

Siger of Brabant

*Questions on Book III of the De anima*¹

Regarding the part of the soul by which it has cognition and wisdom, etc. [De an. III, 429a10] And² with respect to this third book there are four questions that arise regarding intellect.

- The first concerns the difference between intellect and the soul's other parts, sensory and nutritive.
- The second concerns the intellect in its own right: what is it?
- The third concerns the intellect in relation to bodies.
- The fourth concerns the powers of intellect, possible and agent: how do they differ from each other and what are they?

I. The difference between intellect and the soul's other parts

With respect to the first, the difference between intellect and the soul's other parts, two questions arise:

- first, whether the intellective power is rooted in the same substance of the soul as the nutritive and sensory powers;
- second, whether the intellective power differs in substance from the nutritive and sensory powers.

Question 1. Is the intellective power rooted in the same substance of the soul as the nutritive and sensory powers?

With respect to the first, it is argued and shown as follows that the intellective power is rooted in the same substance as the nutritive and sensory powers. Averroes says {2} of the beginning of *De anima* I, where Aristotle raises his questions regarding the soul, that "Aristotle believes these (the sensory, nutritive, and intellective powers) to be one substance in subject" [comment 7, p.10].

For the opposite. A power rooted in an immaterial form is not the same as a power rooted in a material form. This is plain. But the intellect is a power rooted in an immaterial form. Proof: it is said in *De anima* III that the intellect is simple [429b23], immaterial [429a24], and unmixed [429a18, 430a18]. The nutritive power, like the sensory, is rooted in the same [material] substance. Therefore

the intellective is not rooted in the same substance as the nutritive and sensory powers.

Solution. Some hold that the nutritive, sensory, [and intellective] are rooted in the same simple substance. And they say that the soul arrives from without beneath the threefold power and differentia of the soul. By means of one of these powers, it can operate beyond the body -- that is, by means of intellect it understands. But by means of the other twofold power, nutritive and sensory, it can operate only in a body. Hence it can take nourishment and sense only in a body. As a result, these three powers differ in their relation to the body, since they all arrive from without.

Someone who holds this does not have the resources to evade the argument of Averroes by which he proves that there is one intellect in all (even though he makes use of many solutions from others) -- unless he uses the claim that the nutritive and sensory arrive from without. But without doubt it is not hard to disprove that the soul comes from without with its threefold power (nutritive, sensory, intellective). For Aristotle seems to maintain {3} the contrary in *De animalibus* XV [736b27], since he himself says there that "only the intellect is from without."

Also, that reasoning can be disproved by reasoning. It is clear that the nutritive and sensory powers are produced from the potential of the matter when the offspring is formed. So if the nutritive and sensory powers were to arrive from without, the nutritive and sensory powers first produced from the potential of the matter would have to be corrupted by the nutritive and sensory powers arriving from without. No one would hold this, because a thing is corrupted only by its contrary. Alternatively, there would have to be two nutritive and two sensory powers in a human being, which is equally absurd.

For this reason, a different reply to the question should be made. For it should be said that the intellective power is not rooted in the same simple soul as the nutritive and sensory powers, but that it is rooted with them in the same composite soul. So although the intellect is simple when it arrives, it is then united to the nutritive and sensory powers, on arrival, and so once united it does not make up one simple thing, but rather a composite.

Through this the reply is clear to Averroes's claim that Aristotle believes the nutritive, sensory, and intellective powers to be one soul in subject. This is true: they are one composite, but not one simple soul.

The second problem, whether the intellective power differs from the nutritive and sensory, is put off for now until the third [section], on the intellect in relation to the body. {4}

II. Intellect in its own right

Question 2. Is the intellect eternal or created anew?

Next, there is a question about the intellect in its own right. And first we will ask whether it is eternal or created anew.

It seems that it is eternal and not made anew. Everything made anew by an agent is made by an agent undergoing change. But the created intellect is an intellect made by an agent not undergoing change. Therefore it is not made anew. Proof of the major: if something is made anew, it must be that this occurs due to some reason for its newness, through which that new thing is made. Indeed, there must be there some cause of its newness. But that cause of newness is nothing other than a change in the agent and the thing acted on. That which is supposed (*debet*) to be made anew is not made out of something, because if it were out of something, then it could come about out of something other than an agent -- for example, out of some underlying matter. So therefore everything made anew is made by some agent undergoing change. The minor -- that the intellect is made by an agent not undergoing change -- is also clear, since it is made by the first cause, which is simple and unchangeable.

Also, it is written in *De caelo* I [282b1-5, 283b17-19] that everything eternal in the hereafter (that is, in the future) is eternal in the past. But the intellect is eternal in the future; for it is separated from the nutritive and sensory "as the perpetual from the corruptible" [*De an.* II, 413b26-27]. Therefore likewise in the past, and so it is not made anew. {5}

Moreover, it is stated in *De caelo* I [282a30-b1] that everything not generated is eternal. Through this Aristotle proves that the world itself is eternal. But the intellect is not generated, since it comes from without. Therefore it is eternal and not made anew.

For the opposite is Augustine, who says that the soul, in being created, is infused, and in being

infused is created.^a It is clear that what is created in being infused is created anew. Therefore the intellect is created anew and is not eternal.

Solution. This question presupposes that this intellect is not the First Agent, because it is concerned with our intellect. And here is a proof that our intellect is not the First Agent: The intellect that is the First Agent is the ultimate in goodness, simplicity, and perfection. But our intellect is not the ultimate in goodness, simplicity, and perfection, since it has potentiality mixed in with it: our intellect is potentially any of the things that are intelligible, and understands with a phantasm. But the First Agent has nothing mixed in of potentiality nor phantasms. From this it is clear that our intellect is not the First Agent.

Therefore, when it is asked whether the intellect is made anew or eternal, it is clear what should be said according to Aristotle: that the intellect is made eternal, not made anew. For Aristotle says that everything made immediately by the first cause is not {6} made anew, but made eternal. For this reason, he posits that the world is eternal, since it was made immediately by the first cause. So if Aristotle were asked whether the intellect is made anew or made eternal, he would judge that the intellect is made eternal just like the world. And the intellect -- the intellect that is the mover of the human species -- is one thing made eternal, not multiplied by individual multiplication.

If you ask what it is that leads Aristotle to this -- that is, to saying that everything made immediately by the first cause is made eternal, it is clear what should be said. For Aristotle says at the start of *Physics* VIII that every agent making something anew undergoes change. Therefore if the first cause makes something anew, his will must be new and must undergo change. But his will is his action. Therefore his action would have to be new and undergo change, if it were to make something anew. Accordingly, since this is absurd, he says for this reason that the world is eternal. And this claim, that "every agent forming something anew undergoes change," is especially true of things that are not made out of something.

But is this necessary? It should be said that although it is plausible, it is not necessary.^b This

^a Peter Lombard, *Sent.* II d. 18 c. 7; see Gauthier, p. 214.

^b The proof is not necessary, and hence does not measure up to the standards of an Aristotelian demonstrative proof, but it is *probabile*, which is to say that it has some persuasive force or plausibility. It falls into Aristotle's category of a dialectical proof.

is clear, because the thing willed³ proceeds from the willing agent in accordance with the form of its will. For we see that this is so in the case of agents that make artifacts. Therefore it will likewise be the case for the First Agent. So if {7} the First Agent has willed that the intellect be made anew, then when it was willed, it was willed anew, since otherwise it would not have been willed in accordance with the form of his will. And if he willed from eternity that the intellect be made eternal, the intellect was made eternal, since otherwise what he willed would not have been made in accordance with the form of his will. So anyone who would will to know whether the intellect was made anew or made eternal, would have to investigate the form of the First Agent's will. But who will investigate this?

And if you ask: If he willed for the intellect to be made eternal, why would he have willed this rather than having willed for it to be anew? I answer that he so willed because he so willed. For his will does not depend on things as does our will, which -- even if it cannot be compelled by things -- is pulled toward and excited by things. But the will of the First Agent is neither compelled by nor pulled toward things.

But I say that while the view of Aristotle is not necessary, as was shown, it nevertheless is more plausible than the view of Augustine, because we cannot inquire into the newness or eternity of something made by the will of the First Agent, inasmuch as⁴ we cannot think of the form of his will. So we have to inquire into the newness or eternity of something made based on its own proper nature, so as to see whether what is generated compels of its own nature that it was made anew. But everything immediately made by God, in the way the intellect is, does not of its own nature have to have existence made anew; rather, it requires being made eternally. For everything having the power for being able to exist for the whole future, had {8} the power for being able to have existed for the whole past. But this thing that was made, the intellect, has the power for being able to exist for the whole future. Therefore it has the power for being able to have existed in the whole past. And so the intellect, as far as its proper nature is concerned, was made eternal and not anew. For this reason the view of Aristotle is more plausible than the view of Augustine. Therefore if Aristotle is believed, it is plain that Augustine should not be believed. But if Augustine is to be believed, then things will stand equal.

Reply to the argument for the opposite. When it is said that "everything made anew by an agent is made by an agent undergoing change," it should be said that that is true, if the thing made anew was made by an agent that does not act by the form of its will. But because that is not the case here, since the intellect was made by an agent that acts through the form of its will, it need not have been made by an agent undergoing change. This has been understood (*Quod est intellectum ??*).

Question 3. Was the intellect made in the now of time or the now of eternity?

Let us suppose, nevertheless, that the intellect was made and made new, though not generated. And let us ask whether the intellect was made in the now of time or the now of eternity, in this way asking about *how* intellect was made.

It seems that it was made in the now of time, as follows. Everything made new, was made in the instant of newness (or, in the new instant). But newness {9} occurs only in an instant of time, not in an instant of the everlasting (*aevi*) or eternity. Therefore an intellect made new in this way was made in an instant of time.

On the contrary. Every instant of time, if it exists, belongs to some time. So what was made in an instant of time ought to exist at the end of the preceding change. But the intellect was not made at the end of any change. (Proof: when the intellect was made, there was no change in the agent, since he is in himself unchangeable, nor in the matter, since there would be no matter.) Therefore the intellect was made in an instant of the everlasting and not in an instant of time, since it was not made at the end of any change.

Solution. I say that the intellect was made neither in the now of time nor in the now of eternity, but in noncontinuous time, composed of multiple nows.

First I prove that it was made in time. Every change goes from opposite to opposite, and these could not exist at once. Therefore every change occurs in time, from which it follows that opposites between which there is change cannot exist at once. But the intellectual soul was brought from non-being to being. But it did not exist at once under being and non-being. Therefore there was succession in its being made. So if we suppose that every successive measure is time, then it is clear from this that the intellect was made in time.

Next I prove that the intellect was made in a time composed of multiple nows. For this making occurs not at once, but successively, and for this reason it requires a measure that is not whole at once but one after another. Corresponding to it, then, is one now that it requires before its being, and another now for its entering into being, and in this way it seems that successive nows, without anything intervening, are required for its making. Therefore it is evident that the intellect exists in a time composed of multiple nows.

If you are going to say that Aristotle denies that time is composed of multiple nows [*Phys.* VI 241a1-5], it should be replied that there is one sort of time that is the measure of continuous motion, and that time is not composed of multiple nows. Another sort of time is the measure of noncontinuous motion, and such time {10} is composed of multiple nows. It should be replied^c that there is one sort of time that is the measure of continuous motion, and another sort of time that is a measure following motion successively, but not continuously, and such time certainly can be composed of multiple nows.

It can be claimed, as was seen, that the intellect is made anew, and it was also seen before that its making consists in a time composed of multiple nows, although its substance exists neither in time nor in the now of time, but in the now of the everlasting.

Question 4. Is the intellect generable?

Although it was presupposed earlier that the intellect is immediately produced by the First Agent, this can still be in doubt. So let us ask whether the intellect is generable.

It seems that it is. Aristotle says in *Metaphysics* VII [1033b15-20] that what generates the composite generates the form of the composite. Therefore the form of a generated composite is generated. But the intellect is the form of a generated composite. Therefore the intellect is a generated form.

Also, to the extent a form is loftier, to that extent it is more active of itself (*sui*) in matter and multiplicative of itself in matter. But the intellect is a loftier form than the nutritive and sensory. And

^c The ensuing sentence seems merely to restate the previous one: one of them should presumably be omitted.

since these often act through generation, it seems *a fortiori* that the intellective soul multiplies itself through generation and hence will be generable.

