understood by the intellect in actuality. But they need something else to transfer them from potentiality to make them come to be in actuality. The agent which transfers them from potentiality to actuality is a certain essence the substance of which is a certain intellect in actuality and separate from matter. For this intellect gives the material intellect which is in potentiality an intellect something like light." Al-Fârâbî, *Principles of the Opinions of the People of the Virtuous City* (1985), 198–200. Translation substantially modified. Cf. *The Political Regime*, where al-Fârâbî writes that the agent intellect "makes (يجعل) the things which are not in their essences intelligible to be intelligible." It raises (يرفعها) things which are not per se intelligibles to a rank of existence higher than they possess naturally so that they are intelligibles for the human intellect in act. In this way the agent intellect causes them to become intelligibles in act for the human rational power, assisting it to reach the rank of the agent intellect, which is the end of human beings in their perfection and happiness. Al-Fârâbî, *The Political Regime* (1964), 34–35.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* 2.1, 193b7–8. I am grateful to my Marquette University colleague Owen Goldin for help with this reference to Aristotle's *Physics*. Regarding Alexander, see Alexander, *De Intellectu* (1887), 111.8–15; (1990), 53–54; (2004), 35–36. At 112.4 he writes, ἵδιον γὰρ τοῦ νοῦ τὸ ποιητικόν. "For being productive is peculiar to intellect, and its thinking is being active, not being affected" ([2004], 38; [1990], 55). My emphasis. خاصة العقل انه فاعل ([1971], 39.12; [1956], 195.3); "It is characteristic of the intellect that it is active [or: agent]." I am also grateful to Victor Caston for his suggestions regarding the reference of this comment by Averroes.

and the principle more noble than the matter. And knowledge in act is the same as the thing [known]. (430a17–20)

After he had explained the second kind of being of the intellect, this is the agent [intellect], he began to make a comparison between it and the material [intellect]. He said: **And that intellect is also**, etc. That is, and that intellect is also separate, as is the material [intellect], and it is also impassible and unmixed, as that. After he had recounted these things which it has in common with the material intellect, he gave the disposition proper to the agent intellect. He said: **and in its substance it is activity**, that is, there is in it no potency {441} for something, as there is in the recipient intellect potency for receiving forms. For the agent intelligence understands nothing of the things which are here. It was necessary that the agent intelligence be separate, unmixed, and impassible, insofar as it is what makes all forms intelligible. If, therefore, it were mixed, it would not make all forms, just as it was necessary that the material intellect, insofar as it is what receives all forms, also be separate and unmixed. For if it were not separate, it would have this singular form and then necessarily one of two alternatives would come about: either it would receive itself and then the mover in it would be moved, or it would not receive all the species of forms. Likewise, if the agent intelligence were mixed with matter, then it would be necessary either that it understand and create itself or that it not create all forms. What, therefore, is the difference between these two demonstrations when they are considered in reference to these [two intellects]? For they are altogether similar. The marvel is how they all concede this demonstration to be true with reference to the agent intellect and then do not agree in regard to the demonstration in reference to the material intellect, although [the demonstrations] are also altogether similar, such that it is necessary to concede one when conceding the other. We can know that the material intellect ought to be unmixed from its judgment and apprehension. For because we judge in virtue of it things infinite in number in a universal proposition—and it is evident that the judging powers of the soul, namely, mixed individual [powers], judge only finite intentions—according to the conversion of the opposite the consequence is that what does not judge finite intentions necessarily is not a mixed power of the soul. And when we have joined to this that the material intellect judges things infinite and not acquired by sense and that it does not judge finite intentions, the consequence is that it is an unmixed power. {442} Ibn Bâjjah, however, seems to concede this proposition to be true in his *Letter of Farewell*,¹⁷⁷ namely, that the power in virtue of which we judge with a universal judgment is infinite. But he thought this power to be the agent intel-

¹⁷⁷ Ibn Bâjjah, *Letter of Farewell* (1943), 36.11–12, Spanish, 80; (1968), 138.

lect, according to the evidence of his account there. Yet it is not so, for judgment and discernment in us are ascribed only to the material intellect. Avicenna certainly used this proposition, and it is true in its own right.¹⁷⁸ After he had made it known that the agent intellect is different from the material [intellect] in that the agent [intellect] is always pure activity while the material is both¹⁷⁹ on account of the things which are here, he then gave the final cause for this. He said: **For the agent is always more noble than the patient.** That is, the former is always activity in its substance, while the latter is found in each disposition. It was already explained that the relation of the agent intellect to the patient intellect¹⁸⁰ is just as the relation of the moving principle in some way to the moved matter. The agent, however, is more noble than the patient and the principle [more noble] than the matter. For this reason it should be held according to Aristotle that the last of the separate intellects¹⁸¹ in the hierarchy is that material intellect. For its activity is less [immaterial] than the activity of those [other separate intellects], since its activity seems more to be affection rather than activity, not because there is something else in virtue of which that intellect differs from the agent intellect other than this intention alone.¹⁸² For just as we know the plurality of separate intellects only through the diversity of their activities, so too we know the diversity of that material intellect from the agent intellect only in virtue of the diversity of their activities. And just as it happens for the agent intellect that sometimes it acts on things existing here and sometimes not, so too it happens for [the material intellect] that sometimes it judges things existing here and sometimes {443} it does not. But they differ only in that the judgment is something in the category of the actuality of the judge, while the activity is not in that way in the category of the perfection of the agent. Therefore consider this: there is a difference between these two intellects and unless there were, there would be no divergence between them. Oh, Alexander, if this term *material intellect* had signified for Aristotle only the disposition alone, how would he make the comparison between it and the agent intellect, namely, in giving these [characteristics] which they have in common and these in which they differ? Next he said: **And knowledge in act is the same thing as the thing [known].** He indicates, as I figure, something

178. See Ibn Sînâ, *Kitâb al-Nafs* (1959), 206ff.; (1968), 76ff. Averroes also discusses material intellect and universal judgments in his *Incoherence of the Incoherence* (1930), 579; (1969), 358, as noted in Davidson (1992), 254.

179. That is, it is both activity and passivity or actuality and potentiality.

180. That is, the material intellect.

181. Instead of *intellectus*, I read *intellectuum* with manuscript C, following Davidson (1992), 292, n. 151.

182. That is, they are intellect but differ by way of this intention of receptivity in knowing present in material intellect.

proper to the agent intellect in which it differs from the material [intellect], namely, that knowledge in act in the agent intelligence is the same as what is known, and it is not so in the material intellect, since its intelligible is the things which are not intellects in themselves. After he had made it known that its substance is its activity, he gave the reason for this. He said:

20. **And what is in potency is prior in time in an individual, while in general it is not [prior] even in time. Nor does it sometimes understand and sometimes not understand. And when it is separate, it is what it is alone and that alone is eternally immortal. We do not remember, because that is not passible,¹⁸³ while the passible intellect¹⁸⁴ is corruptible, and without this nothing is understood.** (430a20–25)

That section can be understood in three ways: (1) according to the opinion of Alexander, (2) according to the opinion {444} of Themistius and the other commentators, and (3) according to the opinion which we have reported (and this one is the more obvious according to the words).

(1) For it can be understood according to Alexander that [Aristotle] meant by “intellect in potency” the disposition existing in the human compound, because the potency and disposition which is in a human being for receiving the intelligible with respect to any given individual is prior in time to the agent intellect. The agent intellect, however, is prior without qualification. When he said: **Nor is it sometimes understanding and sometimes not**, he means the agent intellect. When he said: **And when it is separate, it is what it is alone**, not mortal, he means when that intellect has been united to us and in virtue of it we understand other beings insofar as it is form for us, then this alone of the intellect’s parts is not mortal. Next he said: **We do not remember**, etc. This is a question concerning the agent intellect insofar as it is united to us and we understand in virtue of it. For someone can say that when we have thought in virtue of something eternal, it is necessary that we understand in virtue of that after death as before. He said in response that this intellect is united with us only in virtue of the mediation of the material intellect [which is] generable and corruptible in us; and when that intellect has been corrupted in us, we will also not remember. Perhaps, then, Alexander expounded this section in this way, although we have not seen his exposition on this passage.

(2) Themistius,¹⁸⁵ however, understands by “the intellect which is in potency”

183. *Non passibilis*: ἀπαθής.

184. *Passibilis*: ὁ δὲ παθητικὸς νοῦς.

185. The account which follows is based on Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 98–99; (1973), 169–181; (1996), 122–124.

the separate material intellect, whose being was demonstrated. And he intends by the intellect {445} with which he made the comparison with this the agent intellect insofar as it is conjoined with the intellect which is in potency. This is in fact the theoretical intellect according to him. And when [Aristotle] said: **Nor does it sometimes understand and sometimes not**, he understands the agent intellect insofar as it is not in contact with the material intellect. When he said: **And when it is separate, it is only what it is**, not mortal, he means the agent intellect insofar as it is form for the material intellect, and this is the theoretical intellect according to him. That question will concern the agent intellect insofar as it is in contact with the material intellect (this is the theoretical intellect), namely, when he said: **We do not remember**. For he said that it is highly unusual that this doubt on the part of Aristotle would concern the intellect except insofar as the agent intellect is a form for us. For he says that for one asserting the agent intellect to be eternal and the theoretical intellect not to be eternal, this question, namely, why we do not remember after death what we understand in life, does not arise. It is as he said, for to pose that question about the agent intellect insofar as it is acquired, as Alexander said, is highly unlikely. For the knowledge existing in us in the state of acquisition is predicated equivocally in reference to the knowledge existing through nature and instruction. That question, therefore, as it appears, is only in reference to knowledge existing through nature. For it is impossible for that question to arise except in reference to eternal knowledge existing in us either through nature, as Themistius says, or through an intelligible acquired afterward.¹⁸⁶ Because this question in the view of Themistius concerns the theoretical intellect and the beginning of Aristotle's account concerns the agent intellect, for this reason he held that the theoretical intellect is the agent [intellect] according to Aristotle insofar as it is in contact with the material intellect. {446} He attests to all those things on the basis of what [Aristotle] said in the first treatise concerning the theoretical intellect. For there he posed the same question as here and he resolved it by the same solution. For he said in the beginning of that book: **The intellect, however, seems to be a substance existing in reality and not to be corrupted. For if it were corrupted, then this would rather be with the weariness of old age.**¹⁸⁷ Later on he provided the way on the basis of which

186. *In postremo*. That is, as coming about in us afterwards in time.

187. **Intellect, however, seems to be a substance which comes to be in a thing and is not subject to corruption. For if it were subject to corruption, it would be more appropriate for it to undergo corruption in the feebleness which accompanies old age.** (408b18–20), Book 1, Text 65 {87}. From consideration of the Latin Text it would appear that the translator did not bother to go back to find the text and to make this translation consistent with what he did earlier. But perhaps Averroes did not bother to coordinate the statements precisely.

it is possible for the intellect to be incorruptible but understanding in virtue of it to be corruptible, and he said: **Conceptualizing and contemplating** are diverse in such a way that **something else is corrupted inside, but in itself it has no failing**. Discernment and love are not the being of that, but rather of that to which this belongs, insofar as it belongs to it. **And for this reason, when that is corrupted, we will not remember nor will we love.**¹⁸⁸ Themistius, therefore, says that [Aristotle's] account in that treatise in which [Aristotle] said, **The intellect, however, seems to be a substance existing in reality and not to be corrupted**, is the same as that in which he said this: **And when it is separate, it is only what it is**, not mortal, eternal. And what he said here: **And we do not remember, because that is not passible, while the passible intellect is corruptible, and without this nothing is understood**, is the same as what he said there, namely: **Conceptualizing and contemplating are distinguished**, etc. He says this on account of the fact that he meant here by **passible intellect** the concupiscible part of the soul. For that part seems to have some [share in] reason, for it listens to what the rational soul considers.

(3) Since, however, we have seen the opinions of Alexander and Themistius to be impossible and have found the words of Aristotle evident according to our {447} exposition, we believe that this is Aristotle's opinion which we voiced and that it is true in its own right. That, however, his words are clear in this section will be explained as follows. For when he said: **And that intellect is also separate, unmixed, and impassible**, he speaks of the agent intellect, and we cannot say otherwise. This word, **also**, indicates another intellect to be impassible and unmixed. Likewise, it is evident that the comparison among these is between the agent intellect and the material intellect, insofar as the material intellect has something in common with the agent [intellect] in many of those dispositions. And in this Themistius agrees with us and Alexander differs.

When he said: **And what is in potency is prior in time to the individual**, it can be understood in the same way for the three opinions. For according to our opinion and [that] of Themistius, the intellect which is in potency is conjoined with us before the agent intellect.¹⁸⁹ And according to Alexander the

188. Book 1 {88–89}: **To understand and to contemplate (intelligere et considerare) are distinguished when something else inside undergoes corruption, but it is in itself affected by nothing. Discerning, loving, and hating are not the being of the [intellect] but rather of this [whole human being], namely, what has [them] insofar as it has [them]. Furthermore, for this reason, when this is corrupted, we will not remember or love others.** (408b24–25)

189. Cf. Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 95.9–10; (1996), 119: "Now this potential intellect comes into existence even among infants."

intellect which is in potency will be prior in us in being or generation, not according to conjoining. When he said: **while in general it is not [so] even in time**, he speaks about the intellect which is in potency. For when it is taken without qualification, not with respect to the individual, then it will not be prior to the agent intellect in any kind of priority, but posterior to it in all ways. That account agrees with each opinion, namely, the one saying that the intellect which is in potency is generable or [the one saying it is] not generable.

When he said: **And it is not sometimes understanding and sometimes not understanding**, it is impossible for that account to be understood according to its literal meaning, neither according to Themistius nor according to Alexander. For this phrase, **it is**,¹⁹⁰ when {448} he said: **And it is not sometimes understanding and sometimes not understanding**, refers according to them to the agent intellect. But Themistius, as we said, holds that the agent intellect is the theoretical [intellect], insofar as it is in contact with the material intellect. Alexander, however, holds that the intellect which is in a positive disposition (this is the theoretical [intellect]) is different from the agent intellect. And it is necessary to believe this, for the artistry is different from the artistic product and the agent different from [its] act. But insofar as it appeared to us, that account is in accord with its literal meaning and that phrase **it is** will be related to the nearest referent, which is the material intellect when it has been taken without qualification, not with reference to an individual. For it does not occur for the intellect which is called material, according to what we have said, that sometimes it understands and sometimes it does not, except in regard to the forms of the imagination existing in each individual, not with regard to the species. For instance, it does not occur for it that sometimes it understands the intelligible of horse and sometimes it does not, except with regard to Socrates and Plato. But without qualification and with regard to the species, it always understands this universal, unless the human species be altogether defunct, which is impossible. According to this the account will be according to its literal meaning. And when he said: **while in general it is not [so] even in time**, etc., he meant that when the intellect which is in potency is not received in reference to some individual, but is taken without qualification and in regard to any given individual, then it will not be found sometimes understanding and sometimes not, but will be found always understanding. Just as when the agent intellect is not taken in reference to some individual, then it will not be found sometimes understanding and sometimes not understanding, but will be found always to understand when it is taken without qualification; for the mode in {449} the activity of the two intellects is the same. According to this, when he said: **And when it is separate, it is only what it is**,

190. The Arabic is likely هو, "it," without an expressed verb, something which made it difficult for the translator to render the text literally.

not mortal, he meant: and when it is separate in this way, in this way alone is it not mortal, not insofar as it is taken in reference to the individual. His account in which he said: **and we do not remember**, etc., will be in accord with his literal meaning. For contrary to this opinion there ultimately arises a question. For one asking will say: Since the common intelligibles are not generable or corruptible in this way, why do we not remember after death any of the knowledge had in this life? It will be said to resolve this: because remembrance comes about by virtue of passible apprehensive powers, namely, material [powers]. There are three powers, the being of which was explained in *Sense and Sensibilia*, namely, the imaginative, the cogitative, and the memorative. For those three powers are in human beings for presenting the form of a thing imagined when the sense is not present. For this reason it was said there that when those three powers assist each other, perhaps they will represent the individual nature of the thing insofar as it is in its being, even though we may not sense it.¹⁹¹ He meant here by **passible intellect** the forms of the imagination insofar as the cogitative power proper to human beings acts upon them. For that power is a kind of reason¹⁹² and its activity is nothing but the placing of the intention of the form imagined in its individuality¹⁹³ in memory or the discerning of it from [the individual] in conception¹⁹⁴ and imagination. And it is evident that the intellect which is called material receives the imagined intentions after this discernment. That passible intellect, therefore, is necessary for conceptualization. He, therefore, rightly said: **And we do not remember, because that is not passible, while the passible intellect is corruptible, and without this nothing understands**. That is, and {450} without the imaginative power and the cogitative [power] the intellect which is called material understands nothing. For these powers are, as it were, things which prepare artistry's matter for receiving the activity of artistry. This, therefore, is one exposition.

It can be expounded in another way, and it is this: when he said: **And it is not sometimes understanding and sometimes not understanding**, he meant: when it has not been taken insofar as it understands and is informed by generable and corruptible material forms, but has been taken without qualification and insofar as it understands separate forms freed from matter, then it will not be found sometimes understanding and sometimes not understanding, but it will be found in the same form. For instance, [it will be found] in the way in virtue of which it

191. Cf. *Short Commentary on the Parva Naturalia* (1949), 54ff.; (1961), 25ff.; (1972), 40ff.

192. Themistius mentions that imagination can be called intellect in a way at Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 89.27–29 and 94.27–29; (1973), 157; (1996), 112 and 118. Cf. Book 3, n. 98.

193. Literally, with its individual.

194. *Formationem*. Conceptualization, properly so called, can take place only by intellect, so here Averroes is indicating the activity of imagination or cogitation together with the material intellect.

understands the agent intellect, whose relation to it is, as we said, like that of light to the transparent. For it should be held that when it was explained that this intellect which is in potency is eternal and that it is naturally constituted to be actualized through material forms, it is [even] more fitting that it be naturally constituted to be actualized through non-material forms which are intelligible in themselves. But in the beginning it is not conjoined with us in this way but rather later on when the generation of the intellect which is in a positive disposition is actualized, as we will explain later. According to this exposition, when he said: **And when it is separate, it is only what it is**, not mortal, he indicated the material intellect insofar as it is actualized through the agent intellect, when it has been united with us in this way, then it will be separated. Perhaps he indicated the material intellect in its first conjoining with us, namely, [in] the conjoining which is through nature. He specified it through this word only in indicating the corruption of the intellect which is in a positive disposition in the way it is corruptible. And generally, when someone will consider the material intellect with the agent intellect, [451] they will appear to be two in a way and one in another way. For they are two in virtue of the diversity of their activity, for the activity of the agent intellect is to generate while that of the former is to be informed. They are one, however, because the material intellect is actualized through the agent [intellect] and understands it. In this way we say that two powers appear in the intellect conjoined with us, of which one is active and the other of the genus of passive powers.¹⁹⁵ How well does Alexander liken that to fire! For fire is naturally constituted to transform every body through a power existing in it, but nevertheless in the course of this it is affected in a certain way by what it transforms and is assimilated to that in some way, that is, it acquires

195. Cf. Book 3, n. 44. I am in agreement with Davidson (1992), 292, 293, 332–333, that Averroes holds for the existence of two distinct intellects. Still, the account in the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* is sufficiently equivocal to leave some doubt for its readers. See *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* (1952), 1489–1490; (1962), 302M–303D; (1984), 104–105. Cf. Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 108.32–34; (1973), 198.2–4; (1996), 134: “and that another [intellect] is like a combination from the potential and actual [intellects], which they posit as separate from the body, imperishable, and uncreated. These intellects are natures that in different ways are one as well as two, for what [is combined] from matter and form is one.” Also cf. *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* (1952), 1489; (1962), 302M–303D; (1984), 104: “but most commentators think that the material intellect survives and that the separate active intellect is like the form in the material intellect, as happens in the compound of matter and form, and that it is that which creates the intelligibles in a way and receives them in another way. I mean it makes them as form and receives them as material intellect.” In what follows this passage of the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* Averroes goes on to explain that highest human happiness would be attained when the material intellect is fully actualized by the agent intellect.

from it a form less fiery than the fiery form which causes the transforming. For this disposition is precisely similar to the disposition of the agent intellect with the passible [intellect] and with the intelligibles which it generates, for it makes these in one way and receives them in another way. And in accord with this will be the account in which he said: **And we do not remember**, etc. [This is] the solution of the question which made the ancient commentators believe the intellect which is in a positive disposition to be eternal and which made Alexander hold that the material intellect is generable and corruptible. In regard to this question it was said: How are the things understood by us not eternal, while the intellect is eternal and the recipient is eternal? It is as if he says in response that the reason for this is that the material intellect understands nothing without the passible intellect, although there is an agent and there is a recipient, just as there is no apprehending of color, although there is light and there is sight, unless there is some colored thing. Then, according to whichever of those expositions it may be said, the letter [of the text] will agree with the words of Aristotle and his demonstrations without any contradiction or departure from his literal account. For this reason it is not right to use in the doctrine concerning equivocal words [452] except for these which, although they are diverse, nevertheless agree in all the intentions regarding which they can be said. He shows that he meant here by **passible intellect** the human imaginative power because of what lies in the other translation in place of what he said: **because that is not passible, while the passible intellect is corruptible**. For he says in the other translation: “And what brought us to say that this intellect is not transformed or affected is that opinion¹⁹⁶ belongs to the passible intellect and that it is corruptible, and does not apprehend the intelligible and nothing understands without imagination.”¹⁹⁷ This term **intellect**, therefore, is accordingly said in this book in four ways. For it is said of the material intellect, of the intellect which is in a positive disposition, of the agent intellect, and of the imaginative power.

You ought to know that there is no difference between the exposition of Themistius and the other ancient commentators and the opinion of Plato in regard to the fact that the intelligibles existing in us are eternal and that learn-

196. *Existimatio*: التوهم. The translator should have rendered this as *ymaginatio*, “imagination,” as he does at the end of this quotation. But perhaps his Arabic manuscript was faulty and had الوهم.

197. (والذى دعانا الآن <إلى أن> قلنا إن هذا العقل لا يستحيل ولا يالَم أن التوهم هو. العقل الآلم، وإنه يفسد) وليس يدرك العقل ولا يفهم شيئاً بغير توهم (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954], 75); “What led us to our having said that this intellect is not passible and not undergoing affection is that the opining faculty is the intellect undergoing affection. The intellect does not apprehend nor does it understand anything without the opining faculty.” This is an addition to the text of Aristotle not found in the Greek. In spite of the use of التوهم here, Averroes understands this to denote the imagination.

ing is recollection. But Plato says that those intelligibles sometimes are in us and sometimes are not, owing to the fact that the subject is sometimes prepared for receiving them and sometimes not. They exist in themselves in this way before we receive them as well as after; and thus they are outside the soul as well as in the soul. Themistius, however, says that this, namely, that they are sometimes united and sometimes not, occurs for them due to the nature of the recipient. For he holds that the agent intellect is not naturally constituted to be conjoined with us at first except insofar as it is in contact with the material intellect. And this declination occurs for it in this way, since the conjoining with the intentions of the imagination is in one way a reception, as it were, and in another way an activity, as it were. For this reason the intelligibles are in [the material intellect] in a disposition diverse from their being in the agent intellect. Assurance [453] in regard to understanding this opinion is [found in the fact] that the reason moving Aristotle to propose the existence of the material intellect is not because here there is a produced intelligible. Rather, the reason for this is either because when there were found the intelligibles which are in us according to dispositions not in accord with the simple intelligibles, then it was said that this intellect which is in us is composed of what is in act, namely, the agent intellect, and of what is in potency. Or [it is] because the conjoining of this according to this opinion is similar to generation and is, as it were, likened to agent and patient, namely, in its conjoining with intentions of imagination. According to this opinion, therefore, the agent, the patient, and the product will be the same and it was said from those three dispositions in virtue of the diversity which occurs for it. We, however, hold that nothing moves him to impose the agent intellect except that the theoretical intelligibles are generated in the way which we said.

Therefore consider this: there is difference among the three opinions, namely, that of Plato, that of Themistius, and our opinion. According to the exposition of Themistius in regard to those intelligibles there is need only to assert the material intellect alone, or the material intellect and the agent [intellect] by analogy, for where there is no true generation, there is no agent. We agree with Alexander in regard to the way of asserting the agent intellect and we differ from him in regard to the nature of the material intellect. We differ from Themistius in regard to the nature of the intellect which is in a positive disposition and in regard to the manner of asserting the agent intellect. We also agree with Alexander in a certain way in regard to the nature of the intellect which is in a positive disposition and in another way we differ. These, therefore, are the differences by which the opinions ascribed to Aristotle are divided. You ought to know that use and exercise¹⁹⁸ are the causes of what appears to be the case

198. Cf. Alexander, *De Anima* (1887), 83.1–3; (1979), 107.

concerning the potency of the agent intellect which is in [454] us for separating [things] and the material intellect for receiving [things]. They are, I say, causes on account of the positive disposition existing through use and exercise in the **passible** and corruptible intellect which Aristotle called **passible**, and [which] he said plainly is corruptible. If not, it would happen that the power which is in us making the intelligibles would be material and likewise the passible power. For this reason no one can reason on the basis of this that the material intellect is mixed with the body. For what one holding it to be mixed says in response to that account in regard to the agent intellect, we [ourselves also] say in response to this in regard to the material intellect. By that intellect which Aristotle called **passible** human beings are distinguished in terms of the four powers mentioned in *The Topics*¹⁹⁹ which al-Fârâbî listed in his *Sophistic Refutations*.²⁰⁰ By that intellect a human being differs from the other animals. And if [it were] not [for this], then it would be necessary that the conjoining of the agent intellect and the recipient would be with animals in the same way.²⁰¹ Indeed, the practical intellect differs from the theoretical in virtue of the diversity of the disposition existing in this intellect. These things having been explained, let us return to our [account] and let us say:

21. **There will, however, be conceptualizing of indivisible things in the case of those things in which there is no falsity. However, in regard to things in which there is the true and the false that [conceptualizing] is then a composition in reference to intelligible things insofar as they are beings. As Empedocles said that many heads and necks are distributed . . . ultimately in virtue of the composition of friendship. So too do separate things exist in virtue of composition, for instance, say the incommensurate and the diameter.**²⁰² (3.6, 430a26–31) [455]

199. "The instruments whereby we are to become well supplied with deductions are four: one, the securing of propositions; second, the power to distinguish in how many ways an expression is used; third, the discovery of the differences of things; fourth, the investigation of likenesses." *Topics* 1.13, 105a22–25, *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (1984).

