

## A FORGOTTEN SENSE, THE COGITATIVE ACCORDING TO ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

THE CONCEPT of psychology in vogue today is quite different from that which was in favor some two centuries and more ago. Modern psychologists are in search of psychical facts and seek for them with all the care and exactness that characterize the positive sciences. They frequently subject these facts to complex experiments and, with no consideration whatever for metaphysics, elaborate laws and theories in need of constant correction and completion.

The ancients also take facts and experience as their starting point, but only as a springboard to rise to a metaphysical explanation of the reality of the soul and its operations. Common problems are thus considered under different aspects; questions that were once discussed at great length are now neglected, not to say contemned, by the moderns, interested as they are in points of research whose value the ancients did not even suspect.

The study of the senses offers a striking example of this difference of view. The old psychology made a distinction between external and internal senses; it sought to learn the supra-sensible conditions of the former, their object and their connection with the soul; of the latter it strove to determine the number and to discover not so much their exterior manifestations as the intimate character of each and its part in the human act *par excellence*, the act of intellection. It spoke of *sensus communis*, and of the imaginative, cogitative and memorative faculties. Of the old internal senses modern psychology has kept, not the name, but some portion of the reality that was called *sensus communis*, which, in modern terminology, is sense consciousness. It discusses memory and imagination at great length, but completely ignores the cogitative, both in name and in fact.

For the last fifty years, this modern point of view has penetrated all the scholastic treatises published on psychology. In most of them there is some mention of the cogitative, but this is little more than a summary or transcription of St. Thomas' classic article (S. T., I. 78. 4.). In some cases this text is supplemented with a few statements from John of St. Thomas. Many authors treat it in an appendix to the chapter on instinct<sup>1</sup> as conceived by the moderns. All in all, it would seem that modern scholastic philosophers implicitly admit that the doctrine of the cogitative now has no more than an historic interest and that what details of it retain some value go to make up an integral part of the much broader study of instinct.

Precisely what is to be said of the *vis cogitativa*? What is its true and complete function in human cognition? Is it merely an antiquated hypothesis which modern psychology has left behind, or does

<sup>1</sup> To the scholastics of the thirteenth century, "instinct" was not the complex function of modern psychology but a blind drive of nature toward an action to be performed. It was opposed to the cogitative. Cf. S. T., I. 78. 4.

it constitute a part of the everlasting psychic make-up of man? These are the questions to which we seek an answer in the course of these pages.

To achieve this aim we must undertake a thorough study of the question, a study which, as far as we know, has never been undertaken. Our study must first of all be historical, for it is only after explaining, in all its breadth and with all possible objectivity, the Thomistic concept of the cogitative sense that we will be enabled to pass judgment on the actual worth of this theory and thus know whether it belongs in a museum of antiques or deserves a place of honor in contemporary thought.

### THE ESTIMATIVE FUNCTION

The Ancients begin their philosophizing with very simple facts of daily occurrence. The observation is made that the ewe flees from the wolf even before it has experienced the danger which threatens it, although it follows the dog which nevertheless bears a strong resemblance to the wolf; it recognizes its own lamb, but refuses to suckle another; it seeks a certain herb as a source of nourishment, but spurns a certain other though it has never tasted it. The wolf does not attack its own whelp to devour it. The dove hides from the hawk or the falcon. When springtime comes the sparrow picks up a bit of straw with which to build its nest, but passes up a splinter of wood. Such is the comprehensive list of facts which are continually made use of as a foundation in the research problem which we are undertaking.<sup>2</sup> And St. Albert the Great, the scientific

<sup>2</sup> These examples will be found in the following passages, which also constitute the principal sources of the doctrine with which we shall be concerned.

Albert the Great, *Opera Omnia* (Borgnet ed., Paris: 1890); *De Anima*, III, Tr. 1, c. 2 (vol. V, p. 317a); *Summa Philosophiae Pauperum*, pars V. *Isagoge in de Anima*, the authenticity of which is uncertain (vol. V, pp. 521-522); *Liber de Apprehensione*, also doubtful, pars III, n. 10 (vol. V, p. 581); *Comp. Theol. Verit.*, equally doubtful, II, c. 38 (vol. XXXIV, p. 65a); *Summa de Creaturis*, p. II, q. 39, "De virtute aestimativa" where in four articles Master Albert asks himself: Quid sit virtus aestimativa, quod sit objectum ejus, quod organum ejus et quis actus? (vol. XXXV, p. 336)—note in this text the twofold arabic origin of this doctrine.

St. Bonaventure, *Comp. Verit. Theol.*, II, c. 38 (Vives ed.), vol. VIII, p. 106.

St. Thomas, *De Ver.*, 25. 2; *Quaest. de An.*, art 13; *In II de An.*, lect. 13 (Marietti ed.), #398; *S. T.*, I. 78. 4; *S. T.*, I. 81. 3; *Opuscula omnia St. Thomae*, *De Potentiis animae*, c. 4 (Mandonnet ed.), vol. V. (The *De Potentiis animae* is not authentic as an opuscule, but is nothing other than a compounding of texts taken from other Thomistic works of clear authenticity.)

Sylvester de Sylvestris, *Commentarium in Summa Contra Gentiles*, II. 60, n. 1 (Leonine ed., vol. XIII), p. 423a.

As for the later scholastics such as Suarez and John of St. Thomas, they work over the traditional examples. The same may be said of the scholastics of the present time, with the exception of some who strive to put new life into the material by attributing to the human aestimative and cogitative the faculty of "fore-seeing danger" (Collin), of being the basis for certain sympathies or antipathies for which a rational explanation cannot be found (Hugon, II, p. 568); and a Canadian author, M. Filion (a Sulpician Father), writes: ". . . ita antiqui incolae regionum nostrarum qui Indi vocantur, mirabilem aestimativa activitatem ostendebant, ad quam pervenerunt etiam albi

light of the middle ages, puts the whole matter in synthetic form when he says: "In general, every being endowed with sensation has a desire for the food which it needs for its nourishment."<sup>3</sup>

Of these facts some of them show us an attraction on the part of the animal for that which is proper to it, for that which is—whether the animal be conscious of it or not—a good, either for itself individually or for its species. The other facts display a tendency of the animal to draw away from what is dangerous, harmful, or a source of new evil for itself or for its species. We have here a first generalization which the ancients themselves expressed. How are we to explain this phenomenon of attraction and repulsion?

Saint Thomas calls attention to the fact that some previous experience does not furnish the explanation. "Ovis fugit lupum cuius inimicitiam numquam sensit."<sup>4</sup> But are we to explain the phenomenon by some element of pleasure or displeasure to sight, hearing, or smell? The ancients were not unaware of this possible solution. They readily admit that in some cases, though not in all, the attraction or repulsion is sufficiently explained by the pleasant or unpleasant impression received by one or more of the external senses: "Animal enim non solum movetur propter delectabile et contristabile secundum sensum,"<sup>5</sup> writes the author of *De Potentiis Anima*. Though the ewe flees from the wolf,<sup>6</sup> it is not because the latter's color of fur or general appearance are unpleasant, or its scent repellent.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, the external senses cannot furnish the explanation for these observed facts. Though St. Thomas goes no further in his inquiry, his master, Albert the Great, and even St. Bonaventure, wonder whether the imagination might not hold the key to the problem. Bonaventure decides that it does not: "Ad imaginationem solam non sequitur affectus miseriae vel tristitiae vel fuga vel insecuritudo." And St. Albert in his commentary on *De Anima* gives the reason for this conclusion:

Every being endowed with sensation has at least two vital movements, retractability and the movement of dilation. And since these animals display self-motion in seeking their food, it follows that they must represent that food to themselves in one way or another by what we might call their imagination. But imagination, alone, is not enough to present the object to them inasmuch as it is useful or harmful, for all it does is reproduce the external sensations which, on their part, have no element of the useful or harmful.<sup>8</sup>

Contact is made with the object known through sight, if the object be blue or red, through hearing, if it be discordant or harmonious, homines [he is probably talking about the trappers], qui vitam eorum imitati sunt." Cf. Emile Filion, *Elementa Philosophiae* (Montreal: 1938), vol. II, pp. 251-252.

<sup>3</sup> "Omne habens sensum habet desiderium cibi quod est fames." Albert the Great, *De Anima*, III, *loc. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> *De Ver.*, 25. 2. *supra cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *De Pot. An.*, *supra cit.*, and *S. T.*, I. 78. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Albert the Great, *Liber de Apprehensione*, *loc. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *S. T.*, I. 78. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. St. Bonaventure, *loc. cit.*, and Albert the Great, *De Anima*, III. Tr. 1, c. 2 (vol. V, p. 317).

through taste, if it be bitter or sweet, through smell, if it be odoriferous, through touch, if it be rough or smooth. But none of these senses reports whether the object be useful or harmful to the health or life of the animal and least of all to the preservation of the species. There is therefore, in corporeal beings, some real aspect which does not fall within the province of the exterior senses, or even that of the imagination, which, even according to modern psychology, elaborates only the data of the exterior senses. Some name had to be given to this real aspect; the Ancients simply called it *intentiones non sensatae*, a formula which defies translation.<sup>9</sup>

### THE ESTIMATIVE FACULTY

Had they been steeped in Positivism the Ancients would not have progressed beyond these facts. But they were not Positivists. For these facts, simple, no doubt, but none the less incontrovertible, they wanted some metaphysical explanation, which, to them, was the only explanation worthy of the human mind. That is the reason why, eschewing further experiments, they proceeded to reason on the data at hand.

Their first conclusion is that knowledge of *intentiones non sensatae* is a necessity of nature. Indeed, without this knowledge, the preservation of animal species could not be assured. That is why St. Thomas explicitly in the *Summa*<sup>10</sup> and implicitly in his other works views these facts as a simple application of the principle "Natura non deficit in necessariis". Who wills the end wills the means, and when the agent has sufficient power these means are realized without fail. The application of this principle at once completely transforms the material which furnished the starting point; what we have to work with is no longer a mere collection of facts, more or less rich, but a truth required by the principle of finality itself.

On the other hand, as all scholastic philosophers admit, no created agent acts directly by its own essence. Between the created essence and its operation there must of necessity be placed as intermediary some active potency or faculty. Consequently it must be admitted that there exists in animals some faculty or capacity for knowing

<sup>9</sup> Here are a few texts which throw light on this statement:

St. Albert the Great, "Aestimativa est virtus sequens phantasiam et diversa ab ipsa et est determinans imitationem vel fugam in intentionibus apprehensis; quae, inquam, intentiones conjunctae sunt compositioni et divisioni phantasmatum, non tamen sunt acceptae a sensibus." *Summa de Creaturis*, loc. cit., a. I, sol.

"Est autem aestimativa virtus transcendens quia apprehensio sua non est formarum sensibilium et materialium sed immaterialium; bonitas enim et malitia, conveniens et inconveniens et nocivum in se non sunt formaes materiales, neque in sensu cadentes exteriori, tamen sunt accidentia sensibilium; et horum est virtus aestimativa." *Philosophia pauperum*, loc. cit., (vol. V, p. 521a). Cf. also *De Anima*, III (vol. V, p. 317a); *Liber de Apprehensione*, loc. cit. (vol. V, p. 521a).

St. Thomas, "Vis aestimativa per quam animal apprehendit intentiones non acceptas per sensum, ut amicitia et inimicitia, inest animae sensitivae secundum quod participat aliquid rationi." *De Ver.*, 25. 2. Cf. also *In III Sent.*, d. 26, l. 2; *Quaest. de An.*, art. 13; *S. T.*, I. 78. 4;

St. Bonaventure, *Comp. Verit. Theol.*, II, c. 38 (Vives ed.), vol. VIII, p. 106.

<sup>10</sup> *S. T.*, I. 74. 4.

what is useful, harmful, or harmless.<sup>11</sup> Now some name had to be given to this faculty. The Ancients called it *aestimativa*, that is, the faculty which "estimates", judges that an object is useful, harmful, harmless; or, as Suarez understood the term, "*aestimativa dicitur quia in rebus ipsis aliud aestimat quam quod exterius appareat*".<sup>12</sup>

Starting from experimental facts obtained from the observation of animals the ancients came to know of this estimative sense. Now man, too, is an "animal"; he too then, for the same reasons and for the same purpose, will have his own estimative sense. But there is a difference. Man is a rational animal. By reason of this simple fact man's estimative will be somewhat in a class by itself.

