

## FIRST PART, QUESTION 79

### Of the Intellectual Powers (In Thirteen Articles)

The next question concerns the intellectual powers, under which head there are thirteen points of inquiry:

- (1) Whether the intellect is a power of the soul, or its essence?
- (2) If it be a power, whether it is a passive power?
- (3) If it is a passive power, whether there is an active intellect?
- (4) Whether it is something in the soul?
- (5) Whether the active intellect is one in all?
- (6) Whether memory is in the intellect?
- (7) Whether the memory be distinct from the intellect?
- (8) Whether the reason is a distinct power from the intellect?
- (9) Whether the superior and inferior reason are distinct powers?
- (10) Whether the intelligence is distinct from the intellect?
- (11) Whether the speculative and practical intellect are distinct powers?
- (12) Whether “synderesis” is a power of the intellectual part?
- (13) Whether the conscience is a power of the intellectual part?

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#### Whether the intellect is a power of the soul?

Ia q. 79 a. 1

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the intellect is not a power of the soul, but the essence of the soul. For the intellect seems to be the same as the mind. Now the mind is not a power of the soul, but the essence; for Augustine says (De Trin. ix, 2): “Mind and spirit are not relative things, but denominate the essence.” Therefore the intellect is the essence of the soul.

**Objection 2.** Further, different genera of the soul’s powers are not united in some one power, but only in the essence of the soul. Now the appetitive and the intellectual are different genera of the soul’s powers as the Philosopher says (De Anima ii, 3), but they are united in the mind, for Augustine (De Trin. x, 11) places the intelligence and will in the mind. Therefore the mind and intellect of man is of the very essence of the soul and not a power thereof.

**Objection 3.** Further, according to Gregory, in a homily for the Ascension (xxix in Ev.), “man understands with the angels.” But angels are called “minds” and “intellects.” Therefore the mind and intellect of man are not a power of the soul, but the soul itself.

**Objection 4.** Further, a substance is intellectual by the fact that it is immaterial. But the soul is immaterial through its essence. Therefore it seems that the soul must be intellectual through its essence.

**On the contrary,** The Philosopher assigns the intellectual faculty as a power of the soul (De Anima ii, 3).

**I answer that,** In accordance with what has been already shown (q. 54, a. 3; q. 77, a. 1) it is necessary to say that the intellect is a power of the soul, and not the very essence of the soul. For then alone the essence of

that which operates is the immediate principle of operation, when operation itself is its being: for as power is to operation as its act, so is the essence to being. But in God alone His action of understanding is His very Being. Wherefore in God alone is His intellect His essence: while in other intellectual creatures, the intellect is power.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Sense is sometimes taken for the power, and sometimes for the sensitive soul; for the sensitive soul takes its name from its chief power, which is sense. And in like manner the intellectual soul is sometimes called intellect, as from its chief power; and thus we read (De Anima i, 4), that the “intellect is a substance.” And in this sense also Augustine says that the mind is spirit and essence (De Trin. ix, 2; xiv, 16).

**Reply to Objection 2.** The appetitive and intellectual powers are different genera of powers in the soul, by reason of the different formalities of their objects. But the appetitive power agrees partly with the intellectual power and partly with the sensitive in its mode of operation either through a corporeal organ or without it: for appetite follows apprehension. And in this way Augustine puts the will in the mind; and the Philosopher, in the reason (De Anima iii, 9).

**Reply to Objection 3.** In the angels there is no other power besides the intellect, and the will, which follows the intellect. And for this reason an angel is called a “mind” or an “intellect”; because his whole power consists in this. But the soul has many other powers, such as the sensitive and nutritive powers, and therefore the comparison fails.

**Reply to Objection 4.** The immateriality of the created intelligent substance is not its intellect; and through

its immateriality it has the power of intelligence. Wherefore it follows not that the intellect is the substance of the

soul, but that it is its virtue and power.

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## Whether the intellect is a passive power?

Ia q. 79 a. 2

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the intellect is not a passive power. For everything is passive by its matter, and acts by its form. But the intellectual power results from the immateriality of the intelligent substance. Therefore it seems that the intellect is not a passive power.

**Objection 2.** Further, the intellectual power is incorruptible, as we have said above (q. 79, a. 6). But “if the intellect is passive, it is corruptible” (De Anima iii, 5). Therefore the intellectual power is not passive.

**Objection 3.** Further, the “agent is nobler than the patient,” as Augustine (Gen. ad lit. xii, 16) and Aristotle (De Anima iii, 5) says. But all the powers of the vegetative part are active; yet they are the lowest among the powers of the soul. Much more, therefore, all the intellectual powers, which are the highest, are active.

**On the contrary,** The Philosopher says (De Anima iii, 4) that “to understand is in a way to be passive.”

**I answer that,** To be passive may be taken in three ways. Firstly, in its most strict sense, when from a thing is taken something which belongs to it by virtue either of its nature, or of its proper inclination: as when water loses coolness by heating, and as when a man becomes ill or sad. Secondly, less strictly, a thing is said to be passive, when something, whether suitable or unsuitable, is taken away from it. And in this way not only he who is ill is said to be passive, but also he who is healed; not only he that is sad, but also he that is joyful; or whatever way he be altered or moved. Thirdly, in a wide sense a thing is said to be passive, from the very fact that what is in potentiality to something receives that to which it was in potentiality, without being deprived of anything. And accordingly, whatever passes from potentiality to act, may be said to be passive, even when it is perfected. And thus with us to understand is to be passive. This is clear from the following reason. For the intellect, as we have seen above (q. 78, a. 1), has an operation extending to universal being. We may therefore see whether the intellect be in act or potentiality by observing first of all the nature of the relation of the intellect to universal being. For we find an intellect whose relation to universal being is that of the act of all being: and such is the Divine intellect, which is the Essence of God, in which originally and virtually, all being pre-exists as in its first cause. And therefore the Divine intellect is not in potentiality, but is pure act. But no created intellect can be an act in relation to the whole universal being; otherwise it would need be an infinite being. Wherefore every created intellect is not the act of all things intelligible, by reason of its very existence; but

is compared to these intelligible things as a potentiality to act.