200. This work is not extant. See Peters (1968), 25, n. 10. This does not seem to arise in al-Fârâbî, *Book of Sophistic Refutations* (1986).

201. Cf. [502].

202. "The thinking of indivisibles is found in those cases where falsehood is impossible: where the alternative of true or false applies, there we always find a sort of combining of objects of thought in a quasi-unity. As Empedocles said that 'where heads of many a creature sprouted without necks' they afterwards by Love's power were combined, so here too objects of thought which were separate are combined, e.g. 'incommensurate' and diagonal." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The Arabic text used by Averroes does not render explicitly the Greek *ἐν* in the phrase *ὡς ἐν ὄντων*, "in a quasi-unity." Averroes' alternate translation offers a quite different understanding: *والتي فيها كذب*

After he had completed making known the substance of the three intellects, namely, the material, what is in a positive disposition, and the agent, he began to consider the activities and properties of intellect. This is what remained [to be considered] concerning the knowledge of that power. Because the more well-known of the differences in virtue of which the activity of the intellect is divided are two activities, one called conceptualizing and the other assent, he began here to make known the difference between these two activities.²⁰³ He said: **There will, however, be conceptualizing of indivisible things**, etc. That is, apprehending simple incomposite things will be through intelligibles which are neither false nor true, which is called conceptualization, while apprehending composite things by [intellect] will be by virtue of intelligibles in which there is falsity and truth. He was content with the first division without the second, since opposite is understood through its opposite. Next he said: **However, in regard to things in which there is found the true and the false**, etc. That is, intelligibles, however, in which truth and falsity are found involve in them a certain composition made by the material intellect and the intellect which first understands singulars.²⁰⁴ If, therefore, this composition is [one] befitting the being, it will be true, but if not, it will be false.²⁰⁵ And that activity of the intellect upon the intelligibles is similar to what Empedocles says concerning the activity of friendship upon beings. For just as Empedocles says that many heads had been separated from necks, then friendship brought them together and composed like with like, so too the intelligibles exist first as divided in the material intellect, for instance, say **the diameter of a square** and say **the incommensurate character of the sides**. For the intellect understands those singulars first; then it composes them, namely, what is commensurate or incommensurate. If, therefore, it has composed according to being, it will be true, if not, false. {456}

22. And if they are past or future things, then it understands time together with this and composes it. For falsity is always in composition, since when you say what is white is not white, you have already composed white with not-white, as if speaking of a white thing. And it is possible to say all these are [cases of] division. But not only is this true and false, namely, that So-

؛ وصدق ولها تركيب معان كأنها قائمة في نفسه؛ (ibid. [1954]); "In the case of things in which there is falsehood and truth and which involve the composition of intentions, it is as if they are *subsistent per se*."

203. These are تصور, "conceptualizing," and تصديق, "assenting." Cf. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 117.14–17.

204. By "singulars" he seems to mean singular concepts. See his remarks at the end of this comment.

205. That is, it is true if it is in accord with the being of things in the world and false if not.

crates²⁰⁶ is white, but additionally that he was or will be [white]. What makes this and its like one is intellect. (430a31–b6)

If those singular intelligibles are among things which are naturally constituted to exist either in past time or in future time, then the intellect understands together with these things the time in which they exist. Afterwards it will compose [time] with these and will judge that those things were or will be, just as it judges that the diameter is incommensurate with the side [in the case of a triangle]. Because he reported first that truth and falsity are found in composition, he began to explain that falsity is in the composition and not found in any of the activities of intellect. He said: **For falsity is always in the composition**. The reason for this is that to say in regard to a white thing that it is not white is a composition similar to saying in regard to a white thing that it is white, although that is false and this true. Since it appears that affirmation is more fitting than composition and negation than division, he said: **And it is possible to say** in regard to all these that they are [cases of] division. That is, and just as we can say negation and affirmation are composition, so too we can say that each is division, although affirmation seems more deserving of this name, {457} **composition**, and negation of this name, **division**. For in affirmation the predicate is composed with the subject, while in negation first the intellect divides the predicate from the subject and later composes them. After he had explained that truth and falsity occur in the composition of things with one another, he also explained that this same thing occurs when it composes them with time. He said: **But not only is that true and false**, etc. That is, both truth and falsity do not occur only in composition in the case of propositions in which the predicate is a name, but [also] in these things in which the predicate is a verb, for instance, **Socrates was** or **will be**. Next he said: **What makes this**, etc. That is, what makes these singular intelligibles one through composition after they were many is the material intellect. For [the material intellect] discerns singular intelligibles and composes similar things and divides different things. For the power apprehending simple and composite things must be the same, since the relationship of that power to the intentions of imagined forms ought to be just as the relation of the common sense to different sensibles, not as it appears from the words of Ibn Bājja in the beginning of his account of the rational power, namely, that the composing power ought to be different from the imaginative.²⁰⁷

206. The Greek uses Cleon instead of Socrates.

207. القوة التي بها تدرك الأشخاص هي القوة المتخيلة على ما تبين قبل هذا. وأما الكلليات فالقوة التي بها تدرك الأشخاص هي القوة المتخيلة على ما تبين قبل هذا. (Ibn Bājja, *Book on the Soul* [1960], 148–149); "As shown before, the faculty by which the particulars are perceived is the imaginative faculty. But the universals belong to another faculty." (ibid. [1961], 120). That faculty to which he refers is القوة المفكرة

23. And because the indivisible is of two modes, either in potency or in act, nothing prevents it from being the case that when [the intellect] has understood length, it understands the indivisible (and that is actually indivisible) and [does so] in indivisible time. For time according to this mode is divisible and indivisible [as is the case] in regard to length. For no one can say that he understands each {458} measure to be something, since it does not exist, to the extent that it is divided, except in potency. When, however, [intellect] has thought each of those two per se, then it will divide time also and then there will be, as it were, two lengths, brought together, however, in the time which encompasses them. (430b6–14)

After he had explained that the activity of the intellect is indivisible in relation to indivisible things, he began here to explain in what way [intellect] happens to understand divisible things having quantity with indivisible intellection and in indivisible time, and in what way it happens to understand these in a divisible way and in divisible time, as is the disposition in understanding a plurality of things. He said: **And because the indivisible is**, etc. That is, and because indivisible is said in two ways, in potency and in act, it is possible to say that the intellect understands things from among divisible things in potency and indivisible things in act (as length and the implicit time which is in these is indivisible in act), and that this comes about by indivisible intellection and in indivisible time, to the extent that it understands indivisible things in each way. For it necessarily understands the indivisible intention in an indivisible way, whether that intention will have been divisible in some way or in no way [at all]. When he said: **it understands the indivisible**, etc., he means: it understands the indivisible intention—and that intelligible is indivisible—and in indivisible time. Next he said: **For time according to that mode is divisible and indivisible**. That is, for time is also found to be divisible in one way and indivisible in another way, just as in the case of length. And when he explained that the intellect understands magnitude and time and generally everything which is indivisible in act and {459} divisible in potency, through an indivisible intellection and in indivisible time, he also explained that it is impossible for someone to say that understanding such things comes about through a divisible intellection and in divisible time. He said: **No one can say**, etc. That is, no one, therefore, can say that when the intellect understands a line, it does not immediately understand it, but first one part and then another. For those two parts are not two in act in the line until the line is divided, but rather they are only two in potency. And when he said **each measure**, he meant

([1960], 148), “the cogitative power,” as I render it in the present translation, or “the thinking faculty” ([1961], 119).

each part of the line. [It is] as if he says: no one, therefore, can say that when the intellect understands a line, first it understands each part per se, then the whole. For those two parts do not exist in act until the line is divided, but rather they are two in potency. Next he said: **When, however, it will have understood each**, etc. That is, but it happens to understand each part of the length per se when it divides the length; then it understands that length just as it understands two lengths. He understood this when he said: **and** then there are, as it were, two lengths. Next he said: **brought together, however**, etc. That is, when, however, it understands these things which have been brought together, that is, the parts, and [understands them] as one length, it understands these in the same indivisible time and in the same instant in which they at once exist, not in two diverse instants. He meant this when he said (as it seems to me): **in the time which encompasses them**.

24. **But what is not indivisible in quantity but in form it understands in indivisible time and through an indivisible [aspect] of the soul, and [it does so] accidentally. But those two are divisible, namely, that in virtue of which it understands and the time in which it understands, because they are [themselves] {460} indivisible.**²⁰⁸ **For even in these two there is something indivisible, but it is more fitting that it not be separable. It is what makes time to be one and length to be one. This is in a similar mode in everything continuous, both in time and in length.** (430b14–20)

After he had explained the way in which the intellect understands what is indivisible in quantity (this is what is indivisible in act and divisible in potency), he began also to explain the way in which it understands what is indivisible in form (this is what is indivisible in act and in potency, except accidentally). He said: **But what is not indivisible**, etc. That is, but what is indivisible in form and quality, not quantity (since indivisible is said in these two ways), is apprehended by the intellect in indivisible time and by an indivisible intellection. Next he said: **But [it does so] accidentally**, etc. That account is shortened and transposed, and it ought to be read in this way: but those two are divisible not essentially, but accidentally, namely, the time in which it under-

208. The Arabic text is faulty here, as Averroes is well aware. See {460}. The corresponding Greek has κατὰ συμβεβηκός δέ, καὶ οὐχ ἢ ἐκεῖνα διαιρετὰ ὁ νοεῖ καὶ ἐν ᾧ χρόνῳ, ἀλλ' ἢ ἀδιαιρέτα· ἐνεστί γὰρ κἀν τοῦτοις τι ἀδιαιρέτον. “But that which thought thinks of and the time in which it thinks are in this case divisible only incidentally and not as such. For in them too there is something indivisible.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation paraphrases the text: لاكتلك، بالعرض يتجزأ، لاكتلك، بالعرض يتجزأ، لاكتلك، بالعرض يتجزأ؛ فان فيها ما لا يتجزأ (ibid. [1954]); “<and> is divisible accidentally, not like these parts by which the intellect perceives, for in them is what is indivisible.”

stands and the thing which is thought or by which it understands. Next he provided the reason for the fact that they are divisible accidentally. He said: **because they are [themselves] indivisible**, etc., that is, because the time in which it understands and the thing which it understands are indivisible in their own right, but they are nevertheless in divisible things, namely, the instant in which it understands and the form which it understands. For an instant is indivisible and is in time which is divisible; and the form is also indivisible and is in a magnitude which is divisible. Next he said: **For even in these [. . .] there is something indivisible**, that is, [indivisible] in magnitude and in time. Next he said: **but it is more fitting that it not be separable**. That is, but {461} what is indivisible in time and in magnitude is not separable from these, and for this reason it was divisible accidentally. Next he said: **It is what makes time to be one**, etc. That is, this indivisible [nature] existing in those things makes length to be one and time to be one. If not, then here neither one length nor one time would be understood, if this nature were not in them. This nature, therefore, is the cause for those things being one while they are also divisible. And because they are in those things, for this reason they happen to be divisible accidentally. That this nature is existent in those material things is the reason that understanding was one in time. This is the sum of what he intended in this section. Next he said: **This is in a similar mode in everything continuous**, etc. That is, that nature exists in a similar mode, namely, in time and length and in other species, inseparable from that in which it exists. For if it were separate, then division would not occur accidentally.

25. **The point, however, and every difference and what is indivisible in this way, are understood as an accident.**²⁰⁹ **And so too for other things, for instance, how it knows blackness and what is black,**²¹⁰ **for it knows it through the contrary, as it were. And what knows in potency ought to be one in its own right.**²¹¹ **If, therefore, there is something among things in which there**

209. For the Latin *quasi accidens*, the Greek has ὥσπερ ἡ στέρησις. "Points and similar instances of things that divide, themselves being indivisible, are realized in consciousness in the same manner as privations." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); emphasis added. The alternate Arabic renders this sufficiently with العدم (ibid. [1954]); "privation." Averroes' remarks about an omission in the manuscript seem to refer to an omission of the Arabic corresponding to ἡ στέρησις. The Latin *accidens* may reflect العرض for العدم.

210. The Greek has οἷον πῶς τὸ κακὸν γνωρίζει ἢ τὸ μέλαν. "e.g. how evil or black is cognized." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation has كيف يعرف العقل السواد والأسود؟ (ibid. [1954]); "How does the intellect know the black or the dark?"

211. The corresponding Greek has δεῖ δὲ δυνάμει εἶναι τὸ γνωρίζον καὶ ἐνεῖναι ἐν αὐτῷ. "That which cognizes must be its objects potentially, and they must be in it." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). This part of the paraphrasing alternate translation reflects

is no contrariety, that understands itself alone and is in act [and] separate. (430b20–26)

After he had explained how the intellect understands things indivisible in act and divisible in potency, namely, magnitudes, and how also it understands things essentially indivisible [and] divisible accidentally, namely, qualities and forms, he began here to explain also how it understands indivisible things neither essentially nor {462} accidentally nor in potency nor in act, for instance, the point, the instant, and unity. He said: **The point, however**, etc. That is, to understand the point, however, and its like among the things which are said to be indivisible, and generally every privative difference, is accidental, namely, insofar as it happens to lack a thing [of which it is] deprived. For the point is understood only insofar as there occurs for it a privation of the divisibility existing in magnitude. Likewise with respect to the instant and the rest. Next he said: And in this way **it knows blackness and what is black; for it knows through the contrary, as it were**. A blank space falls in the manuscript in this way, namely, between the phrase in [this] way and it knows. The account is complete per se, but if something is lacking, perhaps it is this: and in this way the intellect or sight knows blackness or what is black.²¹² Generally all privations are known only through contraries, namely, through the knowledge of a positive disposition and through knowledge of the lack of a positive disposition. Here he meant by blackness the privation of whiteness. For just as it is concerning the senses in regard to those things, so too is it concerning the intellect. For just as it was said there that sight apprehends darkness through apprehension of the lack of light, so too the intellect apprehends privation through apprehension of the lack of form. Next he said: **And what knows in potency ought to be one in its own right**. That is, the intellect knowing the positive disposition and its privation must be the same power in itself, just as

the Greek: ويجب أن تكون المعرفة بحد قوة ، وإن أشياء لم يكن فيها ضد (ibid. [1954]).

212. This comment may be one of an Arabic copyist or the Latin translator referring to "And in this way it knows." But it may be something reflected from consideration of the alternate translation quoted in n. 210.

The following account seems to be the result of Averroes' reading Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 111.18–23; (1973), 203.7–12, "For to the intellect, as much as to sense-perception, there are some objects of thought that [occur] in respect of a [direct] encounter (*kat'epibolên*) where [the intellect] also grasps their nature, others that [occur] in respect of privation and abstraction. For just as for sense-perception white and light [occur] in respect of a [direct] encounter, and black and darkness in respect of privation (and for hearing sound in respect of a [direct] encounter, silence in respect of privation), so too for the intellect good depends on a [direct] encounter, bad on privation." Ibid. (1996), 137.

what knows darkness and light is the same power of sight. [It is necessary] that this knowing power apprehend privation by apprehending in itself being in potency, since it is in potency when it apprehends each in itself, namely, being in potency and being in act. And that is the disposition of the material intellect. Can we say, therefore, {463} that such a thing is the disposition alone and nothing else, as Alexander said? Next he said: **If, therefore, there is something among things**, etc. That is, if, therefore, there is some intellect in which there is no potency contrary to the act existing in it, that is, if there is some intellect which is not found sometimes understanding in potency and sometimes understanding in act, then that intellect will not understand privation at all. Rather, it will understand nothing outside itself. This is one of these things by which this intellect is distinguished from the agent intellect, namely, that in this intellect each is found, while in the agent [intellect] only act [is found], not potency. For this reason Aristotle rightly called that intellect material, not because it is mixed and has matter, as Alexander held.

26. **Both stating something of something, such as affirmation, and every composite [statement], is true or false. Not every sort of understanding is true, but [only] that which states the quiddity of the thing, not what [just] states something of something. But just as proper activities are true, while whether a white thing is a human being is not always true,**²¹³ **so likewise is the disposition of what is separate from matter.** (430b26–31)

To predicate something of something by intellect, such as affirmation and negation, is a composition by the activity of intellect. Every composed [predication] is true or false. In the material intellect, therefore, truth and falsity are always found mixed together. This is proper to this intellect.

Next he began to explain that this is not proper to all the activities of that intellect, but only to the activity which is called {464} assent, not intellectual conceptualization. He said: **Not every sort of understanding**, etc. That is, truth and falsity are not found mixed together in every activity of that intellect, but [rather] the activity which is conceptualization is always true, not the activity which involves predicating something of something. Next he began to recount that what occurs for intellect is similar to what occurs for sense and that there is the same reason for this. He said: **But just as proper activities**,

213. The corresponding Greek ἀλλ' ὥσπερ τὸ ὁρᾶν τοῦ ἰδίου ἀληθές, εἰ δ' ἄνθρωπος τὸ λευκὸν ἢ μή, οὐκ ἀληθές ἀεί. "But, just as while the seeing of the special object of sight can never be in error, seeing whether the white object is a man or not may be mistaken." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). Apparently τὸ ὁρᾶν, "the seeing," was omitted from this text of Aristotle at some stage in the transmission or translation. Again, it is curious that Averroes did not consult his alternate translation, which renders the Greek adequately.

etc. That is, but the reason for this is the same as the reason in the case of sense. Activities proper to sight, namely, apprehending color, are true for the most part, while sensing the white thing to be Socrates or Plato is not always true but rather frequently falsity occurs in that case. This will likewise be [the case for] the disposition of intellect, namely, that it is always true in its proper activity. For assent occurs for it only because its intelligible is material, that is, composite. When he said: **so too is the disposition of what is separate from matter**, he meant: so too is the disposition of the material intellect which is separate from matter in regard to its activities of apprehension, namely, because it is correct in regard to things proper to it, namely, in conceptualization, and false in regard to things which are not proper. This can be understood in this way: so too is the disposition of intellects whose intelligible is separate from matter, in that they are always correct, since in them no activity which is accidental is found because their intelligible is separate from matter.²¹⁴

27. **Knowledge which is in act is the thing itself. And what is in potency is prior in time to the individual, but universally not even in time.** {465} **For everything which is generated is generated by what is in act.** (3.7, 431a1–4)

Knowledge which is in act is the known object itself. Knowledge which is in potency is for the individual prior in time to knowledge which is in act. But universally and without qualification knowledge which is in potency is not prior to knowledge which is in act, since knowledge which goes out from potency into act is generated and everything generated is generated by what belongs in act to the species of that generated thing. Hence, it is necessary that knowledge which is in act be prior in every way to knowledge which is in potency. Perhaps he meant here by this account to indicate the reason why the apprehension belonging to the separate intellects is conceptualization only and truth in these is never mixed with falsity. It is the case that knowledge belonging to these [separate intellects] is the known object itself in every way, contrary to the disposition in regard to things known by the material intellect.

28. **We see the sensible make the sense to be in act after it was in potency and [to do so] without suffering an alteration. For this reason [sensation] is a different kind of motion. For motion is the activity of what is imperfect, while activity without qualification is a different [kind of] motion and is the activity of what is perfected. It seems, therefore, that to sense is similar to something being said only in words and to something being understood**

214. Note that, perhaps due to his faulty text, Averroes transforms Aristotle's epistemological generalization into a metaphysical account of the material intellect and any other separate intellect which apprehends an intelligible separate from matter.

by intellect. If, therefore, it is pleasant or unpleasant, as an affirmation or negation of it, it will be pursued or avoided. (431a4–10)

What he wants here to provide concerning the disposition of that power, namely, of the rational power, is more on account of its similarity to sense, {466} for these things in which they are similar are more evident in the case of sense than in the case of intellect. First he began to compare these things in the thing which is called motion and affection in them. He said: **We see the sensible make**, etc. That is, we see the sensible make what senses to be in act after it was in potency, not in such a way that what senses, at going out from potency into act, is transformed or altered as material things going out from potency into act are transformed. For this reason it should be held that there is a kind of motion and affection different from the kind which is in movable things. For this reason what was said in regard to the intellect, namely, that there is a going out from potency into act without change and without alteration, is not unthinkable. Next he said: **For motion is the activity of what is imperfect**, etc. That is, the reason why change and alteration occur for that motion but not for the other is because that motion, for which change occurs, is an activity not perfected and a process toward something complete, while the other is a perfect activity or rather something complete. It is as if he meant that since it is so, the fact that understanding is an imperfect activity happens for it on account of matter, not insofar as it is an activity. Since this happens for the activity, it is necessary that there be some activity free from this accident. For what happens to something accidentally must not belong to it insofar as it is what it is, and if it will not have belonged to it insofar as it is what it is, then it is necessarily separate from it. What he brought up here is, as it were, the solution of the greatest of all the questions arising in reference to this opinion. For someone can say: How can we imagine reception in a substance unmixed with matter when it was explained that the reason for reception is matter? It is as if he indicated {467} the solution in saying that matter is not the reason for the reception without qualification, but the reason for the changeable reception, namely, of the reception on the part of this individual being. Hence it is necessary that what does not receive by way of an individual reception not be material in any way.²¹⁵ In this way there remains no room for the question. When he had explained the kind of similarity between sense and intellect in this kind of affection and motion, namely, that in each there is perfect activity, he began to make known the similarity between sensing and understanding. He said: **therefore to sense is similar to something being said only in words and to something being understood by intellect**. That is, sensing, which is per se a perfect activity and without time, and without it being the case that an in-

215. Cf. {441}.

complete activity precedes it, is similar to understanding an intelligible intention when that intention is expressed by another, namely, because a perfect activity comes about from this, without it being the case that an incomplete activity precedes it. It is as if he meant by this to explain the reason why the intellect understands without time. Next he said: **If, therefore, it is pleasant**, etc. That is, if, therefore, that which is apprehended is pleasant or unpleasant to the sense, it will be just as the intellect affirms this to be this or denies [it by asserting] that this is not this. Then either it will be pursued or fled in virtue of an intellectual apprehension, just as a thing will be pursued or fled in virtue of a sensible apprehension.

29. **Feeling pleasure or feeling pain are activities with respect to a sensible mean concerning good or bad insofar as they are such. This is to desire and to avoid, which exist in act. What desires and what avoids do not differ {468} from one another nor from what senses, but the being differs.** (431a10–14)

Feeling pain and feeling pleasure on the part of the soul is an activity belonging to it through the mediation of the sensitive power. Its motion in this way concerns the good or bad insofar as the bad is painful and the good pleasant, not insofar as the good is good and the bad bad, just as is the disposition in the intellect's seeking or avoiding. Next he said: **This is to desire and to avoid, which exist in act**. That is, this is to desire and avoid a present thing insofar as it is present and individual, namely, sensible desire. For this is proper to sensible desire, namely, that it be moved only with the presence of the object sensible in act, contrary to intellectual desire. Next he said: **What desires and what avoids** are not diverse, etc. That is, the part of the soul which pursues and flees is the same part, not two diverse ones, neither in the case of intellect nor in the case of sense, but it is the same part in subject and diverse ones in activity. He meant this when he said: but the being differs. He means by this the concupiscible soul.

30. **In the sensitive soul²¹⁶ are found images according to the modes of the senses. When we say in regard to something that it is bad or good not²¹⁷ ac-**

216. The corresponding Greek has τῇ δὲ διανοητικῇ ψυχῇ: "the thinking soul." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). In his Comment Averroes prefers the alternate translation, which is closer to the Greek: عند النفس الناطقة (ibid. [1954]); "in the rational [or: reasoning] soul."

217. *Non* occurs here without any corresponding negation in the Greek: "(and when it asserts or denies them to be good or bad it avoids or pursues them)." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). This problem does not occur in the alternate translation, which itself is less than a clear rendering of the Greek. Averroes' Comment shows no awareness of the problem.

ording to affirmation and negation, then we either pursue or avoid [it]. For this reason the soul understands nothing without imagination. (431a14–17)

In the sensitive soul, that is, in the common sense, images are found the modes of which are according to the modes of the senses (469) and the sensibles such that the relation of those images to the material intellect is just as the relation of sensibles to the senses. This is found in a more evident way in the other translation. For it says: "In the rational soul, however, the image is, as it were, the sensible things."²¹⁸ Next he said: **When we say in regard to a thing, etc.** That is, when the rational soul discerns an image and judges it to be good or bad not insofar as it is known to be such or not such alone (this is the difference proper to the theoretical intellect), then the concupiscible soul either will pursue that, if the rational soul has judged its image to be good, or will avoid [it], if [it has judged its image to be] bad. This is similar to what happens for sense with what is painful and what is pleasant. Next he said: **For this reason the soul understands nothing without imagination.** That is, because the relation of the images to the material intellect is just as the relation of the sensibles to sense, for this reason it was necessary that the material intellect not understand any sensible without imagination. In this he says expressly that universal intelligibles are gathered with images and corrupted with their corruption. He also expressly says that the relation of the intelligibles to images is just as the relation of color to the colored body, not as the relation of color to the sense of sight as Ibn Bâjjah thought.²¹⁹ But the intelligibles are the intentions of forms of the imagination separated from matter. For this reason they necessarily need in this [sort of] being to have matter different from the matter which they used to have in the forms of the imagination. This is self-evident to those who give it consideration. If the imagined intentions were receptive of intelligibles, then the thing would receive itself and the mover would be the moved. Aristotle's explanation that it is necessary that there be in the material intellect none of the intentions existing in act or there [not] have been (470) an intention intelligible in act or in potency, is sufficient to refute the opinion. But what made that man err, and us too for a long time, is that modern thinkers set aside the books of Aristotle and consider the books of the commentators, and chiefly in the case of the soul, in their believing that this book is impossible to understand. This is on account of Avicenna, who followed Aristotle only in dialectics,

²¹⁸. *Apud autem animam rationabilem ymago est quasi res sensibiles*: وأما عند النفس الناطقة فالتخييلي بمنزلة الأشياء المحسوسة (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]); "In the rational soul image forming is in place of the sensible things." التخييلي is Badawi's correction of the manuscript's التخييل, but in this note I translate the Arabic manuscript reading.

