

The "Intus Apparens" and the Immateriality of the Intellect *

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INTRODUCTION

A. *The problem*

TO PROVE that the human intellect is immaterial St. Thomas, commenting on Aristotle's *De Anima*, offers the following argument:

. . . Anything that is in potency with respect to an object, and able to receive it into itself, is, as such, without that object; thus the pupil of the eye, being potential to colors and able to receive them, is itself colorless. But our intellect is so related to the objects it understands that it is in potency with respect to them, and capable of being affected by them (as sense is related to sensible objects). Therefore, it must itself lack all those things which it of its nature is capable of understanding. Since, then, it is of such a nature that it is capable of understanding all sensible and bodily things, it must be lacking every bodily nature; just as the sense of sight, being able to know color, lacks all color. If sight itself had any particular color, this color would prevent it from seeing other colors, just as the tongue of a feverish man, conditioned by a bitter moisture, cannot receive a sweet flavor. In the same way, then, if the intellect were restricted to any particular nature, this connatural restriction would prevent it from knowing other natures. Hence he says: 'What appeared inwardly would prevent and impede its knowledge of what was without'; i. e., it would get in the way of the

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intellect, and veil it so to say, and prevent it from inspecting other things. He calls 'inwardly appearing' any intrinsic thing connatural to the intellect, which so long as it 'appears' therein always prevents the intellect from understanding anything else; as we might say that the bitter moisture was an 'inwardly appearing' factor in a fevered tongue.¹

With some minor variations St. Thomas presents substantially the same proof elsewhere:

. . . It must necessarily be allowed that the principle of intellectual operation which we call the soul of man, is a principle both incorporeal and subsistent. For it is clear that by means of the intellect man can know the natures of all bodies. Now whatever knows certain things cannot have any of them in its own nature, because that which is in it naturally would impede the knowledge of anything else. Thus we observe that a sick man's tongue, being infected with a feverish and bitter humor, is insensible to anything sweet, and everything seems bitter to it. Therefore, if the intellectual principle contained within itself the nature of any body, it would be unable to know all bodies. Moreover, every body has its own determinate nature. Therefore, it is impossible for the intellectual principle to be a body. . . .²

¹ " . . . Omne enim, quod est in potentia ad aliquid et receptivum eius, caret eo ad quod est in potentia, et cuius est receptivum; sicut pupilla, quae sit in potentia ad colores, et est receptiva ipsorum, est carens omni colore: sed intellectus noster sic intelligit intelligibilia, quod est in potentia ad ea et susceptivus eorum, sicut sensus sensibilium: ergo caret omnibus illis rebus quas natus est intelligere. Cum igitur intellectus noster natus sit intelligere omnes res sensibiles et corporales, necesse est quod careat omni natura corporali, sicut visus caret omni colore, propter hoc quod est cognoscitivus coloris. Si enim haberet aliquem colorem, ille color prohiberet videre alios colores. Sicut lingua febricitantis, quae habet aliquem humorem amarum, non potest recipere dulcem saponem. Sic etiam intellectus si haberet aliquam naturam determinatam, illa natura connaturalis sibi prohiberet eum a cognitione aliarum naturarum. Et hoc est quod dicit: 'Intus apparens enim prohibebit cognoscere extraneum et obstruet,' idest impedit intellectum et quodammodo velabit et concludet ab inspectione aliorum. Et appellat intus apparens aliquid intrinsecum connaturale intellectui, quod dum ei apparet, semper impeditur intellectus ab intelligendo alia; sicut si diceremus quod humor amarus esset intus apparens linguae febricitantis." *In Aristotelis Librum De Anima Commentarium*, ed. Pirotta, III, 7, n. 680.

² . . . necesse est dicere id quod est principium intellectualis operationis,

Other places can be found where St. Thomas employs similar arguments to show the immateriality of the intellect,³ but the quotations just given are a good representation of the basic proof, and therefore no others need be reproduced. I do wish, however, to present the outline of the demonstration which Cajetan gives in his commentary on the *Summa*:

. . . that the human soul is incorporeal in being [in essendo] is proved a priori in this manner. Whatever is able to know all bodies does not have the nature of any body; but the human soul is a being of this sort; therefore. The minor is evident, because through his intellect man can know all bodies. The major is proved by the maxim, "whatever is able to know certain things has none of them in its nature." This in turn is proved: because one would impede the knowledge of others, to which the experience of the sense of taste testifies.⁴

Now as the reader is unquestionably aware, ultimately the intention of this argument is to show something about the physical or natural being of the human soul, namely, that it is a subsistent form; and therefore Cajetan is brought to remark

quod dicimus animam hominis, esse quoddam principium incorporeum et subsistentem. Manifestum est enim quod homo per intellectum cognoscere potest naturas omnium corporum. Quod autem potest cognoscere aliqua, oportet ut nihil earum habeat in sua natura; quia illum quod inesset ei naturaliter, impediret cognitionem aliorum; sicut videmus quod lingua infirmi quae infecta est cholerico et amaro humore, non potest percipere aliquid dulce, sed omnia videntur ei amara. Si igitur principium intellectuale haberet in se naturam alicuius corporis, non potest omnia corpora cognoscere. Omne autem corpus habet aliquam naturam determinatum. Impossible est igitur quod principium intellectuale sit corpus." *Summa Theol.*, I, 75, 2.

³ Three may be mentioned: *Q. D. De Anima*, 2; *De Unitate Intellectus*, 1; *Quodl.* X, 3, 6. All references to the *Questiones Disputatae* and *Questiones Quodlibetales* are to the edition published by Marietti.

⁴" . . . quod anima humana sit incorporea in essendo, probatur sic a priori. Cognoscitivum omnium corporum nullam habet naturam corporis: anima humana est huiusmodi: ergo.—Minor patet: quia homo per intellectum potest cognoscere omnia corpora.—Maior probatur ex illa maxima: *Cognoscitivum aliquorum nihil eorum habet in sua natura*. Quae probatur: Quia unum impediret cognitionem aliorum. Quod declaratur experientia in sensu gustus." I, 75, 2, n. iii, ed. Leonina.

that one can speak of "to have the object in its own nature" in two ways: either according to a natural *esse* or according to an intentional *esse*.⁵ Moreover, one can also consider "in its own nature" in two ways: either *inhesive*, as forms are in matter; or *compositive seu intrinsece*, as those things which compose are in the composed, and universally as anything which is intrinsic to the essence of a thing is said to be in its nature.⁶ Thus, the major premise of St. Thomas' argument, the commentator says, should be understood as follows: "A knowing power which is essentially in potency to the knowledge of some object does not have intrinsically in itself according to a natural *esse* the nature of that object."⁷ Furthermore, it is clear from the very presentation of the proof that the ultimate explanation of the conclusion must be looked for in the "*intus apparens*" proposition, which in its entirety reads, "*intus apparens prohibet extraneum*."

That the demonstration is sufficient to conclude to the proposition it intends is not immediately clear; and there are some objections which arise to point up the obscurity in the proof, chief of which are the following: 1) how can we know other immaterial beings if the intellect is immaterial in its natural being? 2) how can we know ourselves, especially our own intellects? In both cases it would appear that the *intus apparens* should prevent the intellect from knowing the immaterial being which is its object.

These difficulties are not original, for Cajetan raises them,⁸

⁵ *Ibid.*, n. iv.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ "Cognoscitivum in potentia essentiali aliquorum non habet in se intrinsece obiectum secundum naturale esse illius." *Ibid.* We wish to draw the reader's attention to the way in which Cajetan poses the problem. Although, in our opinion, the problem can be presented in terms of the intentional and entitative *esse* of the intellect, nevertheless it ought at first to be presented otherwise. These views will be manifested in the body of the essay.