Now, potentiality has a double relation to act. There is a potentiality which is always perfected by its act: as the matter of the heavenly bodies (q. 58, a. 1). And there is another potentiality which is not always in act, but proceeds from potentiality to act; as we observe in things that are corrupted and generated. Wherefore the angelic intellect is always in act as regards those things which it can understand, by reason of its proximity to the first intellect, which is pure act, as we have said above. But the human intellect, which is the lowest in the order of intelligence and most remote from the perfection of the Divine intellect, is in potentiality with regard to things intelligible, and is at first “like a clean tablet on which nothing is written,” as the Philosopher says (De Anima iii, 4). This is made clear from the fact, that at first we are only in potentiality to understand, and afterwards we are made to understand actually. And so it is evident that with us to understand is “in a way to be passive”; taking passion in the third sense. And consequently the intellect is a passive power.

**Reply to Objection 1.** This objection is verified of passion in the first and second senses, which belong to primary matter. But in the third sense passion is in anything which is reduced from potentiality to act.

**Reply to Objection 2.** “Passive intellect” is the name given by some to the sensitive appetite, in which are the passions of the soul; which appetite is also called “rational by participation,” because it “obeys the reason” (Ethic. i, 13). Others give the name of passive intellect to the cogitative power, which is called the “particular reason.” And in each case “passive” may be taken in the two first senses; forasmuch as this so-called intellect is the act of a corporeal organ. But the intellect which is in potentiality to things intelligible, and which for this reason Aristotle calls the “possible” intellect (De Anima iii, 4) is not passive except in the third sense: for it is not an act of a corporeal organ. Hence it is incorruptible.

**Reply to Objection 3.** The agent is nobler than the patient, if the action and the passion are referred to the same thing: but not always, if they refer to different things. Now the intellect is a passive power in regard to the whole universal being: while the vegetative power is active in regard to some particular thing, namely, the body as united to the soul. Wherefore nothing prevents such a passive force being nobler than such an active one.

**Objection 1.** It would seem that there is no active intellect. For as the senses are to things sensible, so is our intellect to things intelligible. But because sense is in potentiality to things sensible, the sense is not said to be active, but only passive. Therefore, since our intellect is in potentiality to things intelligible, it seems that we cannot say that the intellect is active, but only that it is passive.

**Objection 2.** Further, if we say that also in the senses there is something active, such as light: on the contrary, light is required for sight, inasmuch as it makes the medium to be actually luminous; for color of its own nature moves the luminous medium. But in the operation of the intellect there is no appointed medium that has to be brought into act. Therefore there is no necessity for an active intellect.

**Objection 3.** Further, the likeness of the agent is received into the patient according to the nature of the patient. But the passive intellect is an immaterial power. Therefore its immaterial nature suffices for forms to be received into it immaterially. Now a form is intelligible in act from the very fact that it is immaterial. Therefore there is no need for an active intellect to make the species actually intelligible.

**On the contrary,** The Philosopher says (De Anima iii, 5), “As in every nature, so in the soul is there something by which it becomes all things, and something by which it makes all things.” Therefore we must admit an active intellect.

**I answer that,** According to the opinion of Plato, there is no need for an active intellect in order to make things actually intelligible; but perhaps in order to provide intellectual light to the intellect, as will be explained farther on (a. 4). For Plato supposed that the forms of natural things subsisted apart from matter, and consequently that they are intelligible: since a thing is actually intelligible from the very fact that it is immaterial. And he called such forms “species or ideas”; from a participation of which, he said that even corporeal matter was formed, in order that individuals might be naturally established in their proper genera and species: and that our intellect was formed by such participation in order to have knowledge of the gen-

era and species of things. But since Aristotle did not allow that forms of natural things exist apart from matter, and as forms existing in matter are not actually intelligible; it follows that the natures of forms of the sensible things which we understand are not actually intelligible. Now nothing is reduced from potentiality to act except by something in act; as the senses as made actual by what is actually sensible. We must therefore assign on the part of the intellect some power to make things actually intelligible, by abstraction of the species from material conditions. And such is the necessity for an active intellect.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Sensible things are found in act outside the soul; and hence there is no need for an active sense. Wherefore it is clear that in the nutritive part all the powers are active, whereas in the sensitive part all are passive: but in the intellectual part, there is something active and something passive.

**Reply to Objection 2.** There are two opinions as to the effect of light. For some say that light is required for sight, in order to make colors actually visible. And according to this the active intellect is required for understanding, in like manner and for the same reason as light is required for seeing. But in the opinion of others, light is required for sight; not for the colors to become actually visible; but in order that the medium may become actually luminous, as the Commentator says on De Anima ii. And according to this, Aristotle’s comparison of the active intellect to light is verified in this, that as it is required for understanding, so is light required for seeing; but not for the same reason.

**Reply to Objection 3.** If the agent pre-exist, it may well happen that its likeness is received variously into various things, on account of their dispositions. But if the agent does not pre-exist, the disposition of the recipient has nothing to do with the matter. Now the intelligible in act is not something existing in nature; if we consider the nature of things sensible, which do not subsist apart from matter. And therefore in order to understand them, the immaterial nature of the passive intellect would not suffice but for the presence of the active intellect which makes things actually intelligible by way of abstraction.