²¹⁹. This is likely a reference to a discussion in the account of the rational soul in Ibn Bâjjah, *Book on the Soul* (1960), (1961), which is incomplete in manuscript.

but in other things he erred, and chiefly in the case of metaphysics. This is because he began, as it were, from his own perspective.

31. [This is] just as air is what makes the organ of sight to be of such a disposition, and this [follows] from something else; and [it is] similarly so in the case of hearing. For what is last in this is one and the same thing and one and the same mean, while in being it is many. It had already been said earlier what it is in virtue of which we judge that sweet differs from hot or cold. Let us speak, therefore, as follows. For just as it is the same in being, so is it in definition.²²⁰ (431a17–22)

After he had explained the similarity between intellect and sense in reference to the need for a subject from which they receive the intentions which they apprehend, he began now to explain that the relation of that material intellect to the images numbered according to the species of sensibles is just as the relation of the common sense to diverse sensibles. He said: [This is] just as air, etc. That is, it was explained that air moves the organ of sight and is moved by another, and likewise the organ of hearing is moved by air, and air by another, until the motion passes (471) in all sensibles to one final [point] which is in relation to those motions as a point which is the center of a circle with lines going out from the circumference. It is likewise concerning the material intellect with the intelligible intentions of images. Next he said: **For what is ultimate is one . . . and the mean is one.** That is, for the last of the sensible motions is one and of these what is, as it were, the center of a circle is also one (this is the common sense). Next he said: **it was already said earlier**, etc. That is, it was said earlier generally what that is in virtue of which we judge the diversity of diverse sensibles, for instance, the diversity of sweet from hot and of color from sound. Therefore in that way by which there followed there that such be the case in regard to sense, it is necessary that it be [likewise so] here in apprehending things of diverse images by intellect. He meant this when he said: **For just as it is one in being, so is it in definition.** That is, for it was shown by the aforementioned account that just as what judges diverse being in reference to sense ought to be one, so too what judges the images of diverse things ought to be one. It can be understood in this way: just as in the being of diverse things there is one intention which makes what apprehends these to be one—this is the relation which the comprehensive power takes up when it makes a comparison between two different things—so too in diverse images there is one intention which makes what judges these to be one. It can be understood in this way: that

²²⁰. ἔστι γὰρ ἓν τι, οὕτω δὲ ὥς ὁ ὅρος. "That with which it does so is a sort of unity, but in the way a boundary is" is the rather interpretive translation in Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

is, the reason for this, namely, for the similarity between intellect and sense in regard to this, is that just as in this singular being there is one which is a being according to sense, so too in the imagined object there is one according to intellect {472} which is what is imagined. When there will have been many things according to what is imagined, many things will be in the imagination. This is more in agreement with the account which follows.

32. **This is found in proportional numbers and its disposition in them is just as their disposition with respect to one another. For there is no difference between a shape and a quality in the consideration of things unequal in genus or of contrary things, for instance, of white and black. The disposition, therefore, of A (white) toward B (black), and of C to D, is just as the disposition of those to one another, as it is found in contrary things. If, therefore, C and D, existing in the same thing, are found only in virtue of A and B, they are the same in this. If A will have been sweet, for instance, and B white, for instance, then the intellect will be understanding, as it were. For it understands the forms through the first imaginings.** (431a22–b2)

This evident consequence is found in these according to their proportionality in number. The disposition of the part of the soul which judges in the case of each being, namely, the sensible and the imaginable, is just as the disposition of each being with respect to one another. Next he said: **For there is no difference**, etc. That is, it makes no difference whether the judgment will have been about contrary things or diverse things. For shape and quality in the consideration ought to be one and the same with the sensitive and rational power in things diverse in genus and contraries. When he had explained that there is no difference in the consideration of those two kinds in the case of the sensitive and rational power, he gave a demonstration of this from the proportionality {473} and equality which they have in number, namely, the images of things with their individuals. He said: **The disposition, therefore, of A (white)**, etc. That is, there is, therefore, A (white) and B (black), and C (an image of white) and D (an image of black); the proportion, therefore, A to B will be just white to black, and the proportion of C to D [will be] as the image of white to the image of black. He meant this when he said, as it seems to me: the disposition of C to D, is just as the disposition of those to one another, as it is found in two contraries, that is, as it is found in two contraries from true images. When he had explained that they ought to have such a proportionality, drawing the consequence he gave the conclusion. He said: **If, therefore, C and D**, etc. That is, since the proportion of A to B is as C to D, and A and B are apprehended by the same power, therefore C and D ought to be apprehended by the same power. He leaves that conclusion out of his account. Next he gave what follows upon that. He said: **If, therefore, C and D**, etc. That is, if C and D are apprehended by the same power because

A and B are of the same power, then the two powers in this intention and in this way are the same and they do not differ at all, although they do differ in their natures. In virtue of the analogy between the rational power and the sensitive power many of the ancients thought, according to what Aristotle reported in the second treatise, that the two powers are the same. When he had explained that the disposition of these in apprehending contrary things is the same, he also explained that it is so in apprehending things different in genus. He said: **if A will have been sweet, for instance**, etc. That is, if we put in place of the contraries two things different in genus, for instance, sweet and white, {474} then the intellect will also apprehend these in a way similar to the apprehension of these by sense. For then it will understand the forms of these with the mediation of their first images, that is, true [images], just as sense apprehends the intentions of these through the presence of sensible individuals themselves.

33. **It is so concerning what is pursued and what is avoided according to this determined pattern in these things. Sometimes it is moved without the use of sense, when it is existing in the imagination, as when it is imagined that a fire is lit in the towers of cities. For it is commonly thought that the moving thing is fire and it is a signal for the soldier.**²²¹ **For one cogitates,**²²² **as it were, that one sees a thing in virtue of the ways of the imagination, and cogitation of it in reference to future things is according to things present.** (431b3–8)

It is so for the intellect with respect to what is pursued and what is avoided as it is with respect to apprehension. For just as it apprehends things by me-

221. οἷον αἰσθανόμενος τὸν φρυκτὸν ὅτι πῦρ, τῇ κοινῇ γνωρίζει, ὁρῶν κινούμενον, ὅτι πολέμιος. "E.g. perceiving by sense that the beacon is fire, it recognizes in virtue of the general faculty of sense that it signifies an enemy, because it sees it moving." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The Latin *principium preliatorum*, "signal for the soldier," corresponds to منذرة بالحرب (ibid. [1954]); "a signal for war" or "a battlefield signal" in the alternate translation. The sense of *principium* here in the Latin seems to be that of a signal or a first event which initiates action.

222. Note that *cogitat* corresponds to λογίζεται and *cogitatio* . . . *est* to βουλεύεται at 431b7–8. This Text omits rendering the Greek ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ and ἡ νοήμασιν, which I emphasize in the following translation. Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984) renders this sentence as follows: "But sometimes by means of the images or thoughts which are within the soul, just as if it were seeing, it calculates and deliberates what is to come by reference to what is present." The alternate translation, which is less literal and appears also to omit ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, renders this as the protasis in a sentence which has as its apodosis the initial sentence of the Text which follows. فأمّا إذا صار إلى التفكير والارتياض فيما يأتى وفيما حضر . . . (ibid. [1954]); "When it comes to cogitate and give consideration to what it is going to do and what is presently the case. . ."

diating forms of images and sense apprehends in virtue of the presence of sensible things, so too intellect is moved by things to pursue or avoid when the forms of their images are present, just as sense pursues or avoids in the presence of its sensible [object]. Next he said: **Sometimes it is moved without the use of sense**, etc. That is, for this reason a human being is moved toward something, although he does not sense it, when he imagines it, just as the soldier is moved when he imagines fire to be lit in the towers, although the fire {475} has not yet been lit. Next he said: **For it is commonly thought that the thing moving is fire and it is a signal for the soldier**. That is, when the soldier will internally imagine the fire in the towers, immediately he will cogitate about putting that fire out and the opposed soldier [will immediately cogitate] about kindling it. They have a common cogitation, namely, in that the fire is the end set forth and sought on their parts, but in two different ways. What he said can be understood: **For it is commonly thought**, etc., that is, for the common proposition from which we can know all the things which follow is the first consequence of the existence of the fire in the towers. For this reason he said: **it is a signal**, in virtue of experiences of the soldier, that is, a signal for consideration. Next he said: **For one cogitates, as it were**, as one who is seeing. That is, for the signal, for his cogitation in regard to things will be in presenting the kinds of images of possible imaginings as existing in regard to that thing concerning which it cogitates, to the extent that it is as if he were to see that concerning which he cogitates. Next he said: **and cogitation of it in reference to future things**, etc. That is, the reason for this is because a human being puts the starting point of his consideration of possible things in present things which he sees. For this reason it is possible for a human being to cogitate in regard to some thing to the extent that he will find from this some individual thing which he will not have sensed before, but he will have sensed its like, not the very same thing. He indicates in virtue of this how there can be found through cogitation a true image of which the individual [instance] never had been sensed by someone cogitating. For he had already asserted that true images are numbered according to individual sensibles. It is as if he is explaining that this kind of imagining is found by cogitating on the basis of imaginings which are individual sensibles. {476} For, as was explained in *Sense and Sensibilia*, when the cogitative power draws aid for itself from the informative and the memorative [powers],²²³ it is naturally constituted to present on the basis of the images of things something which it never sensed, in the same

223. See *On Memory* 1, 449b31–450a25. Also see *Short Commentary on the Parva Naturalia* (1949), 53ff.; (1961), 24ff.; (1972), 39ff. The three powers are those of cogitation, memory, and imagination. I translate the Latin *informativa* as “informative,” but in the mind of Averroes it clearly refers to the power of the imagination.

disposition according to which it would exist if it had sensed it, by means of assent and conceptualization. Then the intellect will judge those images with a universal judgment. The intention of cogitation²²⁴ is nothing but this, namely, that the cogitative power presents a thing absent from sense as if it were a sensed thing. For this reason things able to be apprehended by human beings are divided into these two, namely, into the apprehensible which has as its principle sense and the apprehensible which has as its principle cogitation. We have already said that the cogitative power is neither the material intellect nor the intellect which is in act,²²⁵ but it is a particular material power. This is evident from the things said in *Sense and Sensibilia*.²²⁶ It is necessary to know this, since the custom is to ascribe the cogitative power to the intellect. It should not be the case that someone says that the cogitative power composes the singular intelligibles. It was already explained that the material intellect composes them. For cogitation is only for discerning individual instances among those intelligibles and to present them in act as if they were present in sensation. For this reason when they are present in sensation, then cogitation will cease and the activity of intellect in regard to them will remain. On the basis of this it will be explained that the activity of intellect is different from the activity of the cogitative power, which Aristotle called the passible intellect and which he said is generable and corruptible. This is evident concerning this [power], since it has a determinate organ, namely, the middle chamber of the brain. A human being is not generable and corruptible except in virtue of this power and without this power and the imaginative power {477} the material intellect understands nothing. For this reason, as Aristotle says, we do not remember after death, not because the intellect is generable and corruptible, as one can believe.

34. When you have judged that something pleasant is here or there, then something unpleasant will be either avoided or pursued, and so universally in regard to actions. For falsity and truth are not involved in operation. They both are in the same genus as also is the case in regard to what is good and in regard to what is evil, but there is a difference because it is said absolutely and in a limited way.²²⁷ (431b8–12)

224. That is, this is the meaning of cogitation in the present context. The cogitative power is used both in apprehension and, as here, in the practical process of seeking out individuals of a certain kind.

225. That is, the agent intellect.

226. See *On Memory* 449b31–450a25. Also see *Short Commentary on the Parva Naturalia* (1949), 55–56; (1961), 25; (1972), 41.

227. “That too which involves no action, i.e. that which is true or false, is in the same province with what is good or bad: yet they differ in this, that the one is absolute and the other relative to someone.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The Greek η seems perhaps

When you have judged by sense that something pleasant is here or there, then something unpleasant before the intellect will be either fled if the intellect has thought that this is evil or pursued if it has thought that this is good. It happens universally in this way for the intellect [working together] with sense in regard to all actions, namely, either to contradict this by seeing that something unpleasant is good and by seeking that which sense fled, or to be in agreement with sense by seeing that something pleasant is good. Next he said: **For falsity and truth are not involved in operation. They are . . . in the same genus.** A blank space was here in the manuscript. It could be: **For falsity and truth are**, etc., that is, for falsity and truth existing in the theoretical intellect are different from falsity and truth existing in the practical intellect.²²⁸ Next he said: **They both are in the same genus as also is the case in regard to what is good and in regard to what is evil.** It can be understood that these two are in the same genus because each is a [sort of] knowledge and because truth is in the genus of what is good and falsity in the genus of what is evil. What he said, {478} **in regard to what is good and what is evil**, can be understood such that it is an exposition of what he said: **They are . . . in the same genus.** It is as if he says: they are in the same genus, that is, in regard to what is good and what is evil. When he had explained that both are united under [the notion of] the good and the evil, he explained what distinguishes them. He said: **but there is a difference**, etc. That is, but nevertheless they are distinct, because truth is in the theoretical intellect as absolutely good and falsity is in it as evil without qualification. Truth in the practical intellect is what is good²²⁹ in a certain respect and conditionally (he meant this when he said: **and particular**), while falsity is what is evil with respect to that end which should be found

to have been lost, with the result that the Arabic translator understood the sentence as we have it above. It is not clear why Averroes apparently refrained from consulting the alternate translation, which renders the Greek accurately.

228. There are some Arabic fragments which correspond rather generally albeit unclearly to Book 3, 34.18–20: *قول عوضه فأما الصدق والكذب فانهما يوجدان في العقل* (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 45). “a repetitive statement, for the true and the false both exist in the theoretical intellect in another kind . . . not the practical kind.”

229. Some Arabic fragments correspond generally to Book 3, 34.28–33: *جنس واحد لأن الصدق يقع تحت جنس الخير والكذب تحت جنس الشر. ثم قال: «لكنهما يفترقان أي أن الصدق في العقل النظري خير مطلق والكذب فيه شر على الإطلاق فاطلاق الخير في العقل النظري خير مطلق والكذب فيه شر على الإطلاق فاطلاق الخير في العقل النظري خير مطلق»* (Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 45); “one genus because the true falls under the genus of the good and the false falls under the genus of the evil. Then he said: **but they are distinguished**, that is, the true in the theoretical intellect is unconditioned good and the false in it is evil without qualification. So the unqualified nature of the good in the practical [intellect] is good.”

[existing]. It can be understood in virtue of what he said: **and particular**, that is, in virtue of an end, namely, they are distinct because one is good without qualification and the other is good with respect to a given end. The closest intention is [to be found] in those two.

35. **It also knows things which are said by way of negation,**²³⁰ **insofar as snub-nosed qua snub-nosed is indivisible. But in the case of what is concave, if the intellect has understood, then it will understand the intention of concavity denuded of flesh. But mathematical intentions are not [the same as] singular things in this way.** (431b12–16)

He means by **things which are said by way of negation** mathematical things. He means by negation separation from matter. He means that when the intellect understands things in separation from matter, it does not do this {479} because they in themselves are not in matter, as some have thought. But what it does, namely, that it understands these things as not in matter although they are in matter, is as if it were understanding snub-nose, insofar as it is snub-nose, separate from matter. But it is impossible for snub-nose insofar as it is snub-nose to be separate from matter. It is possible, however, for its genus, which is concavity, to be distinct from matter. He indicates by this that this possibility in reference to the separation of those by the intellect is consequent upon their natures and quiddities, not because it happens that they are not in matter. Next he said: **And mathematical intentions**, etc. That is, the mode of being of mathematical intentions outside the soul is not [the same] as the mode according to which they exist in the soul. That account can be read in this way: the intellect can also know mathematical things by some kind of definition, for understanding differs according to the diversity of the nature of the thought object. For instance, snub-nose, insofar as it is snub-nose, is not divided [into distinct parts] when it is thought; but insofar as it is concavity, then if the intellect understands it to be a singular per se, it will not understand the intention of concavity except as denuded of flesh. The example which he brings up supplies what is missing from the account.

36. **As a separate thing is thought when [the intellect] understands those things (for what is in act universally is the intellect which is in act), our cogitation later will concern whether or not it can understand any of the separate things while it is separate from magnitude.**²³¹ (431b16–19) {480}

230. *Res que dicuntur negative* corresponds to the Greek τὰ δὲ ἐν ἀφαιρέσει λεγόμενα, “The so-called abstract objects” (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1984]); إدراك العقل الأشياء (ibid. [1954]); “the intellect’s apprehending things stripped of matter.”

231. This Text is far from the Greek: οὕτω τὰ μαθηματικά, οὐ κεχωρισμένα <ὄντα>, ὡς κεχωρισμένα νοεῖ, ὅταν νοῇ <ᾗ> ἐκεῖνα. ὅλως δὲ ὁ νοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ κατ’ ἐνέργειαν

The intellect becomes the thing which the intellect separates when it separates and understands it, since it is necessary universally in regard to the intellect that what is intelligible in act be intellect in act. Hence, we must investigate and cogitate later on whether that intellect which is in us can understand something which is in itself intellect and separate from matter, just as it understands what makes it intellect in act after it was intellect in potency. He said: **while it is separate from magnitude**. It occurred this way in this manuscript. If it is correct, it should be understood this way, that is to say, we ought to cogitate later on whether it is possible for the intellect which is in us to understand things separate from matter insofar as they are separate from magnitude, without relation to something else. In place of that account there appeared in the other text the following: "Later on we will investigate whether or not the intellect, when existing in the body, not as separate from it, is able to apprehend any of those things which are separate from bodies."²³² This question is different from the one mentioned earlier. For that is a question on the part of one who allows that the intellect which is in potency understands

τὰ πράγματα. ἄρα δ' ἐνδέχεται τῶν κεχωρισμένων τι νοεῖν ὄντα αὐτὸν μὴ κεχωρισμένον μεγέθους, ἢ οὐ, σκεπτέον ὕστερον. "It is thus that the mind when it is thinking the objects of mathematics thinks them as separate though they are not separate. In every case the mind which is actively thinking is the objects which it thinks. Whether it is possible for it while not existing separate from spatial conditions to think anything that is separate, or not, we must consider later." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate Arabic translation is less than completely accurate and literal but much better than Averroes' primary translation, which misses the point of this famous passage: وكذلك الأشياء العلمية ليست بمفارقة الهيولى إلا بالتوهم. - وفي الجملة العقل يدرك الأشياء إدراك فعل. وسننظر أخيراً إن كان يمكن العقل، وهو في الجسم، إدراك شيء من مفارقات الأجساد، أو ليس يمكنه ذلك. (ibid. [1954]); "Likewise the things known are not separate from matter except by imagination. And in general the intellect apprehends the things with an active apprehension. Later on we will investigate whether or not intellect is able to apprehend any of the things separate from bodies while it is in the body." Regarding this text, also see the following note.

232. *Et cecidit in alia scriptura loco istius sermonis sic: Et in postremo perscrutabimur utrum intellectus, essendo in corpore, non separatus ab eo, possit comprehendere aliquod eorum que separantur a corporibus, aut non.* إدراك، وهو في الجسم، وسننظر أخيراً إن كان يمكن العقل، وهو في الجسم، إدراك شيء من مفارقات الأجساد، أو ليس يمكنه ذلك (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]). The Latin *non separatus ab eo*, "not as separated from it," is not reflected in the extant Arabic and yet seems to correspond precisely to the Greek of Aristotle: αὐτὸν μὴ κεχωρισμένον. Nevertheless, Dimitri Gutas, who has undertaken the task of preparing a new edition of the Arabic text of Averroes' alternate translation, has suggested to me that <غير مفارق له> was perhaps added from a marginal gloss and merely explains *essendo in corpore*, وهو في الجسم, which is a paraphrastic rendering of the Greek. This view is supported by the Text at *De Anima* 429a12. See Book 3, n. 3 [379].

forms which are without qualification separate from matter, not insofar as the intellect is united with us. On this understanding there will be an investigation into the question of whether [intellect] can understand forms insofar as it is united with us, not whether it can understand forms at all. This understanding was mentioned by Themistius in his book on the soul,²³³ and the first question, which [Aristotle] meant for later, was omitted.

It is necessary, therefore, first to investigate whether or not it is possible for the material intellect to understand separate things {481} and, if it does understand them, whether or not it is possible for it to understand them insofar as it is united with us. For this reason it is possible that in the copy from which we took this account the word "not" dropped out, so that it should be read this way: **our cogitation later on will concern whether . . . it can understand any of the separate things while it is** not separate from magnitude, that is, insofar as it is in contact with magnitude and united with us, in such a way that we ourselves understand the intellect which it understands. This investigation which he intends is extremely difficult and ambiguous and we must investigate this insofar as we are able.

Let us say, therefore: it seems to me that he who asserts that the material intellect is generable and corruptible can find no natural way by which we can be conjoined with the separate intellects. For the intellect ought to be intelligible in all ways, and chiefly in the case of things freed from matter. If it were therefore possible for a generable and corruptible substance to understand separate forms and be made to be the same as these, then it would be possible for a possible nature to become a necessary one, as al-Fârâbî said in [his] *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*.²³⁴ This follows necessarily according to the principles accepted by the wise.

[Such would be the case,] unless someone says that the intention which Alexander meant, namely, concerning the existence of the acquired intellect, is not a newly created conceptualization in the material intellect which did not exist before. But, rather, [this intellect] is united with us by a uniting to the extent that [this intellect] is form for us in virtue of which we understand other beings, as appears from the account of Alexander. Still, it is not apparent from this how that conjoining is possible. For if we assert {482} that the conjoining came to exist after [previously] not existing, as is necessary, it follows that at that time at which it is asserted to exist, there is a change in the recipient or in the received object or in both. Since it is impossible for it to be in the received

233. See Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 114.31-33; (1973), 209.13-16; (1996), 141.

234. Regarding this lost Commentary, see n. 163 and the introduction, p. lxx and lxxxvi-lxxxix and the notes there.

object, it remains that it is in the recipient. And since there is a change existing in the recipient after it did not exist, there will necessarily be there a newly created reception and a recipient substance newly created after it did not exist. When, therefore, we assert a newly created reception, the aforementioned question will arise. If we do not assert a reception proper to us, there will be no difference between its conjoining with us and its conjoining with all beings and between its conjoining with us at one time and at another time, unless we assert its conjoining with us to be in a way different from that of reception. What then is that way?

Owing to the obscure character of that way according to Alexander, we see he is uncertain in regard to this. Sometimes, therefore, he says that what understands a separate intellect is not the material intellect nor the intellect which is in a positive disposition, and these are his words in his book on the soul.²³⁵ The intellect, then, which understands this is the one which is not corrupted, not the intellect which is a material subject. For the material intellect is corrupted in virtue of the corruption of the soul, because it is one power belonging to the soul; and when that intellect is corrupted, its power and its actuality will be corrupted. Next, after he had explained that it is necessary for the intellect which is in us and which understands the separate forms to be neither generable nor corruptible, he recounted that this intellect is the acquired intellect according to the account of Aristotle, and he said: "The intellect, therefore, which is not corrupted is that intellect which is in us as separate, {483} which Aristotle calls acquired because it is in us from outside, not a power which is in the soul nor a disposition in virtue of which we understand different things and also understand that intellect."²³⁶

If, therefore, by the acquired intellect in virtue of which we understand separate intelligences he meant the agent intelligence, then the account concerning the way of conjoining of that intellect with us still remains [to be given]. If he meant a separate intellect different from the agent intellect, as appears from the opinion of al-Fārābī in his *Letter on the Intellect*,²³⁷ and also

235. Cf. Alexander, *De Anima* (1887), 87.24–88.16; (1979), 114–115.

236. ὁ οὖν νοούμενος ἀφθαρτος ἐν ἡμῖν νοῦς οὗτός ἐστιν, <ὅτι χωριστός τε ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ ἀφθαρτος νοῦς, ὃν καὶ θύραθεν Ἀριστοτέλης λέγει, νοῦς ὁ ἐξωθεν γινόμενος ἐν ἡμῖν>, ἀλλ' οὐχ ἡ δύναμις τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ψυχῆς, οὐδὲ ἡ ἔξις, καθ' ἣν ἔξιν ὁ δυνάμει νοῦς τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ τοῦτον νοεῖ. Alexander, *De Anima* (1887), 90.23–91.4; (1979), 119.

237. Al-Fārābī, *Letter on the Intellect* (1983), 20.1–22.8. "When the intellect in actuality thinks the intelligibles which are forms in it, insofar as they are intelligibles in actuality, then the intellect of which it was first said that it is the intellect in actuality, becomes now the acquired intellect (العقل المستفاد)." Ibid. (1983), 20.1–4; (1973), 217; (1974), 99–100. "However, these forms [i.e., separate forms which never existed in matter] can only be per-

insofar as we are able to understand from what is evident of that account, then the question in regard to the way of conjoining of that intellect with us is also the same as the question in regard to the way of the conjoining of the agent intellect on the view of one holding that the agent intellect is the same as the acquired intellect. This is more evident from the account of Alexander. He, therefore, said this in his *Book on the Soul*²³⁸ in regard to the way of the conjoining of the intellect which is in act with us.

But what he said in a treatise which he composed, entitled *On the Intellect According to the Account of Aristotle*, seems to contradict what he said in his book on the soul. These are his words: "When the intellect which is in potency is complete and fulfilled, then it will understand the agent intellect. For just as the potency for walking which a human being has at birth becomes actual in time when that in virtue of which walking comes about is actualized, so too when the intellect is actualized, it will understand these things which are intrinsically intelligible and it will make sensibles into intelligibles, because it is the agent."²³⁹ What is evident from that account {484} contradicts his account in the *Book On the Soul*, namely, that the intellect which is in potency does not understand the intellect which is in act.

But when one considers all the accounts by that man and brings them to-

fectly thought after all intelligibles or most of them have become thought in actuality, and the acquired intellect has come into being." Ibid. (1983), 21.8–22.1; (1973), 217; (1974), 100.