⁸ *Loc. cit.*

and St. Thomas himself makes use of the principal one when he inquires about the angel's knowledge of himself:

It would seem that one angel does not know another. For the Philosopher says that if the human intellect were to have in itself any one of the natures of sensible things, then such a nature existing within it would prevent it from apprehending external things; as likewise, if the pupil of the eye were colored with some particular color, it would not see every color. But, as the human intellect is disposed for understanding corporeal things, so is the angelic mind for understanding immaterial things. Therefore, since the angelic intellect has in it a determinate nature from among the number of such natures, it would seem that it cannot understand other angelic natures.⁹

However, St. Thomas' reply to this objection seems rather strange, for he appears to except the separated substance from the statement that the knower cannot possess the nature of the known:

The spiritual natures of the angels are distinguished from one another by a certain order, as was already observed. So the nature of an angel does not hinder him from knowing the other angelic natures, since both the higher and lower have an affinity with his nature, the only difference being according to their diverse degrees of perfection.¹⁰

But on the other hand he makes no such exception of the human possible intellect:

⁹ "Videtur quod unus angelus alium non cognoscat. Dicit enim Philosophus, in III *de Anima*, quod si intellectus humanus haberet in se aliquam naturam de numero naturarum rerum sensibilium, illa natura interius existens prohiberet apparere extranea: sicut etiam si pupilla esset colorata aliquo colore, non posset videre omnem colorem. Sed sicut se habet intellectus humanus ad cognoscendas res corporeas, ita se habet intellectus angelicus ad cognoscendas res immateriales. Cum igitur intellectus angelicus habeat in se aliquam naturam determinatam de numero illarum naturarum, videtur quod alias cognoscere non possit." *Summa Theol.*, I, 56, 2 ad 1.

¹⁰ ". . . dicendum quod naturae spirituales angelorum ut invicem distinguuntur ordine quodam, sicut supra dictum est. Et sic natura unius angeli non prohibet intellectum ipsius a cognoscendis aliis naturis angelorum, cum tam superiores quam inferiores habeant affinitatem cum natura eius, differentia existente tantum secundum diversas gradus perfectionis." *Ibid.*

Concerning apprehensive powers it is not always true that the power is altogether devoid of the species of its object. It is false in regard to those powers which have a universal object, as in the case of the intellect, whose object is the whatness of things although it has whatness itself. It must, however, be devoid of the forms it receives.¹¹

Although the possible intellect does not lack altogether the nature of its object, it does, nevertheless, lack those natures which it receives; and St. Thomas gives no indication that he intends to except spiritual natures—no qualification of this sort is explicitly declared by his text. The difficulties remain, therefore, and the problem—we agree with Cajetan—can be reduced to the following: why does the “*intus apparens prohibet extraneum?*”

B. Cajetan's solution to the problem

According to Cajetan the proposition “*intus apparens prohibet extraneum*” is true when one nature is not determinable by another.¹² Thus it follows that “. . . this proposition does not hold in those natures one of which is determinable by another: but only in those of which neither can be a determination of the other.”¹³ In other words, the “*intus apparens*” proposition is to be understood only “. . . of the *determined* nature of the object, not of the common nature. . . .”¹⁴ Moreover, by “*determined nature*” Cajetan means one which “. . . is indeterminable by the natures of other objects of the knowing

¹¹ “. . . in apprehensivis potentiis non semper hoc est verum quod potentia denudetur totaliter a specie sui obiecti. Hoc enim fallit in illis potentiis quae habent obiectum universale, sicut intellectus cuius obiectum est quidditas, cum tamen habeat quidditatem; oportet tamen quod sit denudatur a formis illis quas recipit.” *De Ver.*, XXII, 1 ad 8.

¹² The summary which we shall give of Cajetan's position is taken from his commentary on the *Summa*, I, 56, 2; 75, 2.

¹³ “. . . propositio illa non tenet in naturis quarum una est determinabilis per alteram: sed in his tantum quarum neutra potest alterius esse determinatio.” *Ibid.*, I, 56, 2, n. iii.

¹⁴ “. . . propositio illa intelligitur de natura *determinata* obiecti, et non de natura communi; . . .” *Ibid.*, I, 75, 2, n. vii.

nature; and this is true of any species with respect to some other species of the same order, as white is indeterminable by other colors. The nature, however, is common which, although it is in itself a nature, is apt to be determined by the rest of the natures which are knowable by that potency; as is the transparent and the sense of sight with respect to color."¹⁵ It is evident that "... a common nature does not impede, it is instead an aid; but a contracted nature impedes. For sight is not impeded by the transparent, but by whiteness or blackness; although the transparent is one of the visible things."¹⁶ Hence, one angel can know another because "... his nature, as a common nature, is determinable by the others which he is able to know."¹⁷ But because "every body has some determined nature" an intellect cannot have any corporeal nature con-natural to it, and it is only to such natures, according to the Cardinal, that the "intus apparens" proposition can be applied.

Now although it is undeniable that the eminent Dominican Cardinal's commentary on the *Summa* is an excellent work, manifesting its author's profound grasp of philosophy and theology, his resolution of the difficulties accompanying the argument for the immateriality of the intellect does not seem to be sound. He appears to have erred in his understanding of the demonstration, an error which, it seems, he obscurely realized; for reputedly the Cardinal rejected in later life the opinion which he puts forth in his commentary on the *Summa*. Indeed, Cajetan apparently went so far as to deny that the immortality

¹⁵ "Determinata natura vocatur, quae indeterminabilis est per naturas ceterorum obiectorum illius cognoscitivae naturae; qualis est species quae-libet respectu aliorum colorum. Communis vero vocatur quae, licet in se natura quaedam sit, determinari nata est per reliquorum naturas cognoscibilium ab illa potentia; ut disaphaneitas respectu colorum et sensus visus." *Ibid.*

¹⁶ "... natura communis non impedit, sed promovet magis: sed bene natura contracta. Non enim visus impeditur diaphaneitate, sed albedine aut nigredine: cum tamen diaphanum unum sit visibilum." *Ibid.*

¹⁷ "... natura sua, velut communis natura est determinabilis per reliqua cognoscibilia ab eo." *Ibid.*

of the human soul (to which this demonstration is a forerunner) was demonstrable.¹⁸

Returning to our problem, it is evident that the answer to the question, why does the "intus apparens prohibet extraneum," hinges upon a proper understanding of what is meant by "determined nature." But the distinction Cajetan has made seems to have no basis in reality and therefore does not resolve the problem. A nature which is a species in act within a genus but determinable by the other natures within that genus seems to be a contradiction, because if one thing is determinable by other things it is potential with respect to them; but that which is in potency to some genus, *secundum se* lacks the perfections of that genus (just as prime matter *in se* lacks all substantial perfection), otherwise it would be in act and in potency at the same time and in the same respect. As the Cardinal notes,¹⁹ if there were some form which was determinable by all other forms, the possession of that first form would not prevent prime matter from simultaneously receiving the others; and according to Cajetan such a form is impossible only if it is the form of matter. Immaterial natures can have their own species and yet be determinable by other specific natures within the same genus.

During the course of this essay I shall attempt to show that the "intus apparens" proposition holds for the separated substances as well as corporeal natures, but for the moment, as a partial justification of my position in regard to Cajetan's commentary it may simply be noted that Cajetan makes no attempt to show why matter prevents a nature from being common in the way he understands the term; and this, I think, is enough to disqualify his views.

Furthermore, as his choice of an example Cajetan offers the transparent (diaphanum), which he says is determinable by all the colors and is itself something visible. But this, everyone will

¹⁸ See the editor's introduction to Cajetan's *Commentaria in De Anima Aristotelis*, ed. Coquelle (Rome, 1938).