In the case of man the spirit, substantially united to the matter, effects together with that matter a principle of activity which is essentially one. Hence, in every human action this twofold element must of necessity make itself felt. That is why even in his most immaterial act of intelligence man always depends in some way on the material objects furnished by his body, itself immersed in a combination of essentially material conditions. The same is to be said of man's acts of sense cognition and of sense appetite. He cannot avoid having these acts shot through with a spiritual character of some sort. Of the sense faculties with which man is endowed some will experience this influence of the soul on the body more than others, and these will consequently exhibit a modality of action which, though it does not transform them into spiritual faculties, nevertheless raises them to a very definite superiority over the corresponding faculties found in animals. And it is precisely among the number of these privileged faculties that man's estimative faculty must be placed. St. Thomas writes: "Aliquae vires sensitivae, etsi sint communes nobis et brutis, tamen in nobis habent aliquam excellentiam ex hoc quod rationi junguntur." The source of this excellence is to be sought, not in some property of our sensible nature, but in a kind of affinity of the human estimative with reason properly so called, a sort of recoil action originating in the spiritual soul:

Non per id quod est proprium sensitivae partis, sed per aliquam affinitatem et propinquitatem ad rationem universalem secundum quamdam *refluentiam*. Et ideo non sunt aliae vires, sed eadem perfectiores quam sint in aliis animalibus.<sup>13</sup>

This last text makes appeal implicitly to that principle of Dionysius which I once called the principle of contiguity,<sup>14</sup> by reason of which "beings inferior in the scale of *being* establish contact at their apex with what is less perfect in superior beings." If this is a true principle—and it is, since in the last analysis it is nothing but an aspect of the principle of finality—it is quite a normal thing that our sensible nature be bound to our intellectual reason by something which,

<sup>11</sup> For the full proof of this statement, cf. my article, "Faut-il encore parler de facultés de l'Âme?" *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* (April, 1940), sect. spec., pp. 111-144.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Suarez, *De Anima*, lib. III, "De Potentiis cognoscitivis," c. 30, n. 7 (Vives ed., 1856), p. 705a.

<sup>13</sup> S. T., I, 78, 4 ad 5.

<sup>14</sup> Concerning this principle of contiguity, cf. my work *Intellectus et Ratio selon saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris, Ottawa: 1936), pp. 180-181.

while it remains in the material order, participates in some way with reason. This something cannot be other than this faculty whose object, though doubtless furnished by the external senses, is nevertheless not reached by them, namely, the human estimative. In the *De Veritate* St. Thomas calls it:

... quod est altissimum in parte sensitiva ubi attingit quodammodo ad partem intellectivam, ut aliquid participat ejus quod est in intellectiva parte infimius, ut dicit Dionysius, quod principia secundorum conjunguntur finibus primorum.<sup>14</sup>

Because this faculty is in man a thing apart, for clarity's sake a special name had to be found for it. To fulfill its purpose properly this name had to express both the sensible characteristics of the faculty and its proximity to the discursive function of reason, which is the inferior mode of intellectual cognition. The name *cogitativa* was finally decided upon. Indeed, for the thinkers of the middle ages, it expresses on the one hand this notion of successive cognition: "cogitare est considerare rem secundum partes et proprietates suas, unde dicitur quasi co-agitare,"<sup>16</sup> and this is applicable to sensible faculties. On the other hand, *cogitare* also implies intellectual cognition inasmuch as it is discursive. "Cogitare proprie dicitur motus animi deliberantis nondum perfecti per plenam visionem veritatis,"<sup>17</sup> as St. Thomas says in the *Summa*. And in the Commentary on the *Sentences* he calls attention to the fact that it is intellectual *cogitatio* which has received its name from the sensible *cogitativa*, because the process proper to human cognition consists in going from the material to the immaterial.<sup>18</sup> We may therefore propose a trial definition of the cogitative: it is the sensible faculty, proper to man, which, in man, plays a role analogous to that of the estimative in animals. "Quae est in aliis animalibus dicitur aestimativa naturalis in homine dicitur cogitativa."<sup>19</sup> The term, however, is of minor import; our task is now to investigate—and that in detail—just what it stands for.

#### DISTINCTION AMONG INTERNAL SENSES

First of all, we are dealing with a sense faculty. It will therefore have an organ, which is the brain. And because the Scholastics are

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *De Ver.*, 14. 1 ad 9. This same doctrine is also taught in the *In III Sent.*, d. 23, 2. 2. sol. 1 ad 3; and in the *In II de An.*, lect. 13 (Marietti ed.), n. 397.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *In I Sent.*, d. 3, 4. 5.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *S. T.*, II-II. 2. 1.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *In III Sent.*, d. 23, 2. 2. sol. 1 ad 3. For this entire question of the meaning of *cogitare* in St. Thomas and its doctrinal origins, cf. my *Intellectus et Ratio* referred to above, pp. 86-90. Worthy of note is the fact that Alexander of Hales in his *Summa Theologica*, pars I, lib. II, inquisitione IV, Tr. I, sect. 2, q. 2, tit. 1, membrum 2 (Critical edition of Quarachi, 2 vol., p. 453a), where he treats of the cogitative, writes: "ad 2: . . . licet fiat secundum imprium rationis, non tamen in parte intellectiva, sed in parte sensitiva quae suadetur ratione. Et licet cogitare secundum appropriationem dictum sit partis rationis, nihilominus per extensionem illius partis quae rationi copulatur; unde cellula media dicitur logistica, i.e. rationalis, in qua operatur illa exocogitativa." It is clear how, unlike St. Thomas, he derives the name of *cogitative* from reason to the internal sense.

<sup>19</sup> *S. T.*, I. 78. 4c. This fact that the cogitative in man corresponds to the estimative in animals is again taught in *Sum. c. Gent.*, II. 60 (quoting Averroes). Cf. also *Quaest. de An.*, art. 13; *In II de An.*, lect. 13, n. 397. This is also the position taken by Suarez in *De Anima*, loc. cit., n. 7.

strictly dependent on the Arabs for this doctrine they adopt the theory of "cerebral localizations" proposed by Avicenna, Alfarabi and Averroes, themselves skilled in the medical art.<sup>20</sup>

This sensible faculty is a cognitive and not an appetitive faculty. Its act—our basic experiences testify to the fact—is an act of cognition which presents the object as beneficial or dangerous. Since, however, this object is apprehended dependently on the external senses, even though it is other than the proper sensible of each of these, as we have already seen, we have to say that the cognitive is an internal sense. Furthermore, like all cognitive faculties, it is to some extent disengaged from matter. This degree of immateriality is characterized by St. Thomas in the *Quaestio Disputata De Anima*:

Unus enim gradus est secundum quod in anima sunt res sine propriis materiis, sed tamen secundum singularitatem et conditiones individuales quae sequuntur materiam: et iste est gradus sensus qui est susceptivus specierum individualium sine materia, sed tamen in organo corporali.<sup>21</sup>

Is this internal sense a simple aspect of a single function, the other aspects of which would be the "common sense", imagination and memory? Or is it rather a faculty really distinct from the other three? We are here proposing the question, nowadays scarce considered, but at one time much disputed, of the number of the internal senses. To reach a solution the ancients had to define with great care the formal object of each of these senses as well as their specific operation, in a word, their nature. If then we wish to know just what the cognitive is, we must, if not treat the question in all its breadth, at least examine it in the light of the principles which, according to St. Thomas, are the basis for real distinction, and in the light of their application to the cognitive itself.

The facts considered and analyzed above make it clear that the cognitive is actuated by what we have called *species insensatae*, whereas common sense and imagination are actuated by species that come from the exterior senses. From this St. Thomas draws the conclusion that the cognitive is really distinct from both the common sense and the imagination.<sup>22</sup> We are evidently dealing with a simple appli-

<sup>20</sup> According to this theory there would be in the human brain three "cells" or "concavities." The first would contain the organ of the *sensus communis* or sensible consciousness and of the imagination; in the second, called the syllogistic cell, would be the organ of the cognitive, or, to be more exact, this organ would be in the upper portion of this middle section; the organ of the memory would be found in the third cell. This is the idea accepted in the thirteenth century by Alexander of Hales, St. Albert the Great, and St. Thomas. We find it again with Sylvester de Sylvestris in the sixteenth century and with John of St. Thomas in the seventeenth. For this topography of the brain as the ancients conceived it, consult especially Albert the Great in the *Summa de Creaturis* pars II, the third article of questions 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, where the author raises in turn the question of the organ of the *sensus communis*, of the *imaginativa*, of the *phantasia*, of the *aestimativa*, and of the *memoria*. The authors quoted are for one part St. John Damascene and St. Gregory of Nyssa, and for the other Algazel and especially Avicenna, together with a *Liber de Differentia Spiritus et Animae* attributed to a certain "Constabulus," whom I am unable to identify.

<sup>21</sup> *Quaest. de An.*, art. 13.

<sup>22</sup> The fundamental text here is *S. T.*, I. 78. 4, followed by all Thomists, and forms the basis of the Thomistic vulgate on the question as taught in any manual *ad mentem St. Thomae*.

cation of the principle admitted by all philosophers: "Any distinction in objects involves a distinction of potencies." "Secundum distinctionem objectorum attenditur distinctio potentiarum animae," as St. Thomas himself says in the *Quaestio Disputata de Anima*.

But is this application a legitimate one? Saint Thomas tells us, and Suarez agrees, that there must be a difference in the objects in their very nature as objects.<sup>23</sup> Is this condition realized in the present case? St. Thomas, and his commentator Cajetan with him, considers the affirmative answer evident: "Potentiae versantes circa intentiones insensatas sunt aliae a resipientibus sensata."<sup>24</sup> Suarez however rejects not only this evidence but also the solid foundation of the distinction between these two sorts of species as useless. He says that one may admit it if he so wishes, but in any case it is not deep enough to justify a real distinction between the corresponding potencies.<sup>25</sup>

In order to justify this specific distinction of the species, St. Albert draws attention to the opposition existing between the purely speculative character of imaginative cognition and the practical character proper to the estimative and cogitative. Between these two kinds of cognition, and consequently between the two series of species on which they depend, there will exist the same relation as between speculative and practical intellect. Nevertheless, Suarez is right when, though conceding this identity of relation, he denies the real distinction between the two intellects, and in doing that he remains faithful to traditional Thomistic teaching.<sup>26</sup>

In his *Cursus Philosophicus* John of St. Thomas approaches the question from a different angle. We know that the root of cognition is the immateriality of the cognitive faculty. This principle implies that there is in every cognitive faculty some minimal independence as regards matter and material conditions without which there could be no cognition whatever. It follows that the more complete this independence the more perfect the cognition which is founded upon it. Thomists and Suarezians agree on this point. On the other hand, an object—or rather the species which represent this object and through which it actuates the cognitive faculty—will be more imma-

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Quaest. de An.*, art 13, and *S. T.*, I. 73. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Cajetan, *In I S. T.*, q. 78. a. 4. n. 5 (Leonine ed.), vol. V, p. 257b. This is indeed the way that Suarez understood it: "Quarta opinio, quae inter citatas probabilior habetur, duplex fundamentum habet. Primum: cognitionem sensitivam interiorem aliam fieri per species sensatas aliam per non sensatas, ac potentias per eas cognoscentes esse diversas: siquidem potentiae cognoscentes per diversarum rationum species, diversas esse oportet." *loc. cit.*, n. 9.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Suarez, *loc. cit.*, p. 708, n. 15.

<sup>26</sup> "Oportet igitur quod sicut intellectus practicus se habet ad speculativum, ita se habeat aestimativa ad imaginationem." St. Albert the Great, *De Anima*, III, *loc. cit.* (vol. V, p. 317a). "Differt intentionem illam accipere per modum veri speculativi tantum, et accipere eamdem per rationem appetibilis vel detestabilis. Et primo intentionem accipit phantasia, secundo modo aestimativa." *Summa de Creaturis*, II, pars la, q. 39, a. 1 ad 1.

Suarez replies, ". . . negatur iudicium practicum et speculativum fieri a potentiis diversis, cum melius multo fiant ab eadem, uno scilicet in altero fundamentum habente." *loc. cit.*, n. 15, p. 708b.

As for Thomas' view, his article in the *Summa*, I. 79. 11, is too well known to need quoting: "Intellectus practicus et speculativus non sunt diversae potentiae."

terial in proportion as they are more abstract, since abstraction proceeds precisely from the fact that the object is disengaged either totally from matter and its conditions, as is the case in intellection, or partially from certain conditions of matter only, as happens in sense cognition. The greater the freedom of these species from matter, the greater their universality, and the higher their perfection. These different degrees of abstraction will thus offer a foundation for establishing the specific differences between the objects of different faculties of cognition and hence for justifying the real distinction between them as well as their multiplication.<sup>26a</sup>

John of St. Thomas applies these principles to the species of the common sense and the imagination and to those of the estimative and cognitive. The species of the first named senses are furnished by the external senses and depend upon them, so that they have only a rather imperfect degree of abstraction, and consequently, of immateriality. The second, though taken from what the external senses furnish, are not themselves furnished by those senses; they are and remain *species insensatae* (let us here call to mind the dictum of Algazel, quoted by the author of *De Potentiis Anima*: "Aestimativa est virtus apprehendens de sensato quod non est sensatum"). They have therefore a greater degree of independence from the conditions of matter. This is all the more true because they contain—and John of St. Thomas insists on this fact—the element of utility and harmfulness, not to the external senses, but to the nature itself, considered either in each individual or in the entire species. Were it otherwise, St. Thomas remarks,<sup>27</sup> the external senses and the imagination would have sufficed and there would be no need for the estimative and the cognitive.

If then the object of this last faculty is more abstract than that of the imagination and is therefore specifically distinct from it, the faculties themselves will needs be really distinct. The difficulty raised by Suarez against the Thomistic doctrine no longer has point; the distinction between *species sensatae* and *species insensatae* is not at all an empty one; indeed that distinction is sufficiently deep to serve as foundation for the real distinction between the estimative and cognitive and the common sense and imagination. In this way we establish the existence of an autonomous faculty called estimative in animals and cognitive in man.<sup>28</sup>

The reasoning process of the great Thomist is no doubt captivating. For it to be irrefutable, two questions would have to be answered. First of all, is it true that every degree of abstraction in species established a specific difference between those species? Again, is it true that the species which actuate the estimative are more abstract than those of the imagination? As long as an affirmative answer to both these questions has not been justified the problem of the existence of the estimative and cognitive will not have been solved but only pushed back.