One might say that the intellect is not generable, and that its not being generable is not because of a defect in the agent of generation, but because of a defect in matter (for matter is impotent with regard to such a form being produced from it). On the contrary, all forms that exist actually in the First Mover exist potentially in prime matter. But the intellect is among {11} those forms that exist in the First Mover. Therefore it exists potentially in prime matter, and so it is possible to produce it from matter. Hence there is no defect stemming from matter's being impotent.

Also, every form that is the actuality of matter and not separate is generable in matter. But our intellect is a form, the actuality of matter, and is not only a mover. Therefore it is generable.

For the opposite is Aristotle [*De gen. an.* II, 736b27], when he says that the intellect comes from without.

Also, everything generable is corruptible. But the intellect is not corruptible: for it is separated from the nutritive and sensory "as the perpetual from the corruptible" [*De an.* II, 413b26-27]. Therefore it is not generable.

Also, Aristotle says that the intellect is unmixed [429a18, 430a18], immaterial [429a24] and separate [429b5]. But if it were generable, it would be material. Therefore etc.

In this connection it is asked whether Aristotle's means of proving that the intellect is immaterial works. For he says that if the intellect were material, it would not receive all material forms [429a18-27].

This seems to be false, since phantasia is a material power and nevertheless it receives all material forms.

The opposite seems true -- namely, that Aristotle's means is appropriate. For that which receives needs to be stripped of all the things it receives. For otherwise it now would receive things more akin to it rather than other things. But the intellect receives all material forms. Therefore it needs to be stripped of every material form.

In reply to these questions, when it is asked whether the intellect is generable, it should be said that among all the expositors of Aristotle only Alexander held that the intellect is generable. And so he held that the intellect is {12} the loftiest material form, constituted at the highest grade of mixture. At the first grade stands the lowest proportion of mixibles; a complex of minerals is at this grade of mixture. At the second grade there is a greater agreement between mixibles, and through this mixture the form of nutritive things is produced. At the third grade there is a still greater match among mixibles, and through this grade of mixture the form of sensory things is produced. The fourth grade consists in the highest and best proportion and match of mixibles. It is in virtue of this grade of mixture that a human being is produced. And because a human being is at the best grade of mixture, when a human being is generated, at the same time the intellect is generated in him. Hence Alexander said that the intellect is the loftiest material form, with the best ratio of mixibles.

For the opposite is Aristotle [*De gen. an.* II, 736b27], since he says that the intellect comes from without.

So given that Aristotle said that the intellect is ingenerable (and we all say this), what then was the reason through which Aristotle said that the intellect is ingenerable, through which the view of Alexander could be disproved? For Aristotle did not hold this without a reason on account of which he ought to have been moved to hold that the intellect comes from without. This is not to know. Here is a reason that could have moved Aristotle. The Commentator says on *De anima* III [comment 1, p.380] that "knowing the soul's actions is, for us, prior to knowing its substance." Therefore the action of intellect makes us know its substance and so, consequently, whether or not it is generable. But by a certain power existing in us we experience grasping within ourselves a common predicable form. This form, I say, is known not as proper to any one thing, but as common to all its singulars. We cannot, however, experience this grasping {13} due to a material form; we rather experience it due to an immaterial form. So there is an immaterial form in us, and this is nothing other than an intelligible form. Therefore the intellect is immaterial. But if it is immaterial, it is ingenerable, etc.

Proof of the first proposition, that by a certain power existing in us we experience grasping a

common form, etc. For we sometimes know that something applies to all triangles even though we have not experienced that it applies to every particular triangle, since we have not seen every particular triangle. Still, we know that having three angles applies to all triangles. In this way, then, we sometimes know that something applies to all, even though we have not experienced that it applies to every singular. We know this through a certain common account which we know applies to all. But we know this common grasping only by virtue of a universal grasp made by means of some power existing within us. And anyone who wants to intuit and cognize will know that such a universal grasp exists within himself. Therefore we know that there is a power within us through which we know or grasp a form that is common -- common to many, not proper to any one singular.

Proof of the second proposition, that a form by which we experience a universal grasp to result in us is not material. For a material power cannot apprehend a species beyond its material conditions: sight, for instance, only apprehends color as it belongs to this colored object. Nor with regard to that sensory species can it ever take on for itself a species of commonality or the quiddity in universal. Instead, it always apprehends color as it belongs to this colored object, and likewise it apprehends size as it belongs to this sized object.

Also, it is clear that a material form does not bring about a true universal grasp. For the Commentator says [*De an.* III comment 4] that a form, for as long {14} as it is in matter, is potentially intelligible. Therefore, if a form were received in a material power at the very time when it is supposed to be cognized by intellect, then it would be in matter and so would be potentially intelligible. As a result, we would never have an *actual* cognition of the form.

Also, a form that through its substance is conjoined with matter and produced from the potential of matter uses an organ or instrument. But the action or operation of intellect that is now in us is separate and does not use an organ. It is true that we understand with a phantasm, by abstraction of an intelligible form, but in the act itself of understanding the intellect does not use an organ. Hence under sensible phantasms the intellect grasps the nonsensible quiddities of things. This is something that neither imagination nor sense would do; rather, whatever imagination or sense apprehends, it apprehends under material conditions.

If you ask: How then do we experience that the grasping of a common form is brought about in us by intellect? Is this operation proper to it? I say that in a certain way the operation is proper to it, and I say that we experience this, because our intellect is in a certain way like something composed of matter and form. For in a whole⁵ power, one operation is perceived which is owed to the form from which it is a form, and another is owed to the matter from which it is matter. This is likewise the case in us. For we are conscious (*conscii*) due to the powers of body and intellect:⁶ we perceive the operations that occur (or are brought about) in us by reason of the powers of the body and matter, and we likewise perceive the operations that are brought about in us by reason of intellect. Thus it is our intellect through which we experience that this sort of universal grasp is brought about in us. For our intellect apprehends itself just it does other things.^{7d} Therefore if the common forms discussed above are grasped, it will be clear that the intellect is immaterial and hence ingenerable. {15}

I reply to the arguments through which it is proved that the intellect is generable. To the first I say that it is true that the form of a generated composite is generated. But when it is further said that the intellect is the generated form of a generated composite, I say that this is false. So I say that the composite of intellect and body is not generated. And the proof of this is that Averroes says that if forms came from without (that is, from the giver of forms), then there would not be one thing generating the supposit: rather, one thing would generate the matter and another would generate the form, taking what generates broadly. From this I say to the claim in question that since the intellect comes from without, the composite of intellect and body is not generated. Therefore neither should the form of this composite, the intellect, be generated.

To the second argument some reply in the way shown. But when it is further argued that all forms that exist actually in the First Mover exist potentially in prime matter, this is true when speaking of all *material* forms. But the intellect is not a material form.

Against this is the following argument. If the intellect, because of its loftiness, is

^d Cf. Aristotle, *De an.* III, 430a2-3.

multiplicative of itself and nevertheless cannot multiply itself in matter, then either this power for self-multiplying is pointless given that it cannot occur because of a defect in matter, or the defect in this sort of multiplication is not because the matter is impotent, but only because of the loftiness of intellect, it fails to multiply itself in matter. The latter is true, and for this reason one can reply by rejection: when it is said that "to the extent a form is loftier, to that extent it is more active in matter," I say that this is false. Rather, its loftiness is an impediment.

To the third argument it should be said that when it is said that a form that is the actuality of matter is generable, this is true if that form is the actuality of matter as regards its substance. But the intellect is not the actuality of matter as regards its substance, but only as regards its actions. So the argument does not hold. {16}

To the question regarding the means by which Aristotle proves that the intellect is not material, it should be said that his means is appropriate. For if it were material, it would not understand all material forms, but only those akin to it. Therefore since it cognizes all [material forms], it is clear that it is immaterial.

To the argument for the opposite one should reply by rejection: the imaginative power does not apprehend all material forms. For it should be said that the imaginative power receives a sensory form only with an image; it does not recognize material forms that are the quiddities of things. Thus the visual power receives sensed material forms solely in the presence of the sensibles, whereas the imaginative receives forms in their absence.

But you will further argue that there is another material power, the estimative (*existimativa*), that receives forms other than those sensed. So it does indeed grasp forms that are not sensed, such as the hostility of a wolf. I reply to this that the reception of forms by the estimative power is different than the reception by intellect. For the estimative power, even if it grasps forms that are not sensed, still does not ever grasp that form without the form of a sense. Hence, even if the sheep grasps the hostility in the wolf, this occurs only because at the same time it apprehends a certain color, size, and so forth. But the intellect, even if it grasps quiddities with sensory phantasms, still never actually understands those quiddities at the same time as the sensory phantasms.

Question 5. Is the intellect corruptible?

Next it is asked whether the intellect is corruptible. It seems that it is, because what is of finite power is of finite duration. Therefore it is corruptible. {17}

Aristotle holds the opposite, when he says that the intellectual power is separated from the nutritive and sensory "as the perpetual from the corruptible" [*De an.* II, 413b26-27].

Solution. I say that the intellect does not have within itself a power due to which it is necessary for the intellect to be corrupted. For it does not have a contrary, and a thing is corrupted only by its contrary. Nor, likewise, does it have of itself a power due to which it is necessary for it not to be corrupted, but to be preserved in the future. Therefore I say that the intellect is of itself corruptible. Hence, just as it was produced out of nothing, so by its own nature it is reducible to nothing. But I say that the intellect has this [potential] due to the influence of the First Cause, and thus it has this alone from the First Cause, that it is perpetual.

If you are going to say that therefore the intellect has its being perpetual due to the influence of the First Cause, and that therefore it acquires something continuously in the future through which it can be perpetuated in the future, I reply that the intellect is perpetuated not by continually receiving something anew from the First Cause, but because in virtue of its existing from another, it receives from the First Cause from its origin [that] by which it is later perpetuated forever.

Now if you ask how it is that the First Cause makes the intellect perpetual, I say that the First Cause makes the intellect perpetual by its will. Hence because it willed for the intellect to be made perpetual, so the intellect receives perpetuity, by the will alone of the First Cause. The following proposition from Plato [*Timaeus* 41a] expresses this nicely: "You gods of the gods, of whom I am father and maker, who are by your nature dissoluble, are by my will indissoluble," etc.

Question 6. Is the intellect composed of matter and form?

Next it is asked whether the intellect is composed of matter and form. *It seems that it is.* It is certain that the intellect has some composition. But it is not composed of two {18} actual beings, but of one potential and another actual. What is potential is the matter; what is actual is the form.

Therefore it is composed of matter and form.

Also, every power is receptive due to the nature of matter. The intellect has a receptive power according to the Commentator and Aristotle. [Therefore] it has this due to the nature of matter. Therefore, etc.

Also, all accidents exist in a composite through matter. But accidents exist in intellect. Therefore they exist in it through matter. Therefore etc. The proof of the minor is that knowing and understanding are accidents of intellect. The proof of this is that if knowing and understanding were not accidents of intellect they would be the whole substance of intellect: for in the case of an [angelic] intelligence, understanding is its whole substance. But this is false, because the understanding and knowing of our intellect belongs not to itself but to another, the composite. Therefore etc.

Also, if intellect is in the genus of substance, then it must share in the principles of substance. These are matter and form. Therefore etc.

For the opposite. All the philosophers who have reached any conclusions about intellect have called it a separate substance. Therefore etc.

Also, Averroes said at the end of *Physics* I [comment 83] that privation is annexed to matter, and that change [occurs] through the nature of privation. So since no change (*transmutatio*) occurs in intellect, Averroes holds that there is no matter in intellect and no being affected or change (as Aristotle⁸ holds), but only reception.

Solution. It is certain that there is some potentiality in intellect, since it is not pure actuality at the ultimate of simplicity, in which there is no composition. For if there were composition in the first actuality, there would be imperfection in it, because it cannot be composed of two actualities. For Aristotle says in *Metaphysics* VII [1039a7] that actuality separates. Therefore it would have to be composed of matter and form, or from one material actuality and another {19} formal, and thus there would be potentiality in it, since there would be something imperfect in it. For this reason the first actuality, since it is at the ultimate of simplicity, could not have composition. But all other things, which recede from its simplicity, take on some composition. For Dionysius [*De div. nom.* IV 21] says that the dyad follows the monad, and Boethius says that everything that falls short of the

First Cause has that which it is and that by which it is.⁹ So since the intellect recedes from the pure actuality and simplicity of the First Cause, it must have some composition.