238. Alexander, *De Anima* (1887), 90.19ff.; (1979), 119ff.

239. *Et hec sunt verba eius: Et intellectus qui est in potentia, cum fuerit completus et augmentatus, tunc intelliget agentem; quoniam, quemadmodum potentia ambulandi quam homo habet in nativitate venit ad actum post tempus quando perficitur illud per quod fit ambulatio, ita intellectus, cum fuerit perfectus, intelliget ea que sunt per suam naturam intellecta, et faciet sensata esse intellecta, quia est agens.* τοῦτο δὲ καὶ αὐτὸ ὁ δυνάμει νοῦς τελειούμενος καὶ αὐξόμενος νοεῖ. ὥσπερ γὰρ ἡ περιπατητικὴ δύναμις, ἣν ἔχει ὁ ἄνθρωπος εὐθὺς τῷ γενέσθαι, εἰς ἐνέργειαν ἄγεται προϊόντος τοῦ χρόνου τελειομένου αὐτοῦ οὐ κατὰ πάθος τι, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ ὁ νοῦς τελειωθείς τὰ τε φύσει νοητὰ νοεῖ καὶ τὰ αἰσθητὰ δὲ νοητὰ αὐτῷ ποιεῖ, ἅτε ὢν ποιητικὸς (Alexander, *De Intellectu* [1887], 110.30–111.2). "This then [is what] the potential intellect, when it is being perfected and has developed, thinks. For just as the power of walking, which a human being has as soon as he comes to be, is led to actuality, as time advances, by being perfected itself and not by being affected in some way, in the same way the [potential] intellect too when it has been perfected both thinks the things that are intelligible by nature and makes sensible things intelligible to itself, as being productive" (ibid. [2004], 34–35; [1990], 53). والعقل أيضا الذي بالقوة إذا تم ونما عقل هذا ، لأنه كما أن قوة المشي التي تكون للإنسان مع ولادته تصير إلى الفعل إذا أمعن به الزمان وكمل الشيء الذي به يكون المشي ، كذلك العقل إذا استكمل عقل الأشياء التي هي بطبيعتها معقولة ، وجعل الأشياء المحسوسة كذلك العقل (ibid. [1971], 38.1–4; cf. [1956], 191.10–192.1).

exander to be true in regard to the generation of the material intellect, it was necessary in his view to hold according to this opinion that the agent intelligence is nothing but a cause acting upon us only, and he said this clearly in his *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*.²⁴³ {486} This is contrary to his opinion in *The Letter on the Intellect*, for there he said that it is possible for the material intellect to understand separate things.²⁴⁴ This is the opinion of Ibn Bâjjah. Those then are the questions for those who assert that the material intellect is generated and that the end is to be conjoined with separate things.

We also see that for those asserting it to be a separate power questions no less [challenging] than those follow. For if it is in the nature of that material intellect that it understands separate things, it is necessary that it be understanding them always, in the future and in the past. It is thought, therefore, that it follows upon this position that as soon as the material intellect is conjoined with us, the agent intellect too is conjoined with us, which is unthinkable and contrary to what people assert.

But that question can be resolved by what we said earlier, namely, that the material intellect is not united with us per se and initially but is united with us only in virtue of its uniting with the forms of the imagination. Since it is so, it is possible to say that the way in which the material intellect is united with us is different from the way in which it is united with the agent intellect. If it is different, then there is no conjoining at all.²⁴⁵ If it is the same, but initially it is in some disposition and afterwards in another, what then is that disposition? If, however, we assert that the separate material intellect does not have the nature for understanding separate things, then the uncertainty will be greater. Those, therefore, are all questions which arise {487} for those asserting that human perfection is to understand separate things.

We must also recount the accounts on the basis of which it is thought to follow that we have a nature for understanding separate things ultimately. For these accounts are completely opposite to those and perhaps in virtue of this we will be able to see the truth. The reason for that uncertainty and labor, however, is that we find no account by Aristotle concerning this intention, although Aristotle did promise to explain this.²⁴⁶

Let us say, therefore, that Ibn Bâjjah investigated this question at length and worked to explain that this conjoining is possible in his treatise which he called, *On the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man*. In his *Book on the Soul* and in

243. Regarding this lost commentary, see n. 234.

244. Al-Fârâbî, *Letter on the Intellect* (1983), 17.9–22.8; (1973), 216–217; (1974), 98–101.

245. That is, if it is altogether different, then our conjoining is no literal and direct conjoining at all.

246. *De Anima* 3.7, 431b17–19.

many other books it will be seen that this question did not leave his mind nor over time did he take his eye off it. We already expounded that treatise to the extent that we could.²⁴⁷ For this topic is extremely difficult, and since such was the case for Ibn Bâjjah in regard to this question, how much more [can be expected] of any one else?! The word of Ibn Bâjjah in regard to this is more firm than [that] of others, but nevertheless the questions which we recounted arise for him. We must recount here the methods of that man, but first what the commentators said in regard to this.

Let us say, therefore, that Themistius was supported in this by way of the major. For he says that since the material intellect has the power to separate forms from matters and to understand them, how much more [reasonable is it that] it has a natural disposition for understanding these which are from the outset free of matter.²⁴⁸ That account will come about in such a way that the material intellect is either corruptible {488} or not corruptible, namely, separable or not separable.²⁴⁹ But according to the opinion of those saying that the material intellect is a power in the body and generated, that account will be sufficient in a qualified respect [only], not probable [in its own right]. For it does not follow that what is visible in itself is more visible for us. For instance, considering color and the light of the sun, [we see that] color has less of the intention of visibility than does the sun, since color is visible only in virtue of the sun, but we cannot look upon the sun as [we do] color. This occurs for sight owing to the mixture of matter.

But if we assert that the intellect is not mixed with matter, then certainly that account will be true, namely, that what is more intelligible is apprehended more [perfectly]. For in the case of things capable of apprehending which are

247. "Ibn Bâjjah, however, expounded his own account and said that his opinion is the opinion of all the Peripatetics, namely that conjoining is possible and that it is the end [for human beings]" {433}. Averroes is likely referring to his summary of Ibn Bâjjah's *Treatise on the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man* in his *Short Commentary on the De Anima* (1950), 90–95; (1987), Spanish, 214–221. On the doctrine of Ibn Bâjjah, see the introduction, pp. xxv–xxvii and lxxxix–xciii. Also see Altmann (1965).

248. ὁς γὰρ καὶ τὰ ἐνυλὰ εἶδη χωρίζων τῆς ὕλης νοεῖ, δηλονότι πέφυκε μᾶλλον τὰ κεχωρισμένα νοεῖν (Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* [1899], 115.6–7); "For just as it also thinks the enmattered forms by separating them from matter, so is it clearly all the more naturally fitted for thinking the separate forms." (ibid. [1996], 141); فكما يعقل الصور المخالطة للهوى بأن [يفرقها] من الهوى فمن البين أنه أحدى بأن يكون من شأنه الصور المخالطة للهوى بأن [يفرقها] من الهوى (ibid. [1973], 210.6–8); "For as it thinks enmattered forms by separating them from matter, so it is clear all the more that it is of its nature to know separate things."

249. That is, that argument would hold regardless of whether the material intellect were corruptible or incorruptible, separate or not separate.

not mixed with matter, what apprehends the less perfect necessarily apprehends the more perfect and not the contrary. But if this is necessary from its nature and substance, then the aforementioned question arises, which is: how is [the agent intellect] not conjoined with us in the beginning, namely, immediately when the material intellect is conjoined with us? If, therefore, we assert that it is conjoined with us finally, not initially, we ought to give the reason.

On this topic, however, there is support for Alexander in what I say, and this is the fact that when every generated being reaches the end in generation and final actuality, then it will reach the completion and end of its activity, if it is among beings which act, or in its affection, if it is from among passible beings, or in both, if it is of both. For instance, one does not come to the end in the activity of walking except when he comes {489} to the end in generation.²⁵⁰ And because the intellect which is in a positive disposition is one of the generable beings, it is necessary that when it will have come to the end in generation, it come to the end in its activity. Since its action is to create and to understand intelligibles, when it is in final actuality, it necessarily possesses these two activities actually. Actuality in creating intelligibles is to make all intelligibles in potency to be intelligibles in act. Perfection in understanding is to understand all things separate and not separate. It is necessary, therefore, that when the intellect which is in a positive disposition comes to perfection in its generation, it have these two activities.

In regard to this there are no few questions. For it is not self-evident that the perfection of the activity of understanding is to understand separate things, unless this term, *to imagine*,²⁵¹ were to be said of these things and material things in a univocal way, as this term, *to walk*, is said of the less actual and the more actual.

Also, how is the agent intellect's proper action, which is to make intelligibles, ascribed to a generable and corruptible intellect, namely, what is in a positive disposition? Unless [perhaps] one asserts that the intellect which is in a positive disposition is the agent intellect in composition with the material intellect, as Themistius says,²⁵² or asserts that the final form belonging to us by which we separate the intelligibles and understand is composed of the intellect which is in a positive disposition and the agent intellect, as Alexander and Ibn Bâjjah assert, and we also figured to be apparent from the account of Aristotle.

250. Walking is essentially a motion, and so it is an imperfect or incomplete activity. When its end is achieved, there is no motion.

251. *Ymaginari* here is surely تصور *taṣawwur*, which in the case of material entities is imagination but in the case of immaterial entities is conceptualization.

252. This is the point of an extended discussion by Themistius. See Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 99.8ff; (1973), 179.6ff; (1996), 123ff.

Even if we had asserted this to be so, nothing would result from the perfection of this activity of creating intelligibles {490} except the perfection of the activity of understanding these things, not [perfection of the activity] of understanding separate things. For it is impossible that understanding these be ascribed to generation or to coming to be by some generated being (for instance, [to coming to be] by the intellect which is in a positive disposition), unless accidentally. If [it were] not [so], then the generable will be made eternal, as we said.

A question of great importance also arises in the case of the account saying that the form by which we extract intelligibles is the intellect which is in a positive disposition in composition with the agent intellect. For what is eternal does not need the generable and corruptible in its activity. How, then, is the eternal in composition with the corruptible in such a way that there comes to be from them one activity? But we will speak about this later.²⁵³ For it seems that this position is, as it were, the starting point and foundation of what we want to say concerning the possibility of conjoining with separate things according to Aristotle, namely, the position that the final form belonging to us by means of which we extract and make intelligibles in virtue of our will is composed of the agent intellect and the intellect which is in a positive disposition. We see, therefore, from the account of the Peripatetic commentators directed toward this end that this is possible,²⁵⁴ namely, to understand separate things ultimately.

Ibn Bâjjah, however, said a great deal on this matter, chiefly in the treatise which he called *On the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man*. What supported his position on this question is this: first he asserted that the theoretical intelligibles have come to be; then he asserted that everything which has come to be has a quiddity; then he asserted that for everything having a quiddity, the intellect is naturally constituted to extract that quiddity; and from these he concluded that the intellect is naturally constituted to extract the forms and quiddities of intelligibles.²⁵⁵ Al-Fârâbî is in agreement with him on this in his book {491} *On Intellect and the Intelligible*²⁵⁶ and it is from there that Ibn Bâjjah drew this. With this Ibn Bâjjah concluded that the intellect is naturally constituted to extract forms and quiddities of intelligibles.

He went about this in two ways, one in the *Treatise*²⁵⁷ and a second in his

253. {497ff}.

254. I read *possibile* with manuscripts A, B, D, and G instead of *possibilem*.

255. This is the doctrine implicit in the account of the grasp of intelligibles given by Ibn Bâjjah in sections 9ff. of his *Treatise on Conjoining with the Intellect*. Ibn Bâjjah, *Treatise on the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man* (1942), 15ff.; Spanish, 33ff.; (1968), 163ff.; (1981), 188ff.

256. Al-Fârâbî, *Letter on the Intellect* (1983), 12.4–17.8; (1973), 215–216; (1974), 96–99.

257. That is, Ibn Bâjjah, *Treatise on the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man* (1942), (1968), (1981).

Book on the Soul,²⁵⁸ and they are similar to one another. In the *Book on the Soul* he joined to this that multiplicity does not accrue for the intelligibles of things except in virtue of the multiplication of spiritual forms with which they will be sustained in each individual. According to this the intelligible of horse in me will be different from its intelligible in you. From this it follows by conversion of the opposite that for every intelligible not having a spiritual form by which it is sustained, that intelligible is one in me and in you.²⁵⁹ Next he joined to this that the quiddity and form of the intelligible does not have an individual spiritual form by which it is sustained, since the quiddity of an intelligible is not the quiddity of a singular individual, be it spiritual or bodily, for it was explained that the intelligible is not an individual. From this it follows that the intellect is naturally constituted to understand the quiddity of the intelligible belonging to the intellect which is one for all human beings and what is such as this is a separate substance.²⁶⁰

In the *Book on the Soul* he first asserted in regard to the quiddity of an intelligible insofar as it is intelligible, [1] if it has not been conceded by us not to have a quiddity and [has not been conceded by us]²⁶¹ to be simple but rather [is asserted to be] composed (as is the disposition in all quiddities which have come to be), and [2] [if] it has been said that the quiddity of that intelligible insofar as it is intelligible also has a quiddity, namely, the intelligible of that quiddity, [492] then that intellect [which considers these] will also be naturally constituted to revert and to extract that quiddity.²⁶²

If it has not been conceded by us that this quiddity is simple and that the being belonging to it is the same as the intelligible, then what occurs in the first case will occur in regard to this, namely, that it also has a quiddity which has come to be. It is then necessary either that this proceed into infinity, or that the intellect be stopped there [in its regress]. But because it is impossible for this to proceed into infinity (because it would make infinite quiddities and intellects infinitely diverse in species exist, namely, insofar as some of them

258. The incomplete extant text of this work ends abruptly in the course of a discussion of the rational faculty. See Book 3, n. 33, at [397].

259. That is, the intelligible is one in itself, but it has distinct spiritual forms by which it is a particularized intention in each of us.

260. That is, the human intellect is naturally constituted to know the intelligible form in itself which exists in the separate agent intellect.

261. I follow de Libera in *Long Commentary*, Book 3 (1998), 381, n. 820, in preferring manuscripts A, C, D, and G, which omit *non* here.

262. That is, if we say that each intelligible has a quiddity and is composed, not simple, then if the quiddity has a quiddity and it is the nature of the intellect to extract quiddities, then the intellect will aim to extract the ultimate quiddity. The unacceptable consequences of this position are immediately given by Averroes in what follows.

are more freed from matter than others), it is necessary that the intellect be stopped. It will come to a stop when it reaches either [1] a quiddity which does not have a quiddity, or [2] something having a quiddity but [one such that] the intellect does not have the natural ability to extract it, or [3] [when] it reaches something which neither has nor is a quiddity. But it is impossible to find a quiddity which the intellect is not naturally constituted to extract from a quiddity, for that intellect then would not be called intellect except equivocally, since it was asserted that the intellect is naturally constituted to separate the quiddity insofar as it is a quiddity. It is also impossible for the intellect to reach something which neither has a quiddity nor is a quiddity, for what is not a quiddity and does not have a quiddity is a privation without qualification. There remains, therefore, the third division, namely, that the intellect reaches a quiddity not having a quiddity,²⁶³ and what is so is a separate form. He supported this by what Aristotle is accustomed to say in such demonstrations, namely, that when it is necessary to cut off an infinite regress, it is better to cut it off in the beginning.²⁶⁴ [493]

The conclusion of that demonstration, therefore, will be the same as the conclusion of the aforementioned demonstration. For if he had not added this, someone would have been able to say that there are many intellects intermediate between the intellect which is in a positive disposition and the agent intellect, either one, as al-Fârâbî intends in his treatise *On Intellect and the Intelligible*, which he called there *acquired*,²⁶⁵ or more than one. It is thought that al-Fârâbî concedes this in his *Commentary on [Aristotle's] On Generation and Corruption*, where he says, "How are those intermediate intellects exhausted?"²⁶⁶ that is, those whose existence we asserted to be between the theoretical intellect and the agent intellect. Those, therefore, are the more firm ways by which that man [scil., Ibn Bâjjah] proceeded in regard to this intention.

Let us say, however: But if this name *quiddity* is said of the quiddities of material things and of the quiddities of separate intellects in a univocal way, then the proposition saying that the intellect is naturally constituted to separate quiddities insofar as they are quiddities will be true. Similarly, if saying that intelligibles are composite and individuals are composite were something univocally said, [the same would be the case]. If, however, [the predication] is equivocal, the demonstration will not be true. But how [this is so] is very difficult, for it is self-evident that this name *quiddity* is not said of these with pure

263. That is, it is the quiddity itself, not merely something having a quiddity.

264. *De Anima* 3.2, 425b17–18; *Metaphysics* 7.6, 1032a2ff.

265. Al-Fârâbî, *Letter on the Intellect* (1983), 21.8–22.6; (1973), 217; (1974), 100–101.

266. This work is not extant. What is at issue here is how the many intermediate stages of intellectual abstraction, the intermediate intellects, are traversed in order for the intellect to reach the complete grasp of the intelligible quiddity itself.

univocity nor with pure equivocation. But whether it is said in many ways because it is intermediate needs consideration.²⁶⁷

But if we concede this to be said in a univocal way, the aforementioned question will occur, [the question of] how what is corruptible understands what is not corruptible, according to the opinion of those saying that the material intellect is corruptible {494} (this is the opinion of Ibn Bâjjah); or how what is naturally constituted to understand these things in the future and in the past understands by virtue of a new intellection, according to the opinion of those saying that the material intellect is not generable or corruptible. Also, if we have asserted that to understand separate things is in the substance and nature of the material intellect, why, then, is that intellection not analogous to the material intellects belonging to us in such a way that this [sort of] understanding is one of the parts of the theoretical sciences and will be one of the things sought in theoretical science?

Ibn Bâjjah seems to be undecided in this passage. In the treatise which he called *Of Farewell* he said that possibility is of two sorts: natural and divine, that is, that the intellection of that intellect is of a divine possibility, not of a possibility of nature.²⁶⁸ In the treatise *On Conjoining*, however, he said, "When the philosopher has ascended in another way to the contemplation of the intelligible insofar as it is intelligible, then he will understand separate substance." It is evident from this that [the activity of] understanding the intelligible according to him is part of the theoretical sciences, namely, natural science.²⁶⁹ This also appeared in his investigation.

Since it is so, the ignorance of that science which occurs for all of us human beings either will be because still we do not know the propositions which lead us to this science, as it is said of many arts which seem to be possible but are of causes unknown, for instance, alchemy; or [it will be because] this understanding of this is acquired through exercise and use of natural things,

267. At issue here is whether intellectual understanding of composite material things of the sublunar world is the very same activity as intellectual understanding of immaterial incomposite substances, in particular the agent intellect.

268. Ibn Bâjjah, *Letter of Farewell* (1943), 38–39; Spanish, 84–85; (1968), 141.11–142.7. In this work Ibn Bâjjah holds that we are able to exercise a natural capacity for science but that the ability to know one's essence and to know separate intellect requires the help of God.

269. Ibn Bâjjah, *Treatise on the Conjoining of the Intellect with Man* (1942), 16ff.; Spanish, 35ff.; (1968), 164ff.; (1981), 189ff. There and in sections 12–15 of his *Letter of Farewell* ([1943], 24–30; Spanish, 59–69; [1968], 123–131), Ibn Bâjjah discusses the progression of abstraction through various levels, from that of the common folk to that of the natural philosopher concerned with material forms and finally to the highest level of abstraction which grasps the forms themselves.

but we have not yet had enough exercise and use to be able {495} to acquire this intellection; or this will be on account of a deficiency of our nature in a natural way.

If, then, this occurs on account of a deficiency in nature, then we and all who are naturally constituted to acquire this science are called human beings equivocally. If this occurs on account of ignorance of the propositions leading into this science, then theoretical science will not yet have been realized. Perhaps Ibn Bâjjah means this to be a view one cannot hold, but not [altogether] impossible. If this occurs on account of custom, then the account will be close to the account saying that the reason for this is ignorance of the propositions which lead to this science. All this is said while seen to be unlikely, although not impossible. How, therefore, can he evade those questions mentioned earlier?

Those, then, are all questions arising in this inquiry and they are as difficult as you see. We must say what has appeared to us to be the case regarding this. Let us say, therefore: the intellect existing in us has two activities insofar as it is ascribed to us, one of the genus of affection, namely, understanding, and the other of the genus of activity, namely, to extract forms and denude them of matters, which is nothing but making them intelligible in act after they were such in potency. [Hence] it is evident that after we have possessed the intellect which is in a positive disposition, it is in our will to understand any intelligible we wish and to extract any form we wish.

This activity, namely, to create and make intelligibles, is prior in us to the action which is understanding, as Alexander says.²⁷⁰ For this reason he says that it is more appropriate to describe the intellect in virtue of this action, not in virtue of affection, since {496} in affection it shares in something else [also] belonging to the animal powers of the soul, but this is according to the opinion of those saying that affection in these is not said equivocally.

270. ἔτι καὶ πρότερον αὐτῷ τὸ ποιεῖν καὶ οὐσιώδεις. πρότερον γὰρ ποιεῖ τῇ ἀφαιρέσει νοητόν, εἴθ' οὕτως λαμβάνει τούτων τι ὃ νοεῖ τε καὶ ὀρίζεται, ὅτι τόδε τί ἐστίν. καὶ γὰρ εἰ ἅμα χωρίζεται καὶ λαμβάνει, ἀλλὰ τὸ χωρίζειν προεπιννοεῖται· τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστίν αὐτῷ τὸ ληπτικῶ εἶναι τοῦ εἶδους (Alexander, *De Intellectu* [1887], 111.15–19). "Moreover, its producing is prior and [part of] its substance. First it produces by abstraction [something] intelligible, and then in this way it apprehends some one of these things which it thinks and defines as a this-something. Even if it separates and apprehends at the same time, nevertheless the separating is conceptually prior; for this is what it is for it to be able to apprehend the form." (ibid. [2004], 36; [1990], 54). وأيضاً فإن الفعل فيه أقدم، وهو ذاتي له، لأنه أولاً [ولا] يوجد فاعلاً للمعقولات ثم حينئذ يأخذها إثر تعقلها ويحددها بأنها كذا، فانه وإن كان افراده الأشياء شيئاً شيئاً وأخذه إياها يكونان معاً، فإن الأول ينفع مقدماً للآخر، فإن هذا هو أخذ الصورة (ibid. [1971], 38.15–18; cf. (1956), 193.1–4.

Owing to that activity, namely, extracting any intelligible we wish and making it in act after it was in potency, Themistius held that the intellect which is in a positive disposition is composed of the material intellect and the agent [intellect].²⁷¹ This is the same thing that made Alexander believe that the intellect which is in us is composed, or as it were composed, of the agent intellect and that which is in a positive disposition, since he holds that the substance of this [intellect] which is in a positive disposition ought to be different from the substance of the agent intellect.²⁷²

These two fundamental points have been asserted, namely, that the intellect which is in us has these two activities, namely, to apprehend intelligibles and to make them, while the intelligibles come to be in us in two ways: either naturally (they are the primary propositions with respect to which we do not know when, whence, and how they came forth) or voluntarily (they are intelligibles acquired on the basis of the primary propositions).²⁷³ It was explained that it is necessary that the intelligibles possessed by us naturally be from something which is in itself an intellect freed from matter (this is the agent intellect). When this has been explained, it is necessary that the intelligibles possessed by us from the primary propositions be some product brought together from propositions known and the agent intellect. For we cannot say that the propositions do not enter into the being of acquired intelligibles; nor can we even say that they alone are agents of these (for it was already explained that the agent is one and eternal), as intended some of the Ancients who held that Aristotle meant these [primary propositions] by *agent intellect*.²⁷⁴

Since it is so, it is necessary that the theoretical intellect {497} be something

271. See Book 3, n. 233.

272. See Alexander, *De Anima* (1887), 89.11–91.6; (1979), 117–120, for his discussion of the separate productive intellect (agent intellect) in relation to our intellect and understanding. Cf. Alexander, *De Intellectu* (1887), 111.27–32; (1971), 39.6–10; (1956), 194.1–6. “The intellect that is by nature and from without will assist that in us, because other things too would not be intelligible, though being [so] potentially, if there did not exist something that was intelligible by its own peculiar nature. This, being intelligible by its own nature, by being thought comes to be the one who thinks it; it is intellect that has come to be in the one who thinks, and it is thought ‘from without’ and [is] immortal, and implants in the material [intellect] a disposition such that it thinks the things that are intelligible potentially.” (ibid. [2004], 36–37; [1990], 54–55).

273. Cf. Book 3 {407} and {506}, as well as Book 3, n. 90.

274. The primary propositions gathered empirically are not themselves intelligibles, but they do contribute to the being of acquired intelligibles; nor are they the agents in the generation of acquired intelligibles since that agent is the separate agent intellect. Note that in the present context Averroes is using the same term, “primary propositions,” sometimes to denote first principles of the understanding (cf. Book 3, n. 90) and

generated by the agent intellect and by primary propositions. That sort of intelligible happens to exist voluntarily, contrary to the way the first natural intelligibles exist. For with respect to every activity which has come to be from the compound of two different things, it is necessarily the case that one of those two be as it were matter and instrument and the other be as it were form or agent. The intellect in us, therefore, is composed of the intellect which is in a positive disposition and the agent intellect, either in such a way that the propositions are as it were matter and the agent intellect is as it were form, or in such a way that the propositions are as it were the instrument and the agent intellect is as it were the efficient [cause]. For the disposition is similar in this case.

But if we have asserted that the propositions are as it were the instrument, it will happen that an eternal activity arises from two things, one of which is eternal and the other not eternal (or it may be asserted that the instrument is eternal; and thus the theoretical intelligibles will be eternal). This will happen all the more if we have asserted these propositions to be as it were matter. For it is impossible for something generable and corruptible to be the matter of something eternal. How, then, can we escape this question?

Let us say, therefore, that if what we said, that the propositions necessarily are from the agent intellect either as matter or as instrument, if they enter into the being of the theoretical intelligibles, then it was not the account of a necessary consequence insofar as matter is matter and instrument is instrument. Rather, insofar as it is necessary here that there be proportion and disposition between the agent intellect and the propositions {498} which are likened to matter and an instrument in some way, not because it is true matter or a true instrument, it then seems to us that we can know the way in which the intellect which is in a positive disposition is as it were matter and the subject of the agent [intellect]. And when that way has been set forth by us, perhaps we will be able to know easily the way in which [the intellect which is in a positive disposition] is conjoined with separable intelligibles.