<sup>26a</sup> Cf. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus* (edited by Reiser, O.S.B.), vol. iii, *Philosophia Naturalis*, p. IV, q. 8, "De sensibus internis," art. 1, p. 244.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. S. T., I. 78. 4, and John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 249b-250a.

<sup>28</sup> John of St Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 250a-b.

As far as I know, John of St. Thomas never attempted to do this, just as Suarez made no attempt to prove his negative answer to the problem. On the other hand, Saint Thomas never drew an argument from the greater or less degree of abstraction when he wished to prove specific distinction between the five senses or between imagination and *sensus communis*.<sup>28</sup> We have reason to suppose that if he did not do so it was because he saw that there was no need for it. Still, the objection may be proposed that Saint Thomas makes a real distinction between the two kinds of faculties which he calls *sensitivum* and *intellectivum*. Here he finds his distinction on a difference in the degree of abstraction of the object. On a simple degree of abstraction? I rather think not. It would be more exact to speak of the presence in the *intellectivum* of an abstraction properly so called which is not found in the *sensitivum*. This abstraction affects not only one or other of the conditions of matter, but matter itself. The abstraction of the *sensitivum*, on the contrary, is not a true abstraction; it cannot make these potencies intrinsically independent of matter, as is done in the abstraction of the *intellectivum*. Whence it is clear that in this case the opposition of material-immaterial is sufficiently marked to serve as a foundation for a specific and even a generic difference. When it comes to distinguishing the estimative from the imagination we are confronted in both cases with dependence as regards matter, and a mere difference of degree in this dependence is hardly enough to justify a specific difference. It would therefore seem to be more in harmony with the truth and with the thought of St. Thomas not to answer the first question in the affirmative.<sup>29</sup>

As for the second question, it can be solved only by a very close inspection of the *species sensatae* and the *species non-sensatae*. Both are abstract in the sense that they do not represent all and every one of the notes which go to make up the object known, but only some particular aspect. The ewe, by sight, knows only something which is colored and has some certain form or figure; by hearing it knows a thing as sonorous and by smell knows it as having an odor. Each of these senses performs an abstraction, but an abstraction in the improper sense of the term. The ewe's *sensus communis* gathers together all these external sensations and puts them together to form the wolf-object known through the senses; at once this centralized data puts the imagination into act: the ewe represents to itself within itself the wolf-object.

Thus far nothing in our analysis leads us to suspect that the ewe will leap up and flee. Yet that is exactly what takes place. This sudden flight, brought about by the sight of the wolf, the only phenomenon which falls under our experience, must have some explanation. Sufficient reason for it must lie in some representation that came up in the ewe's consciousness, by reason of which the ewe

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<sup>28</sup> It would be well to read again at this point the *Quaest. de An.*, art. 13, where the entire question of the specific distinction of the faculties is very fully explained; then *S. T.*, I. 78. 3, where the principles of the distinction of the exterior senses is laid down: "Exterius ergo immutativum est quod per se a sensu percipitur et secundum cuius diversitatem sensitivae potentiae distinguuntur." And lastly *S. T.*, I. 78. 4, on the distinction between the imagination and the *sensus communis*.

cognizes this concrete object which it saw, heard, smelled, as constituting at this precise moment something which is a source of definite danger for it. This representation it is which belongs to the estimative. This faculty has then passed from potency to act, and that under the influence of the object, taken, not in its material character, but in images dependent upon it, in *species impressae*, as the scholastics put it, which originated in the object and were received in the estimative. Then it is that this faculty, put into first act, can pass to second act, that is to say, can place the act of knowing the wolf, not as something colored, sonorous, odorous, but as dangerous.

Whence come these *species impressae*? The simple truth is that we do not know.<sup>30</sup> All that we can say is that they do not come from the other internal or external senses, as the analysis of the fundamental facts showed us. That is why they are called *insensatae*. Are they abstract? In the sense which we admitted for the other senses they certainly are, for they represent the wolf only under a certain aspect, that of harmful. Are they *more* abstract? Are the *species impressae* of sight more abstract than those of hearing or smell? It seems to me that it is impossible to answer yes or no. These species represent two or three mutually irreducible aspects of the same body, and that is why they are specifically different. As I see it, the same is true for the species of the estimative and those of the other senses. In dealing with them we cannot speak of greater or less abstraction, but only of a different abstract aspect, which is neither what is colored, or sonorous, or odorous, or even the object as constituted with its sensations grouped together by the *sensus communis* in the imagination. It is precisely in this that we find a specific difference between these two series of species and consequently between the potencies which they are to actuate.

Will the same be true for the estimative and the memory? St. Thomas answers that it will. Research into the principles on which this affirmation is founded gives us an occasion to go deeper into the part played by the estimative and cognitive.

As St. Thomas sees it, memory has the same relation to the estimative as imagination has to the *sensus communis*. In fact, just as the imagination preserves the *species sensatae* received from the external senses and grouped by the *sensus communis* around the object known, so the memory preserves the *species insensatae* of the estimative. For, the imagination, according to St. Thomas' metaphor, serves as a strong-box in which the first type of species is kept; the memory serves the same purpose for the second group.<sup>31</sup> This doctrine is evidently founded on the great need of animal nature, as well as on the data of experience. Pigeons know at what time they are

<sup>30</sup> This is why I see no need of tarrying here on the discussion that is rife among scholastics concerning the origin of these species. It is an analogous problem and one as obscure as that which moderns call the problem of the origin of instinct. Those interested in the question will find worthwhile matter in the *Psychology* of Remer-Geny, S.J. (Rome: 1925), pp. 115-116, and the whole treatise in John of St. Thomas, *op. cit., ibid.*, art. 4, pp. 265-271.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *De Potentius Animae* (Mandonnet ed.), vol. V, p. 355; S. T., I. 78. 4, and the commentary of Cajetan.

fed and gather together at that time; the elephant in the zoo recognizes the practical joker who gave him a pebble instead of a cookie. It is evident that the birds of the air and the pachyderm himself have somehow kept the representation of the object as a good thing or a bad thing.

The reason for this is that the memory knows the past as past, that is to say, the animal is conscious of what was already seen, already heard, already smelled, already avoided or sought, and that not only at the moment when one of these sensations is renewed. This apprehension on the part of consciousness is evidently not something intelligible, but something sensible, not otherwise than the knowledge of the object as present and the consciousness of its actual presence.<sup>32</sup> But the past, as past, is not given by the external senses; it is therefore one of these *intentiones insensatae*, which are the object of the estimative. As we find in the *Summa Theologica*: "Ipsa ratio praeteriti quam intendit memoria inter hujusmodi intentiones computatur."<sup>33</sup>

The statement is important. For then the memory will not concern itself only with the useful and the harmful, which is not furnished by the external sense, but also with every external sensation gathered by the *sensus communis* and preserved by the imagination, provided it be in order to recognize them. In such a case there seems to be no reason for seeking a real difference between the estimative and the memory, especially since, as St. Thomas says, remembering comes about as occasioned by what is useful or harmful.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, St. Thomas insists on the real distinction for two reasons.

The first reason is physiological. He says in the *Summa*: "Recipere et retinere reducuntur in corporalibus ad diversa principia."<sup>35</sup> Where there is question of bodily operations, those which consist in simply receiving the impressions from the object will have to be referred to an organ, and those which consist in preserving these same impressions will have to be referred to another organ. On the other hand, although, according to St. Thomas' own teaching,<sup>36</sup> the faculty does not exist for the organ, but the organ for the faculty, still, one of the signs by which we know that the faculties are different is precisely the fact that the organs are different, since it was impossible for nature not to harmonize the organs with the faculties they were destined to serve. But the argument for diverse organs, taken from the discarded physiology of the middle ages,<sup>37</sup> not even the most enthusiastic Thomist in our own day would press very far.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *Quaest. de An.*, art. 13; *S. T.*, I. 79. 6.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. *S. T.*, I. 78. 4. *supra cit.*

<sup>34</sup> "Cujus signum est, quod principium memorandi fit in animalibus ex aliqua hujusmodi intentione, puta quod est nocivum vel conveniens." *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, and also *Quaest. de An.*, art. 13. The same idea is put more explicitly in *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, lect. 2 (Pirotta ed.), n. 321.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *S. T.*, I. 78. 3.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, loc. cit.; also *S. T.*, I. 78. 4; John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Philosophicus*, loc. cit., p. 245a.

<sup>38</sup> May I be permitted to call attention in this connection to the fact that St. Thomas' position in relation to the science of his time is fundamentally the same as that of the philosophers of our own time in relation to the science of today. Just as is done today, the great masters of scholasticism used to consult the scientists and doctors of their time. If mistakes were

The second argument is based on the fact that in the estimative, as also in the *sensus communis* and the imagination, the movement goes from things to the soul, since the object actuates and modifies the faculty, whereas in the case of the memory the movement goes from the soul to things. Sertillanges expresses this in a felicitous phrase: "The other sensible faculties are centripetal; this one is centrifugal."<sup>39</sup> There is therefore a very different movement in the memory and in the cogitative, and, as St. Thomas adds, where the movement is different, the principles are different, and therefore the faculties are different.<sup>40</sup> It seems strange that none of the treatises of scholastic philosophy more or less *ad mentem sancti Thomae* which have been published within the last fifty years makes much of this argument. Indeed, why should this difference of movement be so deep that it demands two specifically distinct potencies? St. Thomas gives no explanation of this.

It is clear that St. Thomas affirms the distinction between the estimative or cogitative and the other internal senses. No one, not even Suarez, quarrels with the general principles which he makes use of to defend this thesis. The difference of opinion is on the application of these principles to the particular case of the estimative (and of the other senses as well). St. Thomas seems to consider as evident and in no need of proof that these different faculties have different formal objects, that the centripetal and centrifugal movement reaches down to the very nature of the faculties. To other thinkers all this does not seem so evident. Thomas' disciples merely repeat the words of the Master, without adding anything, and when one of their number, John of St. Thomas, for instance, tries to go deeper, he only succeeds in pushing the problem back a step. The problem itself remains without a solution. We are thus left to make a choice between two positions: we must either leave the question open, or accept the view of the Angelic Doctor, but only out of fidelity to the thomistic tradition, urged by a sort of argument from comparative authority.<sup>41</sup>

#### FUNCTION IN INTELLECTION

Up to this point we have spoken as much and more of the estimative of animals than of the cogitative in man. All, however, that we have said of the first is true of the second; for, as we have seen in St. Thomas himself, the cogitative is to man what the estimative is to animals. We have indicated the points of similarity in this analogy. We must now consider the differences and study what is peculiar to the cogitative, namely, the part it plays in human cognition.

Above all we must not lose sight of the sensible, and therefore corporeal and material, nature of the cogitative, no matter what part it plays and the extent of the part it plays as seen by St. Thomas.

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made it is the scientists and not the philosophers who are to blame. Six hundred years from now, what will our great, great nephews think of the scientific data of today over which thinkers take such pride?

<sup>39</sup> Sertillanges, O. P., *Saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: 1925), vol. II, p. 136.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. *Quaest. de An.*, art. 13.

<sup>41</sup> For the development of this idea and its justification cf. my article, "Comme être thomiste," *Divus Thomas* (Piacenza: 1932), pp. 260-262.

Even when he identifies<sup>42</sup> the cogitative with the *intellectus passivus*, which Aristotle discusses in the third book of his concerning the soul and which Averroes considers as constituting the specific difference of man, St. Thomas strongly insists that man can be distinguished from brute beasts only by a spiritual element, and that that *intellectus* is corruptible, and therefore material. The cogitative, moreover, can know only what is concrete, singular, individual. This too St. Thomas never tires of repeating, even when he seems to accept a common nature as the object of this faculty and a rational process as its act.

Still, it is all important to understand clearly how the cogitative reaches and knows this concrete object, these *intentiones particulares*, and consequently, how this sense faculty functions. Frequently repeated by the Angelic Doctor is the idea that the cogitative is to these *intentiones particulares* what reason is to the *intentiones universales*.<sup>43</sup> This similarity between the sensible and the spiritual faculty Saint Thomas expresses by the verb *conferre*, and its derivatives, *collatio* for the act, and *collativa* for the adjective. But he also uses the same verb as a technical term to designate the operation of man's intelligence inasmuch as it is discursive. As I have tried to show in a study on *Intellectus et Ratio Selon Saint Thomas*,<sup>44</sup> *conferre* in a rather general sense signifies that process by which the human mind simply takes possession of multiple elements for the purpose of reaching some truth, through simple comparison of two or more objects. In the strict sense, the word can stand for the work of the mind given over to more or less long and difficult search, making use of known elements to raise itself to the level of a truth heretofore unknown. Finally, in a still more narrow sense, it would be the aspect taken by the discursive process of the *ratio* which, once it has gathered together the elements of its reasoning process, places them one next to the other, as if to pass thus more easily from one to the other and discover the sought-for truth.