For this reason some say that matter comes in two kinds: that which is intelligible and that which is not, sensible matter. But on the contrary is Aristotle [*Met.* VII, 10036a9-12]. For he says that matter that is intelligible is the same as sensible matter. Hence although in mathematics sensible matter is intelligible, that matter is nevertheless sensible as regards its being.

For this reason it is said in a different way that one sort of matter is subject to substantiality, one sort is subject to substantiality and corporeality, and one sort is subject to substantiality, corporeality, and change. It is accordingly said that matter subject to substantiality and corporeality exists in celestial bodies, whereas matter subject to substantiality, {20} corporeality, and change exists in lower bodies. Therefore it is said that the intellect is composed of matter and form, its matter being subject only to substantiality.

But this is nothing. For this distinction among matter is not a distinction in terms of matter's substance, but a distinction in terms of its being. For the matter's substance remains the same as it is subjected to substantiality, corporeality, or change. Only its being is different, because of the fact that it is informed by different forms giving being to it.

I believe it should be said that there is no matter in intellect, just as there is none in separate substances. And the proof of this is that Aristotle says in this book three [430a4-7] that things that are of themselves actually intelligible are forms without matter, whereas things that are potentially intelligible are material forms. So just as something is an actual being through its form, so it is actually intelligible through its form; and just as something is a potential being through its matter, so it is potentially intelligible through its matter. Therefore since the intellect is of itself actually intelligible and actually understands itself, it is clear that there is no matter in it. For if there were matter in it, it would not be actually intelligible, but only potentially so.

Nor can you say that it is matter subjected to corporeality that would prevent intellect from being actually intelligible, whereas matter subjected to substantiality would not prevent it from being actually intelligible. For just as was said before, it is the same matter in substance that is subjected to this form and that one. So if the one prevents the intellect from being actually intelligible, so will the

other. Therefore the view of Aristotle and Averroes is that where there is no change, there is also no matter. And this is true. For if {21} there were matter in intellect, then some of what follows from matter due to the nature of matter would be found in intellect. But if this were found, then change in location would already have to occur first, since change in location is found in all change. [Local] change is not found in intellect per se, however, but only per accidens. Therefore since none of what follows matter or the nature of matter (such as change or anything else) is found in intellect, it is clear that there is no matter in intellect.

So there is some composition in intellect. But this is not due to matter and form, as we have seen. The intellect should [instead] be said to be composed from the material and the formal -- that is, from the form of the genus and the form of the differentia. Thus it is composed from its material form and its actuality. For not all forms are simple. For since all the parts of a definition are forms, one [part] must be material with respect to another, and some [form] must be the composite of these. So in this way the reply is clear.

To the first argument it should be said that it is true that the intellect has some composition, and that that composition is not from two pure actualities. So it is composed of two actualities, one of which is material with respect to the other, whereas the other is formal.

To the next it should be said that there are two kinds of receptive powers. One consists in reception, loss, and change, and this kind occurs by the nature of matter. Another kind consists in pure reception, and it does not occur by the nature of matter. This is the kind that occurs in intellect.

To the next it should be said that if understanding were proper to intellect and existed in it by the nature of intellect, then understanding and knowing would be the substance of intellect. Accordingly, it is not because of the nature of intellect that understanding is accidental to it (as if understanding were accidental to intellect due to its substance), but because of the nature of the whole composite in which it shares. Understanding is an accident of this composite.

To the next it should be said that the substance that is common to all actually existing substances (common, that is, by abstraction) {22} need not be composite, but a pure and simple form. And Boethius's remark that Aristotle, putting aside the extremes [of matter and form], takes up the middle, [the composite], should be understood of sensible substances (as is evident from

Boethius's interpretation there), and these *are* composite. Therefore the argument is not valid. And one can likewise reply to the other argument.^e

[III. The intellect in relation to bodies]

Question 7. Is the intellect the body's perfection with respect to its substance or its power?

Next, there is a question about the intellect's union with the body. And first it is asked whether the intellect is the body's perfection with respect to its substance or not with respect to its substance but with respect to its power. I understand the intellect's being the body's perfection with respect to its substance in these terms: that it gives existence to the compound, since existence flows from essence. And if it gives existence to that compound, then it will not have existence in its own right, but only in another. In contrast, I understand the intellect's being the body's perfection with respect to its power as that it perfects the body as regards its cooperation.

Here is a proof that the intellect is not the perfection of the body with respect to its substance. For if the intellect were the perfection of the body through its substance, its operation would be proportioned to the body, {23} which is contrary to Aristotle [*De an.* III, 429a24-26]. Proof: the power from which an operation emerges is not simpler than its substance. Therefore if the intellect perfects the body through its substance, its operation can exist only in the body, and hence in operating it would necessarily use the body (since the power from which an operation emerges is not simpler than its substance). For an actuality that through its substance is the actuality of a body is an organic actuality. Therefore etc.

Also, suppose that the intellect is at some time separated [from the body]. When separated, it will not¹⁰ remain barren. Therefore one of its operations will be separated with it. But if it were to perfect the body through its substance, it would have no operation proper to it. Therefore none would be appropriated to it from the body, and thus the intellect would be pointless after its separation, which is false.

For the opposite. That which gives existence to the body perfects it through its substance. But

^e This "other argument" is missing, as (apparently) is an earlier reference to Boethius. To see this Boethian argument spelled out, see Thomas Aquinas, *Questions on Spiritual Creatures*, Q1 obj. 23.

the intellect gives existence to the body. Therefore it perfects it with respect to its substance.

Also, if it were not the perfection of the body with respect to its substance, it would not be called the *actuality* of the body, but only its mover -- just as the movers of the celestial spheres are not called the actuality of those spheres but only their movers.

Solution. The intellect perfects the body not through its substance but through its power. For if it were to perfect through its substance, it would not be separable. Averroes, having this in mind in book two [comment 21], said that since it does not use the body, it cannot perfect it through its substance. Aristotle, also with this in mind, said in book two [413a7] that the intellect, in substance, is the "actuality of no body" -- that is, the actuality of no part of the body, so that it is read transitively. For this is how another translation reads: that it is the actuality of no part of the body. That is, [it is not the actuality] because it does not use any part as an organ, but communicates with what operates through that part -- namely, with imagination. {24}

With this in mind, Aristotle said in book one [403a8-10] that "if understanding too is a kind of phantasia, or does not occur without phantasia, then it will not be possible even for this to occur without a body."

Also, it would not have a proper operation.

Also, it would use an organ. For every actuality that is through its substance the actuality of a body is organic. For this reason, since it is separable, it is the perfection of the body through its power alone. And Aristotle wrote this when he said in book two that "if the intellect is the actuality of a body like a sailor is, of a ship," then it is separable.

To the [first] argument for the opposite one should reply by rejection. For I say that the intellect, with respect to its form, does not give existence to the body. Rather, the intellect, having its own essence, has existence in itself and not in anything else.

To the other it should be said that the cases are not alike. For our intellect communicates with us more than the movers of the celestial spheres [communicate with them]. Therefore etc.

Question 8. Does the intellect exist in each part of the body?

Next there is a question about the intellect's mode of existence in the body: it is asked

whether it exists in each part. *It seems that it does not.* For it is impossible that the same indivisible thing exist at the same time in more than one thing. But the intellect is indivisible. Therefore it is impossible for it to exist in more than one thing.

For the opposite. The intellect perfects the whole through each part. But it cannot perfect a part through part of itself. Therefore it perfects that part through its whole. Therefore it exists as a whole in each part.

Solution. According to those who claim that the intellect perfects the body through its substance, it can be said that the intellect exists in each {25} part of the body, and this is explained to consist in its informing each part. Accordingly, the intellect exists in each part of the body because it informs each part *per accidens*. Therefore¹¹ it informs the whole *per se* and each part *per accidens*, and this is fairly intelligible.

If, on the other hand, it is said that the intellect is the perfection of the body not in virtue of its substance but in virtue of its power [Q7], then it would be said that the intellect exists in the body, and this would be explained in a different way. That is, its existing in the body is its operating in the body, and this can occur in two ways: understanding or moving. I then say that the intellect does not exist in each part of the body with respect to the act that is to understand. Rather, understanding exists in the body in such a way that the intellect is in one part, not using it as an instrument or organ, but on account of its communicating with what operates through that part -- namely, with phantasia. The intellect exists in the body in virtue of another operation, however -- that is, the intellect moves the body or is a mover in the body. The intellect exists in each part in that it moves each part *per accidens*, and moves the whole *per se*.

To the initial argument it should be said that it is true that an indivisible cannot exist or be located in more than one thing in virtue of its substance. But it surely can inform more than one thing or move more than one thing, and so the reply is clear.

Question 9. Is there a single intellect in all human beings?

Next it is asked how the intellect is joined to us -- that is, whether there is a single intellect in all, not numbered by the number of human beings, or whether there are multiple intellects,

numbered according to the number of human beings.

It seems that there is a single intellect in all. No immaterial form {26}, one in species, is multiplied in number. But the intellect is an immaterial form, one in species. Therefore it is not many in number.

Also, there is the argument of the Commentator [*In de an.* III 5, p. 402]: if the intellect were numbered by the number of human beings, then the intellect would be a power in a body. The intellect is not a power in a body. Therefore it is not numbered by the number of human beings.

For the opposite. The movers of the spheres are multiplied according to the multiplication of their spheres. Therefore so too is the mover of human beings. Therefore etc.

Also, if there were a single intellect for all human beings, then when one acquired knowledge, all would acquire knowledge, which seems to be absurd. In confirmation of this: the things we understand are connected to us only if the intellect is connected to us. Therefore, if there is a single intellect in all, all the things understood will be one.

Solution. To see whether there is a single intellect in all, we have to consider its nature as separate, and likewise its nature insofar as it is joined to us.

I say that it is not in the nature of intellect for it to be multiplied in number. [For] it is written in *Metaphysics* VII [1034a4-8] that something many in number and one in species is not generated unless through matter.

Also, the division of a genus is qualitative. But the division of a species into individuals is quantitative. For if there were more than one world, then there would be more than one mover, and if there were more than one mover then they would also have matter. From these considerations it is concluded that the intellect, since it is immaterial, does not have it in its nature to be multiplied in number.

Also, this is apparent through an argument taken from the final cause of the multiplication {27} of individuals within a single species. This is so only because the existence of the species cannot of itself be preserved in numerically one thing. Therefore in the case of separated beings the multiplication of individuals within a single species is not necessary.

You will say that, although multiplication in number is not required as far as the nature of

intellect is concerned, since it is not material, still it is created with the aptitude for perfecting matter.

Also, since the accidents of matter are diverse, the intellects perfecting them are also diverse. This seems to be the view of Avicenna: that the intellect is multiplied by the principles of the body.

Note, however, at the start of this solution, that if the intellect were the perfection of the body through its substance [Q7], then there would be no question of whether the intellect is multiplied according to the multiplication of the various individual human beings. It is indeed plain that it would be. So when you say that the intellect is multiplied on account of the matters to which it is appropriated, it is asked what the cause of the appropriation will be. There does not seem to be a cause except in positing that the intellect is a power in a body. For in the case of things that are separated from matter and that are found within a single species, one does not find worse and better, as Aristotle says [*Met.* III, 996a30-b1]. Therefore if it is the case for immaterial forms that exist within a single species that one is no better than the next, then one has to be appropriated to this matter no more than to any other. And so Averroes argues that, if the intellect were multiplied according to the multiplication of individual human beings, it would be a power in a body.

So [given that this conclusion is unacceptable], a different reply is made: that there is one intellect, not multiplied according to the multiplication of individual human beings, because if so it would be a power in the body of different human beings -- or, that it is not one, because although it is one in substance, it nevertheless makes different powers in different human beings. {28}

[But the latter should not be accepted,] not for this reason, nor for any other. There is one intellect for different human beings, because the substance of intellect is one, and likewise it is one power. [For] from the fact that there is one concept (*ratio*) of imagined intentions, it is clear that there is one power belonging to it.