Let us say, therefore: the account, however, of one saying that if the conclusions are acquired by us from the agent intellect and the propositions, it is necessary that the propositions be in relation to the agent intellect as it were true matter and true instrument, that account, I say, is not necessary. But to an extent it is necessary that there be [some] relation in which the intellect which is in a positive disposition will be likened to matter and the agent intellect will be likened to form. What, then, is that relation and from what does it arise for the agent intellect that it has this relation to the intellect which is in a positive

sometimes to denote propositions known from experience which contribute to the content of the theoretical intellect.

disposition, while one is eternal and the other generable and corruptible? For all of these [thinkers] concede this relation exists. That the theoretical intelligibles are existing in us from these two intellects, namely, from what is in a positive disposition and from the agent intellect, compels them [to accept this view], as it were.

But Alexander and all those holding that the material intellect is generable and corruptible are not able to provide the cause for this relation. For those, however, who assert that the operating intellect is the intellect which is in a positive disposition, it will happen that the theoretical intelligibles are eternal and many other impossible things following upon this position.²⁷⁵ {499}

But for us who have asserted that the material intellect is eternal and the theoretical intelligibles are generable and corruptible in the way in which we mentioned, and that the material intellect understands both, namely, the material forms and the separate forms, it is evident that the subject of the theoretical intelligibles and of the agent intellect in this way is one and the same, namely, the material [intellect]. Similar to this is the transparent which receives color and light at one and the same time; and light is what brings color about.²⁷⁶

When this conjoining in us between the agent intellect and the material intellect has been established, we will be able to find out the way in which we say that the agent intellect is similar to form and that the intellect which is in a positive disposition is similar to matter. For in regard to any two things of which one is the subject and the second is more actual than the other, it is necessary that the relation of the more actual to the less actual be as the relation of form to matter.²⁷⁷ With this intention we say that the proportion of the first actuality of the imaginative power to the first actuality of the common sense is as the proportion of form to matter.

We, therefore, have already found the way in which it is possible for that intellect to be conjoined with us in the end and the reason why it is not united with us in the beginning. For when this has been asserted, it will necessarily happen that the intellect which is in us in act be composed of theoretical intelligibles and the agent intellect in such a way that the agent intellect is as it were the form of the theoretical intelligibles and the theoretical intelli-

275. That is, given that eternal intelligibles are grasped in intellectual understanding, if the agent in the process is the intellect in a positive disposition (*intellectus in habitu*, بالعقل بالملكة) which resides in us, then the eternal intelligibles will reside in us.

276. The transparent receives actualization as transparent from light and at the same moment receives color thanks to the light which enables color in potency to become color in act. Likewise, the material intellect receives actualization as intellect from the agent intellect and at the same moment receives intelligibles thanks to the agent intellect, which enables what is intelligible in potency to become intelligible in act.

277. Cf. *De Anima* 3,5, 430a10–11, and above [436–437].

gibles are as it were matter. In this way we will be able to generate intelligibles when we wish. For because that in virtue of which something carries out its proper activity is the form, while we carry out {500} our proper activity in virtue of the agent intellect, it is necessary that the agent intellect be form in us.

There is no way in which the form is generated in us except that. For when the theoretical intelligibles are united with us through forms of the imagination and the agent intellect is united with the theoretical intelligibles (for that which apprehends [theoretical intelligibles] is the same, namely, the material intellect), it is necessary that the agent intellect be united with us through the conjoining of the theoretical intelligibles. It is evident [then] that when all the theoretical intelligibles exist in us in potency, it will be united with us in potency. When all the theoretical intelligibles exist in us in act, it will then be united with us in act. And when certain [theoretical intelligibles] exist in potency and certain in act, then it will be united in one part and not in another. Then we are said to be moved to conjoining.

It is evident that when that motion is complete, immediately that intellect will be conjoined with us in all ways. Then it is evident that its relation to us in that disposition is as the relation of the intellect which is in a positive disposition in relation to us. Since it is so, it is necessary that a human being understand all the intelligibles through the intellect proper to him and that he carry out the activity proper to him in regard to all beings, just as he understands by his proper intellection all the beings through the intellect which is in a positive disposition when it has been conjoined with forms of the imagination. {501}

In this way, therefore, human beings, as Themistius says, are made like unto God in that he is all beings in a way and one who knows these in a way, for beings are nothing but his knowledge and the cause of beings is nothing but his knowledge.²⁷⁸ How marvelous is that order and how mysterious is that mode of being!

278. διὸ καὶ θεῷ μάλιστα ἔοικε· καὶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς πῶς μὲν αὐτὰ τὰ ὄντα ἐστί, πῶς δὲ ὁ τούτων χορηγός. τιμιώτερος δὲ ὁ νοῦς καθὼ δημιουργεῖ μάλλον ἢ καθὼ πάσχει· πανταχοῦ γὰρ ἡ ποιητικὴ ἀρχὴ τῆς ὕλης τιμιώτερα, καὶ γίνεται μὲν, ὥσπερ ἔφην πολλάκις, ὁ αὐτὸς νοῦς καὶ νοητός, ὥσπερ ἡ ἐπιστήμη ἢ κατ' ἐνέργειαν αὐτό ἐστι τὸ ἐπιστητόν. (Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* [1899], 99.23–28); “That is why it also most resembles a god; for god is indeed in one respect [identical with] the actual things that exist, but in another their supplier (*chorêgos*). The intellect is far more valuable insofar as it creates than insofar as it is acted on; that is because the productive first principle is always more valuable than the matter [on which it acts]. Also, as I have often said, the intellect and the object of thought are identical (just as are actual knowledge and the very object of knowledge)” (ibid. [1996], 124–125). ولذلك قد يشبهه خاصه.

In this way will be established the opinion of Alexander, according to which he says that to understand separate things comes about through conjoining of that intellect with us. This is not because understanding is found to exist in us after previously it did not, which is the cause in the conjoining of the agent intellect with us, as Ibn Bâjjah intended, but rather [it is because] the cause of intellection is conjoining, not the contrary.²⁷⁹

In virtue of this the question of how it understands what has long existed with a new intellection is solved. It is also evident from this why we are not conjoined with this intellect in the beginning but rather in the end. For so long as the form is in us in potency, it will be conjoined with us in potency and for so long as it is conjoined with us in potency, it is impossible for us to understand something in virtue of that. But when the form is made to exist in act in us (this will be in its conjoining in act), then we will understand all the things which we understand in virtue of [this intellect] and we will bring about the activity proper to ourselves in virtue of it.

From this it appears that its intellection is not something which belongs to the theoretical sciences but rather is something analogous with a thing [502] generated naturally by the learning of the theoretical sciences. For this reason it is not far-fetched that human beings help themselves in regard to this intention, just as they help themselves in the theoretical sciences. But it is necessary for there to be found what arises from the theoretical sciences, not from others. For it is impossible for false intelligibles to have conjoining, since they are not something occurring naturally, but are things unintended, such as a sixth finger and a monster in creation.²⁸⁰

إِلَها فَإِنَّ اللهَ هُوَ بِجَهَةِ مَا الْمَوْجُودَاتِ أَنْفُسَهَا وَبِجَهَةِ مَا الْمُنْعَمِ بِهَا. وَالْعَقْلُ مِنْ طَرِيقٍ مَا هُوَ يَصَوِّغُ أُخْرَى بَأَن يَكُونُ أَشْرَفَ مِنْهُ مِنْ طَرِيقٍ مَا يَنْفَعِلُ فَإِنَّ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ الْمَبْدَأَ الْفَاعِلَ أَشْرَفَ مِنَ الْهَيُولَى وَيَصِيرُ كَمَا قُلْتُ مَرَارًا كَثِيرَةً هُوَ بَعِينُهُ عَقْلًا وَمَعْقُولًا كَمَا أَنَّ الْعِلْمَ بِالْفِعْلِ هُوَ الْمَعْلُومَ نَفْسَهُ (ibid. [1973], 180.6–10). In his *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Averroes also speaks of God's knowledge as the cause of being: "The truth is that because it knows only itself, it knows the existents through the existence which is the cause of their existences. . . . For His knowledge is the cause of being and being is the cause of our knowledge." *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* (1952), 1707–1708; (1962), 337 A–B. (1984), 197. Also see Druart (1995b).

279. Conjoining is a necessary condition for knowing. We do not have understanding so that we may conjoin with the separate agent intellect, as Ibn Bâjjah has it, but rather we conjoin with the separate agent intellect so that we may have understanding. The end, then, is intellectual understanding, which fulfills our natures as rational beings, and this is not a means to a greater end beyond our intellectual fulfillment.

280. The agent intellect brings to actuality as intelligibles only those which truly are naturally occurring intelligibles in potency, the images of which are formed thanks to the individual internal powers of imagination, cogitation, and memory and presented to the agent intellect. On the issue of "fictional forms" in Avicenna, see Black (1997).

It is also evident that when we assert that the material intellect is generable and corruptible, we will then find no way in which the agent intellect will be united with the intellect which is in a positive disposition by a uniting proper to it, namely, with a uniting similar to the conjoining of forms with matters.

When that conjoining has not been asserted, there will be no difference between relating it to a human being and relating it to all beings except in virtue of the diversity of its activity in them.²⁸¹ In this way its relation to a human being will be only the relation of the agent to the human being, not a relation of form, and the question of al-Fârâbî which he voiced in his *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* arises. For assurance of the possibility of the conjoining of the intellect with us lies in explaining that its relation to a human being is a relation of form and agent, not a relation of agent alone. This, therefore, appeared to us in regard to the way sought after. If more appears to us later on, we will write [it].²⁸² [503]

37. Let us, therefore, gather by way of summary the things which have been said in regard to the soul. Let us, therefore, say that the soul is in some way all beings. For beings are either intelligible or sensible. But knowing intelligible things is after the manner of sensing a sensible thing. (3.8, 431b20–23)

Since it has been explained what are the kinds of apprehensive powers of the soul and that they are of two sorts, namely, of sense and of intellect, it is necessary for us now to make a summary [account] concerning the soul and to say descriptively that it is in a way all beings. For all beings are either sen-

281. Cf. [454].

282. On this account, the agent intellect is our "form" in its actualization of the theoretical intelligibles in the individual human being's theoretical intellect. Because of the nature of this relationship of what is analogous to form (agent intellect) and what is analogous to matter (the individual's theoretical intellect), there are no grounds here for the assertion of personal immortality for individuals. While the agent intellect is the form and actuality of our intellects and understanding—that is, of our individual perishable theoretical intellects and of our imperishable shared material intellect—there is no substantial change transforming our individual generable and corruptible intellects into eternal substances, as al-Fârâbî had it. Nor is there here the denial of conjoining with the agent intellect and pessimism about the attainment of knowledge as a consequence of a denial of substantial conjoining, as al-Fârâbî is reported to have held in his late lost *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*. See n. 243.

In *Epistle 1 On Conjunction*, Averroes writes, "It is clear . . . that the agent intellect is not cause of the material intellect in as much as it is agent cause alone but in a way such that it is also its final perfection according to the mode of formal and final [cause], as is the case for sense in relation to what is sensed. This is one of the things which deceived al-Fârâbî, when he thought that [the agent intellect] was only the agent cause, as are material movers." Geoffroy and Steel (2001), 216. My translation of the French.

sible or intelligible. The disposition of sensibles to sense, however, is just as the disposition of intelligibles to intellect and + sense to the sensible +.²⁸³ It happens, therefore, necessarily that the soul is all beings in one of the ways in which it is possible to say that the soul is all beings.

38. **And it should be known how. Let us say, therefore, that knowing and sensing are divided according to the division of beings. If, therefore, [knowing and sensing] are in potency, the intelligible and the sensible will be in potency, if in act, in act.**²⁸⁴ For it is necessary that they be either those beings or [their] forms. They are not those beings, for the stone does not exist in the soul but rather the form. For this reason the soul is like the hand, for the hand is an instrument for instruments and intellect is a form for forms and sense a form for sensibles. (431b23–432a3)

After he had explained that the soul is in a way all beings, he began to explain that way. He said: **Let us say, therefore, that knowing**, etc. That is, the differences belonging to the beings in virtue of which they are divided are {504} the same as the differences belonging to the soul. These are potency and act. For just as sense and intellect are either in potency or in act, so too every sensible and intelligible is either in potency or in act. Since it is so, if that which senses is in potency, the sensible will be in potency, and if it is in act, the sensible will be in act. It is similarly so for the intellect with respect

283. *Sensus ad sensatum*. Crawford marks this text as corrupt.

284. The Text here omits the following Greek at 431b26–28: τῆς δὲ ψυχῆς τὸ αἰσθητικὸν καὶ τὸ ἐπιστημονικὸν δυνάμει ταῦτά ἐστι, τὸ μὲν <τὸ> ἐπιστητὸν τὸ δὲ <τὸ> αἰσθητὸν. “Within the soul the faculties of knowledge and sensation are *potentially* these objects, the one what is knowable, the other what is sensible.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation retains this text to some extent: وقوة النفس الحاسة والعلامة وقوة النفس الحاسة والعلامة (ibid. [1954]; “With respect to the soul’s power for sensing and cognizing, these two are one when they are related to what is known and what is sensed.” In his *Middle Commentary* Averroes seems to give evidence of knowing the correct text: وذلك أنه إن كانت الموجودات المعقولات موجودة بالقوة فالمعقولات هي معقولة بالقوة وإن كانت المعقولات بالفعل فالموجودات بالفعل ، وكذلك الأمر في الحواس؛ “For, if the intelligible existents are in potentiality, the intelligibles are, too; while, if the intelligibles are in actuality, so are the existents; and likewise for sensible objects with the senses” (*Middle Commentary* [2002], 122.11–14). The corruption could have been in the Arabic manuscript of the Latin translator, or early in the transmission of the Latin text. Another possible alternative is that when composing the *Long Commentary*, Averroes may have known this text by way of Themistius. Cf. Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 115.12–13; (1973), 210.13–15. “That is because existing objects are either objects of perception or objects of thought, and actual knowledge is [identical with] the objects of knowledge, while actual perception is [identical with] the objects of perception.” (ibid. [1996], 141).

to the intelligible. [Hence,] it must be truly said that this part belonging to the soul is that part belonging to the beings.²⁸⁵ For things which have differences which are the same are themselves the same in that way in which they have the same differences. Intellect, therefore, is the intelligible and sense is the sensible. Next he said: **For it is necessary**, etc. That is, there are only the two modes, so that the intellect is the intelligible existing outside the soul or its form, and likewise sense with the sensible. It is impossible for the being itself to be intelligible or sensible,²⁸⁶ namely, through its form and its matter, as the ancients held, for then, when it would understand a stone, the soul would be a stone, and if wood, it would be wood. It remains, therefore, that what exists in the soul with reference to beings is the form alone, not matter. He meant this when he said: **for the stone**, etc. That is, for the stone does not exist in the soul but rather only its form. Next he reported that this is the reason why the soul takes on many different forms, like the hand which is an instrument which takes on all instruments. He said: **For this reason the soul is like the hand**, etc.

39. **And because, as is thought, magnitude is + to exist as sensibles of sensible things + and it is the species of sensible things {505} individually,**²⁸⁷ while intelligibles are those things which are said by way of what is fleeting, while things existing in sensibles are according to the mode of positive disposition and affection. For this reason he who senses nothing, learns nothing and understands nothing. If, therefore, one sees, one will necessarily see²⁸⁸ some images, for images are similar to sensibles but without matter.²⁸⁹ For imagination is different from affirmation and negation. For assent

285. The use of *pars*, “part,” here is awkward since what is at issue is the *mode* of existence (potential or actual) of the object and its respective apprehending faculty, as Averroes makes clear in the lines which follow. The term denotes the intention. The problem is with the Latin translation, rather than the Arabic, in all likelihood.

286. That is, it is impossible for it to be per se intelligible in act or per se sensible in act since that would mean that it is per se apprehensive. Rather, it is something intelligible or sensible in potency only by reference to a distinct apprehending power, that of the soul or that of the intellect.

287. *Singulariter*: κεχωρισμένον, “separate in existence.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

288. *Viderit . . . videt* corresponds to the Greek θεωρή . . . θεωρεῖν, but Averroes’ Comment makes it clear that he understands it to refer to intellectual understanding. See below {506}.

289. Crawford marks part of this problematic passage as corrupt: *Et quia, secundum quod existimatur, magnitudo est + esse sensibilia sensibilia +, et est species sensibilia singulariter, intelligibilia autem sunt que dicuntur modo velocis, res autem existentes in sensibilibus sunt secundum modum habitus et passionis*. The Greek here at 432a2–10 is rendered, “Since it seems that there is nothing outside and separate

and non-assent are found in virtue of the composition of certain beliefs with certain others. In virtue of what, however, are primary beliefs discerned in such a way that they are not images? For if they are not images, they nevertheless do not come to be without images. (432a3–14)

Because, as is thought, body, which is the more universal genus of sensible things, exists in sensible things, it is also a universal form for sensible things insofar as the intellect discerns and separates it from sensibles. Next he said: and **intelligibles are**, etc. That is, and since body, which is the more universal of intelligibles, is separated by intellect but is existing in sensible things, it is necessary that the forms existent in the intellect be in accord with fleeting movement and the nature of fleeting change,²⁹⁰ not stable, and that those same forms be existent outside the soul in sensible things in accord with the fact that the positive disposition exists in what has the positive disposition and the thing which is stable [exists] in the thing affected.²⁹¹ {506} Next he said: **For this reason he**

in existence from sensible spatial magnitudes, the objects of thought (τὰ νοητά) are in the sensible forms, viz. both the abstract objects and all the states and affections of sensible things. Hence no one can learn or understand anything in the absence of sense, and when the mind is actively aware of anything it is necessarily aware of it along with an image; for images are like sensuous contents except in that they contain no matter." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); Greek added. The alternate translation is also problematic: وجب أن يكون المعقول : إما واحداً من الأشياء المقولة بالتعريف من الهيولى ، أو ما كان من مسيل (ibid. [1954]); "It is necessary that the intelligible be either one of the things said by abstraction from matter or what is without the character of the sensible and the abstracted affections belonging to it." Note that *modo velocis* fails to render correctly the corresponding Greek ἐν ἀφαίρεσει, "in abstraction." The precise nature of the error here is not completely clear, but perhaps it is one of scribal errors in the Arabic transmission of the text with مسيل (which is found in Themistius; see the following note) or a form from the root سرح (which is found in the corresponding passage of the *Middle Commentary*, in the phrase وجود الأشياء السريعة الزوال, "the existence of fleeting things" [*Middle Commentary* (2002), 122.24], which Ivry renders as "the kind of transitory existence") substituted for what may have been an original translation using a form of سلب.

290. Averroes, challenged by his corrupt Text, appears to have drawn on the work of Themistius for assistance where mention is made of ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀπαιστος ποὶ τῶν σωμάτων (Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* [1899], 115.21); مسيل الأجسام الذي لا فتور له (ibid. [1973], 211.3–4); "the incessant flux of bodies." (ibid. [1996], 142).

291. "The difference between the two types of existence is that the existence of forms in the intellect and sense is of the kind of transitory existence which is called 'disposition' (أحوال), while the forms' existence outside the soul is of the kind of stable existence which is called 'habit' (ملكة)." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 122.23–123.1; Arabic added. The existence of forms in the soul or in the senses is not one of fixity or stability, but

who senses nothing, learns nothing. That is, because the intelligible intention is the same as the thing which sense apprehends in the sensible, what senses nothing necessarily learns nothing by way of knowledge and discernment by intellect. Next he said: **If, therefore, one sees**, etc. That is, that same thing is the reason why, when the intellect which is in us has seen and understood something, it will not understand it unless it is joined with its image. For images are certain sensibles for the intellect and exist for it in place of sensibles during the absence of sensibles, but they are immaterial sensibles. Next he said: **For the image is different**, etc. That is, we said that the images are of the genus of sensible things and are not of intellect because intellect has its own affirmation and negation, but affirmation and negation are different from imagination. But assertion and non-belief,²⁹² existing in the intellect not from sense but from reason, come to be in the composition of beliefs which are had in turn from sense. He said this because there is uncertainty concerning natural propositions (which are such that we do not know whence they come or when) as to whether or not they arise from sense.²⁹³ It is said: perhaps they do not arise from sense as [so] many conclusions. Next he said: **In virtue of what, however, are primary beliefs discerned?** That is, as it seems to me, in virtue of what, therefore, can someone say that the first propositions are discerned from sensibles and do not need them at all, and for this reason are different from imagination? For if we concede that the first propositions are not imagination, nevertheless, they seem {507} to exist with the imagination, and this shows that they need sense. This completes the account of the rational [part of the soul].

40. Because the souls of animals are defined in virtue of these two powers, of which one is a discerning [power], because it is for the activity of sense and intellect, and the other [a power] for local motion, and we already settled the account of sense and intellect, now it is necessary to say in regard to the mover what [part] of the soul it is and whether it is a part distinct in magnitude or in definition, or whether it is the whole soul. And if it is a part of it, [we must say] whether it is something in its own right different from those customarily mentioned, or those things mentioned are not one of those.²⁹⁴ (3.9, 432a15–22)

rather one of transitory internal intellectual or sensory "dispositions" or "states." In contrast, the existence of forms in things external to the soul and its powers is one of independent fixity and stability called ملكة, which in the present context might be better rendered "[external] disposition."

292. *Incredulitas*. That is, assertion of negation.

293. Cf. Book 3 {407} and {496}.

294. The Text is slightly corrupt in the version Averroes used here. The Greek has καὶ εἰ μόριόν τι, πότερον ἴδιόν τι παρὰ τὰ εἰωθότα λέγεσθαι καὶ τὰ εἰρημένα, ἢ

After he had completed the account of the discerning powers, he returned to the account of the power for motion in place and he began to give the reason why he began to speak about this power. He said: **Because the souls of animals**, etc. That is, because the ancients were accustomed to define the souls of animals by two powers, one of which is an apprehensive and discerning power, while the other is for motion in place (we already completed the account of the discerning power with what we said about the power of sense and intellect), it is necessary for us to say now about the mover in place just what [part] of the soul it is. Next he said: **whether it is one part**, etc. That is, it should also be sought out with respect to this power whether it is a part of the soul or the whole soul and, if it is a part of the soul, whether it is separate from the others in quiddity and place, as many ancients held, or it differs only in quiddity and definition. Next he said: **And if it is a part of it**, etc. That is, and if that power is [508] part of the soul, whether it is one of these parts mentioned by the ancients or [whether] it is not one of those but rather a different one.

41. With this account there also arises a question and it is how there are parts of the soul and how many they are. For they seem in a way to be infinite and [it seems] that they are not those parts which people count in the definition, namely, the rational, the emotional, and the desiderative. Some divide it into rational and irrational. For it seems to be divided according to differences dividing it also into different parts among which there exists greater diversity than among those of which even we speak, namely, the nutritive power existing in plants²⁹⁵ and the sensitive power which no one wishes to count, for it is neither non-rational nor rational. Also the power in virtue of which imagination comes about differs per se from the others. (432a22–b1)

τούτων ἓν τι. "If it is a part, is that part different from those usually distinguished or already mentioned by us, or is it one of them?" Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). In composing his *Middle Commentary*, Averroes may have had a different version of the same translation of the *De Anima*, one in accord with the Greek: وإن كان جزءاً منها فهو شيء غير الأجزاء; "Moreover, if it is part of the soul, is it something other than the parts which are customarily mentioned, or one of them?" *Middle Commentary* (2002), 123.17–18. Although it is far from certain, he may have been working with the alternate translation, which has some similarities: وإن كان المحرك جزءاً (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]); "And if the mover is one of [the soul's] parts, is it distinctly other than the parts we sought to mention and [parts] other than those we mentioned?"

295. The Text here omits the Greek καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ζώοις, "the nutritive, which belongs both to plants and to all animals." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); my emphasis. As Badawi notes (ibid. [1954], 80, n. 3), the alternate translation is corrupt with الزمان, "time," in place of the expected الحيوان, "animals" جميع النامية وفي جميع الزمان "in regard to all time and in regard to all growth."

There arises in this investigation a question common to all the powers of the soul, namely, how the parts of the soul are many and one and how many they are. Next he gave the reason why it is difficult to know how many its parts are. He said: **For they seem**, etc. That is, for when someone wishes to count them, they seem to be infinite rather than finite, for its parts are not those parts which human beings have been accustomed to count [509] when they define the soul. He said **in a way** because if someone wished to count the concupiscible soul by the number of things which it desires, then it seems that it is infinite. He cites Plato for saying that the parts of the soul are three: rational, emotional, and desiderative. He asserted that the emotional and desiderative are two and [yet] they belong to one power, namely, to the concupiscible soul. Next he said: **Some divide**, etc. That is, in this they make an error and mistake. For it seems that according to the differences it should have, the soul is divided into parts which are more diverse than those parts into which they divide the soul. Next he enumerated those parts. He said: **namely, the nutritive power**, etc. That is, for instance, the soul is divided into the nutritive power and the sensitive [power]. For no one can put the sensitive soul into the rational power nor into the irrational power. It is not among those things which lack reason because it is something which has apprehension, nor is it among things having reason, for reason does not exist in all animals. He meant by this to make known the error of the two [sorts of] division, namely, of one division of it into rational, emotional, and desiderative, and of the other division of it into rational and non-rational. For one who divides it into these two finds it difficult to be able to put many powers into both of those, for instance, sense and imagination. But one who divides it into those three has erred in two ways. He sets aside many differences, for instance, to take nourishment and to imagine, [510] and he even has divided the same power, the concupiscible, into more than one. When the soul is divided in such a way, then the parts of the soul will be infinite, as he indicates at the beginning.