If such is the case, Saint Thomas conceives the work of the cogitative on the pattern of reason. This is so true that he proceeds in the same fashion to explain the name of *ratio particularis* or even of passive intellect which the cogitative often takes,<sup>45</sup> and to point the fundamental difference between the cogitative and the estimative. He writes in the *Summa Theologica*: ". . . alia animalia percipiunt hujusmodi intentiones solum naturali quodam instinctu, homo autem

<sup>42</sup> Cf. especially *Sum. c. Gent.*, II. 60 *passim*, 73 *passim*. These chapters should be quoted in their entirety. We shall quote only *In VI Ethic.*, lect. 9 (Pirotta ed.), n. 1249: ". . . vim cogitativam sive aestimativam quae dicitur ratio particularis. Unde hic sensus vocatur intellectus qui est circa sensibilia vel singularia. Et hunc Philosophus vocat in tertio *de Anima* intellectum passivum, qui est corruptibilis." We shall come across these passages again.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. among other passages: *In II Sent.*, d. 23, 2. 2. sol. 1 ad 3; *In III Sent.*, d. 26, 1. 2; *In II de Anima*, lect. 13 (Pirotta ed.), n. 396; *In VI Ethic.*, lect. 1, n. 1123; *In I Meta.*, lect. 1, n. 15; *Sum c. Gent.*, II. 60. n. 1; *Quaest. de An.*, art. 13; *S. T.*, I. 78. 4, and I. 81. 3; *De Potentius Animaee*, c. 4 (Mandonnet ed.), vol. V, p. 355.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. my *Intellectus et Ratio selon saint Thomas d'Aquin*, pp. 90-92.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. in particular *In VI Ethic.*, lect. 9, n. 1255.

per quandam collationem." This doctrine of the later years of his teaching was also the one he defended in his youth, as we see in the *Sentences*: "In the other animals there is no *collatio*; they reach these objects through an impulse (*instinctu*) of nature; that is why their operation is not called reason but estimation."<sup>46</sup>

To St. Thomas, then, this *collatio* is characteristic of the specific function of the cognitive, and this precisely by reason of the union in man, and in man alone, of the sense nature with an intellectual nature, *propter conjunctionem ad animam rationalem*, as is explained in the same article of the *Sentences*. And the response to the fifth objection in the article of the *Summa* referred to above declares this to be by reason of a certain affinity and a certain proximity to reason which can know the universal, and which overflows, as it were, into the sensible part, "*secundum quandam refluxum*". It is by reason of its corporeal nature that the cognitive can deal only with singular notions (*intentiones particulares*); it can act upon these by *collatio* because of its proximity, in a single person, to an intellectual nature.<sup>47</sup>

It is not enough to say that the proper act of the cognitive is this *collatio*. We must go deeper and try to see the mechanics of this operation. If we look closely at the texts of St. Thomas we see that the matter is quite complicated.

To begin with, two texts tell us that the *intentiones particulares*, and therefore the knowledge of the object as harmful or useful, are the result of this *collatio*, somewhat in the way that a speculative or practical conclusion flows from an intellectual reasoning process properly so called. This is indeed what is suggested by the word *inquirere*, employed in the *De Anima* (a. 13): "... ad haec quidem cognoscenda pervenit homo, inquirendo et conferendo." In this case the analogy between the cognitive sense and the intellect is quite easy to understand.

We must, then, admit a reasoning process in the cognitive. And if this is admitted, a judgment must also be admitted! These words in no wise frighten St. Thomas. In his Commentary on the *Ethica* he has put down this surprising text:

Sicut pertinet ad intellectum in universalibus judicium absolutum de primis principiis, ad rationem autem pertinet discursus a principiis in conclusiones: ita et circa singularia vis cognitiva vocatur intellectus secundum quod habet absolutum judicium de singularibus. . . . Dicitur autem ratio particularis secundum quod discurrit ab uno ad aliud.<sup>48</sup>

It is all there: judgment and discursive process, and even something in the cognitive which is equivalent to the distinction between *intellectus et ratio*. And let it be noted that this text corresponds to nothing in the Greek text of Aristotle. Furthermore, he teaches exactly the same doctrine in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*: "Cum virtus cognitiva habeat operationem circa particularia quorum intentiones dividit et componit . . ." Here we have the technical term to describe the judgment. Elsewhere: "Hujus autem cognitivae virtutis est distinguere intentiones individuales et comparare eas ad

<sup>46</sup> *S. T.*, I, 78, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *In III Sent.*, d. 23, 2, 2.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. *In VI Ethic.*, lect. 9, n. 1255.

invicem, sicut intellectus qui est separatus et immixtus comparat et distinguit inter intentiones universales.”<sup>49</sup> Even though these lines are taken from the author’s exposition of the thought of Averroes, they are not rejected by St. Thomas who attacks the Arab on another point and grants him this one, which contains precisely one of the meanings of the verb *conferre*.

St. Thomas’ authentic thought therefore admits for the cogitative a capacity for judging and a discursive process, and does so even in passages where the organic and corporeal character of this faculty is strongly emphasized. Is there some contradiction here, or at least a lack of logic? Suarez seems to suggest as much when he writes: As for the cogitative, many consider it as a sensitive potency, proper to man, capable of reasoning and judging on singulars. But such an operation is beyond the powers of a sensible faculty! Let us then say that the cogitative is simply nothing more than the internal faculty, inasmuch as, according to the human way, it distinguishes what is harmful and what is useful. In man it has a greater perfection, because it acts not only under the drive of nature, but is also directed by a more noble cognition and experience and often by reason itself.<sup>50</sup>

It would indeed be most extraordinary that Thomas should fall into this lack of logic or contradiction, especially as in the same context, and often in the same sentence, he affirms both the organic nature and the judgment or discursive process of the cogitative.<sup>51</sup> As good exegetes we must therefore examine as closely as possible the authentic thought of the Angelic Master. This will necessitate a complete—and therefore sometimes complex—analysis of the part played by the cogitative in intellectual cognition.

#### COGNITION OF THE SINGULAR

It is in his commentary on Aristotle’s *De Anima*, speaking of the formulas “*sensibiles per se* and *sensibiles per accidens*”, that Saint Thomas tells us, though nothing in the Greek text suggests it, how he conceives the knowledge of the individual by the cogitative.<sup>52</sup>

In order to be *sensibile per accidens*, a known object must verify the two following conditions: first, the object must be something accidental as regards the proper object of an external sense. What is white is the proper object of the sense of sight, but whether or not that which is white is a man or a ball or a dog is accidental to it as the proper object of sight. Man (or ball or dog) is, therefore a *sensibile per accidens* as regards the sense of vision. Besides, the knowing subject must in one way or another apprehend this object, else there could be no question of an act of sensation. In other words, a *sensibile per accidens* must be by its nature (*per se*) knowable for some other cognitive faculty of the same sentient subject. What can this other faculty be?

There are but two possibilities. Either this object, called *sensibile per accidens*, can be apprehended by some other external sense, or it

<sup>49</sup> Cf. *Sum. c. Gent.*, II. 73, n. 15; and 60, n. 1.

<sup>50</sup> Suarez, *De Anima*, c. 30, “De numero sensuum internorum,” n. 7 (Vives ed., Paris: 1856), vol. III, p. 705a.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. for example, *Sum. c. Gent.*, II. 73, n. 16.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *In II de Anima*, lect. 13 nn. 395-398.

cannot be thus apprehended. The following example may be given of the first case: sugar is white and sweet. From the point of view of sight, what is sweet is *sensible per accidens*, for it is accidental for a white object to be also sweet. But as regards taste, what is "sweet" is a proper sensible. In the second case, either the object is apprehended in abstract or universal fashion, and then it falls under the proper object of the intellect, or it is apprehended in its concrete and individual singularity, so that I see a colored object (*video coloratum*), and thus perceive that it is my friend John, or his dog, Sport (*percipio hunc hominem, vel hoc animal*), in which case, if the cognizing subject is a man, he apprehends John or Sport by the cognitive, and if he is a brute animal, by the estimative.

Thus, for St. Thomas, the individual as such—not the abstract notion of the individual, but the concrete reality of individual, of singular—is the object of the cognitive or estimative. And this is as it should be: it is a *species insensata!* It can therefore not be of the domain of the imagination, which simply preserves sensible data, nor of that of the intellect, a faculty which, with man at least, deals with what is universal. The only thing left, really, is the cognitive or estimative.

Each of these, however, will apprehend the individual differently. The first, as St. Thomas teaches us, knows the individual as existing in a common nature, *ut existens sub natura communi*, a thing which the second cannot do. What does he mean by this?

The ewe knows her lamb as something concrete, individualized, but not inasmuch as it is this individual possessing the nature of a sheep; she knows it only in that she knows, without being conscious of it, that she is impelled to give her milk to this white, baa-ing, gamboling object, that to this other object, green and flexible, which caresses her muzzle and which we call grass, she must go to eat it. In other words, the animal, by its estimative, apprehends the individual thing merely as the principle of an action to be performed or an influence to be undergone (*secundum quod est terminus et principium alicujus actionis aut passionis*). This knowledge of the individual thing thus reduces itself simply to the small initial impulse which sets in motion the psychic and physiological mechanism which culminates in nursing the lamb or eating this grass. This is quite natural, since this faculty is given to the animal to guide it as to what actions are to be performed or avoided, as useful or harmful to its nature. This Thomistic interpretation of animal behavior naturally calls to mind certain modern descriptions of blind instinct showing "every action immediately suggested by the present image, reduced to this representation, enclosed within it, and not going beyond."<sup>53</sup>

The cognitive, for its part, apprehends the individual thing, not only as the term or principle of action or passion, but *ut existens sub natura communi*. What may be the meaning of this formula, unique<sup>54</sup> if I am not mistaken, in the works of St. Thomas?

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Palhorès, *La philosophie au Baccalauréat* (Paris: 1936), vol. I, p. 461.

<sup>54</sup> There is indeed something like this in *In VI Ethic.*, lect. 1, n. 1123, but it is far from being as explicit.

St. Thomas tells us that the cogitative knows *hunc hominem prout hic homo, hoc lignum prout est hoc lignum.* It therefore knows Peter as something concrete in which human nature is realized, and this oak table as something concrete in which is realized the nature of that tree which we call an oak. This is something which the estimative does not do. In the same way the cogitative knows not only Peter, but also James and Louis and other individuals, even if the agent has nothing to do with them at the time. This is evidenced from the opposition that St. Thomas here establishes between the estimative and the cogitative.

Does therefore the cogitative, a sensible and organic faculty, know the common nature, that is, man or oak as universal? St. Thomas is careful to say no such thing. He says that the cogitative knows the individual as existing, and as coming under the human nature. Strictly speaking, therefore, it knows only the individual. Yet, the human being who makes use of his cogitative sense becomes conscious—a thing that the brute beast could never do—that this object-individual which he apprehends by his cogitative realizes the universal nature of man or of oak, and he knows this universal nature of man or of oak by his intellect.

St. Thomas refers to this interpretation when he adds the explanation immediately following “quod contingit ei in quantum *unitur intellectivae in eodem subjecto*”. What the cogitative receives from its union with the intellect is not to know the individual, but to know the individual as existing concretely while realizing an universal nature. And when St. Thomas insists on the fact that it is united with the intelligence in one and the same knowing subject, he is applying his basic doctrine of the substantial unity of the body and the soul constituting a single person, a single true principle of operation.

This single agent places its operation through the medium of its different faculties. When I know Peter or this table my concrete vital act of knowledge is one, but each of my corporeal or spiritual faculties serves me as an instrument to place the act. Through vision I know this object as colored and possessing certain shapes; through the *sensus communis* I group these different *colorata* about a single nucleus; through the imagination I pigeonhole it and preserve it; through my cogitative I know it as an individual thing, and since at the same time, through my intelligence, I have, occasioned by this concrete object, formed the universal idea of man, I, one single knowing subject, finally come to know Peter as concretely existing in human nature.

Of course, life leaves intact the unity and instantaneous character of this cognition which psychological analysis—and it alone—has just cut up into parts. In this way we come in contact with the part played by the cogitative in intellectual cognition.

*(To be continued)*

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## A FORGOTTEN SENSE, THE COGITATIVE ACCORDING TO ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

(Continued from March Issue)

IN OUR study of the cogitative sense we have so far viewed it alongside the estimative sense of animals and considered, in a general way, its rôle in intellection and in the cognition of the singular. We have now to examine in particular the function of the cogitative in intellectual cognition. The first aspect of this function deals with the preparation of the universal concept in the ideogenic doctrine of classical Thomism.

St. Thomas' views on this subject are found in a context in which he is stating his case against Averroes.<sup>1</sup> We know that Averroes considers the possible intellect as something outside of the individual and one for the entire human race. We know too that in the doctrine of Alexander of Aphrodisia and of Avicenna it is the agent intellect that is posited outside the individual.

### AVERROES AND THOMAS ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE COGITIVE

Since Averroes places the possible intellect outside of man he cannot make this intellect the formal constitutive element in man and that which distinguishes him from the brute. What then will this distinguishing element be? It will be the passive intellect, which Aristotle, in the second book of *De Anima*<sup>2</sup> speaks of as corruptible and indispensable for the act of understanding.

What is the character of this passive intellect? For Averroes it is the cogitative. The cogitative, then, is man's formal constitutive element and specific difference. This is how Averroes looks upon the part played by the cogitative in human cognition:

(1) It grasps the differences existing between particular data and compares one with the other. Its function here is analogous to what the intellect, a completely immaterial faculty, performs with the universal.