Note, therefore, that intellect and sense are joined to us in actuality, but in different ways. For sense is joined to us through the part of it that is matter. But the intellect is joined to us through the part of it that is form. Accordingly, the things sensed are joined to us because sense is joined to us. It is not this way for intellect, but conversely. For the things understood are joined to us not because intellect is joined to us: rather, because the things understood are joined to us, [intellect is joined to us]. So note that just as intellect, as far as its nature is concerned, is in

potentiality for imagined intentions, so it is¹² in potentiality for being joined to us: [for] by being actually joined to these imagined intentions, since it stands in potentiality to them, it is through this joined to us in actuality. For this reason, since such imagined intentions are numbered according to the number of human beings, so through these intentions the intellect is numbered in us. Nor should you think that the one intellect is in two or three or a thousand before the imagined intentions are; in fact, the converse is true. So because imagined intentions (which are later made to be actually understood) are joined to us, the intellect is as a result joined to us. And inasmuch as such imagined intentions are made to differ in different human beings, to that extent the intellect is made to differ -- though in terms of its substance it is one, and though its power is also one. With this in mind, Averroes says that the speculative intellect, once it is in all, is one with respect to what receives, distinct with respect to what is received.

Through what has now been said the solution to the second argument is clear. For when it is said that "if there were a single intellect for all human beings, then when one acquired knowledge, {29} all would acquire it," I say that this is true, if the intellect were to exist in all before the imagined intentions do. But this is false. Instead, the imagined intentions are prior to the intellect's existing in human beings. And because those intentions are differentiated according to the differences between human beings, so there is a different intellect in different human beings. Therefore, since it is not necessary that if one imagines, another does,¹³ it is consequently also not necessary that if one acquires knowledge, another does.

It is clear what should be said to the confirmation, since it presupposes the opposite of what Averroes supposes. For when it is said that the things we understand are connected to us only by the intellect's being connected to us, this is false. Instead, the intellect is connected to us only by the things we understand being connected to us. So from this the reply is clear.

To that which was first argued, it should be said that when it is said that one mover ought to have only one moveable, this is true for movers that have an incorruptible moveable. But the intellect has a corruptible moveable, and for this reason it ought to have had more than one moveable.

Alternatively, it is argued that it should be replied to the argument that the intellect is the

mover of human beings only after the apprehension of imagined intentions, and not in virtue of its substance.

Also further: as it is a mover, it is not one, but multiplied; thus the speculative intellect in a particular human being is corruptible. But it is eternal in its own right, unconditionally, as Averroes says. And so Aristotle seems to have thought when he said in this book three (just before "The understanding of indivisibles" [430a26]): "[Knowledge] in potentiality is prior within a single individual, but absolutely speaking is not prior even in time" [430a20-21]. That is, although the intellect within a single human being is in potentiality prior to being in actuality, still unconditionally it is not in potentiality prior to being in actuality. {30}

[IV. The powers of intellect]

Question 10. Is the intellect able to be affected?

Next there is a question about the operations of intellect as it is in a body. And first I ask whether the intellect is able to be affected (*passibilis*). *It seems that it is*. For the Commentator says that the intellect has the nature of those powers that are passive.

Also, the intellect is possible. Therefore it is able to be affected.

For the opposite is Aristotle in this third book: he says that the intellect is unaffactable.

Also, all being affected occurs through the nature of matter. But the intellect does not have matter, as was seen before -- for [if so then] it would be a power in a body. Therefore it is not able to be affected.

Solution. Aristotle says two things on which we ought to base ourselves: (i) that the intellect is not able to be affected, but (ii) that it does receive species in potentiality.^f So we should recognize that there are two kinds of being affected. One consists in reception along with the loss of something, and such being affected occurs in matter or through the nature of matter, given that it always occurs under some actuality and under the other of contraries. But when it is under one

^f "If, then, intellect's operation is like sensing, then it will, at least, be either something's being affected by what is intelligible or it will be something else of that sort. It must, then, be unaffactable and yet capable of taking on a species, and potentially such as it although not it. And as what is sensory is related to things that are sensible, so must intellect be related to things that are intelligible" (*De anima* III 4, 429a13-18).

actually, it cannot at the same time receive another. This sort of being affected is not intelligible, and so Aristotle says with respect to this that the intellect must be unaffectable. He suggests this clearly enough when he says that the intellect is not affected by the intelligible in the way that the senses are affected by the sensible: for sensibles can bring about change within the senses, given that the intensity of sensibles harms a sense. {31}

The other kind of being affected consists solely in reception. This kind of being affected does not occur through the nature of matter, and it does occur in intellect. This is what Aristotle meant when he said that it is potentially receptive of species of this sort. So as regards the nature of being affected, the intellect has only the reception, not the loss of something in the way that matter does: for when the intellect is actually informed by something intelligible, it can still understand without the loss of anything intelligible.

The arguments on each side go through on their own terms.

Question 11. Can a separated soul be affected by fire?

Next there is a question about the soul in its separated state, and the question is one that is not very philosophical: whether a separated soul can be affected by any natural element such as fire.

It seems that it cannot. Aristotle says in this third book that what acts should be loftier than what is affected. But neither fire nor any elemental body is loftier than a separated soul. Therefore a separated soul cannot be affected by fire.

Also, everything that is affected is affected through the nature of matter. Therefore that which is affected should have matter. But the soul does not have matter, as was seen before. Therefore it cannot be affected by fire.

Also, the soul is affected by a body only when it is united to that body. (It is affected by what is united to it because the body is affected.) But a soul in a separated state is not united to fire. Therefore it cannot be affected by fire and undergo suffering or sadness.

You might say that the soul can be affected by fire, not because it is, of its substance, burned by fire, but because it sees itself in the fire, and because of this is affected by the fire. Against this {32} is this argument: Aristotle says in the *Ethics* [X, 1177a12-18] that sensory delight differs in

species from the delight¹⁴ that comes from contemplation. But when a soul sees itself in fire, it sees this not through an imaginative vision, but through an intellectual vision. Therefore since it does not see this through a material vision, it cannot undergo suffering or material sadness.

The opposite can be shown as follows. The punishment ought to correspond to the body's¹⁵ crime. But whatever crime the soul committed when it was united to the body, it committed through the body. Therefore after its separation from the body it ought to be punished by a bodily punishment. But there is no body that could make a punishment for it to the extent that fire could. Therefore it ought to be affected by fire.

Solution. We do not see that Aristotle said anything on this question, because we do not find him reaching any conclusions anywhere about the state of separation. But he does report^g Pythagoras's having said that there is fire at the center of the earth, for the reason that since fire is the noblest body, the noblest location should correspond to it. So since the center is the middle, he said that fire is enclosed in the center of the earth, and he said that that fire is a prison in which those condemned by Jove are burned.¹⁶ And he thought that the middle is the noblest location because we see that the heart of an animal is situated in the middle of the animal, whereas it is plain that the heart is in the noblest of places since it is an animal's most noble component.

Aristotle resolved this, however, by saying that fire is not at the center of the earth. And he dissolved their argument by distinguishing between middles. There are, that is, two kinds of middles, of nature and of magnitude. So he says that the middle of nature is a noble place, but the middle of a magnitude is not a better or nobler place unless because it is the middle of nature. Now in the case of an animal, the middle of its nature and the middle its of magnitude are the same. But the center [of the earth] is the middle of its magnitude, in circumference, and not the middle of its nature. For this reason, the center is not the more noble place, but rather the circumference is. Hence fire is not in the center. But he does not reject its being able to torment those who have been condemned.

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Some say to this question that a separated soul can be affected by fire. But it is affected not

^g *De caelo* II 13, 293a17 ff.

because it is burned, but because it sees itself in the fire.

Against this it is argued that even if the soul sees itself in the fire, it still does not perceive that the fire hurts it. Why then is it affected by the fire?

For this reason others add that the soul is affected by the fire because when¹⁷ it sees that it is in the fire, it *seems* to it that it is burned by the fire, and so in this way it *is* affected by the fire. It is in this way that someone dreaming is sometimes much affected by fire, because it seems to him through his dream that he is in the fire and being burnt.

But this is nothing. For if the soul is affected by fire because it seems to it that it is burned by the fire, then the soul is affected not by the fire but by a species of fire. Also, the being affected would not be being affected, but being deceived, because it seems to him¹⁸ to be false. On the contrary,¹⁹ Aristotle said in this third book [430b28] that the intellect that is without matter is not false, but always true. Therefore if that intellect is not deceived, a separated soul is not deceived.

Others say something else: that fire can be considered in one way in itself and absolutely, and so considered the soul cannot be affected by fire. In another way it can be considered inasmuch as it is the instrument of divine vengeance, and so considered the soul can be affected by fire.

But when something is made to be more affected, it loses something of its substance. So it seems remarkable how the soul would be continuously affected²⁰ by fire and not corrupted by it.

Also, Aristotle says in the first book of this work [407b20-25] that not every craft uses every tool, but only the tool appropriate for it. For a tool ought to have something in common with what is affected by it. But fire seems to have nothing in common with the soul. Therefore, as it seems, the only instrument of the soul's punishment there could be is that to which it is united. But just as the soul at first²¹ *was* united to a body in its sufferings, so after separation it is united to it,²² and so could be affected by it. {34}

But how will it be united to the body? I say that it will be united to it not as the form of matter, but as what has a place is united to a place because it operates in that place. Therefore the soul will be united to fire, because it will be operating in that fire. But then fire very well can be the instrument of divine justice in this respect: that it delimits its place in such a way that the soul could not be operating elsewhere, but only in that fire. Therefore the soul is in this way detained by the

fire, and because it is detained, it is saddened, and by this it is affected, since the soul²³ desires to operate elsewhere and it cannot. For Averroes [*In Met.* V 1] says that every will is pleasurable. Therefore that which keeps the will of the soul united to it from an operation in which²⁴ it would take pleasure, if it were to complete it, makes the soul be sad. And thus the soul is affected by fire.

The arguments can plainly be resolved through what has been said already.

You will perhaps ask: Why would the soul operate in the fire where it is located? For the reason why it is located somewhere is that it wills to delimit where it operates. Therefore if the soul is located in fire, what operation does it perform in fire?

Perhaps, if it were asked of Aristotle whether the intellective soul is able to be affected, he would reply that the separated intellective power is unaffected. And perhaps he would say, along with his Commentator, that it is inseparable, and if it were separated from this body, it would nevertheless not be absolutely separated from every body. And what Aristotle said against Pythagoras [*De an.* I, 407b20-23], that not just any soul enters into any body, should be understood as follows: that he wants to say that the intellect, though only one in substance (not numbered substantially according to the number of human beings), nevertheless is so appropriate to the body of a human being that it does not incline itself toward the body of brute animals. So since the intellect is potentially related to imagined intentions, it determinately receives the imagined intentions of human beings, because all the imagined intentions of human beings are of a single character. So the intellect is singular in all, {35} both in terms of its substance and in terms of its power. Therefore when Aristotle says that not just any soul enters into any body, he means to say nothing more than that the soul, which is determined to the body of a human being (whichever one it is, whether it is one or multiple), does not enter into any body -- that is, any distinct in species, since it does not enter into the bodies of brute animals. But it certainly does enter into any body that is in the human species. So the reply is clear.

Question 12. Is the cognition of any intelligibles innate to intellect?

We began before to speak of the operations of intellect as it is in the body, and to make this clear it was shown that the intellect is in potentiality for intelligible things [Q10]. Now it should be asked

how this power achieves actuality. To make this clear we should first look into two things: first, whether the cognition of any intelligibles is innate to intellect.

It seems that it is, by both authority and argument. By authority, then, as follows:

First, Aristotle says in *Metaphysics* IX [1050a1] that it is necessary for someone learning to have something of what the possessor of the knowledge²⁵ has. But this cannot be unless there is some cognition innate to the one learning. Therefore etc.

Also, Aristotle says in *Posterior Analytics* I [71a26 ff.], in settling Plato's puzzle from the *Meno*, that what we learn, we in a certain way [already] know, though absolutely speaking we do not know it. But this would not be the case unless {36} some cognition were innate to intellect. Therefore etc. For Plato argued as follows: when we wish to learn something, either we have entirely no knowledge of it, and then it is impossible to know it, or we absolutely know it, and then our learning is just remembering. Aristotle solved this: what we wish to learn, though we do not know it in particular, we nevertheless do know it in the universal. Therefore etc.

Also, Aristotle says [the same] in *Metaphysics* II [994a25-30], in the chapter on the status of causes. For he says that knowing is generated not from entirely knowing or entirely not knowing, but from something in between knowing and not knowing. This would not be the case unless some cognition were innate to the intellect. Therefore etc.