42. An important question arises regarding in which of those [parts imagination] is taken to be and whether it is the same or different, and chiefly if someone has asserted that the parts of the soul are different.²⁹⁶ It is unthinkable also, in light of what we said, to distinguish this which is

296. The Text here omits πρὸς δὲ τούτοις τὸ ὁρεκτικόν, ὃ καὶ λόγῳ καὶ δυνάμει ἕτερον ἂν δόξειεν εἶναι πάντων; "and lastly the appetitive, which would seem to be distinct both in definition and in power from all hitherto enumerated." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). Averroes' alternate translation, while obviously corrupt, does contain some remnants of this passage: ومع هذا فاننا نجد الشوق وهو الأرب غير هذه الأجزاء جميعاً بالمعنى وبالقوة (ibid. [1954]); "Then we find desire, which is the end wholly other than these parts in intention and power."

thought to be different from all things in definition and activity. For what governs exists in the cogitative part,²⁹⁷ while desire and anger are found in the non-rational. If, therefore, the soul has three parts, then desire is found in each of those.²⁹⁸ (432b1–7)

There arises for us a question in regard to which of those three or two powers we have counted as having the power of imagination, namely, whether this power is one of those powers into which we divided the parts of the soul or [whether] it is different from them, chiefly if someone asserts that the parts of the soul are different in definition and place. Next he said: **It is unthinkable**, etc. That is, it is unthinkable to divide this power which is thought to be different from all in definition and activity (he means the desiderative power) and to put it both in what has reason and in what lacks reason and not to assert it as something proper to one of the two modes, as is the case with other powers of the soul, but [to put it] in both. For the governing power exists only in the rational soul (he meant this when he said **in the cogitative part**) (511) and a non-governing [power], such as desire and anger, exists in the non-rational. But we see that power to be enumerated according to the number of powers in such a way that if the parts of the soul are three, then desire will be found in all of them. He meant this when he said: **If, therefore, the soul**, etc.

43. **What, however, we have reached in the account is [the issue of] what it is which moves animals from place to place. It is thought that motion, which involves growth and deterioration, exists in all animals and what exists in all animals is what the generative and nutritive are thought to move. Later on we will consider breathing,²⁹⁹ sleep, and wakefulness, for in regard to those there are many questions.** (432b7–13)

297. ἔν τε τῷ λογιστικῷ γὰρ ἡ βούλησις γίνεται; “for wish is found in the calculative part” (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1984]); الروية في الفكر (ibid. [1954]); “wish is in cogitation.” In the *Middle Commentary* (2002), 124.12–13, we find, “The principal expression of this part, which is called choice (اختياراً), occurs in the cogitative faculty (في الفكر);” Arabic added.

298. The Greek has: “It is absurd to break up the last-mentioned faculty: for wish is found in the calculative part and desire and passion in the irrational; and if the soul is tripartite appetite will be found in all three parts.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). Corresponding to the Latin’s *inopinabile*, “unthinkable,” the *Middle Commentary* (2002), 124.10, has ومن العسير, “difficult,” while the alternate translation has ومن القبيح, “repugnant” (ibid. [1954]).

299. The Text drops καὶ ἐκπνοῆς, “and [breathing] out.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); my addition. This is not dropped from Averroes’ alternate translation (ibid. [1954]): وإخراج, nor from the *Middle Commentary* (2002), 124.19: وإخراجه

But we did not intend [to take up] those questions in this place. For our intention is to investigate the nature of what it is which moves the animal in place. Next he said: **It is thought that the motion**, etc. That is, it is thought that motion of an animal in growth and deterioration exists in all animals and what is such is ascribed to the power which moves [the animal] to generating and to taking nutrition. He intended with this to make it known that this motion is different from local motion existing in what is moved in a local way, although each is in place, and that the mover in these is different. Next he said: **Later on we will consider**, etc. That is, after we have spoken concerning this power, we will consider breathing, sleep, and wakefulness, since each is a motion by the soul and involves many questions.

44. **Let us, therefore, consider local motion and what it is which moves animals by local motion. [512] It is evident that this [motion] is not by the nutritive power, for [the nutritive] power is always ascribed to those, while [local motion] is either with imagination or with desire.³⁰⁰ For nothing is moved except either by desire for something or by flight from something, unless its motion is violent. If that were also a disposition of plants, they would be moved and they would have an organic part assisting this motion.** (432b13–19)

The activity of the nutritive power is always [present] and is ascribed to plants, while the activity of that [other] power is not always [present] nor is it in plants. And that motion which is in place always involves imagination and desire for something, for nothing is voluntarily moved except either out of desiring or out of fleeing something. Consequently, if that motion were from the nutritive soul, it would occur that this soul would be desiring and imagining. If the nutritive power were something which moves in place, it would happen that plants would be moved in place. And if plants were moved in place, then they would have this disposition, namely, imagination and desire, and they would also have an organic member in virtue of which motion comes to be.

45. **It is different from sense in this way too. For many animals have sense and are motionless in the same place and completely unmoving. If, then, nature does nothing in vain and works in a complete way in the cases of necessary things, unless it is in reference to things that are monstrosities which are not complete (for such animals are complete, not monstrosities, and the indication of it is that they generate and have [513] maturation and**

300. The Text here carries a sense different from the Greek: “for this kind of movement is always for an end and is accompanied either by imagination or by appetite.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation is awkward but closer to the Greek: من أجل شيء واحد (ibid. [1954]); “for the sake of one thing.”

decline), then for this reason they do not have organic members through which there comes to be local motion. (432b19–26)

It is also necessary in this way for that power moving in place to be different from sense. For many animals have sensation but are completely unmoving. It is necessary that those animals not move at all. For since nature does nothing in vain, that is, it makes no member without benefit nor does it lack necessary things, that is, nor does it abstain from providing an animal with a member in which there is a necessary benefit (unless this is due to occurrences happening infrequently, as a sixth finger). Those unmoved animals do not have an instrument for walking and they are still complete, not monstrous. The indication of it is that they generate [animals] like themselves and also have maturation and decline in their lives as do other natural beings whose being is natural. Hence it is necessary that those animals be unmoved and for this reason they do not have members for motion. You ought to know that he employs the argument from concomitance to refute [the position] that these powers are causes of motion only in this way because what is at issue is the proximate cause of motion. If not, then sense is one of the causes of that motion, but a remote cause.³⁰¹

46. But what causes motion is neither the cogitative part nor that which is called intellect. For the cogitative part³⁰² does not see what it does nor does it say anything in regard to what is fled or in regard to what is pursued.

301. The argument from concomitance is that of the second figure of the syllogism in the affirmative, which does not yield a necessary conclusion. Cf. [416], Book 3, n. 128. Here the argument would be that because one kind of animal has sensation and another kind has sensation, then whatever other characteristics the first has (here, local motion), the second must have. The argument would then be that the cause of local motion is the possession of sensation. But this conclusion is not necessary. If it were, one would conclude that everything having sensation has local motion, which is not the case. Consequently, the proximate cause of local motion is not sensation and so must be attributed to another power of the soul. Nevertheless, the remote cause of local motion for those things which have local motion is indeed sensation since appetite and desire, which arise because of sensation, move what has local motion.

302. This is a significant corruption of the text of Aristotle, for which the corresponding Greek here is *ὁ θεωρητικὸς <νοῦς>*, “mind as speculative.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation has *النظر في العقل* (ibid. [1954]); “theoretical contemplation in the intellect,” and it was consulted by Averroes, as is evident in his Comment. Without mentioning his source, Averroes seems to correct this text in his Comment at Book 3 [46.12]ff., using Themistius, *De Anima Paraphrase* (1899), 118.8–9. There Themistius writes of the first theoretical intellect: *ἐπεὶ γὰρ διττὸς ὁ νοῦς, ὁ μὲν θεωρητικὸς οὐδὲν θεωρεῖ τῶν πρακτῶν οὐδὲ περὶ φευκτοῦ καὶ ὀρεκτοῦ διανοεῖται*. “For there are two kinds of intellect: the contemplative <and the practical>. <The contemplative

Motion, however, is always found either in what flees or in what pursues. It is also not among the things which, when they have seen [514] such a thing, they set forth in pursuit or flight, as frequently we hold something to be desirable or fearful and are not sent into fear. The heart, however, is moved when a different member is enticed.³⁰³ (432b26–433a1)

By the cogitative part one can understand the theoretical intellect and by the part which is called intellect the practical intellect. For this reason he said: For the cogitative part does not see, etc. That is, for the theoretical [intellect] does not consider practical things nor anything useful and pursued nor anything harmful and fled. Motion in place, however, is found only either in what pursues or in what flees. Next he said: It is also not among the things, etc. That is, neither is it also a part of the intellect which is naturally constituted to consider what is pursued and what is fled and which excites a movable member to motion toward the desirable thing or [which excites] a movable member in fear to motion [away from a fearful thing]. [This is what] happens for us when we imagine something desirable or fearful because the member proper in reference to that desirable thing is moved in us and the heart is constrained then by that fearful object. The intellect sees nothing of this, but we see it to be unmoved from that fearful object or to that which is desirable. He meant this when he said: The heart, however, etc. It is this way in the manuscript. [But] perhaps there is missing from this only that the intention was this, namely: the heart, however, is moved out of fear or out of desire when another member is moved from desire. What we find in the other translation shows

[intellect] does not contemplate about what has to be done, nor think discursively about what is to be avoided and desired” (ibid. [1996], 144); *وليس أيضا النطقى الذى يقال له العقل هو المحرك فإن العقل ضربان أحدهما نظرى والآخر عملى فأما النظرى فليس ينظر فى المعمولات ولا يميز شيئا من أمر المهرب منه والمطلوب* (ibid. [1973], 217.9–12); “Moreover, it is not the case that the rational part which is called the intellect is the mover, for intellect is of two sorts, one theoretical and the other practical. The theoretical does not contemplate *intelligibles* (!) and does not discern anything to be fled or pursued.” Cf. Book 2, Text 32 [177], at 415a11–12, where *τοῦ θεωρητικοῦ νοῦ* is rendered *Intellectus . . . speculativus et cogitativus*.

303. “Further, neither can the calculative faculty or what is called thought be the cause of such movement; for mind as speculative (*ὁ . . . θεωρητικὸς*) never thinks what is practicable, it never says anything about an object to be avoided or pursued, while this movement is always in something which is avoiding or pursuing an object. No, not even when it is aware of such an object does it thereby enjoin pursuit or avoidance of it; e.g. the mind often thinks of something terrifying or pleasant without enjoining the emotion of fear. It is the heart that is moved (or in the case of a pleasant object some other part).” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); Greek added.

this, namely: "Frequently the intellect cogitates regarding something fearful or something desirable, but there will not be fear or desire on account of this. The heart, however, is moved with the motion of fear {515} but not from the intellect. When it cogitates regarding something desirable, then a member different from the heart is moved with the motion of desire."³⁰⁴

47. When the intellect has commanded and cogitation has affirmed to flee something or to pursue it, [the heart] will not be moved, but it does what is in concert with desire, just as one who cannot restrain himself. Generally we see he who has the art of medicine does not [always] cure because there is something else which governs activities which come about through knowledge. (433a1–5)

We see also that the intellect frequently commands that something be pursued or fled, but nevertheless people are not moved by the fact that the intellect gives its assent but from the fact that it is in concert with desire, as happens for a human being seeking pleasure who does not restrain himself. Next he said: **Generally**, etc. That is, generally we see frequently that many people who know some art do not act in virtue of that art, as we see many physicians not cure themselves when they are ill. This is only because there is another mover governing the activity of those activities which are carried out through knowledge and art. If it were not so, it would happen that everyone having knowledge of some operation would do that thing which he knows.

48. Governance in regard to this motion does not belong to knowledge. Nor does it even belong to desire. For hermits³⁰⁵ have desire and longing, but they do not do these things toward which they are moved by desire, because they follow intellect. (3.10, 433a10) It appears, therefore, that {516}

304. The corresponding Arabic in Badawi's edition is: وكثيراً ما يتفكر العقل في شيء مخيف أو في شيء مُلذ فلا يكون الخوف عن أمر ولا للذة حركة؛ فإن القلب يتحرك حركة الخوف — وليس ذلك عن العقل؛ وإذا تفكر في شيء ملذ كان عضواً غير القلب المتحرك حركة اللذة. (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]); "Oftentimes the intellect cogitates about something dreadful or something desirable, though there is no dread involved and no movement of desire. The heart is moved by the motion of fear—and this is not from the intellect. When it cogitates about something desirable, what is moved by the notion of desire is a part other than the heart." The final part of this citation of the alternate translation corresponds to the beginning of Book 3, 47.1–4 {515}: *Et cum intellectus miserit et cogitatio affirmaverit fugere aliquid aut querere aliquid, non movebitur, sed facit illud quod convenit delectationi, sicut qui non potest se retinere*. There is no mention of heart in the corresponding section of the *Middle Commentary* (2002), 125.14–17.

305. *Heremite*: The corresponding Greek, οἱ . . . ἐγκρατεῖς, is rendered "those who successfully resist temptation." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

the causes of the motion are these two, namely, desire and intellect, even if someone asserts that imagination is similar to intellect. For in most things we follow imagination without knowledge, for other animals do not have opinion or cogitation,³⁰⁶ but only imagination. These two, therefore, namely, desire and intellect, are what cause motion from place to place. (433a5–13)

What, therefore, predominates in regard to that motion and is proper to this is not knowledge, since we are frequently moved by desire, although the intellect sees that we ought not to be moved. Nor is what predominates in that motion even desire, because many human beings have desires but do not follow desire, but rather [follow] intellect. When he had explained that it is impossible for local motion to be ascribed to one of those powers individually, and it also appears that each of those takes part in causing the motion (for motion does not come about without desire nor without intellect or imagination), he said: **It, therefore, appears**, etc. That is, it therefore appears from what we said that what causes the motion is two, namely, intellect and desire, or imagination, which is similar to intellect. For in most matters we are moved by imagination without knowledge, as animals are moved. For other animals do not have knowledge, but in place of it they have imagination. Those two powers, therefore, are what cause motion from place to place, namely, desire and intellect or imagination.

49. And the practical intellect (this is what cogitates concretely) differs from the theoretical [intellect] in actuality.³⁰⁷ For every {517} desire is a desire for something. For desire is not the principle of the practical intellect, but that particular thing is a principle of the intellect.³⁰⁸ For this reason it neces-

306. *Sine cognitione . . . non habent estimationem neque cogitationem*: παρὰ τὴν ἐπιστήμην . . . οὐ νόησις οὐδὲ λογισμὸς ἔστιν; 433a10–12; "(for many men follow their imaginations *contrary to knowledge*, and in all animals other than man *there is no thinking or calculation*)." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); emphasis added. While *cogitatio* is reasonable as ultimately derived from λογισμὸς, *estimatio* is far from νόησις. The alternate translation is also problematic here: (في سائر الحيوان ليس الإدراك إلا بالتوهم و بالفكر) (ibid. [1954]); "in the other animals there is no apprehension except by imagination and cogitation."

307. "It differs from speculative thought in the character of its end (τῷ τέλει)" Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); Greek added.

308. It appears that the Greek οὐ γὰρ ἡ ὄρεξις at 433a15–16 was read as οὐ γὰρ ἡ ὄρεξις, "For desire is not . . ." for the original Arabic translation from Greek. The Greek is rendered: "for that which is the object of appetite is the stimulant of practical thought; and that which is last in the process of thinking is the beginning of the action." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). ἀρχὴ τῆς πράξεως, here rendered "the beginning of the action," is not soundly reflected in *principium intellectus*. The alternate translation suffers from

sarily appears that these two are what cause motion, namely, desire and cogitation in reference to action. For the object of desire causes motion and for this reason cogitation causes movement, because it is a desiderative [power].³⁰⁹ (433a14–19)

The intellect in virtue of which there is activity (this is the cogitative practical [intellect]) differs from the theoretical [intellect] in actuality and end. For the end of the theoretical [intellect] is just to know, while that of the practical [intellect] is to act. Next he said: **every desire**, etc. That is, because every desire is desire for something, for this reason desire is not the principle moving the practical intellect, but that desired object moves the intellect. Then the intellect will desire and when it has desired, then the human being will be moved, namely, by the desiderative power, which is the intellect or imagination.³¹⁰ Next he said: **For this reason it necessarily**, etc. That is, because the principle of motion is from the desired object, it appears that these two move the human being, namely, desire and belief which exist in reference to operation, in this way, namely, that what causes desire and what causes movement (which is intellect) are the same, but it is the cause of movement because it causes desire

textual difficulties here also, reading οὐ as οὐ and rendering the last part of the sentence less than soundly: *وليس هذه الشهوة بدء العقل الفعال ، بل أجزاء العقل الفعال بدء العقل* (ibid. [1954]); “and this desire is not the starting point of the active understanding but rather parts of active understanding are the starting point of the intellect.” Some of the Greek manuscripts, however, do have οὐ. See ibid. (1956). Note that *العقل الفعال*, “active understanding,” is here a term carrying the sense of “the intellect which is active in practical action.”

309. The Greek text has: τὸ ὁρεκτὸν γὰρ κινεῖ, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἡ διάνοια κινεῖ, ὅτι ἀρχὴ αὐτῆς ἐστὶ τὸ ὁρεκτόν. καὶ ἡ φαντασία δὲ ὅταν κινῇ, οὐ κινεῖ ἄνευ ὁρέξεως; “for the object of appetite starts a movement and as a result of that thought gives rise to movement, the object of appetite being to it a source of stimulation. So too when imagination originates movement, it necessarily involves appetite.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). ἀρχὴ seems perhaps to have been moved toward the end of the sentence so as somehow to be read with the sentence which follows. See Text 50 below. The alternate translation is sound: *المشتهى بدء حركة الفكر. – والتوهم إذا حرك لا يحرك* (ibid. [1954]); “That which is desired is the beginning of the motion of cogitation. And when imagination causes motion, it does not cause motion in the absence of desire.”

310. Ivry (*Middle Commentary* [2002], 208, n. 7) notes that this sentence appears in the *Middle Commentary*, which has *فإذا حركه اشتهى العقل أو التخیل وإذا انتهى تحرك الإنسان* “When it elicits motion, the intellect or imagination desires [the object]; and when desiring, the person moves due to it—that is, due to the appetitive faculty which is the intellect and imagination.” Ibid., 126.6–8.

for the thing.³¹¹ He meant this when he said: **For the object of desire**, etc. That is, for because the object of desire is itself what moves that which apprehends (this is the practical intellect or imagination) and when the intellect apprehends something, it will desire in virtue of knowledge and will move in virtue of desire, it is necessary that the intellect itself be a cause of motion insofar as it is what desires, not insofar as it is what apprehends, and not insofar [518] as desire is a power different from the intellect which is also a cause of motion, as he himself will explain later. What he said concerning the practical intellect should be understood concerning the imagination, for animals universally are moved by imagination. If, therefore, form is imagined on the basis of cogitation, then motion will be ascribed to the practical intellect. If it is not on the basis of cogitation, then it will be ascribed to the imaginative power itself.

50. **The beginning of this will be at the time at which imagination is moved. There is, therefore, no motion in the absence of desire. There is therefore one mover, namely, what desires. For if the mover were two, namely, intellect and desire, then it would move in a common way. But the intellect does not seem to cause motion at all in the absence of desire. For when will and desire are moved in cogitation, then will causes motion.**³¹² **Desire moves with motion which does not involve cogitation. Desire is a certain kind of appetite.** (433a19–26)

The beginning of this motion which is from the thing desired will be at the time at which the imagination is moved by the thing desired without appetite. For imagination first apprehends the object of desire, namely, it is affected by it by way of apprehension; when it apprehends it, it will perhaps desire [it]; and when it has desire and there is there no different contrary desire nor a different contrary power [519] of soul, then the animal will move in place toward that object of desire. Next he said: **There is therefore one mover**. That is, for because the mover, therefore, which is the object of desire, is one, it will

311. The corresponding sentence in the *Middle Commentary* helps elucidate what we have in the Latin of the *Long Commentary*. *ومن قبل أن يبدأ الحرك يظهر أنها من المشتبهة*. *يظهر أيضا أن هذين هما الذان يحركان الإنسان ، أعنى الشهوة والاعتقاد أو التخیل* “As it is evident that the principal factor of motion derives from the desired object, it is also evident that both these—namely, desire and belief or imagination—are the factors which move a person.” *Middle Commentary* (2002), 126.9–11.

312. (ἡ γὰρ βούλησις ὁρεξις, ὅταν δὲ κατὰ τὸν λογισμὸν κινῆται, καὶ κατὰ βούλησιν κινεῖται); “(for wish is a form of appetite; and when movement is produced according to calculation it is also according to wish).” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation also varies from the Greek: *وتحرك العقل: وذلك أن الروية أرب وشهوة ، والفكر فإنما يتحرك بالروية* (ibid. [1954]); “For will is wish and desire and moves the intellect by cogitation. So, then, it is moved only by will.”

happen that what is moved by it, which is what moves the animal, namely, the power of desire, is one also. This is either intellect or imagination insofar as each is what has desire. If what moves the animal were two, namely, intellect per se and the desiring power per se insofar as they are different, then the motion of the animal would not proceed from them except incidentally,³¹³ namely, in virtue of a nature common to those two powers which would be different from each of those. Next he said: **But the intellect**, etc. That is, if it were so, then it would happen that the intellect per se and also desire per se would move the animal, and it is not so. For intellect does not seem to cause motion except voluntarily, just as imagination does not seem to cause motion without desire. The difference between will and desire is that when will and desire cause motion, then will moves in virtue of cogitation, while desire moves [but] not in virtue of cogitation.³¹⁴ Next he said: **Desire is a certain kind of appetite**. This is how it stood in the manuscript and it is wrong and should be read: **Appetite is a certain kind of desire**.³¹⁵ That is, that the part of the soul which desires is what causes motion universally. If, therefore, it desires in virtue of cogitation, it will be called will and if it is without cogitation, it will be called appetite. This error is shown in the other translation, in which it is said: "Appetite, however, causes motion without cogitation, because appetite is a kind of desire."³¹⁶

51. **All intellectual understanding, therefore, is correct, while appetite and imagination are sometimes correct and sometimes not. For this reason the appetitive part always causes motion, but this³¹⁷ either {520} will be good or will be thought to be good. But [this does] not [occur] in regard to all**

313. ولو كان المحرك للحيوان اثنين أعنى العقل على حدة والشهوة على حدة، لكان تحرك الحيوان عن كل واحد منهما عارضا؛ "Were an animal to have two [independent] sources of motion—the intellect by itself and desire by itself—then the motion induced by each one would be an incidental sort." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 126.20–21.

314. With the exception of the lemmata and this last sentence, the content of what Averroes says here is virtually identical with what he says in the *Middle Commentary* (2002), at 126.11–127.5. What is different is the explanation of the role of cogitation as a power involved with the will. There is no mention of cogitation in this context in the *Middle Commentary*.

315. Averroes here suggests rightly that an error has occurred in the transmission of Aristotle's text. The Greek has ἡ γὰρ ἐπιθυμία ὁρεξις τίς ἐστίν; "for wish is a form of appetite." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). His view, like that of the English translators, is based on the understanding that ἐπιθυμία is a species of the genus ὁρεξις. The same view is found in the alternate translation. See the following note for that text.

316. وأما الشهوة فإنما تحرك بغير فكر – لأن الشهوة إنما هي ضرب من الشوق (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]).

317. Hoc: a particular object of appetite.

[goods], for that [good] as actual is praiseworthy,³¹⁸ and the actual³¹⁹ [good] is that for which it is possible that it can be otherwise. (433a26–30)

Every activity of intellectual understanding is correct, while activities which come about from appetite and imagination are sometimes correct and sometimes not. For this reason the appetitive part always causes motion, because it causes motion toward what is correct and toward what is not correct. Intellectual understanding, however, causes motion only toward what is correct alone, and for this reason it does not always cause motion. Next he said: **but this either is good**, etc. That is, but this toward which the appetitive power causes motion either is good or is thought to be good but is not. This good toward which that power is moved is not the good common to all, for that good which is always in act is praiseworthy without qualification. He meant this when he said: **But [this does] not [occur] in regard to all [goods], for that [good] as actual is praiseworthy**, that is, that good existing in all things, for that good which is always actual is praiseworthy.³²⁰ Next he said: **and the actual is that which [. . .] is otherwise**. That is, and the good which is pure activity is the good which moves in a way different from the way in which those goods which sometimes are in potency and sometimes in act move. This

318. The sense requires that we understand that what is praiseworthy is something which is attractive for us. That is, it is deemed praiseworthy because we find some good in it to be desirable.

319. The Latin *actuale* here may reflect a corruption of عملي, "practical," into فعلي, "actual," with the loss of the notion of practical doing contained in the Greek πρακτὸν. Or it may reflect difficulty in understanding المعمول, which in fact appears in the corresponding passage of the alternate translation. Aristotle, *De Anima* (1954). The latter is likely the case since, as indicated in the next note, Averroes gives two interpretations of this text corresponding to two senses of المعمول, "active" or "actual" and "practiced" or "practical." The Greek here is rendered: "Now thought is always right, but appetite and imagination may be either right or wrong. That is why, though in any case it is the object of appetite which originates movement, this object may be either the real or the apparent good. To produce movement the object must be more than this: it must be good that can be brought into being by action; and only what can be otherwise than as it is can thus be brought into being." Ibid. (1984). In the *Middle Commentary* Averroes writes only of الخير العملي, "the practical good," and says nothing of the "actual good." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 127.14.

320. In what follows Averroes gives two interpretations of this Text and finds more suitable the second, which is in fact more in accord with the original text of Aristotle. Here in the first interpretation Averroes is uncertain about المعمول as used in the Arabic Text. That is, he understands it here as concerning the value of what is in actuality over what is in potentiality rather than concerning what is actual as practical. See the previous note. This also affects the comments of Averroes in the lines which follow here.

can be understood in light of his having said **But not in regard to all [goods]**, that is, but not universally. That is, the good toward which that power is moved is not wholly good, that is, always and without qualification, for that good which is in act is asserted to be praiseworthy. Or another way: **But not in regard to all [goods]**, that is, but a good which that power apprehends is not the good existing as praiseworthy by all, but rather it is a good for the practical intellect as something praiseworthy for that power and [also] a good which {521} can be found in a way different from the one in which it is a good. The common good for all, however, is the pure good. The intention in those is fairly similar and the latter [intention] seems, as it were, more fitting.