(2) Working together with the imagination and memory the cogitative so prepares the phantasms that they will be capable of receiving from the agent intellect the influence which will make them become intelligible in act. Here the cogitative has somewhat the same relation to the intellect as the sculptor's helper has to the artist in preparing for the latter the material which he will transform into his masterpiece.

(3) In view of this same fact it is clear how the more or less perfect dispositions of the cogitative will have an effect on the intellectual power of individuals and will explain their great differences in intellectual keenness.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Sum. c. Gent.*, II, 60, 73, 75 et 76 passim. Each of these chapters should be read carefully.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Aristotle *De Anima*, c. 5, 430a24-25. This is the translation given in the *antiqua versio* which St. Thomas used: "separatus autem (intellectus) est solum hoc quod vere est. Et hoc solum immortale et perpetuum est. Non reminiscitur autem quia hoc quidem impassibile est. Passivus autem intellectus est corruptibilis et sine hoc nihil intelligit anima." St. Thomas comments on this passage: *In II De Anima*, lect. 10 #743-745.

(4) Furthermore the *habitus* of science (knowledge), which is the ease with which we can draw conclusions from their principles, is acquired through frequent exercise of the cogitative. Reciprocally, the cogitative itself is perfected by the *habitus* of the various sciences.

(5) Lastly, the new-born child, even before he can perform his very first act of intellection, is, from the very first moment of his existence, endowed with this cogitative, which is that precisely by which he is a human being.

This is, then, at least as St. Thomas sees it, the part which Averroes assigns to the cogitative.<sup>3</sup> As a matter of fact, the exact view of the Arab philosopher concerns us but little. What we are looking for is the Angelic Doctor's own view in the matter.

First of all, he grants Averroes that the passive intellect, corruptible and altogether necessary for the act of intellection, is indeed a sense. In his own commentary on *De Anima* he limits himself to this general statement.<sup>4</sup> In his explanation of the *Ethics*, however, he states definitely that this sense is the cogitative: "The cogitative is a sense called the intellect of the sensible and singular. It is this sense which Aristotle, in the third book of the treatise on the Soul, calls the passive intellect and of which he says that it is corruptible."<sup>5</sup>

After he has conceded this point St. Thomas absolutely refuses to admit that the cogitative is the constitutive element of the human species or that it is the subject of the *habitus* of the various sciences. He also denies that the new-born child, before his first act of intellection, is deprived of possible intellect and must get along with only the passive intellect or cogitative. His reason for this stand, which he insists upon in any number of forms, is always this: the cogitative is a sense; hence it cannot rise to the spiritual level, a thing which it would have to do in order to fulfil the functions ascribed to it by Averroes.<sup>6</sup>

For the rest St. Thomas accepts Averroes' views. We have already seen from Thomas' own writings the doctrine that the cogitative distinguishes and compares particular data in the same way that the intellect does universal data. However, the function of preparing phantasms before the agent intellect begins its work calls for closer examination.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the entire first paragraph of *Sum. c. Gent.*, II. 60, too long to be quoted here and easily available to all. Less available is the Averroes text. The Leonine edition of the *Summa contra Gentiles* (vol. XIII, p. 419) gives this reference to Averroes: *In III De Anima*, text 20, ad cap. V, 2. I had at hand an edition of 1521, printed at Pavia *cura ac diligentia soleritis viri Jacob Paucidrapii de Burgofranco*. In this edition we read the following: ". . . et sunt tres virtutes in homine quarum esse declaratum est in Sensu et Sensata, scilicet et imaginativa et cogitativa et rememorativa istae enim tres virtutes sunt in homine ad praesentandam formam rei imaginatae quando sensus fuerit absens et ideo dictum fuit illic quod cum istae tres virtutes adjuverint se ad invicem forte representabant individuum rei secundum quod est in suo esse. . . Et indendebat hoc per intellectum possibilem formas imaginationis secundum quod in eas agit virtus cogitativa propria hominis. Ista enim virtus est aliqua ratio et actio ejus nihil est quam ponere intentiones formae imaginationis cum suo individuo apud rememorationem aut distinguere eas ab eo apud formationem. Et manifestum est quod intellectus qui dicitur materialis recipit intentiones imaginatas post hanc distinctionem. Iste igitur intellectus possibilis necessarius est in formatione".

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *loc. supra cit.*, #745

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *In VI Ethicorum*, lect. 9 #1249.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Sum. c. Gent.*, II. 60 n. 2, and cf. also the example in 73 n. 16, 17 and 18.

## RÔLE OF THE COGITATIVE IN FORMING THE UNIVERSAL

Far from rejecting this function, St. Thomas makes it his own in so many words. In the seventy-third chapter of this same second book of the *Contra Gentes* the Angelic Doctor looks into the unicity of the possible intellect which Averroes held. If, he says, the possible intellect is one for all men, and consequently outside of each of them, whence will men get the specific principle which will distinguish them from mere animals? This cannot come from man's sensitive soul, nor from phantasms, nor from the cogitative. And why not from this last? Because there is only one relation between it and the possible intellect, namely, the work of preparation done by the cogitative on the phantasms to enable them, under the influence of the agent intellect, to become intelligible in act and capable of actuating the possible intellect. Now this action of the cogitative is but intermittent, whereas our specification as human beings must necessarily be unchangeable and constant. Thus, neither the cogitative nor its action can possibly be the sought-for specifying element in man. Obviously the major premise of this Thomistic argument, which St. Thomas evidently admits, is taken from Averroes.

Nor would it be true to call this a mere argument *ad hominem*. Nothing in the text would justify such a view. Besides we have evidence from other texts that St. Thomas really made this doctrine his own.

In the seventy-third chapter St. Thomas examines the view of Alexander of Aphrodisia and that of Avicenna, who for his part made the agent intellect a separated substance. St. Thomas' objection is that, were the agent intellect a separated substance, we would be unable to posit our acts of intellection *as we please*. There would be two and only two alternatives: to be forever in act, or to lack the free exercise of our intellect. Both alternatives are equally false. But Avicenna replies that though the agent intellect is surely required to enable us to place our act of intellection, it alone is not sufficient. On our part the phantasm must be ready to receive its action. Now the proper preparation of the phantasm is brought about by the cogitative, and the cogitative is subject to our control.

Very well, replies Thomas, but in what does this preparation performed by the cogitative for the act of intellection consist? Avicenna replies that it consists in putting the possible intellect in a condition to receive the intelligible forms abstracted from the phantasms by the agent intellect. Averroes and Alexander of Aphrodisia object strongly and declare that the preparation consists rather in making the phantasms themselves capable of becoming intelligible. The first theory is of no interest to us here. Thomas gives his answer to the second in these words: "Quod per cogitativam disponantur phantasmatum ad hoc quod fiant intelligibilia actu et moventia intellectum possibilem conveniens non videtur si intellectus agens ponatur substantia separata."<sup>7</sup> True. But if, with St. Thomas and the majority of scholastic

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Sum. c. Gent.*, II. 76 n. 11. And also in 73 n. 18 where St. Thomas had already written: "Virtus cogitativa non habet ordinem ad intellectum possibilem quo intelligent homo nisi per suum actum quo praeparantur phantasmatum ut per intellectum agentem fiant intelligibilia in actu et perficiantur intellectum possibilem."

philosophers the agent intellect is considered to be a faculty of each individual human soul, then—the Angelic Doctor's opinion is clear—the obstacle exists no longer, and such an influence on the part of the cogitative can be admitted without any difficulty.

Comes then the inevitable question: how are we to conceive this influence? The solution is also in the *Contra Gentes*, in the answer made to the Averroist doctrine on the cogitative as subject of the science-habitus.<sup>8</sup> St. Thomas first refutes the error directly, then seeks the reason for the error. According to him, Averroes must have observed a certain connection in us between the degree of facility with which we acquire learning and the more or less favorable condition of the cogitative and the imagination. The next step was to conclude to the direct perfecting of these sensible faculties by the *habitus* of science, a step which the Arab philosopher at once took.

St. Thomas says that this conclusion is an invalid one. A *habitus* can perfect only the faculty which acts, and, in the case of knowledge, the operation made easier by the *habitus* is a spiritual one, which by its very nature goes beyond the capacity of the cogitative, an organic and consequently material faculty. Hence it is impossible to conceive the cogitative as the subject of the *habitus* of science. Does this mean that facility for intellectual work in no wise depends on the imagination and the cogitative? St. Thomas is careful not to reject every such influence. He insists, though, that such influence can be only indirect and remote, somewhat like that of which Aristotle speaks in the famous text of the *De Anima*:<sup>9</sup> "Duri enim carne inepti mente; molles autem carne, bene apti", which the Angelic Doctor comments on as follows: "Ad bonam autem complexionem corporis sequitur nobilitas animae; quia omnis forma est proportionata sua materiae. Unde sequitur quod qui sunt boni tactus sunt nobiliores animae et perspicaciiores mentis."

Nor is this all. This indirect influence is not exercised on the possible intellect itself, but on the object to be known, or more exactly on the phantasm which represents this object. In proportion as the cogitative and the imagination are perfect, the phantasm will be more perfectly prepared to play its part in the elaboration of what is called in technical language the *species intelligibiles impressae*. This part consists in this, that under the influence of the agent intellect the phantasms, previously intelligible in potency, become intelligible in act.

St. Thomas has left it to his disciples to develop the details of this last explanation. This is how the great commentator of the *Contra Gentes*, Sylvester de Sylvestris develops it.

The Thomistic formula to the effect that the cogitative and the imagination prepare the phantasm to become more easily intelligible in act can be taken in two ways. In the first place, once the phantasm is received in the imagination, the imagination, aided by the cogitative, would act upon it and would dispose it to receive an influx from the agent intellect by reason of which the phantasm, intelligible in potency, would be put in the act of intelligibility. In the second interpretation, the phantasm is so much the more apt to become intelligible

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Sum. c. Gent.*, II, 73 nn. 27, 28 and 29.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Aristotle *De Anima*, II, 9, 421a25; *In II De Anima*, lect. 19 #485.

in act as the organ of the cognitive or imaginative in which it is received is itself more perfectly disposed.

Ferrariensis declares that the first element of the commentary is to be rejected altogether. How indeed is it possible to conceive that the phantasm, a material entity, constituted by and in an organic faculty, should be transformed, as it were, into something spiritual? The second interpretation is therefore the one to be taken. To understand its scope let us call to mind how intelligible species are formed in the Thomistic philosophy. Their efficient cause is the agent intellect, which, however, employs the phantasm as instrumental cause. Before the phantasm is united to the agent intellect as the instrument is united to the one who makes use of it, the phantasm is said to be intelligible in potency; after it has acted as an instrument under the action of the agent intellect, it is said to be intelligible in act. Both before and after it remains what it is, namely, something corporeal and organic. No matter what the theory, it does not—it cannot—become something spiritual.<sup>10</sup>

Since the phantasm is acting as instrument in the production of intelligible species, it is easy to see that if the phantasm is more perfect, its instrumental action will also be more perfect; and the total effect produced by the principal cause and the instrumental cause, namely, the intelligible species, will also be more perfect; and the possible intellect, actuated by these more perfect species, will finally place the act of intellection properly so called with a greater degree of perfection. In the same way an expert, given a better tool, can do his work more easily, more quickly, and with better results.

But how can we conceive this perfecting of the cognitive, first in its organ, and as a result in its operation? Besides its speculative interest, the question also has some practical importance. Indeed, it is quite clear that the answer might affect in general the methodology of any intellectual work, and individual pedagogical methods in particular. After all, as St. Thomas grants to Averroes, we are in full control of our cognitive. Hence, if we know how to dispose this faculty to the best advantage, we will have at hand the means to improve our intellectual power of understanding, and our ideas will therefore be more clear and precise.

I do not know that St. Thomas or his commentators ever raised this question. Medieval thought never took this rather experimental direction. Still, could there perhaps be some hint of it in the words of Ferrariensis just referred to? "Quanto recipitur in *organo* *imaginationis et cogitativa* perfectius *disposito*, tanto magis aptum est ad hoc ut fiat actu intelligibile." It would thus be a question of general physical health, and, more in particular, of integrity of the brain-substance and normal condition of the nervous system. There would thus be a place in the Thomistic system for the suggestions of experts in hygiene who recommend that the body be comfortable in order to do its best work, and for the claims of experimental psy-

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Sum. c. Gent.*, II. 73, *supra cit.* This commentary will be found in the Leonine edition of the *Summa contra Gentiles* (vol. 13, p. 466, xi, n. 2 and 3). I give here the thought of Ferrariensis, but to understand it fully we must remember both the theory of the instrumental cause and the explanation given by Thomists to make clear the collaboration of Phantasms with the action of the agent intellect. To explain all this did not enter into the scope of my present subject.

chology on the development and training of the imagination and memory.

This then is Thomistic thought on the part played by the cogitative in forming the universal concept. Certain further details must be emphasized in order to grasp its full scope.

#### COLLABORATION OF INTERIOR SENSE FACULTIES

First of all, this intervention of the cogitative is not limited exclusively to those concepts which imply an element of harmfulness or of usefulness; it is found in the elaboration of any concept taken from concrete and individual reality, precisely because the datum of the individual, inasmuch as it is individual, is a *species insensata*.