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the active intellect is not something in the soul. For the effect of the active intellect is to give light for the purpose of understanding. But this is done by something higher than the soul: according to Jn. 1:9, “He was the true light that enlighteneth every man coming into this world.” Therefore the active intellect is not something in the soul.

**Objection 2.** Further, the Philosopher (De Anima iii, 5) says of the active intellect, “that it does not sometimes understand and sometimes not understand.” But our soul does not always understand: sometimes it understands, sometimes it does not understand. Therefore the active intellect is not something in our soul.

**Objection 3.** Further, agent and patient suffice for ac-

tion. If, therefore, the passive intellect, which is a passive power, is something belonging to the soul; and also the active intellect, which is an active power: it follows that a man would always be able to understand when he wished, which is clearly false. Therefore the active intellect is not something in our soul.

**Objection 4.** Further, the Philosopher (*De Anima* iii, 5) says that the active intellect is a “substance in actual being.” But nothing can be in potentiality and in act with regard to the same thing. If, therefore, the passive intellect, which is in potentiality to all things intelligible, is something in the soul, it seems impossible for the active intellect to be also something in our soul.

**Objection 5.** Further, if the active intellect is something in the soul, it must be a power. For it is neither a passion nor a habit; since habits and passions are not in the nature of agents in regard to the passivity of the soul; but rather passion is the very action of the passive power; while habit is something which results from acts. But every power flows from the essence of the soul. It would therefore follow that the active intellect flows from the essence of the soul. And thus it would not be in the soul by way of participation from some higher intellect: which is unfitting. Therefore the active intellect is not something in our soul.

**On the contrary,** The Philosopher says (*De Anima* iii, 5), that “it is necessary for these differences,” namely, the passive and active intellect, “to be in the soul.”

**I answer that,** The active intellect, of which the Philosopher speaks, is something in the soul. In order to make this evident, we must observe that above the intellectual soul of man we must needs suppose a superior intellect, from which the soul acquires the power of understanding. For what is such by participation, and what is mobile, and what is imperfect always requires the pre-existence of something essentially such, immovable and perfect. Now the human soul is called intellectual by reason of a participation in intellectual power; a sign of which is that it is not wholly intellectual but only in part. Moreover it reaches to the understanding of truth by arguing, with a certain amount of reasoning and movement. Again it has an imperfect understanding; both because it does not understand everything, and because, in those things which it does understand, it passes from potentiality to act. Therefore there must needs be some higher intellect, by which the soul is helped to understand.

Wherefore some held that this intellect, substantially separate, is the active intellect, which by lighting up the phantasms as it were, makes them to be actually intelligible. But, even supposing the existence of such a separate active intellect, it would still be necessary to assign to the human soul some power participating in that superior intellect, by which power the human soul makes things actually intelligible. Just as in other perfect natu-

ral things, besides the universal active causes, each one is endowed with its proper powers derived from those universal causes: for the sun alone does not generate man; but in man is the power of begetting man: and in like manner with other perfect animals. Now among these lower things nothing is more perfect than the human soul. Wherefore we must say that in the soul is some power derived from a higher intellect, whereby it is able to light up the phantasms. And we know this by experience, since we perceive that we abstract universal forms from their particular conditions, which is to make them actually intelligible. Now no action belongs to anything except through some principle formally inherent therein; as we have said above of the passive intellect (q. 76, a. 1). Therefore the power which is the principle of this action must be something in the soul. For this reason Aristotle (*De Anima* iii, 5) compared the active intellect to light, which is something received into the air: while Plato compared the separate intellect impressing the soul to the sun, as Themistius says in his commentary on *De Anima* iii. But the separate intellect, according to the teaching of our faith, is God Himself, Who is the soul’s Creator, and only beatitude; as will be shown later on (q. 90, a. 3; *Ia IIae*, q. 3, a. 7). Wherefore the human soul derives its intellectual light from Him, according to Ps. 4:7, “The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us.”

**Reply to Objection 1.** That true light enlightens as a universal cause, from which the human soul derives a particular power, as we have explained.

**Reply to Objection 2.** The Philosopher says those words not of the active intellect, but of the intellect in act: of which he had already said: “Knowledge in act is the same as the thing.” Or, if we refer those words to the active intellect, then they are said because it is not owing to the active intellect that sometimes we do, and sometimes we do not understand, but to the intellect which is in potentiality.

**Reply to Objection 3.** If the relation of the active intellect to the passive were that of the active object to a power, as, for instance, of the visible in act to the sight; it would follow that we could understand all things instantly, since the active intellect is that which makes all things (in act). But now the active intellect is not an object, rather is it that whereby the objects are made to be in act: for which, besides the presence of the active intellect, we require the presence of phantasms, the good disposition of the sensitive powers, and practice in this sort of operation; since through one thing understood, other things come to be understood, as from terms are made propositions, and from first principles, conclusions. From this point of view it matters not whether the active intellect is something belonging to the soul, or something separate from the soul.

**Reply to Objection 4.** The intellectual soul is indeed actually immaterial, but it is in potentiality to determinate

species. On the contrary, phantasms are actual images of certain species, but are immaterial in potentiality. Wherefore nothing prevents one and the same soul, inasmuch as it is actually immaterial, having one power by which it makes things actually immaterial, by abstraction from the conditions of individual matter: which power is called the “active intellect”; and another power, receptive of such species, which is called the “passive intellect” by reason

of its being in potentiality to such species.