¹⁹ I, 56, 2, n. iii.

agree, is contrary to common experience, for the more perfectly transparent something is the more invisible it becomes. Moreover, it is hardly possible to admit that St. Thomas understands "determined" as Cajetan does, for he says:

After showing what colour and the transparent medium and luminosity are, the Philosopher now explains how the medium is related to colour. It is clear, from the foregoing, that the transparent medium is receptive of colour; for colour, we have seen, acts upon it. Now what is receptive of colour must itself be colourless, as what receives sound must be soundless; for nothing receives what it already has. The transparent medium is therefore colourless.²⁰

St. Thomas repeats what Aristotle has said before him, and it does not seem likely that either would have shared in Cajetan's view of "determined nature." However, we should note that St. Thomas, following Aristotle, does hold the transparent to be visible in a certain manner:

But, as bodies are visible by their colours, the transparent medium must itself be invisible. Yet since one and the same power apprehends opposites, it follows that sight, which apprehends light, also apprehends darkness. Hence, although the transparent medium of itself possesses neither light nor colour, being receptive of both, and is thus not of itself visible in the way that things bright or coloured are visible, it can, all the same, be *called* visible, as the darkness which is scarcely visible is seen. The diaphanum is therefore a kind of darkness, so long as it is not actually but only potentially transparent; for the same thing is the subject, sometimes of darkness, sometimes of light. Thus the diaphanum, while it lacks luminosity and is only potentially transparent, is darkness.²¹

²⁰ "Postquam Philosophus ostendit superius quid est color, et quid diaphanum, et quid lumen, *hic ostendit, quomodo diaphanum se habeat ad colores*. Manifestum est autem ex praemissis, quod diaphanum est susceptivum coloris; est enim color motivus diaphani, ut supra dictum est. Quod autem est susceptivum coloris, oportet esse sine colore, sicut quod est susceptivum soni, oportet esse sine sono: nihil enim recipit quod iam habet: et sic patet quod diaphanum, oportet esse sine colore." *In II De Anima*, 15, n. 427.

²¹ "Cum autem corpora sint visibilia per suos colores, sequitur quod diaphanum secundum seipsum sit invisibile. Quia vero eadem est potentia

Although it is quite true that St. Thomas here makes a case for the visibility of the transparent, he nevertheless is at pains to show that visibility is not said of color and the transparent in the same way: the latter is in itself *invisible*. And since the transparent is said to be visible as the "opposite" (the privation) is visible, it can hardly be said to have a specific nature within the genus which is common to light and color; for privations cannot belong to any genus of real being.

Hence, it appears that another solution must be found. Let us therefore direct our attention to the answer we propose.

C. *The plan of the essay*

I do not wish to burden the reader with a long presentation of already familiar doctrine, but for the sake of clarity and precision, it is necessary to present in outline some of the common doctrinal points upon which this interpretation depends. The notions which must be discussed are 1) the meanings of "determined;" 2) the distinction between intellect and essence in creatures; 3) the passive nature of every created intellect. From what is evident about these we hope to make the force of St. Thomas' argument manifest.

II. THE SOLUTION

A. *The meanings of "determined"*

In reply to the first objection of *Questiones Disputatae Quodlibetales*, VII, 1, article 1, St. Thomas distinguishes two uses of "determinatum:"

cognoscitiva oppositorum, sequitur, quod visus qui cognoscit lucem, cognoscat et tenebram. Licet igitur diaphanum secundum se careat colore et lumine, quorum est susceptivum, et sic secundum se visibile non sit, eo modo quod sunt visibilia, lucida et colorata, tamen potest dici visibile, sicut videtur tenebrosus quod vix videtur. Diaphanum igitur est huiusmodi, idest tenebrosus, cum non est actu diaphanum, sed in potentia tantum. Eadem enim natura est subiecta quandoque quidem tenebrarum, quandoque autem luminis. Et sic diaphanum carens lumine, quod ei accedit, dum est in potentia diaphanum, oportet, quod sit tenebrosus." *Ibid.*

... a thing is said to be determined in a twofold way: first, by reason of a limitation; in another way by reason of a distinction.²²

According to this text something can be called "determined" for two reasons: 1) because it is limited; or 2) because it is distinct. Understood in its first sense it is apparent that every created nature is determined, because every created nature is finite or limited. And even though it is *simpliciter* more perfect, that which is in act in some genus, because it is limited to the perfection of some species, is determined when compared to that which is in potency in the same genus. The latter, insofar as it is *all* species potentially, is truly unlimited or undetermined. Thus, in one way (as unlimited actuality) God is undetermined in comparison to creatures, and in another way (as unlimited potentiality) prime matter is undetermined in relation to material substance. But understood in its second sense, as that which is distinct in itself, *anything*, whether finite or infinite, potency or act, can be called *determined*. The only requirement is that those things to which the name is applied be distinct or separate one from the other. Taken this way, God has a determined nature and so does prime matter.

My intention is to show that "determined nature," when used in the demonstration of the intellect's immateriality, must be understood in the sense of "limited," but to accomplish this there are still several points of doctrine to be considered. However it might be wise to note, in passing, that St. Thomas speaks of the possible intellect (inasmuch as it is in potency) as being *undetermined*, in contrast to this same power's objects which he declares to be *determined*:

... the possible intellect is in potency to intelligible objects (intelligibilia) as the undetermined to the determined. For the possible intellect does not have determinately the nature of any sensible thing. However, an intelligible object is a determined nature belonging to

²² "... aliquid dicitur determinatum dupliciter; primo ratione limitationis; alio modo ratione distinctionis." See also VII, 3, 6.

some species. Hence, the possible intellect is compared to intelligible objects as a canvas to determined pictures. . . .²³

Let us turn our attention now to the doctrine upon which the argument hinges.

B. *Every created intellect is distinct from the essence of the knower*

It is common doctrine in the Aristotelian and Thomistic tradition that potencies are specified by their acts. Every potency exists for the sake of its act and takes its formal or specific determination from the act to which it is proportioned; consequently, wherever there is a formal distinction in acts there is also a formal difference in the potencies ordered to them. Arguing from this principle, it follows that the intellect of a creature is necessarily distinct from its essence. Because the operation of knowing in created substances is distinct from the existence of the substance,²⁴ the intellect of the knower (which is compared to intellection as potency to act) must necessarily be distinct from the essence of the knower (essence is compared to *esse* as potency to act). Briefly, because *esse* and *intelligere* are distinct acts in every intelligent creature, the essence and intellectual power are also distinct potencies, and only in God where *esse* and *intelligere* are one is there an identity of intellect and substance. It is apparent, therefore, that created intellects are predicamental accidents distinct from both the substance of the knower and other operative potencies as well.

Having declared the principle from which we must proceed, let us consider a few things about the intellect in comparison

²³ “. . . Est enim intellectus possibilis in potentia ad intelligibilia, sicut indeterminatum ad determinatum. Nam intellectus possibilis non habet determinate naturam alicuius rerum sensibilium. Unumquodque autem intelligibile, est aliqua determinata natura alicuius speciei. Unde supra dixit quod intellectus possibilis comparatur ad intelligibilia, sicut tabula ad determinatas picturas.” *In III De Anima*, 10, n. 738.

²⁴ *Summa Theol.*, I, 54, 3.

to matter. From experience we know that the intellect is an operative potency—a proximate principle of operation—and by this alone if by nothing else the intellect is distinguished from every material potency, whether in the accidental or the substantial order. Nothing that is properly matter, and consequently passive in the order of exercise, is a principle of operation. Operative potencies suppose a being in act—even passive operative potencies have in themselves the power to exercise or elicit operations, and their receptivity in the face of their objects is solely in the order of specification.²⁵ No object moves an operative power in the order of exercise, which is the order of existence. Consequently this kind of potency has its origin in the actuality of the substance and its primary root therefore is in the substantial form. *Operation follows upon a being in act*, and although the passive operative potencies only determine the operator to the object in general and must themselves be reduced to act with respect to some particular species by a form received from the object, nevertheless, since such faculties *do not* receive their ability to exercise operations from the object, we know that they are founded in the form; and every operative potency is active in this sense.

Furthermore, it should be noted that when we say the senses receive a form in an *immaterial mode* we are forced to admit that the receptivity of the sense is founded on the *actuality* of the being; this passivity, therefore, originates in the substantial form. To the extent that a species is received immaterially—to that extent it is received by the form of the receiver rather than his matter. If the mode of reception varies, so must the receiver—that is, the principle of reception. (However, as long as the receiver is a composite potency, the reception will be material to some degree.) Operative potencies, therefore, especially knowing powers, are radically distinct from matter.²⁶

²⁵ See John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus*, Phil. Nat., IV, q. 2, a. 3 ed. B. Reiser (Turin, 1937).