Moreover, Averroes at the start of *Metaphysics* II, on Aristotle's claim that no one is unaware of where the door of a house is located [993b5], says that in every genus of beings there are some [truths] that are hidden from no one. These are like the location of a door in a house, and are had naturally in each of us. Therefore it seems that a cognition of some intelligibles is innate to the intellect.

Moreover, those are innate in us that it is not possible for us to err in cognizing. But there are some [truths] such that it is not possible for our intellect to err in cognizing, as Averroes holds in *Metaphysics* IV [8]. For he says that it is not possible to err regarding first principles such as this one:

Either the affirmation or the negation holds for every claim

and others like it. Therefore at least the cognition of principles is innate to our intellect.

Moreover, this is evident through reason. For just as is written in *Metaphysics* IX [1049b35], nothing is moved toward something unless it has in itself something of that toward which it is moved. {37} Therefore if the intellect is moved to cognize something, it must have in itself something of that toward whose cognition it is moved. Therefore some cognition is innate to it. Therefore etc.

The same is argued through a similar case. Matter needing to go into some actuality needs to have something created along with it and innate to it, through which it goes into that actuality. For matter goes into actuality not of its own pure nature but through its active character. Therefore likewise the intellect, if it needs to go into actuality, needs to have something innate to it through which it enters into the act of understanding. Therefore etc.

Moreover, it is said in this book three [430a1] that the intellect is like a bare slate, prepared for pictures; the Commentator holds that the intellect is prepared for understanding [*In de an.* III 14]. Therefore something must be innate to it through which it is prepared for other intelligibles. Therefore etc.

Also, sight needing to go into the act of seeing has something innate to it through light, given that the eye glimmers. Through this light [the eye] can go into the act of seeing. Therefore likewise the intellect needing to go into some act needs to have something of an intelligible light innate to it, through which it could go into the act of understanding.

For the opposite. Aristotle in this third book [430a10-14, 432a5-10] gives three principles of understanding: the material or possible intellect (and this is the material principle), the agent intellect, and imagined intentions. These are sufficient requirements for the act of intellect. So in this way Aristotle posited sufficient principles through which the intellect could go into the act of understanding, and he did not posit that any cognition is innate to intellect. {38}

And lest it should seem that the argument does not go through because of what was said [two paragraphs] earlier in an argument for the contrary, that sight goes into the act of seeing through an innate light, it should for this reason be replied that this light in the eye is not in it inasmuch as it is an organ of seeing, but insofar as it is a clear and dense body. Indeed, if that light truly did exist in the eye, then sight could go into the act of seeing without an extrinsic light, which

does not happen. The light innate to it is hidden, so that there is no cognition of the light; for if there were then it would see its light (as it does when the senses are moved or suddenly struck, or in the dark or with closed eyes: then it sees its light as if a coal were burning). Therefore it is clear that there is no cognition of itself essentially innate to the senses so that they go into act. So there will likewise be no cognition [innate] to intellect. Therefore etc.

Some said to this that our intellect has in itself some innate cognition, and they called this innate cognition the agent intellect, the intellective disposition. They were inspired by a phrase of Aristotle's: he says that the intellect is a kind of disposition, like a light [*De an.* III 5, 430a15]. {39} Hence they called the agent intellect the intellective disposition, innate to the material intellect, through which the material intellect goes into act when it wants to. (In the same way, someone who has the disposition of a thing within himself goes into act with regard to that thing when he wants to.)

But this does not succeed, because the agent intellect is not a disposition, according to Averroes, but the most powerful part of our soul. Moreover, this intellective disposition, since it is confused, cannot distinctly bring our intellect to act. For nothing can be brought to act distinctly without a distinct agent. This is clear in the case of matter. For since matter is confusedly in potentiality for all forms, it cannot of itself exist under a single form without a distinct agent. So likewise neither can the material intellect be brought to act without a distinct agent. Therefore etc. Moreover, Aristotle does not say of the agent intellect that it is a disposition. Rather, just as someone having a disposition goes into act whenever he wants to, through that disposition, so the possible intellect goes into act through the agent intellect.

Others say (and this seems to be the position of Albert^h) that some cognition is innate to our intellect: that of first principles, which are hidden from no one, such as

Either the affirmation or the negation holds for every claim

and the like. It is not that these principles are the agent intellect, but that they are the instruments of agent intellect, through which it brings the possible intellect to act.

^h *S. Theol.* II, tr. 15, q. 93, m. 2 *in corp.*; cf. *Poster. Anal.*, I, tr. 1, c. 3.

But this view does not succeed. For if the agent intellect were to have an instrument, this would seem to be the imagined intentions more than anything else. For although²⁶ Aristotle says that the agent intellect is "that by which it is to make all things, as art stood to its matter" [*De an.* III, 430a12-13], still the intellect and art act in different ways. For art suffices of itself to place a form in matter, whereas the intellect does not: it needs imagined intentions. This is Averroes's claim [*In de an.* III 18, p. 438]. Therefore it is clear that what they say does not hold. {40}

I say and believe that no cognition of intelligibles is innate to our intellect. It is in pure potentiality for all intelligibles. Within itself it has the innate cognition of nothing; rather, whatever it understands, it understands through phantasms. But when it goes from the potentiality of understanding to the actuality, this is not because the cognition of any intelligibles is innate to it, but because the intellect had from its maker or from its own nature the natural power by which it is cognizing the nature of all intelligibles, when they are offered to it. This power is the material or possible intellect. Intelligibles are offered through imagined intentions and through the agent intellect. Hence things that are actually understood actualize the material intellect.

But you should understand that the possible intellect is not of a material nature in order to grasp intelligibles: for intelligibles are acted on by intellect more than intellect is acted on by the intelligibles. With this in mind, Aristotle says in this book three [432a1-2] that the soul is like the hand, and just like the hand is the organ of organs, so the intellect is the species of species. Hence just as the hand is the organ that activates other organs, so the intellect is the species that activates species (*species activa specierum*). Also, Aristotle said earlier that "those who said the soul is the locus of species are right, except that it is not the whole soul but the intellective part" [*De an.* III, 429a27-28]. But the locus serves not as the matter for what is located there, but as the form; accordingly, the intellect is not of a material nature with respect to intelligibles, but rather of a formal nature, inasmuch as it is somehow excited by the intelligibles that are offered to it.

Another way of showing that the intellect need not have {41} any innate cognition of any intelligibles is through sense. For sight does not go into actuality because it already had something sensible, since the only thing sight had from the First Agent is a natural power for grasping a sensible offered to it.

But it should be understood, to counter certain arguments, that sight has a power innate to it in virtue of which some things are naturally suited to be seen primarily. These make the greatest cognition, and through it other things are cognized by sight. (Light, because it has a great deal of visibility, is for this reason primarily seen by sight, per se, and all other things are seen through it.) In just this way there are some things that, when offered to the intellect, make the greatest cognition; error is not possible with respect to these. The nature of understanding demands (*vult*) this: that there are some intelligibles through which the intellect rises to a cognition of others. First principles are of this sort, [although] not because a cognition of them is innate to intellect. So the intellect is not in potentiality for first principles as it is for others: for it understands these more easily than others, inasmuch as these make a greater cognition of themselves within intellect than do other things. Thus it is clear that the only thing the intellect has innate to itself is the natural power that is cognitive of all intelligibles, but of first principles more easily and in advance of other, mediated principles.

Now something must be said *in reply to the arguments*:

When you say that someone learning must have something of what the possessor of the knowledge²⁷ has, it should be replied that the learner has innate to him a natural power, etc. Moreover, someone first knows first {42} principles and second knows other things, such as conclusions. So then it should be said that someone is not said to be properly learning except with respect to things known secondarily, such as conclusions. When you say that he must have something, etc., this is true for learning with respect to things known secondarily. For he must have something of what the one teaching the knowledge has: he must have the first principles that were known first. But this is not true of learning with respect to first principles.

Through this the reply to the second is clear. For if we wish to learn something of what is known secondarily, we must know in the universal: that is, we must know the things known first, the first principles.

To the third it should be said that inasmuch as the knowing is of things known secondarily, this is generated from something in between knowing entirely and not knowing. But this is not true for the knowing of things known primarily.

To the fourth -- Averroes's claim that in every genus of beings, etc., [certain truths] are had naturally by each of us -- perhaps Averroes was of this view. Alternatively, it should be said that they are had naturally not because they are innate to the intellect. Rather, they are produced just as other things are, but are produced more easily and are the instruments for producing other things. The same is clear for a craftsman, who uses certain instruments to produce other things, even though the instruments themselves are likewise produced. Likewise some things are said to be had naturally by each of us inasmuch as they are the things most evident to intellect. Thus the intellect can produce them at once and by means of them produce other things. We see this well enough inasmuch as for each sense its object is clear enough but is not said to be innate to that sense. {43}

To the fifth, when it is said that those are innate in us with respect to which it is not possible to err, and that principles are of this sort, etc., it is clear what should be said. One should reply by denying the antecedent, as is clear from the above.

To that which is said next, that nothing is moved toward something, etc., it should be said that what is moved toward something either is drawn by the power of that toward which it is moved (in which case it must have something of that toward which it is moved) or else something is produced within it that is moved from without (in which case it need not have something of that toward which it is moved). But intelligibles are not drawn by the power of intellect; they rather flow toward it from without. And these [claims] would be entirely consistent (*simul valde bona*) if it were said how intelligibles do and do not flow toward it from without — something we will see below.

Alternatively, it should be said that the intellect seems to move intelligibles more than to be moved by intelligibles. (The first solution applied to the major; this one to the minor.) So it should be said that the intellect cognizes intelligibles not through a form of the intelligibles that is innate to it, but through an innate natural power for doing this. In just this way, one sees that this lower sphere is said to produce the heat of what is hot, but does not do this through the innate form of heat.

To the next it should be said that the intellect is prepared to understand just as a slate is for pictures. But this is so not through the innate cognition of any intelligibles. Rather, it is prepared for intelligibles through its innate natural power.

The final argument has been solved by an argument already made.

Question 13. Does the possible intellect understand the agent intellect?

At this point there is a question about the mode of intellect, as it is our intellect. And first it is asked whether the possible intellect understands the agent intellect.

It seems {44} that it does. It is written in the *De causis* that every intelligence understands its essence through the union of intellect with the intelligence. Hence the intelligence is present to itself and understands itself through this. But the possible intellect, as it seems, is a certain substance with being in its own right, separate. It is also always present to the agent intellect, since it is the same as it in essence. Therefore the possible intellect can understand the agent intellect.

Also, there is an argument from analogy (*simile*). Light makes what is potentially visible, such as colors, be actually visible, and light itself is likewise visible. Therefore analogously the agent intellect, which makes what is potentially intelligible be actually intelligible, will itself be intelligible to the possible intellect.

Also, there is an argument from the authority of Averroes. He says that the possible intellect is perfected through the agent intellect and so understands it [*In de an.* III 20]. Therefore etc.

For the opposite. The agent intellect is not an imagined intention nor does it have an imagined intention, since it does not fall under imagination. Therefore it cannot be understood through imagined intentions, and therefore it also cannot be understood by the possible intellect.

Also, that which we sense, we sense ourselves to sense. Therefore that which we understand, we understand ourselves to understand. But we do not understand our possible intellect to understand the agent intellect. Therefore the possible intellect does not understand the agent intellect.

Solution. I say that our possible intellect can understand the agent intellect, but it is not connected to us in virtue of that action. For just as the rational soul, as it is connected to us, has two parts, the agent and the possible intellect, so too the separate soul (or the soul considered as a separate substance) has in itself a possible and an agent intellect, and this rational soul {45} understands itself through the possible intellect by reception and through the agent intellect by

action. For just as its agent intellect forms and causes things to be actually understood in the possible intellect, when it is connected to us, so too when it is not connected to us. Accordingly, I say that the whole rational soul understands itself receptively through the possible intellect, actively through the agent intellect. And Averroes testifies that this is true. He says that "the possible intellect is perfected by the agent intellect and understands it" [*In de an.* III 20]. Averroes likewise suggests this through the remark that "nor does it sometimes understand, sometimes not understand" [*ibid.*] - here rejecting the exposition of Themistius and Alexander. He makes this remark about the possible intellect. Thus the possible intellect, through its turning toward the agent intellect, does not sometimes understand and sometimes not; instead, it always understands.