**Reply to Objection 5.** Since the essence of the soul is immaterial, created by the supreme intellect, nothing prevents that power which it derives from the supreme intellect, and whereby it abstracts from matter, flowing from the essence of the soul, in the same way as its other powers.

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**Whether the active intellect is one in all?**

Ia q. 79 a. 5

**Objection 1.** It would seem that there is one active intellect in all. For what is separate from the body is not multiplied according to the number of bodies. But the active intellect is “separate,” as the Philosopher says (De Anima iii, 5). Therefore it is not multiplied in the many human bodies, but is one for all men.

**Objection 2.** Further, the active intellect is the cause of the universal, which is one in many. But that which is the cause of unity is still more itself one. Therefore the active intellect is the same in all.

**Objection 3.** Further, all men agree in the first intellectual concepts. But to these they assent by the active intellect. Therefore all agree in one active intellect.

**On the contrary,** The Philosopher says (De Anima iii, 5) that the active intellect is as a light. But light is not the same in the various things enlightened. Therefore the same active intellect is not in various men.

**I answer that,** The truth about this question depends on what we have already said (a. 4). For if the active intellect were not something belonging to the soul, but were some separate substance, there would be one active intellect for all men. And this is what they mean who hold that there is one active intellect for all. But if the active intellect is something belonging to the soul, as one of its powers, we are bound to say that there are as many active intellects as there are souls, which are multiplied according to the number of men, as we have said above (q. 76, a. 2). For it is impossible that one same power belong to various substances.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The Philosopher proves that the active intellect is separate, by the fact that the passive intellect is separate: because, as he says (De Anima iii, 5), “the agent is more noble than the patient.” Now the passive intellect is said to be separate, because it is not the act of any corporeal organ. And in the same sense the active intellect is also called “separate”; but not as a separate substance.

**Reply to Objection 2.** The active intellect is the cause of the universal, by abstracting it from matter. But for this purpose it need not be the same intellect in all intelligent beings; but it must be one in its relationship to all those things from which it abstracts the universal, with respect to which things the universal is one. And this befits the active intellect inasmuch as it is immaterial.

**Reply to Objection 3.** All things which are of one species enjoy in common the action which accompanies the nature of the species, and consequently the power which is the principle of such action; but not so as that power be identical in all. Now to know the first intelligible principles is the action belonging to the human species. Wherefore all men enjoy in common the power which is the principle of this action: and this power is the active intellect. But there is no need for it to be identical in all. Yet it must be derived by all from one principle. And thus the possession by all men in common of the first principles proves the unity of the separate intellect, which Plato compares to the sun; but not the unity of the active intellect, which Aristotle compares to light.

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**Whether memory is in the intellectual part of the soul?**

Ia q. 79 a. 6

**Objection 1.** It would seem that memory is not in the intellectual part of the soul. For Augustine says (De Trin. xii, 2,3,8) that to the higher part of the soul belongs those things which are not “common to man and beast.” But memory is common to man and beast, for he says (De Trin. xii, 2,3,8) that “beasts can sense corporeal things through the senses of the body, and commit them to memory.” Therefore memory does not belong to the intellectual part of the soul.

**Objection 2.** Further, memory is of the past. But the past is said of something with regard to a fixed time. Memory, therefore, knows a thing under a condition of a fixed time; which involves knowledge under the conditions of “here” and “now.” But this is not the province of the intellect, but of the sense. Therefore memory is not in the intellectual part, but only in the sensitive.

**Objection 3.** Further, in the memory are preserved the species of those things of which we are not actually

thinking. But this cannot happen in the intellect, because the intellect is reduced to act by the fact that the intelligible species are received into it. Now the intellect in act implies understanding in act; and therefore the intellect actually understands all things of which it has the species. Therefore the memory is not in the intellectual part.

**On the contrary,** Augustine says (*De Trin.* x, 11) that “memory, understanding, and will are one mind.”

**I answer that,** Since it is of the nature of the memory to preserve the species of those things which are not actually apprehended, we must first of all consider whether the intelligible species can thus be preserved in the intellect: because Avicenna held that this was impossible. For he admitted that this could happen in the sensitive part, as to some powers, inasmuch as they are acts of corporeal organs, in which certain species may be preserved apart from actual apprehension. But in the intellect, which has no corporeal organ, nothing but what is intelligible exists. Wherefore every thing of which the likeness exists in the intellect must be actually understood. Thus, therefore, according to him, as soon as we cease to understand something actually, the species of that thing ceases to be in our intellect, and if we wish to understand that thing anew, we must turn to the active intellect, which he held to be a separate substance, in order that the intelligible species may thence flow again into our passive intellect. And from the practice and habit of turning to the active intellect there is formed, according to him, a certain aptitude in the passive intellect for turning to the active intellect; which aptitude he calls the habit of knowledge. According, therefore, to this supposition, nothing is preserved in the intellectual part that is not actually understood: wherefore it would not be possible to admit memory in the intellectual part.

But this opinion is clearly opposed to the teaching of Aristotle. For he says (*De Anima* iii, 4) that, when the passive intellect “is identified with each thing as knowing it, it is said to be in act,” and that “this happens when it can operate of itself. And, even then, it is in potentiality, but not in the same way as before learning and discovering.” Now, the passive intellect is said to be each thing, inasmuch as it receives the intelligible species of each thing. To the fact, therefore, that it receives the species of intelligible things it owes its being able to operate when it wills, but not so that it be always operating: for even then is it in potentiality in a certain sense, though otherwise than before the act of understanding—namely, in the sense that whoever has habitual knowledge is in potentiality to actual consideration.