²⁶ We have dwelt upon the operative character of the intellect because

C. *Every created intellect is a passive power*

1. *The principle of knowledge is a similitude*

Knowledge is an assimilation;²⁷ it implies a similitude between knower and known. The act of knowing, in which knower and object are united, is accomplished through a similitude by which the object is made present to the power. A similitude, of course, is a likeness, a representation of another, and therefore knowledge formally as such implies a relation to another.²⁸ Briefly, *a knowing power is in act as such only when it is assimilated to the known.*

However, as St. Thomas remarks,²⁹ it is possible to distinguish a threefold similitude: for two things are similar 1) when each has the same thing in act; or 2) when one has in potency that which the other has in act; or 3) the potency itself and its act (as opposed to the thing which has the potency and the thing which has the act) are similar and constitute a similitude, for the act can be realized in the potency only insofar as the latter is proportioned to the former.

Now since knowing is an *actus perfecti* and follows upon a being in act, knowledge occurs when the knower and the known are alike in act. The similitude according to which the knowing power is assimilated to the object is that which exists when knower and known are one in act; that is, when they possess the same form. Although it is legitimate to speak of a similitude existing between a knowing power and its object even when the former is in the state of potentiality with regard to the act of knowing (according to the third kind of similitude), this similitude is not the one which defines the act of knowledge.

the capacity to receive an intentional form is the capacity of a being in act; hence matter can never receive a form intentionally.

²⁷ Assimilation is understood as "motus ad similitudinem." One thing is assimilated to another when it is made similar to it.

²⁸ St. Thomas, *De Ver.*, II, 6 ad 17.

²⁹ *Summa Theol.*, I-II, 27, 3.

Furthermore, unlike the agent which assimilates many things *to itself* through *one* form (as a flame makes many things like itself by heating them), the knower must be assimilated *to many things* and must therefore possess in some manner the *many* forms or perfections of the objects he knows.

2. *The passivity of created intellects*

Experience teaches us that the human intelligence is a passive power.³⁰ Because we can acquire knowledge we do not yet possess, we know that our intellects are potential, and that they operate by a form which is received. But it is not the intellect alone that is passive, for any power whatsoever which is distinct from the form by which it is proximately prepared for operation is passive in respect to that form; and since every created intellect is related to its form in this way, it can be seen that every created intelligence is a passive power. (It cannot be said, however, that every power which is a composite of matter and form is passive simply because it is composed of two such principles. Vegetative powers, for example, are of this sort, yet they are active, for in faculties of this kind it is the composite which is the power and not just the matter. In regard to the intellect, however, it is that which *receives* the form that is the power, not the "composite" of intellect and form.)

But the passivity of created intelligences can be made more manifest by arguing directly and necessarily from the nature of a finite knowing power:

The sense . . . is a passive potency, because the sense cannot be in act all those things to which by its nature its operation extends. For there cannot be something which has all colors in act. Therefore, it is necessary that sight be able to know all colors insofar as it is in a certain manner all colors in potency. . . .

³⁰ Passive is taken in its most general sense. "*Communiter* quidem dicitur passio receptio alicuius quocumque modo; et hoc sequendo significationem vocabuli: nam passio dicitur a *patin* graece, quod est recipere." *De Ver.*, XXVI, 1.

Similarly, the intellect is able to know all beings, because being and the true, which is the object of the intellect, are convertible. However, no creature, since it is a finite being, can be all being in act; for this belongs only to God, who is the source of all being, and who has all things in himself in a certain manner. . . . And therefore no creature can understand without an intellect which is a passive potency, that is, receptive.³¹

Substantially the same doctrine is repeated in another passage:

. . . the intellect of the human soul is in potency to all things. However, it is impossible for any created being to be perfectly the act and likeness of all beings, for then, it would possess the nature of being in an infinite manner. Hence, only God can understand all things in Himself and without any addition. But every created intellect understands through some additional species, either acquired by it, as happens with us, or given in creation or infused, as in angels.³²

And in yet another passage:

. . . the intellect . . . has an operation extending to universal being. We may therefore see whether an intellect is in act or potentiality by observing how the intellect is related to universal being. For there is an intellect whose relation to universal being is that of the act of all being; and such is the divine intellect, which is the essence of God, in

³¹ "*Sensus autem potentia passiva est; quia non potest esse in actu omnium ad quae se extendit sua operatio per naturam potentiae. Non enim potest esse aliquid quod actu habeat omnes colores. Et ideo oportet quod visus sit cognoscitivus omnium colorum, secundum quod est potentia omnes colores quodammodo, . . .*

"Similiter etiam intellectus est cognoscitivus omnium entium; quia ens et verum convertuntur, quod est obiectum intellectus. Nulla autem creatura potest esse in actu totius entitatis, cum sit ens finitum: hoc enim est solius Dei, qui est fons omnium entium, omnia quodammodo in se prae habens, . . . Et ideo nulla creatura potest intelligere sine aliquo intellectu qui sit potentia passiva, idest receptiva." In III Sent., d. 14, 1, 2.

³² "*. . . intellectus animae humanae est in potentia ad omnia entia. Impossibile est autem esse aliquid ens creatum quod sit perfecte actus et similitudo omnium entium, quia sic infinite possideret naturam entitatis. Unde solus Deus per seipsum sine aliquo addito potest omnia intelligere. Quilibet autem intellectus creatus intelligit per alias species superadditas, vel acquisitas, sicut in nobis accidit, vel concreatas, sive infusas, sicut in angelis." De Ver., XX, 2.*

which, originally and virtually, all being pre-exists as in its first cause. Therefore the divine intellect is not in potentiality, but is pure act. But no created intellect can be as act in relation to the whole of universal being; for then it would needs be an infinite being. Therefore no created intellect, by reason of its very being, is the act of all things intelligible; but it is compared to these intelligible things as potentiality to act.³³

An intellect is a power whose operation is absolutely universal, extending to all being. Now powers are related to their objects either actively or passively; and if an intellect were to be related actively to its object, in itself it would have to be in act with respect to all those things to which its operation extends. This would demand that the intellect be a similitude of all being, that it be infinite. It is evident, therefore, that the only intellect which is related to its object as an active power is the Divine Intellect. No created form, whether subsisting or inhering, can be a representation of all being. In the words of St. Thomas: ". . . the perfect likeness of the whole of all being cannot but be infinite. And just as the nature of a separated substance is not infinite, but limited, an intelligible likeness existing in it cannot be infinite, but is limited to some species or genus of being; hence a plurality of such likenesses is required for the comprehension of all being."³⁴ In a certain way there

³³ "Intellectus enim . . . habet operationem circa ens in universali. Considerari ergo potest utrum intellectus sit in actu vel potentia, ex hoc quod consideratur quomodo intellectus se habeat ad ens universale. Invenitur enim aliquis intellectus, qui ad ens universale se habet sicut actus totius entis: et talis est intellectus divinus, qui est Dei essentia, in qua originaliter et virtualiter totum ens praeexistit sicut in prima causa. Et ideo intellectus divinus non est in potentia, sed est actus purus.—Nullus autem intellectus creatus potest se habere ut actus respectu totius entis universalis: quia sic oportet quod esset ens infinitum. Unde omnis intellectus creatus, per hoc ipsum quod est, non est actus omnium intelligendum, sed comparatur ad ipsa intelligibilia sicut potentia ad actum." *Summa Theol.*, I, 79, 2.

³⁴ ". . . totius entis universalis perfecta similitudo esse non potest nisi infinita; sicut autem natura substantiae separatae non est infinita sed terminata, ita similitudo intelligibilis in ea existens non potest esse infinita,

is a disproportion between the created intellect and the created similitude, for, since every created similitude must be finite, no one such form can perfectly determine a created intellect to the knowledge of all things. Thus the intelligence of the creature must be receptive of many forms.

In book II of the *Summa contra Gentiles*, chapter 98, St. Thomas considers how one separated substance knows another, and in the treatment of this question he makes use of doctrine bearing upon the limited nature of the finite similitude, which, in spite of the risk of being repetitive, we wish to consider. St. Thomas says:

... since none of these separated substances is by its essence a sufficient principle of the knowledge of all other things, there must be added to each of them over and above its own substance, certain intelligible likenesses, whereby each of them is enabled to know another in its proper nature.³⁵

Now the reason for this

... can be made clear as follows. The proper object of intellect is intelligible being, which includes all possible differences and species of being, since whatever can be, can be known.³⁶

An intellect is a potency which is ordered to intelligible being as its object, and it is therefore ordered to being universally; for whatever can be, can be known. Hence, an intellectual power has a certain infinity due to its ordination to an absolutely universal object. But

sed terminata ad aliquam speciem vel genus entis; unde ad comprehensionem totius entis requiruntur plures huiusmodi similitudines. *Sum. cont. Gent.*, II, 98.