This is also clear enough through reason. For if the rational soul is a separate substance, having in itself something through which it can actively understand, it seems that it can understand itself. And that the possible intellect is not connected to us in virtue of this action (understanding the agent intellect) is explained as follows. The possible intellect is connected to us only through the imagined intentions that it receives, intentions that are actually understood or abstracted, just as the agent intellect is joined to us only through the imagined intentions that it brings about. For just as we experience in ourselves that the possible intellect is informed by imagined intentions, so we experience in ourselves the abstraction of things understood in the universal, which the agent intellect brings about. So since we experience that this occurs in us, it follows not only that the possible intellect understands or cognizes the agent intellect, but also that we -- on account of such operations, which we experience in ourselves -- understand and cognize our agent intellect.

Therefore since the possible and agent intellects are joined with us only through imagined intentions, whereas the possible intellect does not understand the agent intellect through intentions, I say accordingly that the possible intellect can intuit the agent intellect and can do so distinctly, since it is the same in substance as it {46}. But it is not connected to us in virtue of this action. And for this reason it is conclusively inferred that the intellect is not the actuality of a body in virtue of its substance, but only through its operation [Q7]. [For] if the intellect were joined to us through its substance, then whatever things were actually united within intellect would also be united with us. This is evident in the case of the senses: because the species of sense is the actuality of body in virtue

of its substance, it follows that any sense objects united to the sense are also united to us. Therefore since the possible intellect is not connected to us in virtue of the action by which it understands the agent intellect, it is clear that our intellect is not the perfection of the body in virtue of its substance, but only in virtue of its operation or power.

The arguments on each side go through on their own terms. For the first do indeed show that the possible intellect understands the agent intellect. And the arguments on the other side do indeed establish that we do not in ourselves experience how the possible intellect understands the agent intellect -- or experience even that it does not understand it. Still, they do not establish that it does not.

Question 14. Do species need to be received in the possible intellect in order for our intellect to understand?

There is next a question about what the mode of action is in virtue of which the intellect is joined to us. And it is asked whether species need to be received in the possible intellect in order for our intellect to understand.

It seems that they do. Aristotle says that the soul -- the intellective soul -- is the locus of species. But it is the locus of species only through the act of understanding. Therefore it seems that concepts (*rationes*) received in the possible intellect are required for the act of understanding. {47}

Also, everything that understands, understands through some concept. But such a concept seems to exist only if species are received in the possible intellect. Aristotle says this same thing: it is not the stone in the soul, but the species of the stone [*De an.* III 8, 431b30]. Therefore etc.

Also, the senses sense nothing except at the presence of what is sensible. Hence they never sense unless something is offered to them as present. Therefore the same is true for intellect. But the only things of this sort are species. Therefore for the act of understanding it is necessary for species to be received in the possible intellect.

For the opposite. It seems for the following reason that it is not necessary for the act of understanding that species be received in the possible intellect: for this mode of reception does not seem possible in the possible intellect. For since the intellect is a simple and immaterial substance,

without an organ, it does not seem that such species could through themselves be multiplied in the possible intellect. And so it seems that multiple things do not produce themselves within the possible intellect. Therefore etc.

[*Solution.*] To understand this question, it should be known that the multiple abstract actions that appear within us have made us know the multiple intelligible [powers] within us. But we experience within ourselves two abstract operations. The first abstract operation is the reception of universal abstract intelligibles. The other abstract operation that we experience within ourselves is the abstraction of intelligibles when before there were imagined intentions. So through experiencing in ourselves that these two operations occur, we know that there are necessarily two powers within us, by means of which these operations come about. For knowing the soul's actions is, for us, prior to knowing its substance. But such an operation -- this same one [under discussion] -- makes us know that the intellect is immaterial. It is astounding how Alexander said that the agent intellect is immaterial, while saying that the possible intellect {48} is a power in a body. For why does Averroes go against him? He does so for the following reason [*In de an.* III 19]: A material power does not judge the infinite, because a material power apprehends a thing only under its material existence. But the intellect judges the infinite through a universal judgment, in a universal proposition. Therefore a power that is not material certainly can judge the infinite, because it apprehends the thing not under its material existence, but under a kind of common concept. If the possible intellect were material, then it could not receive things understood in actuality, because every material form is intelligible only potentially, not actually.

Also, just as the possible intellect is joined to us, so too is the agent intellect. For just as imagined intentions are received in the possible intellect, so too are they acted on by the agent intellect. On the above view, then, the agent intellect would be a power in a body.

From the foregoing it is evident that understanding requires each intellect, possible and agent: the possible as what receives, the agent as what effectively causes. And beyond these two a third thing is required, imagined intentions. For as Averroes says regarding Aristotle's claim that the agent is the efficient cause "of all things, as art stood to its matter" [*De an.* III, 430a12-13], the agent intellect stands to the possible intellect in a different way from how art stands to matter. For art is

sufficient of itself to establish a form in matter, whereas the agent intellect is not of itself sufficient to make the possible intellect actually understand.

Also, if imagined intentions were not required for our understanding, then we could understand without sense and imagination, which is false.

So I say that our understanding requires the reception of abstracted intelligible universals, along with the making and the abstracting of those same universals, when before they were imagined intentions. The two {49} first -- the reception of intelligibles with their making -- I say that these suffice for the nature of intellect in its own right. But the third, the abstraction of intelligibles, when before they were imagined intentions, is required for the continuity of intellect with us. For it could not be joined with us unless there were imagined intentions. For it is because it stands in potentiality to those intentions that it is joined to us through them. Averroes means to call attention to this when he says [*In de an.* III 20] that "the reason [intellect] appears is the exercise and use" of the power that is imagination. Aristotle, however, referred to this power as the passive intellect.

Still, a doubt surfaces. You say that our understanding requires the reception of intelligibles - that is, a reception in the possible intellect. Consequently, imagined intentions are brought from the agent to the possible intellect. Does this not occur by way of multiple [intentions]? For it seems impossible for imagined intentions to be brought about in the possible intellect by way of something multiple, since the intellect is a simple substance, immaterial and without an organ.

Some, moved by the passage that says that the agent intellect is a disposition, like a light,ⁱ imagine that just as a light, in radiating, makes things that are potentially colored be actually colored, so the agent intellect, by illuminating, radiates the imagined intentions existing in the organ of phantasia and so makes them actually intelligible.

Others imagine that the possible intellect is oriented toward phantasms actually existing in the organ of phantasia, and that it receives and actually understands these phantasms. But this is nothing, for the intellect in question to radiate and illuminate. Indeed, it is false and said by the ignorant. Moreover, however much light might irradiate color, still color would never be abstracted

ⁱ Aristotle, *De an.* III 5, 430a15.

as regards the true existence it has in the object, unless it had intentional existence. Therefore, likewise, however much the intellect might irradiate imagined intentions, they are never abstracted through irradiation.

One also cannot hold a third view, that imagined intentions existing in {50} the organ of phantasia move the agent intellect by themselves, and then the intellect makes them intelligible. For to say this would be to imply that the agent intellect receives, which goes against Averroes's claim that the agent intellect receives nothing whatsoever.

I say that the agent intellect receives nothing whatsoever, and I say that the agent intellect makes actually abstracted intelligible universals in the possible intellect. So I say that when imagined intentions are present in the organ of phantasia, the agent intellect makes universal intentions from imagined intentions, and from these similar intentions it abstracts the universal concepts of things, for understanding. So it makes for itself the universal concepts of things, for understanding, not by making imagined intentions from the organ of phantasia result in the possible intellect, but because it makes for itself and informs for itself intentions like the particular imagined intentions, and from these it abstracts the universal concepts of things, for understanding. Only one similar case can be offered. For Aristotle says in that part [that begins] "Since by two distinctive features" [*De an.* III, 429a17] that when the phantasm is absent the sense reimagines for itself a similar image and then it receives it. The rational soul likewise does two things. For it brings about the universal concepts of things, for understanding, and afterwards it receives them and understands them. For it was seen before that our understanding requires the reception and abstraction of intelligibles, when they first were imagined intentions. For abstracted intelligibles and likewise received intelligibles once were imagined intentions, and we experience within ourselves this reception and abstraction of intelligibles. So through the possible intellect the rational soul understands intelligibles, whereas through the agent intellect it causes things to be actually understood.

But in this connection there are doubts that could surface. 1. For when you say that the intellect is joined to us through imagined intentions, and likewise that the reception of intelligibles and their abstraction {51} is united to us through imagined species, then how is the intellect actually within us? For it does not seem that actually understanding could be within us. For the intellect acts

through its substance. But the intellect is not joined to us through its substance; it is instead separate from us through its substance. Therefore the intellect is not joined to us, but rather is separated from us. And so it seems that actually understanding is never within us.

2. Also, you can say that the action of intellect is joined to us only given that the things understood are joined to us. But I prove that actual understanding still cannot in this way be joined to us, as follows. The intellect is not actually joined to us through the part of it that is matter, because if so then it would be a power in a body. Nor can it be joined to us through the part of it that is form, because things actually understood are never joined to us. It is instead joined to us under the aspect of things imagined. But²⁸ if the things actually understood are not joined to us under the aspect of things understood, but only under the aspect of things imagined, then actual understanding (that is, the action of intellect) will also never be joined to us.

In this connection there is a question about whether the intellect is joined to us through imagined intentions and [whether], for the action by which the intellect is joined to us, imagined intentions are required for the sake of receiving the things understood within the possible intellect and for the sake of their actually being caused by the agent intellect. But for the intellect's understanding inasmuch as it is a separate substance, is it the case that species are required, which need to be received within the possible intellect and which need to be made actually understood by the agent intellect? Or, in other words, is the reception of intelligibles required in the possible intellect, and their abstraction by the agent intellect? The arguments need to be resolved, and by solving the arguments the mode of understanding will be made clear.

To the first, then, it should be said that although the rational soul acts through its substance, still its power for receiving intelligibles (the possible intellect) and its power for causing things to be understood (the agent intellect) have a dependence on the body. Thus the rational soul is said to act through its substance inasmuch as it acts without an organ, by its substance. But with respect to the power that is the possible intellect, by means of which it receives intelligibles, and with respect to {52} the power that is called the agent intellect, by means of which it makes things to be actually understood, the soul needs the organ of another power, namely the organ of phantasia. So with respect to these actions the soul has a dependence on the body, because it shares in these actions

with the organ of a corporeal power.

You argue secondly that understanding is not joined to us through the part of it that is matter, because if so it would be a power in a body. Nor is it joined to us through the part of it that is form, because things actually understood are not joined to us under the aspect of being understood, but only under the aspect of being imagined. It seems that for this reason actual understanding is not joined to us. And the argument can be confirmed through an analogy (*simile*). Let us suppose that the First Cause understands one stone existing here, and that you have imagined the same. Therefore since that which is understood by the First Cause is imagined by you, would not the First Cause's understanding be joined [to you] for this reason? Clearly not. The argument is analogous for intellect. As a result of something that is not understood being in us under the aspect of things imagined, it seems that the actual understanding of this intellect cannot by this be joined to us. For we cannot actually understand it, but only have an imagined intention of it. Therefore its understanding does not appear to us.

The Commentator solves this argument. The intellect is joined to the human species, and the intellect is joined to this individual from the human species. And the joining of the intellect to the human species is more essential than its joining to this individual, because the human species is eternal and the intellect joined to it is eternal. But the joining of the intellect to this individual of the human species is less essential. Hence the individual is also separated, whereas the intellect is never separated from the human species. For if its intellect were appropriated to each individual, so that for this individual there was this intellect, and for that individual that one, and so on, then it would necessarily be a power in a body. So it is not in the nature of intellect for it to be joined to this individual, but it is in its nature that it is in potentiality for the imagined intentions of each human being. And since these are all of the same character, it follows {53} that the intellect, which is one and of itself existing, is essentially united or joined to the human species, just as it accidentally stands to the imagined intentions of this individual. Nor do I mean to say that the joining of the intellect to the human species is more essential than its joining to this individual for the reason that the intellect is through its substance the actuality of the human species. Rather, it is in its essential nature to be *cognitive* of the human species, just as it is essential to it to be in potentiality for the imagined

intentions of each human being. But it is accidental that it is joined to this individual, just as it is accidental that it is joined to the imagined intentions of this individual.

To the argument, then, I say that the intellect is joined to this individual because of the imagined intentions. For otherwise they would never be actually understood. And for this reason too the intellect is actually joined to us, because it had some joining to us before it is actually joined to the imagined intentions, given that it belongs to intellect from its natural origin to be in potentiality for imagined intentions. So just as it is in potentiality for them, so it is likewise in potentiality for us. Hence it is in the nature of intellect that it receives imagined intentions through its part that is called the possible intellect, and that it actually brings them to be intelligible through its part that is called the agent intellect. Accordingly, it is evident that that argument proceeds on an insufficient basis.