Since in this intervention the cogitative works together with the memory and the imagination, the phantasm from which the intelligible species are abstracted is not the product of the imagination alone, as many a current textbook would lead us to think. It is the result of the combined operation of each of these internal senses. It may even possibly be said that in this common operation one sense or another will play a greater or lesser part depending on the nature of the object to be known and its relation to the knowing subject. We must admit this if we keep in mind the fact that there is in us but one real principle of action, the human person, essentially one, which, in order to perform its specific operation *par excellence*, intellection, brings into play this wonderful combination of different faculties which, each in its own way and according to its proper place in the ensemble, makes its contribution toward realizing that masterpiece which is the human idea.

But the human idea is abstract and universal. Now we must act according to the data of reason, whereas our actions themselves are concrete and singular. We must therefore in one way or another come to a knowledge of the material singular thing, the more so since no one can deny the fact that we do have this intellectual knowledge. Hence it is that every scholastic philosophy has some answer to give to the complex problem presented by this type of knowledge.

#### INTELLECTUAL COGNITION OF THE SINGULAR

St. Thomas makes this knowledge indirect and reflex. After the preparation we have spoken of, the possible intellect, actuated by the intelligible species taken from the phantasm by the operation of the agent intellect, places its specific act which consists in "saying" the mental word, or, if one prefers to put it so, in conceiving the idea. Thereupon, and immediately, the intelligence turns itself back, as it were, on its own act, and takes it as the object for a new act. It is then that the single knowing subject which is the human person observes that the abstract idea, conceived by the possible intellect, has its principle in the phantasm of which it is the continuation, and, in this phantasm, observes a similar continuation with the actual or past operation of the external senses. In this way the knowing subject, by putting the combination of its faculties into operation, reaches the concrete and the singular.

The phantasm then, next to the intelligence, is the principal element in this complex operation of knowing the material singular thing intellectually. We have seen how the cogitative holds a place of

prime importance in preparing the phantasm, and, consequently, in preparing the universal concept. This same place must be accorded it in the knowledge of the singular, and for the same reasons. Does not St. Thomas look upon the cognitive as the faculty of the individual precisely as individual? Ferrariensis is therefore right when he says in his commentary on the *Contra Gentes*:

The soul united to the body . . . cannot know the singular thing directly. It has an intellectual knowledge of the singular which is simply reflex, in this sense that it turns back on its operation, on the principle of this operation, and on the phantasm, the cause of the intelligible species. Such a turning back (*quae reflexio*) could never be realized without the help of the cognitive and the imagination, both of them sensible powers.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, on the one hand, the cognitive is active in the process of going up from the concrete to the abstract, and, on the other hand, it plays a part in going down from the abstract to the concrete. I do not think that this constitutes a departure from the thought of the Angelic Doctor when he makes what is harmful or useful the formal object of the cognitive. Indeed, we have explicit texts in which the individual is shown as belonging to the cognitive. Furthermore, let us note this fact. Every action is concrete. In fact, we go to the concrete, we seek to know the singular material thing for no other reason than to act. Theory and speculation remain in the field of the abstract, and it is in that field that we find science and speculative truth. We can therefore say that the concrete thing invites us to act; knowledge of the individual thing is a practical knowledge. Now, action goes of necessity toward the good it wishes to possess and shrinks from the evil it wishes to avoid, and it makes no difference whether the good itself be seeming or real. This is but a form of the first principle of finality which we will not fail to recognize if we remember that the notions of end and good are interchangeable. Thus, when the cognitive prepares in us the knowledge of the singular material thing, it does nothing other than act according to its nature as a faculty which judges some object to be good or bad, useful or harmful to the one who acts; and so we arrive again at the general idea of Thomistic teaching on this point.

#### THE COGNITIVE AND THE *Experimentum*

The cognitive helps to form the concept by preparing the phantasm; it has something to do with the knowledge of the singular thing. It also has a part to play in establishing those more complete and more rich concepts which are formed gradually and which particularly in combination make up practical science. We must now look into this function of the cognitive.

St. Thomas gives us his views on the subject in his commentary on the first chapter of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. In studying the notion of wisdom under which all forms of knowledge are grouped in proper order the Angelic Doctor notes the presence in man of memory, and somewhat like memory but of greater perfection, what he calls *experimentum* and Aristotle calls  $\epsilon\mu\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha$ . What does he mean by this? His answer is put in these terms:

*Experimentum enim est ex collatione plurium singularium in memoria*

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Sum. c. Gent.*, II. 74 (Leon. ed., vol. XIII, p. 472).

receptorum. Hujus autem collatio est homini propria et pertinet ad vim cogitativam, quae ratio particularis dicitur, quae est collativa intentionum individualium, sicut ratio universalis intentionum universalium. Sicut autem se habet experimentum ad rationem particularem, et consuetudo ad memoriam, ita se habet ars ad rationem.<sup>12</sup>

The *experimentum* is therefore the result of a *collatio* of particular data, in the sense in which this word has been explained above. This is why St. Thomas attributes it to the cogitative as to the faculty which places it; as if in his opinion this operation of gathering together concrete data is the very type of the operation of the cogitative, even though the element of useful or harmful be absent. Thus, the *experimentum* is something proper to man, just as is the cogitative itself. In animals there is to be found at best something which approximates the *experimentum*, which would be that kind of progress in the instinct of animals which moderns have made a great deal of and which is too often considered as unchangeable. St. Thomas observes that as a matter of fact, thanks to the multiplicity of sensations and thanks to the memory of these sensations which the animal keeps, certain associations are established which teach the animal to seek certain objects and avoid others. Observers tell us that this explains why, in the eighteenth century, whales in the southern seas did not flee from ships, whereas those in northern waters did; the first named as yet were not aware of the danger which threatened their species from these great sailing machines.

Man therefore has the *experimentum* as a privilege. Why? For our answer let us analyze the example used by St. Thomas.<sup>13</sup> Plato has been sick; his pulse was rapid, his temperature too high, his tongue coated—these are so many external sensations which I have made and noted in my memory. Some doctor, as I have seen for myself or been told, gave him a dose of a certain herb—more external sensations which I have similarly noted. Now the sick man's pulse is back to normal, his temperature is lower, his tongue is cleared, and he is cured—a third series of external sensations also noted in memory. Thereupon I said that Plato was cured of his fever by this medicine. I have made the same observations in the case of Socrates, Phaedo, Critias, and so forth.

Now let it be noted that each of these sensations, external as it is and therefore concrete and singular, was accompanied by universal and abstract ideas. I had the general ideas of man, pulse, rapidity, fever, and so forth, and in forming these ideas the cogitative had its part, as we mentioned above. I also had an indirect intellectual knowledge of each of these singular objects, of this man called Plato or Socrates, of this coated tongue. Once again the cogitative has been at work. These interventions of the cogitative come before that of which we now have to speak.

These various observations concerning Plato, Socrates, Phaedo, Critias, were successively recorded in my memory, perhaps at widely different times. But now, I place them all together in my actual, present consciousness; I remember them. Then, going from one to the other, I note the concrete similarity of concrete symptoms in the case of each of my sick men; I note that the four doses of medicine which cured them show a similarity of concrete characteristics; I see

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *In I Meta.*, lect. 1 #15 (Pirotta ed.).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, #19.

that the concrete effect in the four cases was the same. I have therefore a concrete knowledge of these singular instances under a common nature. Now this last named knowledge is what St. Thomas calls *experimentum*. He sees it as a *collatio*, that is to say, a gathering together, a collection of singular data going to make up a singular whole.

In this knowledge the first thing I have is a series of what St. Thomas calls judgments of the senses; that is to say, an operation which attributes some characteristic taken in its singularity to a being itself considered as singular. Plato's pulse has this certain quickening, or again, Plato no longer has this particular pulse-beat. We do not go beyond the singular in this operation, and I see no reason why we may not speak of judgment in the case. Needless to say, this will not be a judgment in the formal meaning of the word, since this formal meaning implies a complete reflexion of the faculty on itself, involving intellect; but it will nevertheless be a judgment which can be referred to as inchoate (*judicium inchoative dictum*).

But I have more than all this. There is a passing from a singular instance to another singular instance, whose result is a concrete observation of an equally concrete similarity. What is to prevent the use of the words *inquirere* or *discurrere* to designate the operation which enabled me to achieve this result? In their strictly etymological sense they are really verified here, since in this process there is really a seeking (*inquirere*), and in this seeking there is really a passing from one thing to another, a progress from here to there (*discurrere*). Why should these two words necessarily and without any exception be given an exclusively spiritual meaning? That may be very well for ordinary language, in which they are set aside to designate the operation of the spiritual reason. Nevertheless, when these words are used to designate a faculty to whose organic and material character attention is called at every moment, any honest exegete must admit that St. Thomas, in order to bring out the analogy existing between the cogitative and reason, has here used the words in their etymological meaning, indifferent to the element of materiality or immateriality.

If this is a faithful analysis—and I do believe it is—it seems to me that the Suarezian difficulty referred to above, which points out the radical impossibility for the cogitative to judge and draw conclusions, falls of its own weight.

It also seems to me that according to St. Thomas this function of the cogitative makes it the faculty which would prepare an induction by gathering together the more or less numerous instances from which the intellect induces a universal law. The cogitative then would direct the process which today is called observation of facts or experimentation, whether we take this in the strictly scientific sense of the words or in a broader sense.

#### THE *Experimentum* AS "EXPERIENCE"

If all this is true the latin word *experimentum*, which I have not as yet translated, could well be translated "experience." This is all the more so as the accumulation of these *experimenta* will give us what we refer to as experience in such phrases as the following: a man of experience, an experienced pilot, a workman experienced in

his field, a politician with experience in parliamentary law. Since these experiences increase with the years they will go to make up the experience of the elders, transmitting itself from generation to generation and forming at length the wisdom of nations.

Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to claim that in all this the cogitative is alone at work. Such is indeed not the case, for in man the intellect is always dominant in the operation performed. But this does not make less true the fact that in Thomas' opinion it is the cogitative which prepares for the intellect all the singular material from which the intelligence draws its ideas, and forms its own judgments and reasonings.

This experience—we may use the word now—is logically attributed to the cogitative by St. Thomas. For it makes us know singular instances, inasmuch as they are gathered together into a concrete unity by their concrete grouping. But this last datum is not a *species sensata*, for neither sight, nor hearing, nor taste can give it to us; consequently it falls under the class of *species insensatae*, which, as we saw in the beginning, is the object of the cogitative. Besides, St. Thomas calls attention to the fact that the result of this experience is to make the action more easy and more correct. If it is true that every action seeks the good and avoids the bad, we now find once more, not by some subtle roundabout process but by a deepening of our analysis, that same element of harmful and useful which, as St. Thomas constantly repeats, is what the cogitative seeks in the *species insensatae*.

Since the cogitative is the faculty of experience in the sense just explained it will be found at the very foundation of what Aristotle calls *τέχνη*,<sup>14</sup> and St. Thomas calls *ars*, a word which we might translate as *art*, provided we take it in the meaning suggested when we speak of the culinary art, the art of military tactics, the art of medicine, or even the art of fishing with a line. It might be better perhaps to keep the Greek word and translate it as "technique." There is an interesting text of the Angelic Doctor in this connection.

Ponit generationem artis et dicit quod ex experientia<sup>15</sup> in hominibus fit ars et scientia. . . . Modus autem quo ars fit ex experimento est idem cum modo quo experimentum fit ex memoria. Nam sicut ex multis fit una experimentalis scientia [note this word *scientia*, which is evidently to be taken in the general sense of knowledge and not in the restricted meaning given it by Aristotle], ita ex multis experimentis apprehensio fit universalis acceptio de omnibus similibus. Unde plus habet ars quam experimentum quia experimenta tantum circa singulare versantur; ars autem circa universalia.

So this technique is developed through an accumulation of concrete experiences from which the intelligence draws a universal idea and general rules.

Even after all this St. Thomas does not consider that the cogitative has yet played its full part. Using a comparison between experience

<sup>14</sup> Aristotle, *Meta.*, I, c.1, 980b29-981a5.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *In I Meta.*, loc. supra. cit., #18. Concerning this text of St. Thomas let it be noted that the word *experiencia* renders the Greek *ἐμπειρία*, *experimentalis scientia* corresponds to *τῆς ἐμπειρίας ἐννοημάτων*, literally *ex multis conceptionibus experimentis*. The word *science* should not be made too much of.

and technique he enables us to look far into the work of this internal sense in human action.

Experience and technique are similar in this, that they are both connected with action; the purpose of both is the concrete execution of some purpose. But on this field of the singular the cogitative with its experience and the intellect with its technique are not of equal efficacy; experience, and consequently the cogitative, has the upper hand. This is easily understood. Technique, intellectual as it is, does not go beyond the universal, and so remains at a distance from action which is concrete; but experience, as the function of a singular sense, is at home in the field of the singular. In fact, we observe this in our daily experience. A nurse will often do far more good to a patient than some *cum laude* graduate of the medical school with the ink scarce dry on his diploma, who knows his theory inside and out as he finds it in books, but has had no clinical or hospital experience. This is the very example used by St. Thomas.