³⁵ "... cum nulla huiusmodi substantiarum secundum suam essentiam sit sufficiens principium cognitionis omnium aliarum rerum, unicuique earum, supra propriam substantiam, oportet superaddere quasdam intelligibiles similitudines, per quas quaelibet earum aliam in propria natura cognoscere possit." *Sum. con. Gent.*, II, 98.

³⁶ "Hoc autem sic manifestum esse potest. Est enim proprium obiectum intellectus *ens intelligibile*: quod quidem comprehendit omnes differentias et species entis possibiles; quicquid enim esse potest, intelligi potest." *Ibid.*

... since all knowledge is brought about by way of likeness, the intellect cannot know its object wholly unless it has in itself the likeness of all being and of all its differences. But such a likeness of all being, can be nothing other than an infinite nature: a nature not determined to some species or genus of being, but the universal principle of all being and the power productive of all being; and this, as was shown in Book I, is the divine nature alone. Indeed, no other nature can be the universal likeness of all being, since every other nature is limited to some genus and species of being. It therefore remains that God alone, by His essence, knows all things. Every separated substance, on the other hand, is by its nature possessed of a perfect knowledge only of its own species; while the possible intellect by its nature knows not at all, but through the intelligible species. . . .³⁷

It is necessary to repeat, because of its importance to the argument, that between the nature of a created substance (considered as the form by which he knows) and his intellect there is a certain disproportion. No created essence can be an adequate similitude of all intelligible being, but intelligible being is, nevertheless, the object of even the created intellect. The substance of every creature is limited to a genus and species, and not one such being can adequately represent some other species in its proper distinction. The act of knowing is measured by the similitude which is its principle, and therefore whatever is not contained in the principle cannot be known. The separated substance can know *himself* perfectly through his essence, but since one separated substance contains the perfection of other

³⁷ " . . . Cum autem omnis cognitio fiat per modum similitudines, non potest totaliter suum obiectum intellectus cognoscere nisi habeat in se similitudinem totius entis et omnium differentiarum eius. Talis autem similitudo totius entis esse non potest nisi natura infinita, quae non determinatur ad aliquam speciem vel genus entis, sed est universale principium et virtus activa totius entis: qualis est sola natura divina, ut in Primo . . . ostensum est. Omnis autem alia natura, cum sit terminata ad aliquod genus et speciem entis, non potest esse universalis similitudo totius entis. Relinquitur igitur quod solus Deus per essentiam omnia cognoscat; quaelibet autem substantiarum separatarum per suam naturam cognoscit, perfecta cognitione, suam speciem tantum; intellectus autem possibilis nequaquam, sed per intelligibilem speciem, . . ." *ibid.*

beings only commonly and not properly or specifically (as for example, when we understand the power of nutrition in man to be generically similar to the power of nutrition in a plant; the two have only a common likeness, for one makes flesh while the other makes cellulose, etc.), he cannot have perfect knowledge of any other being through his own essence. The specific perfection of one creature is not possessed by others. The only being which contains in itself the likeness of all being, is God. God, therefore, can know all things through Himself; but since every created intellectual substance is finite (that is, determined or limited to some genus and species), it follows that all such substances must have intelligible species added to them in the manner of accidental determinations if they are to know other things. **These intelligible species supply for the representational deficiencies of the creature's essence.**

To put the matter a little differently, what makes the use of intelligible species necessary—the limited nature of the finite similitude—is also what requires that the created intellect be a passive power. Such an intelligence cannot be in act through its essence; rather, it must operate through forms which are *other* than it. As St. Thomas says,

. . . the intellect in act is altogether, that is, perfectly, the thing known. . . . This should not be understood to mean that the *essence*³⁸ of the intellect becomes the thing known, or its species, but that the intellect is completely informed by the species of the thing known when it knows it in act.³⁹

Through its own essence a created intellect is only potentially a likeness of its object. It becomes the known in act through a form which is distinct from it. Moreover, the knowledge the

³⁸ Italics ours.

³⁹ “. . . intellectus secundum actum est omnino, id est perfecte, res intellecta. . . . Quod quidem intelligendum est, non quod essentia intellectus fiat res intellecta, vel species ejus, sed quia complete informatur per speciem rei intellectae dum eam actu intelligit.” *Quodl.*, VII, 1, 2.

separated substance has of himself (and he always knows himself in act) is not an exception to this; for the essence and intellect of this creature are distinct things, and the one is form in relation to the other. In these substances, too, the intellectual power is not known through its own essence as a power, but through a form which is distinct from that power.

Although up to now we have been speaking universally of created intelligences, certain distinctions must be made between the possible intellect of the human soul and the intelligence of the angels:

. . . potentiality has a double relation to act. There is a potentiality which is always perfected by its act, as is said in the case of the matter of the heavenly bodies. And there is another potentiality which is not always in act, but proceeds from potentiality to act, as we observe in things that are corrupted and generated. Hence the angelic intellect is always in act as regards those things which it can understand, by reason of its proximity to the first intellect, which is pure act, as we have said above. But the human intellect, which is the lowest in the order of intellects and most remote from the perfection of the divine intellect, is in potentiality with regard to things intelligible, and is at first *like a clean tablet on which nothing is written*, as the Philosopher says. . . .⁴⁰

Potencies have a twofold relation to their acts. Some are always perfected by their acts and never exist as separated from them. For example, according to the hypothesis of the ancients the heavenly bodies were composed of matter and form; and although the matter of these bodies was held to be a pure potentiality, it nevertheless had a capacity for only one form,

⁴⁰ "Potentia autem dupliciter se habet ad actum. Est enim quaedam potentia quae semper est perfecta per actum; sicut diximus de materia corporum caelestium. Quaedam autem potentia est, quae non semper est in actu, sed de potentia procedit in actum; sicut invenitur in generabilibus et corruptibilibus.—Intellectus igitur angelicus semper est in actu suorum intelligibilium, propter propinquitatem ad primum intellectum, qui est actus purus. . . . Intellectus autem humanus, qui est infimus in ordine intellectuum, et maxime remotus a perfectione divini intellectus, est in potentia respectu intelligibilium, et in principio est *sicut tabula rasa in qua nihil est scriptum*, ut Philosophus dicit. . . ." *Summa Theol.*, I, 79, 2.

and what is more important, it always possessed that form in act. Now the intelligence of the separated substance is a power of this first sort; for although it is potential, from the first moment of its existence it possesses all those forms by which it knows. In the natural order it never acquires a new species. Other potencies, however, are not always actuated by their forms, but must *acquire* them, and the human intellect is a potency of this second kind. Man's reason, therefore, is reduced to act by its object.

But despite such differences the human and angelic intellect *are* alike in that each is only passively ordered to its object, *ens intelligibile*. Both powers in themselves are potential—neither is in act. If some finite intellect were an active power—if it were in act through itself—then that intellect could not be ordered to being universally as its object. A finite active intellect could know adequately only that to which it would be determined by its form. It would be like a separated substance whose essence was his intellect, for such a being could know only himself adequately. Thus, every finite intelligence must be a passive power which is actuated by a form distinct from the essence of the power.

An important objection, however, must be forestalled before continuing, for it cannot be maintained that an active intellect of the sort described would be capable of receiving other species. Nothing receives insofar as it is in act but only insofar as it is in potency,⁴¹ and to ask that an intellect be simultaneously some finite similitude in act and others in potency is to ask the impossible. Whenever some being is one thing in act and others

⁴¹ “. . . nulla res, quantumcumque materialis, recipit aliquid secundum id quod est formale in ipsa, sed solum secundum id quod est materiale in ea; sicut anima nostra non recipit illuminationem ratione intellectus agentis, sed ratione possibilis; velut etiam res corporales non recipiunt aliquam impressionem ex parte formae, sed ex parte materiae et tamen intellectus possibilis noster est simplicior quam aliqua forma materialis. . . .” *De Ver.*, IX, 1 ad 12.

in potency it is so by reason of different principles. Material substances, for example, are one being in act through their form and other beings in potency through their matter. Similarly, as we have already pointed out, that by which the intellect is in act (its form) is other than that by which it is potency. To suppose that the intellect is one thing in act and others in potency through one and the same principle is to suppose a contradiction; for if an intelligence were ordered to one thing in act and others in potency according to the same formality, it would follow that it was in act and in potency at the same time and in the same respect, which is manifestly contradictory. On the other hand, if the intellect were ordered to one formal object insofar as it was active and to another formal object insofar as it was passive, it would be several formally distinct powers, and there could then be no question of *one* intellect. This is obviously an equally unacceptable position.