To the confirmation by analogy it should be said that the analogy goes wrong in two ways. It first goes wrong because the First Cause was not in potentiality for intentions imagined by you, in the way that the intellect was in potentiality for imagined intentions. Now if the intellect of the First Cause were in potentiality for those, then it would follow that the understanding of the First Cause would be joined to us. But the understanding of intellect could not be joined to us without its standing in potentiality for those intentions. {54}

Question 15. Three doubts regarding intellect

1. How is intellect joined to us?

Briefly, I review the doubts regarding intellect.

First, there is a doubt over how the intellect is joined to us. If it is joined to us through the part that is matter, then in that way it would be a power in a body. Thus it cannot be joined to us in that way. Also, the senses: for sense is the actuality of a body in virtue of its substance, so anything sensed that is within the senses is also within us. In this way, then, the intellect is not joined to us through its part that is matter. Nor is it joined to us through its part that is form. For things understood are not within us in virtue of their being understood -- that is, they are not in the organ of our substance -- but only under the aspect by which they are imagined. Therefore the intellect can be joined to us neither through the part of it that is matter, nor through the part of it that is form,

and so not in any way.

The solution would be easy for someone who holds that the intellect is joined to us in virtue of its substance. For he would say that, since the intellect is joined to us through its substance, so things actually understood are joined to us. But the question cannot be settled in this way because it assumes something manifestly²⁹ false and impossible. For if the intellect through its substance were the actuality of a body, it would not have a separate action. For nothing that is conjoined to matter through its substance has a separate operation.

Also, if through its nature it were the actuality of a body, it could happen that just as the possible intellect understands the agent, so we would understand the agent intellect. This goes against what Averroes says [*In de an.* III 20, p. 451], that the possible intellect is perfected by the agent intellect and understands it, but is not joined to us through that action.

Also, Aristotle says that if the intellect is the actuality of the body {55} just as a sailor, of a ship, then it is separable [*De an.* II 1, 413a7-8]. For it is clear that it is not the actuality of a body through its substance, but through its power. Therefore it is clear that the question cannot be settled by this.

2. How can different things be understood by different people?

There is another doubt as well: how can different things be understood by different people? For this difference in understanding stems from a difference of intellect. For since the intellect, in virtue of its substance, is one thing common to all, it seems that whatever intelligibles are received in the intellect of one person, such as Socrates, are also received in the intellect of another, such as Plato. For there is a single intellect for both. Thus the understanding of Socrates will be the understanding of Plato. Nor also can a difference in things understood cause a difference in understanding in different human beings. For all the things understood belong to the same intellect, although the imagined intentions are numbered according to the number of different human beings. Since understood intentions could not, as it seems, be numbered according to the number of human beings, it follows that just as the intellect of all is one, so the things understood, since they are in it, will be one, and so again the understanding of Socrates will be the same as the understanding of

Plato.

3. Why the reception of intentions and their abstraction is required.

There is also this question. Since actions of understanding require intentions received in the possible intellect, which were once imagined intentions, if in fact the things understood that are abstracted and caused by the agent intellect were once imagined intentions, then is the reception and abstraction of intentions required for the intellect to be joined to us, or is it also required for the sake of the intellect's nature in its own right? {56}

Solutions

When it is asked how the intellect is joined to us, I say that the intellect *is* joined to us. For the intellect is that through which abstracted things appear to us. And I say that the intellect is actually joined to us because it understands from imagined intentions. For intentions are actually joined to us, and so the intellect, since it understands them, is actually joined to us, so that it is not joined to us through the part of it that is matter, in the way that the senses are the actuality of the body through the part of it that is matter. Nor do I mean to say that the intellect in its nature has some joining. Of its nature, it is only potentially joined to us. For unless it were only potentially of its nature to be joined to us, and instead it needs (*deberet*) to be joined to us, then it would necessarily be the form and actuality of our body through its substance. And it is necessary for one who holds that there is one intellect in all, that this occurs through imagined intentions. For if you were to say that since the intellect is actually joined to the human species it follows that the things understood are actually joined to the human species, then I would ask how there is a difference among things understood in this individual human being. For this cannot be because of a difference in intellect, since it is one in its substance. Instead, this difference arises on the side of the imagined intentions. Therefore it is clear that it is joined to us through imagined intentions. But then further: how is the intellect joined to us as a result of being joined to imagined intentions? This is not because the intellect understands something imagined by us, in the way that the First Cause can understand something that is imagined by another. Rather, it is joined to us because it is joined to the imagined

intentions and understands through them, effectively.

But this is not enough. For the intellect does not understand through imagined intentions because they are imagined, but because universal concepts are abstracted [from them]. It seemed above that the intellect operates in us because it has of its nature some joining with us. But this is neither true nor enough, because the intellect of its nature is united to us only in potentiality. So through such potential joining {57} it is not able to be actually joined to us; instead it is joined to us only through imagined intentions, because those are actually joined to us.

It is then asked why some understood things are joined to one individual and not to another. For this is not because of a difference in its substance, since it is one, nor because of a difference in its power, since its power is one. Then it is argued as follows: the reason why the intellect is actually joined to us is that there are different things making the one intellect be joined to one and not another. But different imagined intentions are the reason for the difference in understood things among different human beings. Therefore imagined intentions are the reason why the intellect is actually joined to us. This is true.

Also, to the argument showing that the intellect cannot be actually joined to us, one should reply by rejection. So it should be said that understood intentions are joined to us under the aspect by which they are understood, not by belonging to the whole conjunct as are the actions of sense, which belong to the whole conjunct. And certainly understanding does not belong to the whole conjunct as sensing does. Instead, I say that they are joined to us by belonging to the intellect, which is joined to us. This is clarified by an analogy (*simile*). Suppose that there is a material form belonging to a conjunct, and that it has some operations proper to it. Then would it not be the case that the operations proper to that form, which it carries out without an organ, are joined to the whole conjunct? Certainly they would, inasmuch as that form is joined to the conjunct through its part. Something analogous holds in the part -- that is, the intellect. For the operations of intellect are joined to us not through an organ, but because they belong to the intellect, which is joined to us -- joined, I say, not as form to matter, which is joined to the conjunct, but joined to us by its understanding through imagined intentions.

To the second question, when it is asked on what account understanding is made to differ in

different human beings, I say that this occurs on account of a difference in things understood. And when it is said that understood intentions belong to a single intellect, I say that although in their own right, absolutely, understood intentions do belong to a single intellect, nevertheless they are the things understood by this intellect {58} in virtue of its being joined to this [human being], rather than absolutely. And likewise is it joined to another. So in its own right the intellect, as regards its nature, is joined in the same way to every human being. So if there were some understanding that pertained to it in its own right, that understanding would belong to every human being. But because it understands through imagined intentions that are joined to different human beings and are different according to the difference between human beings, so understanding differs in different human beings.

To the third question I say that it is only through imagined species that the agent intellect can bring about within the possible intellect things understood that are different from it. For one should not say that the agent intellect, looking toward the phantasms that are in the organ [of phantasia] as toward exemplars, provides for itself universal concepts from intentions like itself formed by looking at phantasms. For according to Averroes [*In de an.* III 19, p. 441], the agent intellect cognizes nothing; rather, only the possible intellect cognizes. Nor should one say that the agent intellect makes imagined intentions result in the possible intellect from the organ of phantasia, nor that they make themselves within the possible intellect by multiplying. Instead, I say that the rational soul is potentially joined to the human species because the nature of its active power is to act on things of the sort that are joined to us. Imagined intentions are of this sort. And so I say that since it needs (*debeat*) to understand things other than itself, imagined intentions are necessary.

Still, one should understand about the agent and possible intellect that they are not two substances, but two powers of the same substance. Aristotle maintains this when he says in this book three [430a10-13] that in every genus there is something by which it is to make all things and something else that is potentially all things. In the soul we receive and abstract through the agent and possible intellect as much as we like. Therefore they seem to be powers of the same substance -- that is, of our intellect. {59}

Also, the intelligence that is a separate substance has of its nature a power through which it

can make (*agere*) things understood, and a power through which it can receive them, if united to a body. Therefore since our soul is a separate substance just as this intelligence is, why would it not have a power that makes things understood? And likewise it has a power receptive of them. Nor should one think that the possible intellect is conjoined with matter while the agent intellect is a substance separate from us. Rather, as Aristotle says [*De an.* III 4, 429b4-5], just as the agent is a separate substance, so is the possible a separate substance. Hence, without qualification, he calls the intellect a separate substance. But the rational soul is of its nature in potentiality for receiving phantasms. For in virtue of this nature it is united to a body, and although this potential for receiving phantasms belongs to it inasmuch as it is separate, still the act of this power participates only in things united to a body. And likewise the soul has a power through which it can bring about phantasms, but still it belongs to it to bring about phantasms in the possible intellect only through its conjunction with the body. Aristotle clearly suggests this in his text [*De an.* III 5, 430a22-23]: "nor does it sometimes understand, and then not; but only this that truly is is separate, and this alone is immortal and perpetual." Thus the possible intellect, by turning toward the agent intellect, always understands and it is eternal and separate with respect to its operation just as with respect to its substance. But by turning toward phantasms, although that possible intellect is eternal and separate with respect to its substance, still with respect to its operation it is corruptible and conjoined. Thus according to Aristotle in the same place [430a23-24], after death "we do not remember" -- that is, with respect to its operation it is corruptible. Moreover, it should be understood that just as the possible intellect is potentially all intelligibles, so the agent intellect is in potentiality to bring about all intelligibles.

You will say that some things are actually intelligible, such as separate substances. But the agent intellect cannot make these actually intelligible. Therefore the agent intellect does not make all things intelligible.

Also, the agent intellect understands itself and yet does not make itself. Therefore it does not make all things intelligible.

To the first, although separate substances are in their own right actually understood and intelligible, I say that they are understood by the possible intellect only with phantasms, though not

with their own phantasms, but foreign ones. So just as in the possible intellect they are potentially intelligible, so in the agent intellect they are in potentiality -- so as, that it, to be made intelligible. As for how the agent intellect makes them actually intelligible, there is a question. And I say to this that the agent intellect makes things actually intelligible through abstraction from phantasms in this that it makes material forms without the matter. So note that the soul considers things: it considers them abstractly and universally through the possible intellect, and also considers them abstractly through the agent intellect, and through it brings about this universal abstraction.

To the other, when it is said that it understands itself even though it does not make itself, it should be replied that although the agent intellect is intelligible in its own right and so does not make itself, still it is potentially intelligible by us, because it is understood by us only with some phantasm. Hence just as it is potentially intelligible by us, so it makes itself actually intelligible.

Question 16. Can a separate substance understand itself?

Someone might next ask a few questions about separate substances: first, whether a separate substance can understand itself.

It seems that it cannot. {61} Nothing particular and numerically one is actually intelligible, because the intellect is receptive of universality. But separate things are particulars, because in the case of separate things, each one is at once a being per se, distinct from every other being. Therefore separate substances are not actually intelligible. Therefore neither can they understand themselves.

The opposite is held by Aristotle, who says here in book three [430a2-4] that forms without matter are actually intelligible. But separate substances are forms without matter. Therefore they are actually intelligible. Therefore they can understand themselves.

Question 17. Does one intelligence understand another?

Next it is asked whether one intelligence or separate substance understands another.

It seems that they do not. Aristotle says here in book three [430a2-4] that in things with matter, intellect is the same as what is understood, and so one does not understand another.

This is also shown by reason. For separate substances are not intelligible through their

substance, since such an intelligible ought to be the perfection of what understands it, and ought to be present to it, since it has a union with it. But one separate substance does not perfect another through its substance, nor can it be united to it. Therefore one does not understand another through its substance.

Also, separate substances cannot be understood by others by means of phantasms, because they do not have phantasms. For abstraction is made only from forms in matter. But these sorts of substances are forms without matter. Therefore they cannot be abstracted and so cannot be understood by means of phantasms.

Also, the possible intellect receives phantasms only inasmuch {62} as they are united *to us*. Therefore even given that separate substances were to have phantasms, they still would not understand by means of them, since those phantasms are not united to us.