*Cum ars sit universalium, experientia singularium, si aliquis habet rationem artis sine experientia, erit quidem perfectus in hoc quod universale cognoscat, sed quia ignorat singulare (cum experientia careat) multoties in curando peccabit, quia sanatio magis pertineat ad singulare quam ad universale, cum ad hoc pertineat per se, ad illud per accidens.<sup>16</sup>*

Of course, once the young doctor has acquired experience, he knows far more than the nurse, because he has knowledge of both the universal and the concrete.

This must not lead us to extol the cogitative above the intellect. Knowledge through technique is indeed more perfect, since it enables us to know causes and to some extent essences, whereas experience affords only a surface knowledge of facts. When one has technique he is not greatly disturbed by unexpected obstacles and difficulties and is quite able to handle them, using the general ideas in his possession. Given experience alone, however, the least obstacle, the first exception to previously noted experiences can throw everything out of gear. Finally, when there is question of establishing the hierarchy of our various knowledges and connecting them all with a higher principle—which is the very work of wisdom—art, grasping as it does the various universals, can at once discover their hierarchical order. Experience, on the contrary, cannot do this, because it sees only facts following upon one another in time and space. Add the fact that technique can be taught, but experience cannot. For to teach, in the large and noble sense of the word, is to make to know, and to know is to have cognition of a thing by its causes. Experience knows nothing about causes. Technique, which grasps the universal and the supersensible, does attain to them. Technique can therefore demonstrate, lead to knowledge, teach. We do say that the man of experience can communicate the result of his experiences. Though this is true, St. Thomas notes that the man of experience can transmit his experience only as “opinion,” that is to say, as a greater or less probability, somewhat after the fashion of the statistical laws laid down by our modern scientists, while for the pupil there will be no more than an acceptance on faith of what is given, and by no means a certitude which is the product of an apodictic demonstration.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, #22.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, #29. Note in this text the use of the word opinion, to express an assent given to what is contingent and singular.

## THE COGITIVE AND SENSE APPETITION

What we have called technique deals directly with the material activity of human industry, if we take these words in as broad a sense as possible. There is, above this, a technique of human living, an art of living which is ultimately nothing other than the pursuit of happiness, man's last end. This pursuit rules our moral activity properly so called.<sup>18</sup> The part that the cognitive plays in material activity naturally leads us to ask whether this internal faculty has a similar influence in the moral field. Since happiness, the object of moral philosophy, is only the ordered satisfaction of our appetites we will perhaps be able to discover some influence of the cognitive as well in the domain of sensible appetite as in that of rational appetite or free will.

Let us begin with the sensible appetite. Its operation depends on previous knowledge of an object which possesses sensible goodness. In some cases the external senses will be able to furnish this knowledge; their pleasure or pain will be enough to explain the desire or aversion as well as the movements of approach or flight performed by the faculty of locomotion. In other cases, however, the external senses will not suffice as an explanation. This is why we noted at the very beginning of this study that the Ancients admitted the existence of an estimative-cognitive faculty, precisely to explain the movement of flight of the ewe on meeting the wolf and on the feeling of fear which brings that movement about. We may therefore say that the knowledge proper to the cognitive is essentially directed toward action, since it is of its very nature to affect the sensible appetite. "Ab ea (cognitativa) natus est moveri appetitus sensitivus."<sup>19</sup>

Consequently, if the intellect can exercise some influence on this same appetite and on the passions which depend on it, it will necessarily do so through the cognitive. Thus Cajetan well expresses the Master's thought when he writes: "In man the appetite is put into motion and directed by the cognitive; the latter in turn is actuated by universal reason; this is why it may be said that the latter puts into motion and directs the sensible appetite."<sup>20</sup> The truth of this is clear. As we have seen, the cognitive is the faculty of the particular inasmuch as it is particular, and only the particular good can affect the sensible appetite. In the domain of action then we have a part played by the cognitive which is parallel to that which it has in the domain of knowledge: the intellect knows the singular only through the cognitive and acts upon it only through that same faculty.

By reason of its very character of *ratio particularis*, namely, of a sense which participates in the operation of reason properly so called, the cognitive in man has a lesser scope than has the estimative in the beast. Let us explain what we mean. In the case of the animal, once the estimative has knowledge of a good, the appetite is at once

<sup>18</sup> This, after all, is the classic distinction between *factibilia*, with which what I have called technique is concerned, and *agibilia*, the work of action inasmuch as it is moral and prudent.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. S. T., I. 81. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Cajetan's commentary on S. T., I. 81.3. It is rather interesting to note that of all the parallel passages in which St. Thomas speaks of the domination of the rational part over the sensitive this text of the *Summa* is the only one in which he introduces the cognitive.

moved and with absolute necessity puts the faculties of locomotion in motion to take possession—or at least attempt to take possession—of the good presented. The very same is true of a danger to be avoided. Once the wolf is known, fear arises in the sensible appetite of the ewe and panicky flight results. With man, however, it is different. The cognitive can judge one or another object dangerous or pleasurable without the corresponding exterior movement following necessarily. No doubt, in the majority of cases, the appetite will be excited and will feel desire or aversion regarding the object in question. It will even bring about unreasoned flight or irresistible forward movement; such are the *primo-primi*, spontaneous actions on which cold reason has not had a chance to act. But soon reason gains or regains the mastery; by its absolute controlling power over the movements of the body it will stop them or allow them to continue as it pleases. As regards the passions, however, reason will have to be content with calming them down or arousing them further by dwelling on rational and universal motives of a nature to oppose or confirm the sensible and particular motives furnished by the cognitive; in a word, by giving the cognitive its approval or disapproval.

With us then the cognitive has not absolute power of direction over our passions, as has the estimative in the case of animals, because the cognitive is not the highest light we have in which to direct our conduct. On the other hand, if intellect exercises over the inferior portion of our being that twofold domination, despotic and political, of which Aristotle spoke, and St. Thomas after him, it can exercise such power only by making use of the cognitive, very much like a prince who governs slaves and free citizens through his ministers.

With this last remark we touch upon the field of the will, and so of moral proper. We have to do with those acts by which we tend freely toward our end as human beings, purely and simply, which is happiness.

#### THE COGNITIVE AND INTELLECTUAL APPETITION

Now, in the moral order, no act is good unless it is placed under the action of natural or supernatural virtues. These virtues give ease to the activity of our faculties, perfect their operation, introduce joy and power into their progress toward good. It is through them that our will decides promptly to render to each his due (justice), or that the lower tendencies of our sensible nature are kept under the yoke of right reason (fortitude and temperance).

But before he acts the virtuous man must throw light on the path he is to follow. He is a just man, and he knows that detraction is to be avoided, and he makes up his mind to avoid it; he has the virtue of temperance, and he knows the commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and he wills to keep it; he is a man of fortitude, and he is quite aware of the fact that there are times when duty must be accomplished at the cost of painful sacrifices, and he is resolved to accept these sacrifices. Lines of action and resolutions of this kind are general. Action is the most concrete thing there is, shot through as it is with very exact circumstances of persons, time and place. Is this thing I have in mind to tell my neighbor here and now a real instance of detraction, or is it something he really ought to know? Is the growing friendship between Arthur and Jean such as to put

them in danger of some act of conjugal infidelity? Suppose I am a doctor, and some patient asks me to perform an operation which, as a doctor, I see is quite unnecessary, and which my conscience tells me is unlawful. If I refuse to perform the operation I shall lose this rich patient, and many others besides. Must I sacrifice my own interests, themselves quite legitimate, to scruples which many of my fellow-doctors brush aside so easily? In a word, we have the problem of harmonizing the individual instance with the general law.

The virtue of prudence is the one to give the answer. To be able to give this answer the prudent man must know the universal principles and the concrete conditions in which, if I may so speak, the principles will take flesh.<sup>21</sup> Above all he must have knowledge of the concrete. We do meet people who have practically no general ideas, but who are nevertheless better than others when it comes to action. Their experience of reality is greater. This is so true that, while we insist on the necessity of general principles, we must be ready to give these up should we have to make a choice between them and the concrete,<sup>22</sup> for prudence is active reason and the concrete is closer to action.

The prudent man must reach a practico-practical decision. In view of the circumstances of time, place and persons in which I actually find myself, I must keep the information I have to myself. This decision is the conclusion of a syllogism which St. Thomas calls the prudential syllogism. It is often only implicit, instantaneous, and scarce conscious. In more obscure cases it is the synthesis of a more or less long and complicated process of deliberation. The major of this syllogism is some universal law of justice (detraction is forbidden), or of temperance or of fortitude; the minor is some concrete and particular fact (to give the information I have to others is detraction). Prudence uses its influence in shaping this concrete and particular judgment.

But the knowledge of what is concrete, individual, contingent cannot, at least directly, belong to the intellect, the faculty of the abstract, universal, necessary. To get to this minor premise there is need of a sensible faculty, since only such a faculty can grasp the concrete, individual, contingent. This faculty cannot be an external sense, held down as it is to knowledge of a proper sensible quality, such as what is colored, sonorous, and so forth, whereas there is a question here of grasping the entire individual inasmuch as it is individual. This faculty must therefore necessarily be some internal sense, with the capacity of perceiving data outside the scope of exterior senses, and able to gather the particular data together and judge them from the viewpoint of the end of man; that is, in the light of good or evil. We have already found all these required characteristics in the cogitative. And this, indeed is St. Thomas' own conclusion in his commentary on the Nichomachean Ethics:

Quia singularia proprie cognoscuntur per sensum, oportet quod homo horum singularium quae dicimus esse principia et extrema habeat sensum non solum exteriorem, sed etiam interiorem, cuius supra dixit (Aristoteles) esse prudentiam, scilicet, vis cogitativam sive aestimativam quae dicuntur ratio particularis.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Cf. S. T., II-II 47. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. In VI Ethic., lect. 9 #1249.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. In VI Ethic., lect. 6. #1194.

It is evident that it is by reason of his views on the cognitive as the faculty of the individual, as we noted above, that St. Thomas brings it into the prudential reasoning process. In the last analysis he is only applying to the domain of moral the psychological analysis we saw him make a while back. In the formation of the phantasm from which the agent intellect draws the intelligible species necessary for the universal concept, and in keeping before consciousness this same phantasm toward which the intellect turns itself back in order to know the material singular thing, St. Thomas did not isolate the cognitive from the other internal senses. Here too, as the *Summa Theologica* puts it, it is when "perfected by the memory and by experience that the cognitive allows the prudent man to judge the concrete cases, objects of experience, with speed and ease."<sup>24</sup>

We must therefore, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to the *agere* what we have read concerning the *fieri* in the commentary on the Metaphysics; experience (*experimentum*) in the sense there explained comes in here. Thus, just as for art or technique the lapse of years is of great importance, so in the order of prudence, old age has the advantage over youth, and, taking up again a text of Aristotle, Thomas writes these curious lines: "Non videtur quod juvenis fiat prudens. Cujus causa est quia prudentia est circa singulare quae fiunt nobis cognita per experientiam. Juvenis autem non potest esse expertus quia ad experientiam requiritur multitudo temporis."<sup>25</sup> Hence, the more the cognitive knows concrete cases, and becomes skilful in going over them to discover elements of resemblance, and makes those concrete judgments of which we spoke above, the more will the intellect in turn become able to embody the general laws of the virtues in the concrete and the more will it come to the conclusion according to right reason to place a certain action or not, in this way or in that; in a word, the more will the individual conform his conduct to the *recta ratio agibilium*, that is, to prudence.

#### THE COGNITIVE AND PRUDENCE

But then prudence appears as a perfecting and a habitus, not of the spiritual intellect, as is commonly taught, but of the cognitive! If we limit ourselves to the commentary on the *Ethics*, we do indeed get that impression. Not only does St. Thomas note without objection that Aristotle attributes prudence to a sense which Thomas himself thinks is the cognitive,<sup>26</sup> but he even writes: "Ad istum sensum (interiorum scilicet) *magis* pertinet prudentia per quam perficitur ratio particularis ad recte existimandum de singularibus intentionibus operabilium."<sup>27</sup> And he draws the conclusion that beasts, because of

<sup>24</sup> Cf. S. T., II-II. 47. 3 ad 3. "Prudentia non consistit in sensu exteriori . . . sed in sensu interiori, qui perficitur per memoriam et per experimentum ad prompte judicandum de particularibus expertis."

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *In VI Ethic.*, lect. 7 #1208.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *In VI Ethic.*, lect. 9 #1249 with its reference to the Greek text: c. 8, 1242a30. I am attempting to present St. Thomas' and not Aristotle's opinion in my text. It would seem that the medieval Doctor here differs from the real opinion of the Stagirite. This is all the more probable as in the opinion of Susemihl the Greek text here has been altered. Cf. *Aristotelis Ethica Nicomachea*, ed. Fr. Susemihl—O. Apelt (Leipzig: Teubner), p. 135. Note line 30.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, #1215.

the fact that they possess the estimative faculty, the parallel of our own cogitative, in some sort are endowed with this virtue of prudence, and he repeats this same idea not only in his commentaries on the *De Anima* and the *Metaphysics*, but also in his *De Veritate*.<sup>28</sup>

But on the other hand, when he treats of the basis of prudence in the *Summa Theologica*, St. Thomas does not take this same stand: Prudence does not consist in an external sense . . . but in an internal sense which memory and experience perfect in such a way that it may pass quick judgment on particular cases. This does not mean that prudence finds its principal subject in an internal sense. It exists in the reason first of all; it reaches this sense only *per quamdam applicationem*.<sup>29</sup>

What are we to make of this? Commenting on this article of the *Summa* Cajetan indeed admits that there is a difference on this point between St. Thomas, commenting on Aristotle, and St. Thomas, author of the *Summa*, and that we must seek the true Thomistic thought in the last named. As a matter of fact, the act of prudence is an intellectual act. We must doubtless know the concrete and individual in order to place it, but we must also know the universal. Yet the cogitative, because it is no more than a sensible faculty, is fundamentally incapable of any abstract and universal cognition. The intellect, however, undoubtedly has the universal as formal and direct object, but it also has a certain indirect and reflex knowledge of the singular material thing.