The foregoing opinion is also opposed to reason. For what is received into something is received according to the conditions of the recipient. But the intellect is of a more stable nature, and is more immovable than corporeal nature. If, therefore, corporeal matter holds the forms which it receives, not only while it actually does some-

thing through them, but also after ceasing to act through them, much more cogent reason is there for the intellect to receive the species unchangeably and lastingly, whether it receive them from things sensible, or derive them from some superior intellect. Thus, therefore, if we take memory only for the power of retaining species, we must say that it is in the intellectual part. But if in the notion of memory we include its object as something past, then the memory is not in the intellectual, but only in the sensitive part, which apprehends individual things. For past, as past, since it signifies being under a condition of fixed time, is something individual.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Memory, if considered as retentive of species, is not common to us and other animals. For species are not retained in the sensitive part of the soul only, but rather in the body and soul united: since the memorative power is the act of some organ. But the intellect in itself is retentive of species, without the association of any corporeal organ. Wherefore the Philosopher says (*De Anima* iii, 4) that “the soul is the seat of the species, not the whole soul, but the intellect.”

**Reply to Objection 2.** The condition of past may be referred to two things—namely, to the object which is known, and to the act of knowledge. These two are found together in the sensitive part, which apprehends something from the fact of its being immuted by a present sensible: wherefore at the same time an animal remembers to have sensed before in the past, and to have sensed some past sensible thing. But as concerns the intellectual part, the past is accidental, and is not in itself a part of the object of the intellect. For the intellect understands man, as man: and to man, as man, it is accidental that he exist in the present, past, or future. But on the part of the act, the condition of past, even as such, may be understood to be in the intellect, as well as in the senses. Because our soul’s act of understanding is an individual act, existing in this or that time, inasmuch as a man is said to understand now, or yesterday, or tomorrow. And this is not incompatible with the intellectual nature: for such an act of understanding, though something individual, is yet an immaterial act, as we have said above of the intellect (q. 76, a. 1); and therefore, as the intellect understands itself, though it be itself an individual intellect, so also it understands its act of understanding, which is an individual act, in the past, present, or future. In this way, then, the notion of memory, in as far as it regards past events, is preserved in the intellect, forasmuch as it understands that it previously understood: but not in the sense that it understands the past as something “here” and “now.”

**Reply to Objection 3.** The intelligible species is sometimes in the intellect only in potentiality, and then the intellect is said to be in potentiality. Sometimes the intelligible species is in the intellect as regards the ultimate completion of the act, and then it understands in act.

And sometimes the intelligible species is in a middle state, between potentiality and act: and then we have habitual

knowledge. In this way the intellect retains the species, even when it does not understand in act.

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**Whether the intellectual memory is a power distinct from the intellect?**

Ia q. 79 a. 7

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the intellectual memory is distinct from the intellect. For Augustine (De Trin. x, 11) assigns to the soul memory, understanding, and will. But it is clear that the memory is a distinct power from the will. Therefore it is also distinct from the intellect.

**Objection 2.** Further, the reason of distinction among the powers in the sensitive part is the same as in the intellectual part. But memory in the sensitive part is distinct from sense, as we have said (q. 78, a. 4). Therefore memory in the intellectual part is distinct from the intellect.

**Objection 3.** Further, according to Augustine (De Trin. x, 11; xi, 7), memory, understanding, and will are equal to one another, and one flows from the other. But this could not be if memory and intellect were the same power. Therefore they are not the same power.

**On the contrary,** From its nature the memory is the treasury or storehouse of species. But the Philosopher (De Anima iii) attributes this to the intellect, as we have said (a. 6, ad 1). Therefore the memory is not another power from the intellect.

**I answer that,** As has been said above (q. 77, a. 3), the powers of the soul are distinguished by the different formal aspects of their objects: since each power is defined in reference to that thing to which it is directed and which is its object. It has also been said above (q. 59, a. 4) that if any power by its nature be directed to an object according to the common ratio of the object, that power will not be differentiated according to the individual differences of that object: just as the power of sight, which regards its object under the common ratio of color, is not differentiated by differences of black and white. Now, the intellect regards its object under the common ratio of being: since the passive intellect is that “in which all are in potential-

ity.” Wherefore the passive intellect is not differentiated by any difference of being. Nevertheless there is a distinction between the power of the active intellect and of the passive intellect: because as regards the same object, the active power which makes the object to be in act must be distinct from the passive power, which is moved by the object existing in act. Thus the active power is compared to its object as a being in act is to a being in potentiality; whereas the passive power, on the contrary, is compared to its object as being in potentiality is to a being in act. Therefore there can be no other difference of powers in the intellect, but that of passive and active. Wherefore it is clear that memory is not a distinct power from the intellect: for it belongs to the nature of a passive power to retain as well as to receive.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Although it is said (3 Sent. D, 1) that memory, intellect, and will are three powers, this is not in accordance with the meaning of Augustine, who says expressly (De Trin. xiv) that “if we take memory, intelligence, and will as always present in the soul, whether we actually attend to them or not, they seem to pertain to the memory only. And by intelligence I mean that by which we understand when actually thinking; and by will I mean that love or affection which unites the child and its parent.” Wherefore it is clear that Augustine does not take the above three for three powers; but by memory he understands the soul’s habit of retention; by intelligence, the act of the intellect; and by will, the act of the will.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Past and present may differentiate the sensitive powers, but not the intellectual powers, for the reason give above.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Intelligence arises from memory, as act from habit; and in this way it is equal to it, but not as a power to a power.