For the opposite. Averroes says that if there were no matter belonging to the bath, the bath would not be in the soul [*In Met.* XII 36]. But there is not any matter belonging to an intelligence.³⁰ Therefore it can be intelligible from itself, not from the intellect of another.

[*Solution to Q16*]

In reply to this it should be understood that separate substances are actually intelligible and that they can understand themselves. Aristotle holds this in the text when he says that in things without matter, knower and known are the same [430a2-4].

To the argument for the opposite it should be replied that there are two kinds of particulars. One is material, and such a particular is not actually intelligible. The other is immaterial, and such a particular is actually intelligible. Also, the object of intellect is the one belonging to the many, if it is intelligible. The reason for this is that the intellect takes in a form without matter, whereas what generates another does so only through matter. Hence matter is divided by sense, whereas form is not. Therefore the intellect considering Socrates and Plato takes in the form of Socrates and Plato, leaving out the matter. But that [form] is of itself one and belongs to many matters. Therefore it is clear that the object of intellect is the one belonging to many, if it is intelligible.

To the second question, whether one separate substance understands another and how, whether through its substance or in some other way, it is said by some and it seems to them that one separate substance is understood by another, because given that every intelligence is actually intelligible, one is offered to another, and thus one understands another or can do so. But this is not sufficient, because for something to be intelligible to another it is not sufficient for it to be actually intelligible and offered to the other under the aspect of a perfection, since the cognizable needs {63} to be united with what cognizes it and needs to be made one with it. Therefore you must state how one intelligence can be one with another. So for something to be intelligible to another, it must be intelligible, and must be an intelligible of this sort, [unified] with some intelligence. Although they are actually intelligibles of this sort, they are neither united with another nor the intelligible perfection of another.

Another view is that one intelligence understands another through species that have been with it from its creation (*concreatas*). Thus because one intelligence has from creation the species of another, for that reason one understands another. But this is nothing, because it has to be understood of material forms. So if an intelligence were to understand some material form, then it could indeed be said that this occurred through a species had from creation. Also, that which is an abstracted species does not have a species from creation that is its own. I say "that is its own," because we certainly do understand intelligences through species, but this occurs not through their own species, but through foreign ones. Therefore if intelligences³¹ are abstracted species, they do not have species that are their own. Therefore one intelligence could not from creation have a species of another.

In a third way, it should be said that whatever an intelligence understands, it understands on the basis of understanding its own substance. And Aristotle maintains this in this third book, when he says that in things without matter, knower and known are the same [430a2-4]. Also, he says in *Metaphysics* XI [XII, 1074b33-34] that the First Cause does not understand things other than itself. Hence that which is intelligible and that which understands are multiplied in intellect when the intelligible is understood on a basis of understanding other than the basis of understanding its own

substance. For whatever has another basis of understanding than its own substance or essence, understands through phantasms. So I say that an intelligence understands something else only in virtue of a relationship between its substance and that thing -- that is, in so far as it has the role of a cause relative to the other, or the role of being caused. Thus it is written in the *Liber de causis* [prop. 8] that an intelligence {64} is the cause of things beneath it and understands them. Hence an intelligence understands some form beneath it only by way of being a cause of its production. And I say that an intelligence, as it has things beneath it, understands [them] per se. So since an intelligence understands something only through the relationship of its substance to another, I say that one intelligence does not understand another under the aspect of being its cause; rather, all intelligences equally relate to the First Cause as their cause. Likewise our intellect immediately relates to the First Cause as its cause, not through intervening intelligences.

To the objection. When Averroes says that if there were no matter then the bath would not be in the soul, he means to say that since the intellect understands a thing's form only when the form of the bath is in the soul, it follows that if there were no matter belonging to the bath externally, then the bath would not be in the soul -- and because then the bath that is in the soul would be the same as the bath that exists externally.

Question 18. Does our intellect cognize the particular particularly?

A doubt still arises regarding the intellect's cognition: it is asked whether our intellect cognizes the particular particularly, so that by intellectual cognition it can distinguish one particular from another.

It seems that it can. Aristotle holds in the third book of this work [433a14, 431b1-13] that the practical intellect cognizes in that it considers what ought to be done. But what is done concerns particulars. Therefore its action concerns particulars. For unless it were to cognize and consider the particular, it would not have the capacity to choose among things to be done. Therefore etc.

Also, Boethius says in *The Consolation of Philosophy* [V pr. 4] that whatever a lower {65} power can do, a higher power can do as well. Sense can cognize particulars. Therefore the intellect, since it is a higher power, can cognize the same.

For the opposite. Boethius says that it is universal when understood, particular when sensed [*In*

Isagoge 1, p. 167]. For the particular is the object of sense, the universal the object of intellect.

Therefore if the intellect cognizes some particular, it does so under the aspect of the universal.

Solution. It is certain that the intellect does not cognize the particular first and per se. The reason for this is that the action of understanding, just like every other action, occurs in keeping with what the agent's form demands. But the form that brings about the action of understanding is immaterial, abstract, one of many, and does belong to one in such a way as not to belong to another. Therefore, likewise, that which specifies the action of this sort of form ought to be immaterial, abstract, one of many, and also should not belong to one in such a way as not to belong to another. The universal is of this sort. Therefore it is clear that the intellect understands nothing per se except for the universal, nor does it cognize particulars as particulars. Instead, particulars -- as they are understood -- are one and not distinct from each other among themselves, so that the intellect cognizing singulars does not know how to distinguish one from another.

Therefore since our intellect does not, first and per se, understand the particular particularly, it can still be held that consequently (*ex consequenti*)³² the intellect understands the particular particularly. But in what way? One way in which this can be held is as follows. It is held that the intellect understands the particular particularly, but consequently, through the application of one intellect to distinct particulars, so that through the application of the same common form to a particular it cognizes that one particularly.

To the contrary, the intellect cognizes the particular through the application {66} of a universal form to that particular only in keeping with that form's mode of application. But the intellect does not apply a common form to a particular so as to grasp the very being of this one in such a way as not to grasp the being of another. For this real universal form of such particulars is not in this made to be of one more than another. Therefore it is clear that through this application the intellect cannot cognize one particular distinctly from another.

Moreover, Aristotle holds in *De anima* III that the intellect, in comparing several things to each other, must cognize those several things, given that it compares each to each. Therefore if the intellect applies a common form to singulars and compares it among them, then it must be that before its application it cognizes each one of them. Therefore it is clear that the intellect does not

cognize the particular particularly through application.

So I believe and say that the intellect, even as it is ours, does not understand the particular particularly, neither first nor consequently. For our intellect is not such as to understand through an organ; it is instead separate according to each part of its power, according to both the possible and the agent intellect. But it communicates with what operates through an organ. For otherwise there would be no reason why it would understand only through a common form, in such a way that the intellect does not distinguish singulars. For all these [singulars] share in a form that is common, intelligible, immaterial, and abstract, one that is not different among different singulars, but one of many singulars.

Nor do I say that the particular is in no way cognized by the intellect. This is the case for someone who says that the universal is distinct from the singular, as Plato {67} said. For Plato said that the universal is a form entirely separate from singulars. So in this way it happened that someone who understands the universal would in no way understand the particular, since the universal is held to be distinct from the singular. I say, instead, that since the universal is the same as its particular, the particular is cognized through a cognition of the universal, but not as it is in its own proper form, but only in the universal, since this universal form truly is the particular in terms of its being. For the particular has no other form than the universal. Hence Aristotle says that the particular has neither its own name, nor its own form, nor its own cognition.

Another way in which it is held that the intellect understands the particular particularly is *consequently*. For it is said that although the form first cognized by the intellect is universal and immaterial, it is nevertheless caused by particular phantasms. So from the fact that it is caused by particulars, the intellect thus cognizes the particular. An analogous (*simile*) case is offered: the sensible is cognizable per se and first insofar as it is in the organ, but because that is caused by the being that it has in the object, so the sense cognizes the sensible not only in the organ, but also in the object.

Moreover, although the intellect cognizes per se and first the abstracted universal form, still it is caused by itself as it is in the particular. So³³ the intellect cognizes the form of the universal not only as it is universal, but also as it is particular. Therefore etc.

Yet this is seen [to be so]. It is the truth that sensibles existing in the organ bring about a cognition not only of themselves in the organ, but also of the things of which they are likenesses or species, by which they are caused. {68} It is said: an immaterial, abstracted form brings about not only a cognition of itself in the intellect, but also a cognition of what it is the species of, by which it is caused as by its object. Thus since the immaterial form exists in the real form as in the object by which it is caused, so if the universal form is cognized, the real form is also cognized.

But it should be understood that although the sensible brings about within the sense a cognition of itself in the organ, it nevertheless brings about that cognition only through the likeness in that organ that it has from the object. Still, it is a likeness of the object, a likeness that the sensible has while existing in the organ. In the case of sight, for example, it has [a likeness] not of what is colored universally, but of this colored thing -- that is, a likeness of this particular. And thus the sensible produces the cognition of a particular. Likewise, an immaterial form brings about the cognition of its object in accordance with its being the likeness of that object. But now³⁴ since it is a likeness of its object not under particular being, but under universal being, you can from this fact show decisively that a real human being that is the object of a universal form is cognized not under real being but under universal being.

So note that there are two kinds of universals. There is one universal that is a pure intention, abstract and universal, not predicable of external particulars. The other universal is not a pure intention {69} but a real form, existing in more than one thing and predicable of the same. Note then that the universal that is a pure universal intention brings about the cognition of a real universal.

To the first argument for the opposite it should be said that it does indeed establish that the intellect needs to have cognition of particulars. But it does not follow that it therefore needs to have cognition of these particulars. This is granted, because from a universal cognition of particulars it is directed toward acting with respect to particulars. Thus since these are not cognized in their own proper nature, it happens that those without much experience in the rules of a universal art are less able to act with respect to particulars (as Aristotle holds in *Metaphysics* I [981a13 ff.]).

To the next it should be said that in this way the senses cognize the particular, and likewise

the intellect cognizes the particular, but not particularly in the way that the senses do. Thus it is true that whatever a lower power can do, a higher power can do, but they need not do it in the same way.

TEXTUAL NOTES

1. *Quaestiones in tertium de anima*, ed. Bernardo Bazán, *Philosophes Médiévaux* 13, (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1972). See also René-Antoine Gauthier, "Notes sur Siger de Brabant," *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 67 (1983) 201-32.
2. Adding *et* (ms, Gauthier).
3. *Volitum* (Gauthier) for *Causatum*.
4. *secundum* (Duin) for *scilicet* (ms, Bazán).
5. *tota* for *toto* (Bazán).
6. Reading *et intellectus* for *intellectum* (ms?, Bazán).
7. *et alia* for *operari* (Bazán).
8. *Aristotle* for *Averroes* (following Bazán's suggestion).
9. Supplying *et suum quo est* (Gauthier, p. 213).
10. Supplying *non*.
11. *ergo* for *autem*.
12. *est* for *enim*; om. *est* (suppl. Bazán).
13. Omitting *quod si unus <non>, quod alius* (Bazán). Alternatively, one might at this point add the phrase: "or that if one [does not], another [does not]"

14. Supplying *quae est a sense differt specie a delectione quae* (Gauthier).
15. *Corporali* (Gauthier) for *Universaliter*.
16. *cremabantur* (Gauthier) for *cruciabantur*.
17. Supplying *cum* (Gauthier).
18. *quia videtur [ei]* (Gauthier) for *quod videtur*.
19. *Contra hoc* (Gauthier) for *nam*.
20. *pateretur* (Gauthier) for *patiatur*.
21. *[Sed] sicut in principio anima* (Gauthier) for *in principio. Sicut anima*.
22. Supplying *ei* (Gauthier).
23. *ipsa anima* (Gauthier) for *ipsa quia* (Bazán).
24. *unitae [ab operatione] in qua* (Gauthier) for *unire, in quo* (Bazán).
25. *dominus scientiae* (Gauthier) for *docens scientiam*.
26. *Licet enim* (Gauthier) for *Et licet* (Bazán).
27. *dominus scientiae* (Gauthier) for *docens scire* (Bazán).
28. *Sed* for *Quod*.
29. *manifeste* for *manifestum*.
30. *intelligentiae* for *intelligentia* (Bazán), *intellecta* (ms).
31. *intelligentiae* for *intellectus*.

32. *ex consequenti* for *ex consequentia* (cf. lines 36, 57, 78).

33. *ideo* for *quia*.

34. Omitting *enim*.