Thus, no finite active intelligence (or any other finite active power, for that matter) could be ordered to being universally, for it would be naturally determined or limited to one thing and unable to receive the similitudes of others outside the formality of its object. In other words, the "*intus apparens*," or con-natural determination would be an obstacle to the knowledge of other things. Moreover, the same determination would occur whether the intellect was a form or whether it was constituted as an operative power through the union of potency and form, for in the latter case as in the former the power would have a finite nature in act. Hence, because no created intellect can be substantially either a form or a composite of potency and form, it follows that it must be substantially in potency and therefore not proportioned *in act* to any object whatsoever. This is the same as saying that every created intelligence must be undetermined.

Having established that an intellectual power must be purely

potential, there remains only the business of completing the interpretation by applying the above doctrine to the question, why cannot a corporeal operative potency be an intellect? Or in other words, why cannot such a power be capable of receiving any intentional form whatsoever?

In order to answer this question explicitly we shall proceed as follows: Accepting that every form received in matter is a finite act, we may then say that since every operative potency constituted by a form received in matter is limited, and because every corporeal operative power is an operative potency constituted by a form received in matter, therefore it follows that every corporeal power is limited—*which is the same as saying that it is connaturally determined*. Unlike the intellect, which is substantially in potency, corporeal operative powers must be composites; for matter is a pure potency and cannot be a principle of operation through itself but only through a received form. Hence, because every corporeal operative power is substantially in (first) act, and therefore determined, such potencies can be ordered only to those objects to which they are proportioned by their limited forms. As a result *their capacity to receive is limited, and they are unable to take on any form which is outside their own determined genus*. This is manifestly the kind of potencies the senses are.⁴² Thus, we may argue as follows: no corporeal knowing power is able to receive all intentional forms, and every intellect is able to receive all

⁴² After distinguishing first act and second act in the intellect St. Thomas says, commenting on Aristotle: “. . . Considerandum est ergo . . . quod sicut in scientia est duplex potentia et duplex actus, ita est et circa sensum. Nam quod nondum habet sensum et natum est habere, est in potentia ad sensum. Et quod iam habet sensum et nondum sentit, est potentia sentiens, sicut circa scientiam dicebatur. Sicut autem de potentia prima aliquid mutatur in primum actum, dum acquirit scientiam per doctrinam; ita de prima potentia ad sensum, aliquid mutatur in actum, ut scilicet habeat sensum per generationem. Sensus autem naturaliter inest animali: unde sicut per generationem acquirit propriam naturam, et speciem, ita acquirit sensum. Secus autem est de scientia, quae non inest homini per naturam sed acquiritur per intentionem et disciplinam.” *In II de Anima*, 12, n. 373.

intentional forms, therefore no intellect is a corporeal power. This was the conclusion to be established.

However, because it is the fundamental point of doctrine in this exposition, let us manifest the determined nature of composite powers more thoroughly by comparing the intellect in first act to the sense. The possible intellect is reduced to act by an *habitus*, and although in considering the *habitus* one cannot abstract from the intelligible species, it is the *habitus*, nevertheless, which is the principle of unity according to which the intellect is determined to some genus of object. The *habitus* is, therefore, comparable to the substantial form of the sense in this regard. Moreover, it is pertinent to note that if some such quality (for example, geometry) were connatural to the intellect the latter would be unable to receive other *habitus* for the reason given earlier.⁴³ However, despite its inability to receive forms outside its genus, such a connaturally determined intellect would *not* be prevented from receiving further species within the formality of its object, and such an intellect would be like the senses, which can receive intentional forms although only in a limited respect.

Yet it is precisely insofar as it is in first act that the intellect differs from the sense. The intellect is reduced to first act by an *habitus*, but this first act does not confer existence upon the possible intellect; it neither makes the intelligence to be a power nor gives it the ability to elicit operations. On the other hand, the substantial form of the sense, which is a first act and which proportions the sense to some genus of object, is also that which causes the sensitive power to exist as such. In no way is the ability to operate *presupposed* to the reception of first act in the case of a corporeal knowing power; on the contrary, the operative nature of the potency *results* from its being in first act.⁴⁴ Consequently, it follows that every corporeal knowing

⁴³ Page 18.

⁴⁴ St. Thomas remarks: "... materia prima non potest agere aliquam actionem nisi perficiatur per formam." *De Ver.*, VIII, 6.

power is connaturally finite or limited and is therefore incapable of being ordered to an unlimited or absolutely undetermined object, that is, *ens universale*.

In summary, then, the argument may be restated somewhat differently as follows: no connaturally determined operative potency can be ordered to an undetermined or unlimited object, but every intellect is ordered to an undetermined or unlimited object, therefore no intellect is connaturally determined. Using this conclusion as a minor premiss we may then subsume it under the proposition over which we labored so long and construct the following syllogism: because every corporeal knowing power is connaturally determined, and because no intellect is connaturally determined, it follows that no intellect is a corporeal knowing power. And so if the possible intellect is an operative potency uncomposed of matter and form, the only remaining alternative is that it be a potency of the form alone. And from this it plainly follows that the substantial form of man is subsistent.

Returning now to the original citation in order to compare our doctrine to the letter of the demonstration as it is presented in the *De Anima*, we may note that the argument begins with the following proposition: "Anything that is in potency with respect to an object, and able to receive it into itself, is, as such, without that object; . . ." Now manifestly the human intellect is this sort of potency, so it ". . . must itself lack all those things which it of its nature is capable of understanding." But in the text this proposition is then contracted by being applied to corporeal natures: ". . . since then it is of such a nature that it is capable of understanding all sensible and bodily things, it must be lacking every bodily nature; . . ." and the reason is, of course, that ". . . if the intellect were restricted to any particular nature, this connatural restriction would prevent it from knowing other natures." But in order for a determined nature to impede the assimilation of the intellect to its object

it must interfere with the reception of a similitude, and this is how St. Thomas understands the "intus apparens prohibet extraneum," for he says: ". . . a feverish tongue, which has some bitter humour cannot *receive* (italics ours) a sweet flavor."⁴⁵ Thus, it appears that this interpretation resolves to first principles and that it is in conformity with the letter of St. Thomas.

3. *The intentional union*

The reader will have observed that the resolution of the argument proceeds without any specific reference to the distinction between the natural and intentional being of the intellect, nor does St. Thomas at any time have recourse to it. But because Cajetan poses the problem in these terms we have a certain obligation to consider the distinction and see how it might be used in the demonstration.

It is fundamental to the doctrine of knowledge in the Aristotelian and Thomistic tradition that the union between knower and known obtained through the medium of the similitude is an intentional union; and the form which is the principle of the act of knowing is characterized by the different mode of existence it has in the knower as compared to the mode of existence it has in the object known:

. . . the sense receives the form without the matter, because the form has one mode of existing in the sense and another in the sensible. For in the sensible thing it has a natural existence, in the sense, however, it has an intentional and spiritual existence.⁴⁶

The immediate problem, therefore, is to determine what is *per se* to the intentional form as such.

⁴⁵ ". . . lingua febricitantis, quae habet aliquem humorem amarum, non potest recipere dulcem saporem." *In III de Anima*, 7, n. 680.

⁴⁶ ". . . sensus recipit formam sine materia, quia alterius modi esse habet forma in sensu, et in re sensibili. Nam in re sensibili habet esse naturale, in sensu autem habet esse intentionale et spirituale." *In II de Anima*, 24, n. 551.