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**Whether the reason is distinct from the intellect?**

Ia q. 79 a. 8

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the reason is a distinct power from the intellect. For it is stated in De Spiritu et Anima that “when we wish to rise from lower things to higher, first the sense comes to our aid, then imagination, then reason, then the intellect.” Therefore the reason is distinct from the intellect, as imagination is from sense.

**Objection 2.** Further, Boethius says (De Consol. iv, 6), that intellect is compared to reason, as eternity to time. But it does not belong to the same power to be in eternity and to be in time. Therefore reason and intellect are not

the same power.

**Objection 3.** Further, man has intellect in common with the angels, and sense in common with the brutes. But reason, which is proper to man, whence he is called a rational animal, is a power distinct from sense. Therefore it is equally true to say that it is distinct from the intellect, which properly belongs to the angel: whence they are called intellectual.

**On the contrary,** Augustine says (Gen. ad lit. iii, 20) that “that in which man excels irrational animals is reason,

or mind, or intelligence or whatever appropriate name we like to give it.” Therefore, reason, intellect and mind are one power.

**I answer that,** Reason and intellect in man cannot be distinct powers. We shall understand this clearly if we consider their respective actions. For to understand is simply to apprehend intelligible truth: and to reason is to advance from one thing understood to another, so as to know an intelligible truth. And therefore angels, who according to their nature, possess perfect knowledge of intelligible truth, have no need to advance from one thing to another; but apprehend the truth simply and without mental discussion, as Dionysius says (Div. Nom. vii). But man arrives at the knowledge of intelligible truth by advancing from one thing to another; and therefore he is called rational. Reasoning, therefore, is compared to understanding, as movement is to rest, or acquisition to possession; of which one belongs to the perfect, the other to the imperfect. And since movement always proceeds from something immovable, and ends in something at rest; hence it is that human reasoning, by way of inquiry and discovery, advances from certain things simply understood—namely, the first principles; and, again, by way of judgment returns by analysis to first principles, in the light

of which it examines what it has found. Now it is clear that rest and movement are not to be referred to different powers, but to one and the same, even in natural things: since by the same nature a thing is moved towards a certain place. Much more, therefore, by the same power do we understand and reason: and so it is clear that in man reason and intellect are the same power.

**Reply to Objection 1.** That enumeration is made according to the order of actions, not according to the distinction of powers. Moreover, that book is not of great authority.

**Reply to Objection 2.** The answer is clear from what we have said. For eternity is compared to time as immovable to movable. And thus Boethius compared the intellect to eternity, and reason to time.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Other animals are so much lower than man that they cannot attain to the knowledge of truth, which reason seeks. But man attains, although imperfectly, to the knowledge of intelligible truth, which angels know. Therefore in the angels the power of knowledge is not of a different genus from that which is in the human reason, but is compared to it as the perfect to the imperfect.

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#### Whether the higher and lower reason are distinct powers?

Ia q. 79 a. 9

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the higher and lower reason are distinct powers. For Augustine says (De Trin. xii, 4,7), that the image of the Trinity is in the higher part of the reason, and not in the lower. But the parts of the soul are its powers. Therefore the higher and lower reason are two powers.

**Objection 2.** Further, nothing flows from itself. Now, the lower reason flows from the higher, and is ruled and directed by it. Therefore the higher reason is another power from the lower.

**Objection 3.** Further, the Philosopher says (Ethic. vi, 1) that “the scientific part” of the soul, by which the soul knows necessary things, is another principle, and another part from the “opinionative” and “reasoning” part by which it knows contingent things. And he proves this from the principle that for those things which are “generically different, generically different parts of the soul are ordained.” Now contingent and necessary are generically different, as corruptible and incorruptible. Since, therefore, necessary is the same as eternal, and temporal the same as contingent, it seems that what the Philosopher calls the “scientific” part must be the same as the higher reason, which, according to Augustine (De Trin. xii, 7) “is intent on the consideration and consultation of things eternal”; and that what the Philosopher calls the “reasoning” or “opinionative” part is the same as the lower reason,

which, according to Augustine, “is intent on the disposal of temporal things.” Therefore the higher reason is another power than the lower.

**Objection 4.** Further, Damascene says (De Fide Orth. ii) that “opinion rises from the imagination: then the mind by judging of the truth or error of the opinion discovers the truth: whence” men’s (mind) “is derived from” metiendo [measuring]. “And therefore the intellect regards those things which are already subject to judgment and true decision.” Therefore the opinionative power, which is the lower reason, is distinct from the mind and the intellect, by which we may understand the higher reason.

**On the contrary,** Augustine says (De Trin. xii, 4) that “the higher and lower reason are only distinct by their functions.” Therefore they are not two powers.

**I answer that,** The higher and lower reason, as they are understood by Augustine, can in no way be two powers of the soul. For he says that “the higher reason is that which is intent on the contemplation and consultation of things eternal”: forasmuch as in contemplation it sees them in themselves, and in consultation it takes its rules of action from them. But he calls the lower reason that which “is intent on the disposal of temporal things.” Now these two—namely, eternal and temporal—are related to our knowledge in this way, that one of them is the means of knowing the other. For by way



of discovery, we come through knowledge of temporal things to that of things eternal, according to the words of the Apostle (Rom. 1:20), “The invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made”: while by way of judgment, from eternal things already known, we judge of temporal things, and according to laws of things eternal we dispose of temporal things.

But it may happen that the medium and what is attained thereby belong to different habits: as the first indemonstrable principles belong to the habit of the intellect; whereas the conclusions which we draw from them belong to the habit of science. And so it happens that from the principles of geometry we draw a conclusion in another science—for example, perspective. But the power of the reason is such that both medium and term belong to it. For the act of the reason is, as it were, a movement from one thing to another. But the same movable thing passes through the medium and reaches the end. Wherefore the higher and lower reasons are one and the same power. But according to Augustine they are distinguished by the functions of their actions, and according to their various habits: for wisdom is attributed to the higher reason, science to the lower.