52. It already appeared, therefore, that such a power of the soul causes motion and it is what is called the appetitive [power]. If those who divide the soul [into parts], divide it according to powers, then they will find a great many parts, namely, the nutritive, the sensitive, the understanding, the cogitative,³²¹ and the desiderative. For those are distinct from one another and more so than are the desiderative and likewise the irascible.³²² (433a31–b4)

It already appeared from this account that such a power from among the powers of the soul, which apprehends and desires a thing, is a power moving the animal and that it is what is called the appetitive [power]. For those who are accustomed to dividing the soul into three parts or into two parts, it was necessary for them, if they intended to divide that according to the powers it should have, that they divide it into more parts, since it has more parts than those three, for instance, the nutritive, the sensitive, the understanding, and the cogitative.

53. Owing to diversity, appetites are contrary to one another. This happens when the sorts of appetite are opposed,³²³ and this will be only for what has sense through time. Intellect compels us to resist for the sake of a future thing and appetite [compels us to motion] for the sake of the reality of a present pleasure. It is thought, therefore, that the thing providing present

321. Here *cogitantem* corresponds to the Greek βουλευτικόν. However, the *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.20, has *المروية*, "deliberative."

322. ταῦτα γὰρ πλέον διαφέρει ἀλλήλων ἢ ἐπιθυμητικόν, καὶ θυμικόν; "for these are more different from one another than the faculties of desire and passion." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

323. τοῦτο δὲ συμβαίνει ὅταν ὁ λόγος καὶ αἱ ἐπιθυμίαι ἐναντία ᾧσι; "which happens when a principle of reason and a desire are contrary." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). Note that the plural αἱ ἐπιθυμίαι is rendered singular by Smith and Barnes in this edition. The alternate translation also has the singular: ويعرض ذلك إذا اختلف الفكر والشهوة (ibid. [1954]).

pleasure {522} is pleasure without qualification, because it does not refer to a future thing. (433b5–10)

It can be understood: on account of the diversity of the appetites which are in the concupiscible soul, they contradict one another in regard to motion. Or [it can be understood] in another way: that is, on account of the diversity of the appetite of the concupiscible soul from the intellect, they contradict one another. This latter is the more evident. Next he said: **This happens**, etc. That is, this happens in one and the same thing³²⁴ when the sorts of the appetites in it are opposed. That sort of contrariety is found only in an animal which apprehends time, because in the present it apprehends with respect to the thing something different from that which [it apprehends with respect to the thing] in the future, for instance, to judge that now it is something pleasurable and in the future painful.³²⁵ Next he said: **Intellect compels [us] to resist**. He meant to show the diversity of the two sorts in reference to appetite, namely, the appetite of intellect and the appetite of the concupiscible soul. For the concupiscible soul causes movement toward a thing which is pleasurable in act. The rational soul, however, frequently resists this on account of future harm, for instance, [regarding] intercourse and intoxication.³²⁶ Next he said: **It is thought, therefore**, etc. That is, many therefore think that the thing presently pleasurable is pleasurable without qualification and never painful, because the concupiscible power does not see the pain occurring in the future.³²⁷

324. That is, in one and the same soul.

325. This sentence is found in the *Middle Commentary* (2002), 127.23–128.2: وهذا النحو من التضاد إنما يوجد من الحيوان في الحيوان الذي يدرك الزمان وهو الناطق ، لأنه يدرك من الشيء في الزمان الحاضر غير ما يدرك منه في الزمان المستقبل ، مثل أن يدرك أنه لذيق في "This sort of contrariety occurs to an animal who apprehends time—namely, a rational animal—for he apprehends in the present something in the object other than that which he apprehends in it in the future. For example, he apprehends that the object is pleasant now, but injurious in the future."

326. This sentence is also found in the *Middle Commentary*: والنفس النزوعية هي التي تحرك إلى اللذيق الحاضر والعقل هو الذي يحكم بمضرة ذلك في المستقبل، مثل الحال في الطعام؛ "It is the appetitive faculty which moves toward present pleasure and the intellect which judges its future harm, as occurs with copulation and gourmandizing." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.2–4.

327. This sentence too is found in the *Middle Commentary*, although the difference should be noted. The *Middle Commentary* has mention of the intellect failing to consider future harm, while the *Long Commentary* has "the concupiscible power." وقد يظن كثير من الناس أن اللذيق الحاضر لذيق بإطلاق من قبل أنه لا يلحظ العقل فيهم ما يعرض من ذلك في المستقبل من الأذى؛ "Many people think that the currently pleasant is absolutely pleasant, because their intellect does not consider the injury which will be incurred by it in the future." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.4–6.

54. The cause of motion is the object of appetite inasmuch as it is an object of appetite. For the object of appetite precedes the others, for this causes motion and is [itself] unmoved, because it moves imagination and intellect.³²⁸ Things causing motion, however, are many in number because the things in virtue of which motion comes about {523} are three, one is the mover, another is the thing in virtue of which it causes motion, and the third is what is moved. The mover exists in two ways: one is as immovable, while the other is as movable.³²⁹ What is unmoved is that which is understood to be good.³³⁰ But the appetitive part is mover and moved. (For it moves what is moved insofar as it is an object of appetite, because appetite is a kind of motion, namely, [appetite] which is in act.) What is moved is the animal. The instrument causing motion is appetite. Those are bodily things, and for this reason they should be investigated in the context of actions common to the soul and to the body. (433b10–21)

The first mover in this motion is the thing which is the object of appetite insofar as it is an object of appetite. For the thing which is the object of appetite precedes the other things which move the animal in this motion because it moves and is not moved, and that is the disposition of a first mover.³³¹ Next he said: **because it moves imagination and intellect.** That is, it is a

328. The beginning of this Text fails to reflect εἶδει μὲν ἔν ᾧν εἶη, with the result that the sentence is construed differently. “It follows that while that which originates movement must be specifically one, viz. the faculty of appetite as such (or rather farthest back of all the object of that faculty; for it is it that itself remaining unmoved originates the movement by being apprehended in thought or imagination), the things that originate movement are numerically many.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); emphasis added to indicate omitted text. The alternate translation differs from the Greek: فيرى الشوق محركاً بالصورة أولى هذه، وهو الشيء المشتهى المطلوب (ibid. [1954]); “So desire accounts for motion by form as prior to these movers. This [mover] is the thing desired and sought after.”

329. The Text here may be faulty. The Latin’s *mobilis* corresponds to τὸ δὲ κινούμενον καὶ κινούμενον, “or that which at once moves and is moved.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); emphasis added. The alternate reflects the Greek well with أحدهما لا يتحرك في نفسه (ibid. [1954]); “One of the two is unmoved in itself and the other causes motion and is moved.”

330. *Bonum intellectum* corresponds to the Greek τὸ πρακτὸν ἀγαθόν, “the realizable good.” Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

331. These initial sentences of this Comment are virtually identical to what Averroes writes in the *Middle Commentary*: والحرك الأول في هذه الحركة هو الشيء المشتهى بما هو: المشتهى، وذلك أن الشيء المشتهى يتقدم سائر الأشياء الحركة للحيوان في هذه الحركة، لأن هذا هو الذي يحرك في هذه الحركة ولا يتحرك وهذه هي صفة الحرك الأول “The prime mover in this motion is the object of desire qua desideratum. It is prior to other things which move an animal in this [sort of] motion, for it causes motion of this sort and is not

mover because it moves imagination when appetite belongs to the imaginative part or intellect if appetite belongs to that part of the soul.³³² Next he said: **The things causing motion, however, are many in number.** That is, the things causing motion, however, by which that motion comes to be are more than one.³³³ Next he said: **because the things in virtue of which motion comes about,** etc. That is, it happens that the mover is more than one on account of what was explained in the general accounts,³³⁴ namely, that every motion comes about through three things, of which one is the mover which is unmoved, another that in virtue of which it moves (this is the mover and moved), and the third is what is moved and not a mover.³³⁵ Next he said: **The mover {524} exists in two ways,** etc. That is, it was explained there that the mover exists in two ways, namely, as unmoved mover (this is the first) and as mover which is moved (it is this in virtue of which the first mover causes motion). Next he showed what each of those three is in regard to this motion. He said: **What is unmoved is that which is understood to be good**, etc. That is, what is mover and unmoved in this motion is what is thought good and what the appetitive soul apprehends. The mover and the moved is the thing

moved, which is the attribute of a prime mover.” *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.6–9. In the *Middle Commentary* this text is continuous with the texts cited in the following notes for much of the rest of this Comment. Averroes has broken that continuity here in the *Long Commentary* with citations of the relevant Text of Aristotle.

332. Again, this sentence is virtually identical to what Averroes writes in the *Middle Commentary*: وإنما صار محركاً أولاً من قبل أنه يحرك المتخيل إذا كانت الشهوة للجزء المتخيل أيضاً؛ “It is indeed a prime mover, since it moves the imagination when desire occurs to the imaginative part of the soul, or it moves the intellect when desire occurs to it also.” *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.9–11.

333. Again, this sentence is virtually identical to what Averroes writes in the *Middle Commentary*: فإن المحركون الذين يلتئم بهم هذه الحركة فهم أكثر من واحد: “The moving agents in which this motion is coordinated are more than one.” *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.12–13.

334. *Physics* 8.5, 256b14ff.

335. Again, this sentence is virtually identical to what Averroes writes in the *Middle Commentary*: وذلك أنه قد تبين في الأقاويل الكلية أن كل حركة فهي تلتئم من ثلاثة أشياء: أقل ذلك أحدها المحرك الذي لا يتحرك، والآخر الشيء الذي به يحرك وهذا هو متحرك محرك ومجموعهما هو الذي يسمى المتحرك من تلقائه والثالث المتحرك الغير محرك “this, in that it has been explained in general terms that every motion is coordinated by three things, at least: one is the mover which is not moved; another, that with which it moves, which is moved, moving, and a combination of both and is called self-moved; and the third is the moved object which does not cause motion.” *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.13–16.

which has appetite,³³⁶ that is, the member of the body in which that part of the soul exists, while appetite is the motion which arises from the thing which is the object of appetite in virtue of what is understood in act.³³⁷ Perhaps he meant this when he said: **because appetite is a motion, namely, [motion] which is in act**, that is, appetite which arises from the thing which is the object of appetite in act. Or alternatively: that is, the appetite which is appetite in act. What is moved and not a mover, which is a third thing in regard to this motion, is the animal.³³⁸ Next he said: **The instrument . . . is appetite**, etc. That is, because that in virtue of which the first mover moves is necessarily a body, since it is moved, as was explained in the general accounts,³³⁹ and appetite here is that in virtue of which the first mover causes motion, therefore the thing which has appetite in virtue of which the animal is moved is the body and appetite is its form. For this reason it is necessary to seek out these things in virtue of which that motion comes about where he speaks about actions common to soul and body, that is, in the part of natural science in which he speaks about those common actions, such as sleep and wakefulness. He had spoken about this in the treatise which he wrote *On the Motion of Animals*,³⁴⁰ but that treatise has

336. Again, this part of this sentence is virtually identical to what Averroes writes in the *Middle Commentary*: فأما الشيء الذي هو في هذه الحركة محرك غير متحرك فهو الخير: "That which moves and is not moved in the motion under discussion is the intelligible good; the moving and moved thing is the desiderative part of the body." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.16–18.

337. That is, appetite as mover results from actual thought of the desired object.

338. Again, this sentence is virtually identical to what Averroes writes in the *Middle Commentary*: وأما المتحرك الغير محرك فهو الحيوان: "and that which is moved and does not cause motion is the animal." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.18–19.

339. *Physics* 8.5, 256b15–19.

340. Again, these sentences are virtually identical to what Averroes writes in the *Middle Commentary*: ولما كان الشيء الذي به يحرك المحرك الأول واجبا أن يكون جسما إذ كان متحركا حسبما تبين في الأقاويل الكلية، وكانت الشهوة هاهنا هي الذي به يحرك المحرك الأول في هذه الحركة، فالشيء الشهواني الذي به يتحرك الحيوان هو جسم و الشهوة هي صورته. ولهذه العلة ينبغي أن نلتزم معرفة الأجسام التي بها تلتزم هذه الحركة حيث نتكلم في تلخيص الأشياء التي تلتزم بها الأفعال الموجودة للنفس والبدن. وذلك في الجزء من العلم الطبيعي الذي نتكلم فيه في الأفعال المشتركة للنفس والبدن وهو الكتاب المعروف بحركة الحيوان المكانية: "As the object in which the first mover acts has to be a body, since it is moved (as has been explained in the [preceding] general remarks), and as it is actual desire with which the first mover performs this motion, the desiderative faculty whereby the animal moves is corporeal, and desire is its form. It is appropriate, for this reason, to seek knowledge of the bodies with which this motion is coordinated when we engage in explaining the factors whereby the activities common to soul and body are coordinated. This is that part of natural science in which we speak [of such activities], which is the book known as *De motu animalium*." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 128.19–129.5.

not come down to us, but what was transmitted to us was a part of the summary of Nicolaus.³⁴¹ {525}

55. **I say now generally that the body is moved by motion of a very similar sort. For where the starting point is, there also is the end, as circular motion.**³⁴² **For in this convexity and concavity are found one as end and the other as starting point. For this reason one is at rest while the other is moved, although in definition they are different; in spatial magnitude, however, they are not distinct. For everything which is moved is moved by pushing and pulling. Hence it is necessary that the thing be at rest, as what happens in the case of a wheel, and that the starting point of motion be from this.** (433b21–27)

After he had made it known that the inquiry concerning things in virtue of which that motion comes about is more fitting elsewhere, he began here to recount something general. He said: **I say now generally**, etc. That is, I say now that the body is moved by the first instrument in such a way that the first instrument which moves it, which is the subject of the desiderative soul, is in the body of the animal in one place from which the parts of the moved part of the animal are pushed and toward which the parts of that part are pulled by that instrument.³⁴³ For in the case of every motion composed of pulling and push-

341. Drossaart Lulofs speculates that this may be a reference to a section of the zoological part of the compendium *On the Philosophy of Aristotle* by Nicolaus. See (in the primary sources) Nicolaus of Damascus (1965), 39 and 11. Also see Peters (1968), 48. Cf. Aristotle, *Movement of Animals*, ch. 10, 703a4ff., as Ivry suggests at *Middle Commentary* (2002), 209, n. 16, and ch. 6, 700b4ff.

342. This Text significantly fails to reflect the corresponding Greek: "To state the matter summarily at present, that which is the instrument in the production of movement is to be found where a beginning and an end coincide as e.g. in a ball and socket joint." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The corresponding text in the alternate translation is cited by Averroes in his Comment. For that Arabic text, see below.

343. This sentence is found in the *Middle Commentary* with only slight variations. إن البدن يتحرك عن الآلة الأولى المحركة له التي هي موضوع النفس المتشوقة ، وهي من بدن الإنسان في موضع واحد منه تندفع عنها جميع أجزاء الجهة المنبسطة من الحيوان واليه تنجذب جميع أجزاء الجهة المنقبضة منه "the body is moved by the first organ which moves it, which is the substrate of the desiderative soul. It is a place in the human body from which all parts of its constricting aspect are pulled." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 129.6–9. Differences in the Arabic are indicated by the overbar. Comparison of this with the extant Arabic fragment in the next note indicates support for the reading على in the *Middle Commentary*'s Modena manuscript. See *Middle Commentary* (2002), 129, n. 2. The first half of the sentence following immediately here is also identical with *ibid.*, 129.12–13: وذلك أن كل حركة مؤلفة من جذب ودفع لا بد ، which is exactly what is found in the extant fragment. See the following note.

ing, it is necessary that the starting point from which the pushing exists be the end toward which there is pulling. For this reason he said: **as circular motion**.³⁴⁴ For circular motion is composed of pulling and pushing. However, that the motion of an animal is composed of pulling and pushing is evident. For when the right part is moved by us and we are held stable on the left, then certain parts of that part will be {526} pushed toward the front and certain parts pulled, and they are the parts which are farther back. The pulling and pushing of these is not in a straight line but in lines not straight, more curved than straight, and for this reason it is likened to the circle. The instrument in virtue of which the body desires first and generally is not known by us. In place of this account we find a clearer account in the other translation as follows: "Let us, therefore, say briefly that the mover is, as it were, something possessing this disposition in its starting point and in its end, just as what is called in Greek *gigglimus*.³⁴⁵ For there is convexity and concavity in it, and one of these is the end and the other the starting point."³⁴⁶ Next he said: **For in this convexity and concavity are found**. That is, for in everything which is moved by pushing and pulling, not in a straight way, there happens to exist concavity and convexity in such a way that what is convex is unmoving from what will be the starting point of the pushing and to what is the end of pulling, and what is concave is moved, as is the case for a body moved in a circular way. For the motion of every body which is moved in a circular way is composed of pulling and pushing, as was said in the Seventh Book of the *Physics*.³⁴⁷ Next he said:

344. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 55.16–24: ان البدن يتحرك عن الآلة الأولى: 24–55.16. على ان الآلة الأولى المحركة له والتي هي موضوع النفس المتشوقة هي في بدن <الحيوان> في موضع واحد، منه تندفع عنها جميع أجزاء الجهة المنبسطة من الحيوان واليه تجذب <الأجزاء> الأخرى <...> وذلك أن كل حركة مؤلفة من جذب ودفع لا بد <أن يكون> لها مبدأ منه تندفع <Long Commentary Fragments (1985), 45> ونهاية اليها تنجذب ويعني بقوله: بمنزلة الحركة اللولبية (1985), 45). Perhaps due to the omission of , the Latin translator understood the last portion of this text differently from what we have in the fragments. The Arabic has "<it is necessary that> it have a starting point from which it is pushed and an end toward which it is pulled." Cf. the previous note regarding this text in the *Middle Commentary*. Ben Chehida's conjecture of <الحيوان> may be corrected with the *Middle Commentary's* الإنسان. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 129.8.

345. ὁ γιγγλιμός: a ball-and-socket joint.

346. فأما الآن فإننا نختصر فنقول بايجاز إن المحرك كآلة هو الذي بحال واحدة من بدنه ونهايته، مثل الذي يسمى باليونانية جنجلموس فإن فيه أحد وثنية: فأحد هذين نهايته <Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]>). This text is apparently quoted in the Arabic fragments at *Long Commentary Fragments* (1985), 45. Note that أحد is missing in the fragments. In its place Ben Chehida suggests <تجذب>.

347. Averroes seems to have in mind *Physics* 8.10, 267b9–17 and perhaps also *Physics* 7.2, 243a15ff.

one is as end and the other as starting point, etc. That is, one part is unmoving in virtue of the motion of the pulling of the end and [the other] in virtue of the motion of the pushing [is] the starting point. For this reason it is necessary that what is convex, or what is in place of the convex, be unmoving and that what is concave, or what is in place of the concave, be moved. Still, the starting point and the end in this motion are different in definition, while they are the same in spatial magnitude, as the center of a circle. And this is the contrary of straight motion, namely, that the starting point and the end are in it as different in definition and in magnitude. The member [of the body] which is such as this in the animal is the heart, according to him.³⁴⁸ Next he said: **For everything [527] which is moved is moved according to a certain convexity**. That is, it was necessary that in the animal there be such a member at rest because it is the starting point of the motion of pushing and the end of pulling because everything which is moved by pulling and pushing is necessarily by way of some unmoving convexity toward which the pulling motion reaches and from which the pushing motion begins. For this reason it is necessary that in every such case there be something stable which is the starting point and the end, as the center in a wheel. That account is founded on two propositions, one that the motion of an animal in place is composed of pushing and pulling and the other that every motion composed of pulling and pushing has an unmoving thing from which there is a starting point of pushing motion and toward which there is an end of attractive [motion]. For it appears that it is necessary in regard to every motion that this from which there is motion and toward which there is motion is at rest. Since, therefore, motion is composed of pushing and pulling, it will happen that what is at rest is the same. When, therefore, these two propositions have been conceded, it will follow from these that in the animal there is a member at rest from which the motion of pushing begins and toward which it reaches. Because we see that the final member which is at rest in local motion is the

348. Arabic fragments correspond to Book 3, 55.42–59: <يعني ان كانت كل حركة مؤلفة: 59–55.42> من الجذب والدفع على غير استقامة لزم ان توجد في شيء فيه تحديد وتغير حتى يكون المحذب الذي فيه ساكن ومنه مبدأ حركة الدفع واليه نهاية حركة الجذب، والمقعر متحرك كالحال في الجسم المتحرك <حركة> دورة. فان كل جسم متحرك دورة فحركته مؤلفة من جذب ودفع كما قيل <في السابعة من السماع> ثم قال: كما كان ذلك نهاية فهذا أيضا له مبدأ <فيلزم ان يكون هذا الجزء الساكن أما بحركة الجذب فنهاية وأما بحركة الدفع فمبدأ> ولذلك يجب ان يكون المحذب أو الشيء الذي يتنزل منزلة المحذب فساكن، فأما المقعر أو الذي ينزل منزلة المقعر فمتحرك، على أن المبدأ والنهية في هذه الحركة هما مختلفين في الحد وأما في العظم فواحد بمنزلة المركز وهذا بخلاف ما عليه الأمر في الحركة المستقيمة – أعني ان المبدأ فيها والنهية مختلفين بالحد والعظم، والعضو الذي بهذه الصفة في الحيوان هو القلب عنده <Long Commentary Fragments [1985], 45>). Note that Ben Chehida fails to provide the location of the closing brackets <following يعني>.

greater in such a way that it is able to act from many imaginings. This is the cause of opinion.³⁵⁵ For it does not have cogitation because it does not involve something which comes about from reason.³⁵⁶ This is something which is so on account of pleasure, because it does not have the cogitative power.³⁵⁷ It, therefore, commands and moves sometimes this and sometimes that. For the appetite moves the appetite, just as a sphere, when it has the intention of containment.³⁵⁸ For according to nature it is prior and a mover, in such a way that they are moved to motion. (434a6–15)

Imagination exists in other animals, while cogitation exists in rational animals. For choosing to do this imagined thing and not another belongs to the activity of cogitation, not to the activity of imagination. For what judges that this imagined thing is more pleasant than another ought to be of necessity the same power which reviews imaginings in which it judges what is more pleasurable. He meant this when he said: **It figures itself one of necessity.** (530) That is, as I figure, it is necessary that one power review those imaginings until it apprehends what is more pleasant among them, as one thing reviews unequal numbers until it apprehends which is comparatively greater. Likewise, cogitation reviews imaginings and compares them until it is able to be affected by the imagination of some one of these. This is the reason why a rational animal has opinion, for opinion is belief which arises from cogitation. Next he said: **For it does not have cogitation,** etc. That is, aside from the rational animal, none has cogitation because none has reason. The motion of animals is due to pleasure and it is simple motion, not complex [motion]. This is because it does not have the cogitative power together with appetite in such a way that these two powers command one another to the extent that the animal is moved sometimes on account of will as [is the case] in regard to the rational animal.

has *وهو مضطر في المثل إلى أحد الأمرين* (ibid. [1954]); "It is compelled toward one of two in the case of what is similar."

355. The Text fails to render the Greek *μη δοκεῖν ἔχειν*, "is held not to involve." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation omits this sentence.

356. The Text fails to render the Greek *<αὐτὴ δὲ ἐκείνη>*, which Ross brackets in Aristotle, *De Anima* (1956). This is rendered "though opinion involves imagination" in ibid. (1984). The alternate translation has *وعلة ذلك أنه ليس له العزم الكائن عن القياس* (ibid. [1954]); "The reason for this is that it does not have decision existing on the basis of reasoning."

357. This is an interpretive translation which adds to the Greek a reference to pleasure. The Greek is rendered, "Hence appetite contains no deliberative element." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation reflects the Greek.

358. *Continentie*: ἀκρασία, "moral weakness" (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1984]); تهتك (ibid. [1954]); "degradation." Crawford notes that manuscript D adds *non*.

Next he said: **For the appetite moves the appetite,** etc. That is, for it happens in what has more than one appetite that the animal may be moved in certain situations by two appetites at the same time, when it happens that one appetite is predominant and contains the second. For then it will lead it toward its motion, when the commanded appetite remains moved in its proper motion, as happens in the case of celestial bodies. For any given one of the orbs of the wandering stars seems to be moved with diurnal motion in virtue of an appetite of the orb of the fixed stars, although with its appetite it is moved by its proper motion. Next he said: **For according to nature it is,** etc. That is, this happens to this sphere which contains others, namely, to be in command over these [531] on account of this because it is prior by nature to the others and is what moves them, in such a way that in virtue of this it happens that the others are moved by it.

58. **The cognitive power, however, is not moved, but is at rest, because in one case [the premise] involves at once opinion and judgment of the universal,**³⁵⁹ while in the other it is of particulars. For this makes it such that such a thing must do such an action, while that is such that because that thing is so, I also am so. For this latter also causes motion, but the universal does not. Or [it is] both, but one is at rest, while the other is not. (434a16–21)

The power, however, which apprehends the universal is not moved to the object apprehended, because it is a power which is only of opinion and of apprehension of a universal thing. The universal thing, however, does not cause motion at all, since it is not some singular thing. The power, however, which apprehends the particular is among particulars and is moved when [a particular] causes motion. He meant here, therefore, by **cognitive power** the power apprehending the universal thing. Next he said: **For that makes,** etc. That is, for the power which apprehends the universal affirms that every such thing must carry out such an activity, while the particular power is what apprehends an instance for itself according to the disposition which it affirmed, if it were to be knowing, so that it carries out that activity. The composition in virtue of which the activity comes about will, therefore, arise from apprehension on the part of those two powers. Next he said: **For this latter causes motion,** etc. That is, for the intention of the particular causes motion, while motion in reference to the universal either is not due to this or we should say that [532] motion is due to both, but is due to the universal because it is at rest and due to

359. *Quia illa est existimationis et iudicii universalis insimul*: ἐπεὶ δ' ἡ μὲν καθόλου υπόληψις καὶ λόγος; "Since the one premiss or judgement is universal. . . ." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The *Middle Commentary* (2002), 131.5–6, has *لأن هذه القوة إنما هي للعلم وإدراك الأمر الكلي فقط*; "since that faculty belongs solely to cognition and the apprehension of universals."

the particular because it is what is moved.³⁶⁰ He meant this when he said: **but one is at rest, while the other is not.** That is, but if the universal is the mover, it will be so insofar as it is at rest, while the other particular will be so insofar as it is moved.