To know implies having the form of another; therefore the form by which the knowing power operates must be the form of the thing known, existing within the power. Such a form, therefore, has a twofold function: 1) to represent the object—that is, to substitute for it—and 2) to enable the power to operate by serving as its form. Briefly, it can be said that in one respect the intentional form is the form of the known, and in another respect it is the form of the knower. Hence, intentional forms can be categorized according to the genus of the object represented; and classified in this way the genera of the intentional species are many. But when the intentional species are considered in a second way as the principle of the power's operations, they all belong to the same genus and that is quality.

The distinction we have just presented is also made by John of St. Thomas:

... a species informs its potency in a twofold way; namely, entitatively or by inhering in it, and also intentionally and in place of the object by perfecting, or preferably, by transforming the potency into the object.

And the reason for this is that the species, among all the other forms, has this special feature, that it informs not only for itself but also as a substitute for another, namely the object; indeed the species is not required for itself but for the sake of the object, by which the potency is perfectly without constituting some nature with it.⁴⁷

Thus, from the fact that the act of knowing is a *real determination* of the knower by which he attains the object, we see that the species must inform the power both entitatively and representationally; and it is plain that the two informations are distinct from one another. Furthermore we must conclude that

⁴⁷ "... speciem informare dupliciter potentiam, scilicet entitative seu inhaerendo, intentionaliter autem et vice obiecti perficiendo seu potius transformando potentiam in obiectum.

Et ratio est, quia species inter omnes alias formas hoc habet speciale, quod non solum informat pro se, sed vice alterius, scilicet obiecti, imo propter se non requiritur, sed propter obiectum, a quo perficitur potentia sine hoc, quod cum ipso obiecto constituat naturam aliquam." *Cursus Philosophicus, Phil. Nat.*, IV, Q. 6, a. 3, p. 185a, 26-40.

the form of the knowing power is intentional precisely insofar as it represents and not insofar as it inheres in the power. But a few more lines from John of St. Thomas will help determine this point:

... a potency does not use the entity of the species as the specifying principle of its acts; but it is the represented object which is specificative; and a potency must be actuated by its specifying principle inasmuch as it is specifying. Therefore if the potency is not specified by the entity of the species but by the represented object, another union or actuation or determination must occur between the represented object and the potency, and this is said to be an intelligible or intentional union; however, between the potency and the entity of the species there is an accidental union, that is, an inhering of one in the other.⁴⁸

Since the form which specifies an act of knowing is the form as representative, and because the intentional form is the form which specifies, it follows that the intentional as such is representational.

This point can be established in another way, proceeding from the supposition that the substance of an angel serves him as a formal principle of knowledge. The form by which an angel knows is an intentional form, and if his own substance is the form by which he knows, the angel's substance is an intentional form insofar as it is a similitude determining his act of knowledge. In other words, because an intentional form can be *subsisting* as well as *inhering* it is apparent that representation is the formal element of intentionality.

More formally, we can say with Cajetan that it is necessary to distinguish between that which is *per se* and that which is *per accidens* to the intentional form:

⁴⁸ "... potentia non utitur entitate speciem tamquam principio specificante actus suos, sed obiecto in ea repraesentato utitur tamquam specificativo, sed potentia debet actuari a suo specificativo, inquantum specificativum est. Ergo si ab entitate speciei non specificatur, bene tamen ab obiecto repraesentato, alia unio seu actuatio aut determinatio debet intercedere inter obiectum repraesentatum et potentiam, et dicitur unio intelligibilis seu intentionalis, inter entitatem vero speciei et potentiam est unio accidentalis, id est inhaerentiae." *Ibid.*, b, 10-25.

The intelligible species of things, about which we are speaking, are not *per se* either substances or accidents; this happens (accidit) to them. Truth demands *per se* of such a species that it be representative of another, not in the mode of a sign (because anything can signify anything), but in the mode of a similitude. Hence the philosophers, as it is said in the first book of the *De Anima*, agree in this, that knowledge is brought about through assimilation. And if knowledge is to be quidditative, it is necessary that the species be similar not only according to the genus, but the ultimate species as well, either formally or eminently. For our soul never knows a house quidditatively unless it has within it a species of 'what it is' to be a house. It is necessary, therefore, that the species by which the thing is seen, be the 'what it is' of that thing; not according to the same natural mode of being of the thing seen but in another mode. This mode, formally taken, abstracts from both substantial and accidental being (*esse*), as is evident; in addition it must be more noble, or at least as noble, as the nobility of the mode of being of the thing seen; which is evident inductively, and is proved by argument; because the knower as such has a more noble mode of being than the known has in itself, as it terminates knowledge.⁴⁹

As the Cardinal points out, the being of the similitude formally considered abstracts from both accidental and substantial *esse*—both of these are *per accidens* to the similitude as such. An intentional union is precisely one which is *not* of the

⁴⁹ " . . . Species quidem rerum, de quibus est sermo, per se quidem non habent quod sint substantiae vel accidentia; sed hoc accidit eis. Verum per se exigit talis species, quod sit repraesentativum alterius, non per modum signi (quoniam quodlibet potest significare quodcumque), sed per modum similitudinis. Unde philosophi, ut in *I de Anima* dicitur, conveniunt in hoc, quod cognitio fit per assimilationem. Et si cognitio debet esse quidditativa, oportet speciem esse similem non solum secundum genus, sed speciem specialissimam, formaliter vel eminenter. Nunquam enim anima nostra domum quidditative novit, nisi apud se speciem domus quae sit quod quid est domus, habeat. Oportet igitur speciem qua videnda est res, esse quod quid est ipsius rei; non secundum modum essendi naturalem rei visae, sed in alio essendi modo. Qui, formaliter sumptus, et abstrahit ab esse substantiali et accidentali, ut de se patet; et exigit quod sit nobilior, aut saltem aequae nobilis, quam sit nobilitas modi essendi rei visae; ut inductive patet, et ratione probatur; quia cognoscens ut sic, habet nobiliorem essendi modum cognito in seipso, ut cognitionem terminat." *I*, 12, 2, n. vii.

natural, or entitative order. The species is not *intentionally* united to the knower by reasons of its inherence in the intellect. On the contrary, although the species is united to the intellect as an accident to its subject, this union is extrinsic to that union whereby the species informs and is one with the intellect in the representational order. It is precisely this latter unity which is formal to knowledge, and which, because it must be manifested through the medium of the union between matter and form, we are wont to denominate negatively as immaterial. In short, the intentional form as such does not determine the intellect subjectively to the genus and species of that which it (the form) is quidditatively.

Now, although it is accidental to the similitude that its *esse* be substantial or accidental, it nevertheless must be noted that the species is necessarily one or the other of these; for as we have already said, before a thing can represent another it must itself be an entity of some sort.

Briefly, then, the similitude which is the form of an intellect is 1) either inhering or subsisting; is 2) endowed (in either case) with a being of its own in addition to the being of that which it represents; is 3) an intentional form insofar as it is representational. Intentional union, therefore, is in the order of representation.

Now up to this point we have been intent upon distinguishing the natural or entitative being of a species from its intentional being, but it is important to remember that these two aspects are not distinct *in re*. The species is not a composite of intentional and natural being. On the contrary, although they are formally different these two are one in the thing. The intelligible species is both the form of the knower and the form of the known. As form of the knower its being is natural, as form of the known (albeit within the knower) it is intentional, and it is precisely as the latter, that is, as a substitute for the object, that the species is principle of the act of knowing. The natural union

exists only so that the intentional union can occur. It is an indispensable condition of the latter. As John of St. Thomas says, this natural or entitative union must not be considered intelligible (that is, the intelligible union), but "maxime ad intelligendum conducens."⁵⁰

A similar doctrine can be put forward apropos of the power. As an operative potency which is an accident of the knowing substance the intellect's being is natural; as a potential likeness of the object its being is intentional. But as in the species so in the power, the natural being and the intentional being are *one thing*. The intentional being is also entitative *identice seu presuppositive*; ⁵¹ the former presupposes the latter *in re*.

Hence, if one identifies the ability of the intellect to *elicit* or *exercise* its operations (insofar as this proceeds from the soul) with the natural or entitative being of the intellect, then it is possible to say that this natural being of the intellect cannot be material, because if it were the operative ability would be limited by the finite form which gave it the power of operation.