**Reply to Objection 1.** We speak of parts, in whatever way a thing is divided. And so far as reason is divided according to its various acts, the higher and lower reason are called parts; but not because they are different powers.

**Reply to Objection 2.** The lower reason is said to flow from the higher, or to be ruled by it, as far as the principles made use of by the lower reason are drawn from and directed by the principles of the higher reason.

**Reply to Objection 3.** The “scientific” part, of which the Philosopher speaks, is not the same as the higher reason: for necessary truths are found even among temporal things, of which natural science and mathematics treat.

And the “opinionative” and “ratiocinative” part is more limited than the lower reason; for it regards only things contingent. Neither must we say, without any qualification, that a power, by which the intellect knows necessary things, is distinct from a power by which it knows contingent things: because it knows both under the same objective aspect—namely, under the aspect of being and truth. Wherefore it perfectly knows necessary things which have perfect being in truth; since it penetrates to their very essence, from which it demonstrates their proper accidents. On the other hand, it knows contingent things, but imperfectly; forasmuch as they have but imperfect being and truth. Now perfect and imperfect in the action do not vary the power, but they vary the actions as to the mode of acting, and consequently the principles of the actions and the habits themselves. And therefore the Philosopher postulates two lesser parts of the soul—namely, the “scientific” and the “ratiocinative,” not because they are two powers, but because they are distinct according to a different aptitude for receiving various habits, concerning the variety of which he inquires. For contingent and necessary, though differing according to their proper genera, nevertheless agree in the common aspect of being, which the intellect considers, and to which they are variously compared as perfect and imperfect.

**Reply to Objection 4.** That distinction given by Damascene is according to the variety of acts, not according to the variety of powers. For “opinion” signifies an act of the intellect which leans to one side of a contradiction, whilst in fear of the other. While to “judge” or “measure” [mensurare] is an act of the intellect, applying certain principles to examine propositions. From this is taken the word “mens” [mind]. Lastly, to “understand” is to adhere to the formed judgment with approval.

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## Whether intelligence is a power distinct from intellect?

Ia q. 79 a. 10

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the intelligence is another power than the intellect. For we read in *De Spiritu et Anima* that “when we wish to rise from lower to higher things, first the sense comes to our aid, then imagination, then reason, then intellect, and afterwards intelligence.” But imagination and sense are distinct powers. Therefore also intellect and intelligence are distinct.

**Objection 2.** Further, Boethius says (*De Consol.* v, 4) that “sense considers man in one way, imagination in another, reason in another, intelligence in another.” But intellect is the same power as reason. Therefore, seemingly, intelligence is a distinct power from intellect, as reason is a distinct power from imagination or sense.

**Objection 3.** Further, “actions came before powers,” as the Philosopher says (*De Anima* ii, 4). But intelli-

gence is an act separate from others attributed to the intellect. For Damascene says (*De Fide Orth.* ii) that “the first movement is called intelligence; but that intelligence which is about a certain thing is called intention; that which remains and conforms the soul to that which is understood is called invention, and invention when it remains in the same man, examining and judging of itself, is called phronesis [that is, wisdom], and phronesis if dilated makes thought, that is, orderly internal speech; from which, they say, comes speech expressed by the tongue.” Therefore it seems that intelligence is some special power.

**On the contrary,** The Philosopher says (*De Anima* iii, 6) that “intelligence is of indivisible things in which there is nothing false.” But the knowledge of these things belongs to the intellect. Therefore intelligence is not another

power than the intellect.

**I answer that,** This word “intelligence” properly signifies the intellect’s very act, which is to understand. However, in some works translated from the Arabic, the separate substances which we call angels are called “intelligences,” and perhaps for this reason, that such substances are always actually understanding. But in works translated from the Greek, they are called “intellects” or “minds.” Thus intelligence is not distinct from intellect, as power is from power; but as act is from power. And such a division is recognized even by the philosophers. For sometimes they assign four intellects—namely, the “active” and “passive” intellects, the intellect “in habit,” and the “actual” intellect. Of which four the active and passive intellects are different powers; just as in all things the active power is distinct from the passive. But three of these are distinct, as three states of the passive intellect, which is sometimes in potentiality only, and thus it is called passive; sometimes it is in the first act, which is knowledge, and thus it is called intellect in habit; and sometimes it is in the second act, which is to consider, and thus it is called intellect in act, or actual intellect.

**Reply to Objection 1.** If this authority is accepted, intelligence there means the act of the intellect. And thus it is divided against intellect as act against power.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Boethius takes intelligence as meaning that act of the intellect which transcends the act of the reason. Wherefore he also says that reason alone belongs to the human race, as intelligence alone belongs to God, for it belongs to God to understand all things without any investigation.

**Reply to Objection 3.** All those acts which Damascene enumerates belong to one power—namely, the intellectual power. For this power first of all only apprehends something; and this act is called “intelligence.” Secondly, it directs what it apprehends to the knowledge of something else, or to some operation; and this is called “intention.” And when it goes on in search of what it “intends,” it is called “invention.” When, by reference to something known for certain, it examines what it has found, it is said to know or to be wise, which belongs to “phronesis” or “wisdom”; for “it belongs to the wise man to judge,” as the Philosopher says (*Metaph. i, 2*). And when once it has obtained something for certain, as being fully examined, it thinks about the means of making it known to others; and this is the ordering of “interior speech,” from which proceeds “external speech.” For every difference of acts does not make the powers vary, but only what cannot be reduced to the one same principle, as we have said above (q. 78, a. 4).