59. **It is necessary, therefore, that the nutritive soul be in every one and that the soul exist in these from generation until corruption. For it is necessary that everything generated have a beginning³⁶¹ and an end and decline, which cannot exist without food. Therefore the nutritive power necessarily exists in all things capable of growth and decline.** (3.12, 434a22–26)

Since he completed the account of all the universal powers of the soul, he wants to show what exists of necessity among these in animals and what exists for betterment. He said: **It is necessary, therefore, that the nutritive soul be in every living thing . . . from first generation until corruption.** For it is necessary that everything having soul have growth and decline, since it is impossible for it to come immediately to its final actuality, but [it does so] by gradually declining and entering into old age. Since the cause of growth is nothing but nutrition and the cause of decline is nothing but lack and scarcity of food,³⁶² it is necessary that the nutritive soul be in everything which is such that it grows and ages. Since every living thing is such as this, it is necessary that every living thing be capable of nutrition.

60. **It is not necessary that the power of sensation exist without qualification. It is not possible for an animal to live without that, nor also in the case of things which do not receive {533} form without matter.**³⁶³ **It is necessary,**

360. This sentence is nearly the same as that in the text of the *Middle Commentary*: وإذا كان هذا هكذا فبين أن الأمر الجزئي يحرك، وأما الكلّي فإما أن نقول إنه ليس له تحريك على حدته أو نقول إن التحريك لهما جميعاً لكن الكلّي من قبل أنه ساكن والجزئي من قبل أنه يتحرك؛ "This being the case, it is clear that the particular causes motion, whereas we can say either that the universal has no motion of its own or that motion belongs to both: the universal in that it is stationary, the particular in that it is moved." *Middle Commentary* (2002), 131.12–15.

361. *Principium* does not render the Greek αὔξῃσιν, "For what has been born must grow." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation is in accord with the Greek.

362. This is certainly an odd statement, perhaps a result of a problem in the Latin translator's Arabic manuscript. In the *Middle Commentary* (2002), 131.18–132.1, he writes, "It certainly must be the case that every mortal being has a beginning, acme, and decline; the acme is due to growth, the decline to decay, and none of this is possible without nutrition."

363. The Text fails to render the Greek οὔτε γὰρ ὅσων τὸ σῶμα ἀπλοῦν ἐνδέχεται ἄφῃν ἔχειν "But sensation need not be found in all things that live. For it is impossible for touch

therefore, that sense be in animals, if nature does nothing in vain. For all things existing by nature either are for the sake of something or are accidents consequent upon things which are for the sake of something. For every body which moves about without sense suffers corruption and does not come to [its natural] end, although it was of the activity of nature. It is known, therefore, that the power of sensation will necessarily be found in animals, since in this way there is motion without sense. But that also is the case in the things which have been naturally constituted to be at rest.³⁶⁴ (434a27–b2)

It is not necessary that the power of sensation exist without qualification, that is, in all things which grow and suffer corruption; but in animals alone is it necessary that there be power of sensation. For it is impossible for something to be an animal without this power. This is [in fact] the case in regard to things which receive [life] immaterially, for the term life is said of these and those equivocally. He is making reference to celestial bodies. Next he said: **It is necessary, therefore, that sense be in animals,** etc. That is, it is apparent that it is necessary that sense be in every animal; and this is because nature does nothing

to belong either to those whose body is uncompounded or to those which are incapable of taking in forms without their matter." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); emphasis added. The alternate translation reflects the Greek poorly: لأنه لا يمكن لما كان جسمه مبسوطاً أن يصير ذا حس؛ ولا يمكن أيضاً الحيوان أن يكون بغير هذا الحس ولا ما كان قابلاً للصور يمكنه أن يكون بغير هولي (ibid. [1954]); "Because it is not possible for what has a simple body to come to possess sense. And it is not possible as well for the animal to be without this sense nor can what is receptive of forms be without matter."

364. Averroes' Text of Aristotle suffers from several corruptions and difficulties. Among those is the omission of Text corresponding to the Greek πῶς γὰρ θρέψεται; τοῖς μὲν γὰρ μονίμοις ὑπάρχει τοῦτο ὅθεν πεφύκασιν. Starting at the text corresponding to "although . . ." above, the Greek has: "which is the aim of Nature; for how could it obtain nutriment? Stationary living things, it is true, have as their nutriment that from which they have arisen." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); emphasis added. As is evident in the Comment, Averroes understood Aristotle's intention here to be a discussion of celestial bodies. The same is the case for the corresponding passage in the *Middle Commentary* (2002), at 132.11–13. The alternate translation has فكل جسم ذي سير وتنقل قد يفسد ما لم يكن له حس؛ ثم لا ينتهي إلى الغاية التي يقصد إليها الطبايع. وإذا فكيف يجوز أن يكون مغتدياً؟ فأما راسية الأجسام والنامية منها فجائز أن لا يكون لها حس وأن تكون ثابتة في أماكنها غير منتقلة عنها (Aristotle, *De Anima* [1954]); "For every body possessing movement and motion which may suffer corruption is something which does not have a sense. Then it does not reach the end which nature has intended. But how is it possible for it to be nourished? As for the stationary character of bodies and plants among them, it is conceivable that it does not have a sense and that there be a stabilization in their places without local movement on their parts."

of them because it is generable and corruptible. It is impossible for the body to be simple, for it is impossible for a simple body to have the sense of touch and it is necessary for touch to be in everything having sense.

63. This is known concerning those things: that an animal is an animated body and every body is tangible, and everything tangible is perceptible by touch; therefore, the body of an animal is necessarily capable of touch, if animals are naturally constituted to avoid [certain things]. The other remaining senses sense through other mediating things, for instance, smell, sight, and hearing. If, therefore, what is capable of touch is not found with sense, it is impossible for it to take in certain things and to flee from others, and so it is impossible for the animal to survive. For this reason, taste is as touch, for it concerns food and food concerns tangible body. (434b11–19)

This is known from these propositions: since every animal is an animated body, and every body is tangible, and everything tangible is perceptible through touch, therefore, if the body of an animal ought to be preserved and ought to avoid accidents, {537} it is necessary that it have touch.³⁷⁰ The other remaining senses which it has apprehend the other sensibles through mediating bodies different from their proper sensibles,³⁷¹ for instance, the senses of hearing, smell, and sight. If, therefore, the animal does not sense tangible bodies, then it is impossible for it to come to certain bodies and use them to some benefit or to flee from certain harmful things. Since it is so, it is impossible for the animal to survive.³⁷² Next he said: **For this reason**, etc. That is, on account of this necessity the sense of taste is more necessary in animals just as is touch.

370. Cf. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 133.5–8: وقد يوقف على ضرورة وجود الحس للحيوان: 8-133.5. وذلك أنه لما كان كل حيوان كائن فاسد جسمًا ملموسًا وكل ملموس من هذا الذي أقوله. "That the existence of this sense is necessary for an animal can be shown by the following remarks: As every mortal animal is a tangible body, and everything tangible is perceptible by the sense of touch, then, necessarily, the body of an animal is tactile."

371. Cf. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 133.11–12: ويكون باقى الحواس الموجودة له يدرك بها: 12-133.11. "The rest of the senses found [in an animal] apprehend the remaining objects of sensation by means of other bodies different from the sensible objects being apprehended."

372. Cf. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 133.12–15: فإن كان الحيوان ليس يوجد له الحس: 15-133.12. "Were an animal not to have the sense [of touch] for tangible bodies, it would not be able to accept those bodies from which it benefits nor flee from those which damage and corrupt it; and, were this the case, the animal would not be able to be safe."

For taste is for the sake of food, namely, for knowing the fit from the unfit, and food is in a tangible body. For this reason it is necessary that what has the sense of taste have the sense of touch, as we explained earlier.³⁷³

64. However, sound, color, and odor do not nourish, nor does any growth or decline come from these. For this reason taste was necessarily a kind of touch, because it senses only what is tangible and nutritious. Those, however, also necessarily belong to animals and it is evident that it is impossible for an animal to exist without sense. Those other [senses], however, exist for betterment and this does not happen for every genus of animals, but [only] for certain genera. Just as that [animal] must be something which moves about if it is naturally constituted to survive, [it must] not [be the case] that it senses only when it touches, but [that it does so] also from a distance. (434b19–27)

However, sound, color, and odor do not nourish the body when they come to it, nor do they cause in the body {538} gain or loss as food does. For this reason which I mention, taste is necessarily a kind of touch, that is, because the sense of taste is of some tangible nutrient.³⁷⁴ He meant this when he said: **because there is sensation only of what is tangible**. Next he said: **Those, however, belong to animals . . . necessarily**. He meant the sense of touch and the sense of taste. Next he said: **Those others, however**, that is, the three other senses. Next he said: **and this does not happen**, etc. That is, and those three senses are not found in every genus of animals but in certain genera. Next he said: **Just as that [animal] must be something which moves about**, etc. That is, thus, when it is necessary for an animal to move about if it is naturally constituted to survive, it is more perfect for it not just to apprehend harmful and useful sensibles nearby only and through touch, but also from a distance, since by those two ways of sensing it will be more perfectly and better preserved.

373. {171}.

374. Cf. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 133.19–134.2: وأما القرع واللون والرائحة فليست واحدة منها تغذوا جسم الحيوان إذا وردت عليه، أعنى أنه ليس الجسم بغاذ من جهة ما هو ذو لون ولا قرع إلا بالعرض، ولذلك لا يحدث عنها فى الجسم زيادة ولا نقصان كما يحدث عن الغذاء. ولهذا العلة كان الذوق من الاضطراب لمسا ماء، أى من قبل أن حس الذوق إنما يكون لشيء ملموس غاذ: 2-134.19. "He said: *Neither sound, color, nor smell nourish the body of an animal when they reach it*—that is, the body is not nourished other than incidentally insofar as it is capable of [receiving] color and sound. Therefore, *neither increase nor diminution will occur to the body from them, as will happen because of food. Accordingly, taste is necessarily a kind of touch*—that is, because the sensation of taste occurs only in relation to a tangible, nourishing object." Emphasis added to indicate portions of the *Middle Commentary* text related to the *Long Commentary* text.

65. This will be so only when the sensible is through a medium, because [the medium] is affected and moved by the sensible, while [the animal is affected and moved] by [the medium]. Just as what causes motion in place does so up to the point that there is change, likewise what impels something else does so until [that] is impelled. The motion will be through a medium. (The first causes motion or impels without being impelled and the other is impelled only and does not impel, while the medium has both [properties] and the intermediates³⁷⁵ are many.) This is similarly the case too for alteration, but [this involves] what is resting in the same place.³⁷⁶ [This is] just as one who presses [something] in wax, presses as long as he moves [the thing] and so far as {539} the impression reaches. In the case of stone, however, there is no impression at all, while water is affected by impression to a great distance. Air, too, is moved a great deal and acts and is affected, if it remains and is the same. For this reason it is better [to hold] that air is affected in virtue of reflection by body and color, than that it may be possible that sight [itself be affected directly] through change and reflection [by body and color].³⁷⁷ It is the same in the case of smooth things. For this reason this [medium] moves sight also, just as the impression in the wax is brought through to its end points. (434b27–435a10)

Sensing what is at a distance comes about when the sensible moves what senses through a medium, since when what acts as a medium is affected and moved by the sensible, also this which belongs to the sense³⁷⁸ is affected by the medium. Next he said: Just as **what causes motion in place**, etc. That is, just as a body moving in place, insofar as it moves, needs to do so up to the point that it is moved and is changed, similarly what impels another thing

375. The Latin *meaia* here is a typographical error in the Crawford edition for *media*.

376. This Text is less clear than the Greek. "Just as that which produces local movement causes a change extending to a certain point, and that which gave an impulse causes another to produce a new impulse so that the movement traverses a medium—the first mover impelling without being impelled, the last moved being impelled without impelling, while the medium (or media, for there are many) is both—so it is also in the case of alteration, except that the agent produces it without the patient's changing its place." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

377. The Greek is clearer. "That is why in the case of reflection it is better, instead of saying that the sight issues from the eye and is reflected, to say that the air, so long as it remains one, is affected by the shape and colour." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). Aristotle here is referring to Empedocles' theory of effluences and vision, which Plato espouses at *Timaeus* 45b2–46c6. On this account, vision is the result of an internal fire proceeding from the eyes to the seen object.

378. That is, the physical organ is moved or affected.

needs to be impelled, and then it impels. Thus, motion in such things has at least three components, namely, the first mover, the intermediate, and the final moved thing. The first mover impels and causes motion and is not moved, the final moved thing is impelled and moved and does not cause motion, while the intermediate does both, namely, it causes motion and is moved. The intermediate, however, can be one and can be more than one. Next he said: **This is similarly the case too for alteration**, etc. That is, according to the disposition which we recounted concerning motion in place, namely, that it is composed of three things in such a way that it relates to this change which comes about from sensibles grasped by the senses through intermediaries. For sensibles cause motion and are not moved and intermediates between these move the senses and are moved by the sensibles, {540} while the senses are moved and do not cause motion. But there is a difference between these because that change which is in those things is through a medium and a medium remaining in the same place is also not [in itself] altered by this. But in the case of motion in place the medium is altered, and similarly for the final moved thing. When he had explained these things which that change has in common with change in place and in virtue of what things it is distinguished from it, he gave an example of this. He said: **[This is] just as one who presses wax**, etc. That is, that motion belonging to the medium in its parts from the sensible is exactly like the impression of a seal in wax. Just as the wax is moved with its parts by the seal and that motion reaches into the wax so far as the power of the one impressing is able to reach, and the wax remains [a unitary whole] in all its parts, so is this the disposition in the motion of the medium with the sensibles, namely, that [the medium] is pressed by these and impelled toward everything toward which the power of the pressing reaches and [the medium as a whole] remains in its place unmoved.³⁷⁹ Next he said: **In the case of a stone**, etc. That is, that motion is not accommodated in every body, for a stone and its like cannot at all be pressed but rather what can be pressed is akin to water. For water

379. Cf. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 134.21–135.2: قال: وهذه الحركة التي تكون للمتوسط: وذلك أنه كما أن في أجزائه عن المحسوسات هي أشبه شيء بمن يغمر على الشمع بطابع. وذلك أنه كما أن الشمع يتحرك في أجزائه عن شكل الطابع وتنتهي تلك الحركة إلى حيث انتهت قوة الغازم والشمع ثابت بجملة أجزائه، كذلك الحال في حركة المتوسط مع المحسوسات. أعني أنه يتغمر عنها ويندفع إلى حيث انتهت قوة تحريك المحسوسات وهو ثابت بعينه. "He said: This motion which is induced in the parts of the medium by the objects of sensation most resembles the situation which obtains when one impresses a seal upon wax. Just as the parts of the wax are moved by the shape of the seal—the motion extending to the part where the impressing force terminates, while the wax remains stationary in its parts—such is the situation in the motion of the medium with objects of sensation: the medium, while remaining stationary in itself, is impressed and driven by them to the point where their motive force terminates."

seems to be pressed over a distant space. Likewise for air, for it frequently seems to act and be affected by pressing, when it is stable as a whole, unmoved and undivided.³⁸⁰ Next he said: **For this reason it is better [to hold] that air is affected**, etc. That is, because in the case of a medium this impression is possible, for this reason it is better to say, in the case of the reflection which comes about in things which can be heard and in things which can be seen, that it is nothing other than that the air is reflected by that motion which is in it and by that affection which comes about from sensibles, when {541} it has encountered something which that motion cannot pass through soundly in reference to the senses.³⁸¹ This is better than to say that there is a reflection of bodies outside sight, as certain of the ancients say, and the empiricists³⁸² concede, when there may be no external bodies there. Next he said: **It is . . . in the case of smooth things**, etc. That is, that motion is in wet things. He meant this by **same for smooth things**. For this reason air also will move sight, just as a seal existing in wax is pushed to the extreme end to the extent that it moves air in a second part, so too in this way the sensible will move air in such a way that it is carried through it to the surface touching the sense, and in this way it moves the sense.³⁸³

380. Cf. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 135.2–6: وهذا النحو من الحركة ليس يتأتى في كل جسم وذلك أن الحجر وما أشبهه لا ينغمز البتة وإنما ينغمز مثل الماء والهواء، فإننا نجد ههما كثيرا ما ينفعان عن التحريك مسافة بعيدة إذا كان كل واحد منهما ثابتا بجملته غير متحرك ولا متشذب؛ "This kind of motion does not come about in every body, for the stone and its like are not impressionable at all, while things like water and air are. We often find them affected by motion over an extensive distance, each one being stationary in its entirety, unmoved [as such], and undispersed."

381. That is, the medium bearing sound or light can affect the quality of sound or sight. For example, an intervening wall affects the medium between persons and thereby affects their ability to hear one another, or fog can affect the medium such that sight is affected.

Cf. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 135.7–11: (733) ولكون المتوسط يمكن فيه هذا الانغماز (733) والتحريك والتحرك كان الأفضل أن نقول في الانعكاس الذي يكون في المسموعات وفي المرئيات أنه ليس هو شيئا إلا أن الهواء ينعكس بتلك الحركة التي فيه عن المحسومات إذا صادفت تلك الحركة شيئا لا يمكن أن تنفذ فيه على استقامة إلى الحواس أنفسها "As it is possible of the medium to experience impression and motion [in an active and passive way], it is better to say that the reflection which occurs with audible and visible objects is nothing other than the air reflecting the objects of sense by its motion, when that motion meets something which it cannot traverse directly en route to the senses themselves."

382. *Perspectivi*.

383. Cf. *Middle Commentary* (2002), 135.16–17: المحسوس يحرك الهواء حتى ينفذ فيه إلى: "the sensible object moves the air until it penetrates through it to the particular surface of the corporeal sense organ and moves it."

66. It is, therefore, evident that it is impossible for the body of an animal to be simple as fire or air [are]. For it is impossible to have one of the other senses without touch, for every animated body is capable of touch, as we said. Those other [elements] are instruments of sense, except earth. For all cause sensations because they sense through another and through a medium.³⁸⁴ Touch, however, comes about in touching and for this reason is called by this name. This is because other instruments of sense do not sense except through the mediation of touch (but this is with other things mediating), while that [sense of touch] is thought to be sufficient per se. For this reason the body of an animal is not one of those elements. Nor is it earth. For touch is, as it were, intermediate in relation to the other sensibles and an instrument {542} of sense. And the recipient thing does not include only changes which involve earth but also those which involve hot and cold and other tangibles. For this reason we do not sense through bones, hairs, and other such parts.³⁸⁵ For this reason plants do not have any of these senses, because they are [composed] of earth. For it is impossible for there to be another sense without touch, and this instrument which belongs to sense is not composed of fire³⁸⁶ or any of those other elements. (3.13 435a11–b4)

It is impossible, therefore, for the body of an animal to be simple. For it is impossible for the animal to have any of these three senses without touch, for every animated thing must be something which has the sense of touch. Next he said: **Those other [elements]**, etc. That is, the simple bodies are instruments of these three senses, except for earth, which is not an instrument of any sense. This was because all those senses, namely, the three, cause sensation because they need simple instruments and an extrinsic medium, that is, things devoid of sensibles, namely, so that the instrument and medium in sight do not have color nor [is there] odor in the olfactory sense nor [is there] sound in

384. The Text has lost the sense of the Greek, which has τὰ δὲ ἄλλα ἔξω γῆς αἰσθητήρια μὲν ἂν γένοιτο, πάντα δὲ τῷ δι' ἑτέρου αἰσθάνεσθαι ποιεῖ τὴν αἴσθησιν, καὶ διὰ τῶν μεταξὺ. "All the other elements with the exception of earth can constitute organs of sense, but all of them bring about perception only through something else, viz. through the media." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation, though imperfect, is somewhat closer to the Greek: "الجميع، ما خلا الأرض، تكون،" (ibid. [1954]); "All, with the exception of earth, may be involved in sensing but they all bring about sensation and perceive what is air for them through what is intermediate between them."

385. The Text here fails to reflect ὅτι γῆς ἐστίν, 435a25, "because they consist of earth." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation is in accord with the Greek: لأنها من الأرض وحدها.

386. The Greek has γῆς, "earth," instead of "fire." The alternate translation is in accord with the Greek.

hearing. What are devoid of those either are the simple bodies or that in which the simple bodies predominate. But touch differs from those senses because it apprehends its sensible without a medium and for this reason it uses no intermediate element in regard to what is extrinsic. When this has been explained concerning the sense of touch, it is necessary that its instrument not be simple. Generally he wants to explain here that touch differs from the other senses in this regard. For if the other senses can be devoid of touch, then it would be possible for the body of an animal having those senses to be {543} simple, while for touch it is the contrary, namely, that it is impossible for its instrument to be simple. For every instrument ought to be devoid of sensible. Because it is impossible that any body be devoid of the four qualities, it is necessary that the instrument of that sense be intermediate, that is, a mixture of the elements. Since it is so, it happens that this power is the essential reason why the body of an animal is composite. Next he said: since it is the case that **other instruments of sense**, etc. That is, since the other senses use the three elements for instruments and media, it is necessary that touch not use any of them and that its instrument be composite, not simple. Still, the instruments which those use cannot be devoid of touch and on this basis they are composite. If this were not [the case], it would be necessary that they be simple things. Next he said: **but this is** through other mediating things. That is, but their lack of touch is not a lack belonging to what apprehends its sensible directly without a medium, but [something which characterizes what apprehends] through other media and through other instruments. Next he said: **For this reason the body of an animal is not one of those elements**, etc. That is, on account of what we said, none of those elements is the body of an animal. Not even earth, insofar as it is simple or nearly simple, since the other senses use the elements as instrument and medium, and [touch] is a power other than those. Hence, it does not use the elements as instrument, since its instrument ought to be the medium between tangible things, since it cannot be made devoid of tangible qualities nor can it apprehend tangible things if it were a simple tangible, that is, some perfect tangible quality. Next he said: **And the recipient . . . does not include**, etc. That is, what is receptive of touch does not necessarily {544} have qualities which involve earth alone, but hot and cold and other tangible qualities. For this reason it was necessary that what receives a tangible be a mean, since it cannot be devoid of all things nor even can it sense if any of the tangible qualities predominates in it. For this reason we do not sense through bones or through hairs, on account of the predominance in these bodies of the qualities which involve earth. For this reason plants do not have the sense of touch. Hence, neither do they have other senses, because it is impossible for the other senses to be found without touch. And the instrument of touch is neither fire

nor some other body which is among the elements, nor is it a body ascribed to these predominantly.

67. It was explained, therefore, that animals necessarily die when they cease to have this sense alone and also that it is impossible for it not to be in animals. For animals do not necessarily have any other sense but this. For this reason other sensibles do not corrupt animals by predominating excess, for instance, color, sound, and smell, but rather they only corrupt the instruments of sense, except accidentally. (For instance, when there is a great blow together with sound, for all those cause corruption in animals, but accidentally.)³⁸⁷ For this reason flavors also harm animals through the mediation of taste, for taste is a kind of touch.³⁸⁸ Predominating excess, however, of what is tangible, for instance, of hot and cold and hard, corrupts animals. (435b4–14) {545}

It was already explained from this account that animals die when they have lost touch and that it is impossible for that sense not to exist in an animal while the animal is an animal, which is not the case for the other senses. For it is not necessary for an animal to have any sense except touch. On account of this, predominating excess and strength of the other sensibles do not corrupt an animal, for instance, strong color, strong sound, and strong odor, but they only corrupt their proper instruments, except accidentally (for instance, when with sound there has been a great blow, and likewise for color and odor). Flavors, however, do harm animals in an essential way, through the mediation of taste, for taste is a kind of touch. But the qualities corrupting animals are tangible, for instance, hot, cold, and hard.

68. The predominant excess of any sensible expels the instrument of sense, and for this reason what is tangible expels touch. Life is defined in virtue of touch, for it is impossible for an animal to exist without touch. For this reason the predominant excess of what is tangible not only corrupts the instrument of sense but also even the animal, because it is necessary for the

387. Averroes' Text of Aristotle omits part of the Greek: οἷον ἂν ἅμα τῷ ψόφῳ ὧσις γένηται καὶ πληγὴ καὶ ὑπὸ ὁραμάτων καὶ ὁσμῆς ἕτερα κινεῖται, ἃ τῇ ἀφῇ φθείρει; "as when the sound is accompanied by an impact or shock, or where through the objects of sight or of smell certain other things are set in motion, which destroy by contact." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984); my emphasis. The alternate translation reflects the Greek: فتتحرك أشياء آخر مع الرائحة واللون (ibid. [1954]); "for other things are set in motion by odor and color."

388. "Flavour also destroys only in so far as it is at the same time capable of contact." Aristotle, *De Anima* (1984).

animal that it be a being, not that it be in a better disposition. Those other senses, however, are in the animal for the better, sight so that it may see in air and water; taste so that it may sense the pleasant and unpleasant and that it may have appetite and be moved; and likewise for smell; hearing that it may hear a thing; and tongue that it may signify something in another way.³⁸⁹ (435b15–25) {546}

The predominant excess of every sensible, when it is intense, corrupts its proper instrument, whether it is touch or something else. Next he said: **In virtue of that it was defined**, etc. That is, through that power, namely, touch, animal is defined. The reason for this is that it is impossible for the animal to exist without touch. For this reason it happens that an intense tangible corrupts not only the instrument of sense but also the animal in an essential way, because the sense of touch is among things necessary for the animal, namely, for it to be a being, not insofar as it is better for it, as it is in the case of the other remaining senses. Next he said: **sight so that it may see in air and water**. Likewise concerning smell, namely, that primarily it is for the sake of appetite for food. Hearing, however, so that it may hear a thing, that is, sounds, and understand in virtue of those, in rational animals and in brute animals. In rational animals [this is] so that they may understand the intentions which the words signify. Tongue, however, so that it may signify the thing in another way. He is indicating, as I believe, the help which it affords in regard to words, not taste. For this help appears to be more for betterment than taste, since taste is thought to be more necessary on account of its nearness to touch. The other senses, however, are for the sake of betterment, chiefly sight and hearing. This is evident.

389. The Greek has <γλωτταν δὲ ὅπως σημαίνει τι ἑτέρω>, “and a tongue that it may communicate with its fellows.” Aristotle *De Anima* (1984). The alternate translation has وكذلك صار اللسان فيه ليعجيب به غيره بالكلام والحديث (ibid. [1954]); “And likewise there comes to be a tongue in it so that by it it may communicate with another by speech and talk.”

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