We would thus be wrong in thinking that the particular minor of the prudential syllogism is elaborated by the cogitative alone. Indeed not! An act of the intellect has its place here, but it is an indirect act of intellectual knowledge of the singular material thing. In this act, as in all other acts of this kind, the intellect turns itself back on the phantasm whence was drawn the intelligible species which put the intellect in act. This phantasm is the product of the cogitative, helped by imagination and memory. Besides, the human person, the single knowing subject, while it has the universal knowledge of the object—for instance, detraction—through the intellect, finds this same notion embodied in the phantasm which it reaches by means of the cogitative as perfected by memory and experience. In working out the prudential minor the cogitative can be said to serve as instrument to the intellect. St. Thomas is therefore correct in insisting that prudence first and above all perfects the intellect, and only secondarily perfects the cogitative. And just as a better tool in the hands of an artist will produce a better result, so a more experienced cogitative will enable the reason to perform acts of more consummate prudence. A person thus endowed will give wiser counsels, will be more just in his judgments, will act more opportunely. The law governing the relations between instrumental and principal cause will be active here; the statue is wholly the product of both the chisel and the sculptor; these acts of prudence, in the words of Cajetan, “principaliter sunt intellectus, ministerialiter autem cogitativae.”<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *In III De Anima*, lect. 4 #644; *In I Meta.*, lect. 1 #11; *De Ver.*, q. 15, a. 1; q. 24 a. 2; q. 25 a. 2.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. the text quoted above in note 24 which goes on as follows: “Non tamen ita quod prudentia sit in sensu interiori sicut in subjecto principali, sed principaliter quidem est in ratione, per quamdam autem applicationem pertinet ad hujusmodi sensum.”

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Cajetan, *In II-II S. T.*, q. 47, a. 3 (Leon. ed.), vol. VIII, p. 351.

This, then, is how the cognitive has a very special place in the act of prudence. Because of this part which it plays, most important among the senses and indispensable for the intellect, St. Thomas calls it not only *ratio particularis* but *intellectus* as well, implying a sort of higher dignity. We know that for the Angelic Doctor the intellect which knows first principles without any reasoning process is opposed to discursive *ratio* and is called *intellectus* in the strictest sense of the term, or *intellectus principiorum*.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless these principles, specific objects of the *intellectus*, either implicitly or explicitly serve as starting points for the process of *ratio*, and are the last point to which the demonstration can be traced back. With this in mind St. Thomas, both in his *Summa* and in his commentaries on Aristotle, calls these first principles *extrema*: "Intellectus in utraque cognitione, scilicet tam in speculativa quam in practica, est extremorum, quia primorum terminorum et extremorum a quibus scilicet ratio incipit."<sup>32</sup>

With these facts established, let us remember that in the prudential act the cognitive constructs the particular or singular minor. Now the cognitive knows the singular without any reasoning or discursive process and therefore passes upon it judgments which are "absolute," taking this word as synonymous for immediate judgments.<sup>33</sup> Again, the universal is taken from the singular by abstraction. This is already enough for this singular minor to be worthy of the name of principle, and consequently, extreme, especially as the practical intellect has these singulars as the goal of its processes. Which gives us the reason why St. Thomas, using a legitimate analogy, boldly transposes the term *intellectus* from the domain of the spiritual to that of the sensible and corporeal and applies it to the cognitive: "Sicut pertinet ad intellectum in universalibus judicium absolutum de primis principiis . . . ita et circa singularia vis cognitiva vocatur intellectus secundum quod habet absolutum judicium de singularibus."<sup>34</sup>

Nor is this all. The singular minor of the prudential syllogism aims at a practical conclusion, and therefore at an end, with which, if known formally as a minor, it is already full and pregnant. It may even be said that this minor itself expresses an end in this sense, not a universal end—the synderesis expresses this in the major—but a particular end embodied in the concrete act suggested by prudence, a particular end which is consequently a means judged apt to lead to the general end, either in the order of some virtue, such as justice, or simply in the order of human nature. It can therefore quite legitimately be said that the intellect which enters into the prudential act is a correct estimate of a particular end. And so, looking at it from another angle, this minor, inasmuch as it is a singular final cause, is worthy of the name of principle and extreme, and the cognitive which constructs it may be called *intellectus*.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Cf. my book *Intellectus et Ratio selon saint Thomas d'Aquin*, which takes this idea for its principal thesis; especially to be consulted are Part II, c. 3; and Part III, c. 2.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *In VI Ethic.*, lect. 9 #1247.

<sup>33</sup> This term, absolute judgment, is a technical term in St. Thomas used to designate the angelic cognition inasmuch as it proceeds without *discursus* or reasoning; he applies it to our human cognition to designate the act of our *intellectus*. Cf. my *Intellectus et Ratio* quoted above, p. 47.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *In VI Ethic.*, lect. 9 #1255, already quoted a number of times.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. S. T., II-II. 49. 2. The same doctrine in ad 3 and in the commentary of the passage quoted by the *Summa* (Pirotta ed.), #1248.

All of which enables us to conclude with Cajetan in his two-line commentary on the second article of the *Secunda-Secundae*, question forty-nine: "In articulo secundo, habetur quod prudentiae principium et conclusio est in cogitativa."<sup>36</sup> For it is from the singular minor, formed by the cogitative as we have explained, that the prudential act flows, and it is in a particular conclusion obtained through this same cogitative that the prudential act culminates.

### CONCLUSION

It is now time to attempt to answer the questions we raised at the beginning of our study. What is the true part played by the cogitative? The cogitative is not merely the sense of the useful or the harmful, in the narrow meaning in which the examples so often repeated and, indeed, taken from the animal world would lead us all too easily to understand it. It is also, and in St. Thomas' opinion more so, perhaps, the sense of the individual grasped under the aspect of its reality as a concrete individual. The cogitative gathers this individual element, organizes it, and from it constructs experience in the order of technique as well as in that of moral conduct enlightened by prudence. With good reason does P. Noble say of it: "It is the master faculty of practical people, of artisans, of people who know how to do things; it is the sense of fortunate discoveries, happy combinations, success in action."<sup>37</sup> Indeed it is with action, essentially individual, that the cogitative is particularly concerned. And since action is fundamentally nothing other than the incarnation of a tendency toward a concrete good, the cogitative, in spite of this broader concept of it, still remains the internal sense of the good proper to the individual, and consequently proper to the entire species.

As the sense of the individual, the cogitative—with the aid it receives from imagination and memory—is at the origin of the phantasm whence in the last analysis the universal concept will be drawn. It is also through the cogitative that the thinking subject, turning back upon these same phantasms, observes the continuity existing between the abstract idea and the phantasm on one hand, and on the other between the abstract idea and the real extrinsic object the perception of which has been furnished to it by the external senses. The cogitative is therefore a real liaison agent between the spiritual world of our ideas and the corporeal world of our senses. Consequently, the more exact the work of the cogitative, the keener can our intellectual knowledge become. This throws light on the statement of P. J. Webert, O.P.: ". . . it is a priceless instrument for the intellect, whether there be question of speculation or of action. It can be affirmed that there is no really powerful intellect, be it speculative or active, without a cogitative at once very swift and exact."<sup>38</sup>

If this is the case, it would be a mistake to follow Suarez<sup>39</sup> in considering the cogitative as a mere copy of the estimative of animals, a bit more perfected by reason of its proximity to reason. No doubt

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Cajetan's commentary on this text of the *Summa* (Leon. ed., vol. VIII, p. 368).

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Noble, O.P., *La Prudence*, French translation of the *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q. 47 to 52, explanatory notes on q. 47, a. 3, p. 243 (Paris: 1926).

<sup>38</sup> Cf. J. Webert, O.P., *L'âme humaine*, French translation of the *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 75-83, technical notes, p. 383 (Paris: 1925).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Suarez, text quoted above, note 50.

there is still truth in the proportion: the cognitive is to man what the estimative is to the animal. We must not for that reason forget the abyss created by intelligence between these two classes of beings, nor must we forget that as a result the cognitive is rightly called the particular reason and the intellect of the individual, both of which formulas, in St. Thomas' opinion, indicate the altogether special part played by this internal sense in our human intellection, a part which in no sense finds a parallel in the animal estimative.

One would also find himself on the wrong track if he were to identify the cognitive with instinct as the Moderns understand it. Take the definition of instinct given by W. James: "Instinct is usually defined as the faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends without foresight of the ends and without previous education in the performance"; or, again, that found in the *Vocabulaire Technique et Critique de la Philosophie*, published by Andre Lalande: "The complex combination of exterior, determined, hereditary reactions, common to all the individuals of a same species and adapted to an end of which the being which acts is not generally conscious."<sup>40</sup> Let this concept be compared with the notion of the cognitive that resulted from our present study.

Instinct is a combination of external and internal cognitions, of appetites and local movements of all kinds; the cognitive is an internal faculty of cognition, and nothing more than that. Instinct implies no consciousness of an end to be reached, or even, in many cases, of the means or movements useful to reach the end; the cognitive, on the contrary, is essentially founded on consciousness. Instinct, though not altogether impervious to improvement, remains, in all its essential elements, incapable of true progress. By its very nature the cognitive perfects itself in speed of action, sureness of vision, richness of experience, and thus prepares an ever more perfect instrument for intellectual progress. Instinct serves vegetative life in particular, and makes certain the development and conservation of the individual, and through him of the species. The cognitive, though it is far from being of no use whatever to this side of man, aims particularly at placing the inferior portion (vegetative and sensitive) at the service of the superior and rational portion, thus contributing to the good of the whole, the complete and ordered satisfaction of all the faculties of the human person.

Undoubtedly the cognitive can play its part in the domain of instinct, in the case of man. We saw that this was the case when we considered its relations with the sensible appetite and with the play of strictly spontaneous movements (the *primo-primi* movements of the scholastics). But it is more often outside of these so called instinctive movements that the cognitive exercises its action, and frequently removes whatever element of the instinctive there is in them and places them as quickly as possible under the domination of reason.

Does this mean that there is no point of similarity between the cognitive and instinct? Such a claim would be an exaggeration in the opposite direction. There are times when the cognitive throws such clear light on the conduct to be followed that it seems to have made impossible any intervention on the part of reflex and discursive

<sup>40</sup> Cf. William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, II (New York: 1890), p. 382, and Lalande, *Vocabulaire*, art. instinct.

reason. The action seems altogether spontaneous, prepared in no wise by experience or education. In such cases men speak of instinct, but, as is evident, in a sense quite different from that in which biologists and psychologists speak of instinct. La Rochefoucauld speaks in this sense when he says: "Some there are who by a kind of instinct whose cause they ignore make decisions on what is presented to them and always decide for the right thing."<sup>41</sup> The truth is that such decisions must be attributed to a quick and exact view taken of concrete situations, a view which is that of the intellect, but prepared by a cogitative naturally placed in ideal conditions.

The cogitative then, not reducible to instinct or to imagination and memory, remains, in the twentieth as well as in the thirteenth century, an authentic part of the eternal human psychism. Not only is there no question of relegating it to the museum of antiquities, but it must take up again in our psychology the place so generously marked out for it by St. Thomas Aquinas.

It is true that the Moderns know nothing about this cogitative. But what does that prove? It proves nothing, absolutely nothing, against its existence and its nature. In fact, we might expect them to know nothing about it, considering the purely experimental and positive, not to say positivistic direction which psychological studies since the nineteenth century have chosen to take. As a faculty, the cogitative does not fall within the scope of positive science. As for its operation, it is so easily confused on the one hand with that of the imagination and memory, by which it is always helped, and on the other with that of the intellect, behind which it hides, as it were, that minds with a bias for observed facts would naturally fail to single it out. Add to that the anti-metaphysical prejudices with which Auguste Comte has imbued the minds of our era. It was quite natural, then, that the cogitative should be branded as one of those metaphysical entities, those personified abstractions for which the positivistic mind can never find enough scorn. It is high time to realize, as P. Webert, O.P., put it so well in the passage already quoted<sup>38</sup> that:

in a Thomistic theory of the internal senses there are two faculties (the *sensus communis* and the cogitative), which have been laid aside in favor of their connected faculties, the imagination and the memory, which hold the principal roles. Because they are faculties of synthesis, both of them, and not powers of mere repetition, their nature is subtle enough to pass unnoticed. But from the fact that they reintegrate in sensible cognition a synthetic function, the study of them once developed cannot fail to put back into this cognition a unifying principle of which recent observations give no hint.

On this point as well as on many others Thomism, understood in all its breadth, might give satisfaction to minds left unsatisfied by the too purely material progress of our time.

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<sup>41</sup> de la Rochefoucault, *Maximes Diverses*, c. 10, "On Taste."