Perhaps this is similar to what Cajetan might have had in mind when he proposed the problem in terms of the natural and intentional being of the intellect. On the whole, however, we do not think it contributes very much to the understanding of the doctrine on the immateriality of the intellect.

D. *Some difficulties*

The principal problem which occasioned this essay has now been sufficiently considered, but there are some lesser difficulties which remain, one of which is: how can an intellect know itself if it must lack the nature which it knows?

The solution to this problem depends upon the same doctrine which has already been proposed. When a created intellect knows itself the similitude or form by which it operates is something other than its essence. The angelic intellect, for example,

⁵⁰ *Loc. cit.*, p. 185, a 41-45.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 186, a 10-12.

is an accident, and it knows itself through the essence of the angel, not through its own—the intellect's—essence. Through the substance of the angel the angelic intelligence sees itself as a property following upon that substance. No created power knows itself through itself as the form *by which* it knows (this is on the part of the power).

Perhaps it is also worth noting that when St. Thomas enunciates the proposition, "whatever knows certain things cannot have any of them in its own nature," he is not speaking of the supposit which performs the operation, but of the power by which the supposit operates. This is clear from his own words in some texts⁵² but not so evident in others.⁵³ However, it is manifest that every created supposit has a determined (limited) nature, and the "intus apparens" proposition cannot apply to the substance of the knower. Indeed, if the substance of the creature were also his intellectual power, then no created being would be able to know anything other than himself (adequately), as was said above. The "intus apparens" proposition must be interpreted, therefore, to apply to the proximate principle of operation, the intellectual potency.

There remains as yet one important difficulty to be resolved. In the beginning when posing the problem, an objection from St. Thomas was quoted which he puts forward against the proposition that one angel can know another. We also noted St. Thomas' reply to that objection and remarked that it did not seem to resolve the difficulty. Let us repeat that reply:

The spiritual natures of the angels are distinguished from one another by a certain order, as was already observed. So the nature of an angel does not hinder him from knowing the other angelic natures, since both the higher and lower have an affinity with his nature, the only difference being according to their diverse degrees of perfection.

⁵² *In III de Anima*, 7, n. 680; *Q. D. de Anima*, 2; *De Unitate Intellectus*, I, 10.

⁵³ *Summa Theol.*, I, 75, 2; *Quodl.*, X, q. 3, a. 6.

In this text, it must be noted, St. Thomas remarks that the nature of the angel (i. e., his substantial nature) is not an obstacle to his knowing the natures of other angels. St. Thomas here speaks, not of the nature of the *power*, but of the nature of the *supposit*. Now in knowing himself through his own essence the angel is not hindered from knowing the *natures* of other angels for the reason that is given in the above reply, and which is presented at greater length in another place where St. Thomas treats the same question (whether one angel knows another):

From what others have written, however, it seems that one angel sees another by means of his essence, that is, by means of his own essence. . . . "Just as the mind acquires knowledge of corporeal things through the senses of the body, so it acquires knowledge of incorporeal things through itself."

. . . This explanation does not seem to be sufficient, however, for since all knowledge takes place through assimilation, by knowing his own essence one angel would know no more about another angel than that which was similar to his own essence. Now, one angel resembles another only in their common nature. Hence, it would follow that the knowledge one angel would have about another would not be complete; and it would be very incomplete according to the opinion of those who hold that there are many angels in one species. This view, however, might be supported to some extent by those who hold that each angel is specifically different; for, by knowing his own essence, each angel would know perfectly an intellectual nature, and having known this perfectly, he would know all the grades an intellectual nature could have. Now, the different species of angels are distinguished only according to grades of perfection of intellectual nature; consequently, by seeing his own essence, one angel could conceive the individual grades of intellectual nature, and, by means of these conceptions, have complete knowledge of all other angels.

In this way, we could save the opinion of those who say that one angel knows another by means of a form he has acquired—if, indeed, the aforementioned conceptions can be called acquired forms. It would be as though whiteness understood itself, and by knowing perfectly the nature of color, knew all species of colors distinctly according to the grades of color, supposing that there were only one member to a species.

But this explanation does not seem sufficient either, because, even

though there is only one angel in every species, nevertheless, in any particular angel there will be a difference between what belongs to him by reason of his species and what belongs to him as an individual, for example his own particular operations. According to the above theory, these special operations could in no way be known by another angel. Moreover, the words of Augustine do not mean that a mind can know other things through itself as through a medium, but as through a knowing power; for thus it knows corporeal things through the senses.⁵⁴

There is a limit to what one angel can know of another through his own substance, but nevertheless St. Thomas admits that because the natures of angels differ only as grades of

⁵⁴ "Ex aliorum autem dictis videtur quod angelus per essentiam suam, id est videntis, alium angelum videat. . . . '*Mens ipsa sicut corporearum rerum notitias per corporis sensus colligit, ita et incorporearum per semetipsam. . . .*'

"Sed istud non videtur sufficere: quia, cum omnis cognitio sit per assimilationem, angelus per essentiam non potest plus de alio angelo cognoscere quam hoc in quo essentiae est similis. Unus autem angelus alteri non simulatur nisi in natura communi: et sic sequeretur quod unus alium non cognosceret cognitione completa, et praecipue quantum ad illos qui ponunt plures angelos esse unius speciei.

"Quantum enim ad illos qui ponunt plures angelos specie ab invicem differe, forte posset aliquo modo sustineri modus iste. Quilibet enim angelus cognoscendo essentiam suam, cognoscit perfecte intellectualem naturam. Cognita autem natura intellectuali perfecte, cognoscuntur omnes gradus naturae intellectualis. Diversae autem species in angelis non distinguuntur nisi secundum gradus perfectionis intellectualis naturae. Et secundum gradus naturae intellectualis, et per huiusmodi conceptiones de omnibus aliis angelis cognitionem completam habet.

"Et sic potest salvari quod quidam alii dicunt, quod unus cognoscit alium per formam acquisitam, ut praedicta conceptio forma acquisita dicatur; sicut si albedo seipsam intelligeret, perfecte cognosceret naturam coloris, et per consequens omnes species colorum secundum gradus colorum distincte, et ulterius etiam omnes individuos colores, si in una specie non esset nisi unum individuum.

"Sed adhuc hic modus non videtur sufficere. Quamvis enim in una speciei non sit nisi unus angelus, tamen in angelo alicuius speciei aliud erit quod ei conveniet ex ratione suae speciei, et aliud quod ei conveniet inquantum est quoddam individuum, sicut operationes particulares ipsius; et has secundum modum praedictum nullo modo de eo alius angelus cognoscere posset. Auctoritas autem Augustini . . . non sonat quod mens per seipsam sicut per medium cognoscendi cognoscat alia, sed sicut per potentiam cognoscitivam: sic enim per sensus corporalia cognoscit." *De Ver.*, VIII, 7.

perfection within the order of intellectual natures, in knowing his own essence one angel can know adequately the *natures* of other angels. However, such knowledge does not constitute an exception to the "intus apparens" proposition in St. Thomas' mind for the evident reason that in this instance the similitude is sufficiently proportioned to the object known; the object does not transcend the genus of the form by which it is known. Therefore, according to this position St. Thomas can say that because of the likeness or affinity between the separated substances the substance of one angel is an aid in his knowing other such natures.

E. *Summary*

In conclusion, it may be well to summarize the argument which has been presented. No created intellect can be *in act* the nature of any one of the things it can know, because if some finite nature were connatural to it, the knowing power would be limited to some genus or species, and at the same time it would be prevented from receiving other forms (except those within its formality). And since every operative potency which is a composite of matter and form is intrinsically finite or determined because of the finite character of the form through which it is constituted as an operative power, and because such a power or potency must therefore be ordered to some determined or limited genus of object, it follows that no corporeal potency can be ordered to being universally; consequently no corporeal power can be an intellect. Only a potency which is simple, which is not a composite of matter and form (and which is not matter itself), can be undetermined. And since only a power rooted solely in form and therefore uncomposed can be a potency of this sort, it is evident that the intellect must be in itself, as operative, rooted solely in form and thereby entirely independent of matter.

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