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#### Whether the speculative and practical intellects are distinct powers?

Ia q. 79 a. 11

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the speculative and practical intellects are distinct powers. For the apprehensive and motive are different kinds of powers, as is clear from *De Anima ii, 3*. But the speculative intellect is merely an apprehensive power; while the practical intellect is a motive power. Therefore they are distinct powers.

**Objection 2.** Further, the different nature of the object differentiates the power. But the object of the speculative intellect is “truth,” and of the practical is “good”; which differ in nature. Therefore the speculative and practical intellect are distinct powers.

**Objection 3.** Further, in the intellectual part, the practical intellect is compared to the speculative, as the estimative is to the imaginative power in the sensitive part. But the estimative differs from the imaginative, as power form power, as we have said above (q. 78, a. 4). Therefore also the speculative intellect differs from the practical.

**On the contrary,** The speculative intellect by extension becomes practical (*De Anima iii, 10*). But one power is not changed into another. Therefore the speculative and practical intellects are not distinct powers.

**I answer that,** The speculative and practical intellects are not distinct powers. The reason of which is that, as we have said above (q. 77, a. 3), what is accidental to the nature of the object of a power, does not differentiate that

power; for it is accidental to a thing colored to be man, or to be great or small; hence all such things are apprehended by the same power of sight. Now, to a thing apprehended by the intellect, it is accidental whether it be directed to operation or not, and according to this the speculative and practical intellects differ. For it is the speculative intellect which directs what it apprehends, not to operation, but to the consideration of truth; while the practical intellect is that which directs what it apprehends to operation. And this is what the Philosopher says (*De Anima iii, 10*); that “the speculative differs from the practical in its end.” Whence each is named from its end: the one speculative, the other practical—i.e. operative.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The practical intellect is a motive power, not as executing movement, but as directing towards it; and this belongs to it according to its mode of apprehension.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Truth and good include one another; for truth is something good, otherwise it would not be desirable; and good is something true, otherwise it would not be intelligible. Therefore as the object of the appetite may be something true, as having the aspect of good, for example, when some one desires to know the truth; so the object of the practical intellect is good directed to the operation, and under the aspect of truth. For

the practical intellect knows truth, just as the speculative, but it directs the known truth to operation.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Many differences differentiate

the sensitive powers, which do not differentiate the intellectual powers, as we have said above (a. 7, ad 2; q. 77, a. 3, ad 4).

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### Whether synderesis is a special power of the soul distinct from the others?

Ia q. 79 a. 12

**Objection 1.** It would seem that “synderesis” is a special power, distinct from the others. For those things which fall under one division, seem to be of the same genus. But in the gloss of Jerome on Ezech. 1:6, “synderesis” is divided against the irascible, the concupiscible, and the rational, which are powers. Therefore “synderesis” is a power.

**Objection 2.** Further, opposite things are of the same genus. But “synderesis” and sensuality seem to be opposed to one another because “synderesis” always incites to good; while sensuality always incites to evil: whence it is signified by the serpent, as is clear from Augustine (De Trin. xii, 12,13). It seems, therefore, that ‘synderesis’ is a power just as sensuality is.

**Objection 3.** Further, Augustine says (De Lib. Arb. ii, 10) that in the natural power of judgment there are certain “rules and seeds of virtue, both true and unchangeable.” And this is what we call synderesis. Since, therefore, the unchangeable rules which guide our judgment belong to the reason as to its higher part, as Augustine says (De Trin. xii, 2), it seems that “synderesis” is the same as reason: and thus it is a power.

**On the contrary,** According to the Philosopher (Metaph. viii, 2), “rational powers regard opposite things.” But “synderesis” does not regard opposites, but inclines to good only. Therefore “synderesis” is not a power. For if it were a power it would be a rational power, since it is not found in brute animals.

**I answer that,** “Synderesis” is not a power but a habit; though some held that it is a power higher than reason; while others\* said that it is reason itself, not as reason, but as a nature. In order to make this clear we must observe that, as we have said above (a. 8), man’s act of reason-

ing, since it is a kind of movement, proceeds from the understanding of certain things—namely, those which are naturally known without any investigation on the part of reason, as from an immovable principle—and ends also at the understanding, inasmuch as by means of those principles naturally known, we judge of those things which we have discovered by reasoning. Now it is clear that, as the speculative reason argues about speculative things, so that practical reason argues about practical things. Therefore we must have, bestowed on us by nature, not only speculative principles, but also practical principles. Now the first speculative principles bestowed on us by nature do not belong to a special power, but to a special habit, which is called “the understanding of principles,” as the Philosopher explains (Ethic. vi, 6). Wherefore the first practical principles, bestowed on us by nature, do not belong to a special power, but to a special natural habit, which we call “synderesis.” Whence “synderesis” is said to incite to good, and to murmur at evil, inasmuch as through first principles we proceed to discover, and judge of what we have discovered. It is therefore clear that “synderesis” is not a power, but a natural habit.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The division given by Jerome is taken from the variety of acts, and not from the variety of powers; and various acts can belong to one power.

**Reply to Objection 2.** In like manner, the opposition of sensuality to “syneresis” is an opposition of acts, and not of the different species of one genus.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Those unchangeable notions are the first practical principles, concerning which no one errs; and they are attributed to reason as to a power, and to “synderesis” as to a habit. Wherefore we judge naturally both by our reason and by “synderesis.”

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### Whether conscience be a power?

Ia q. 79 a. 13

**Objection 1.** It would seem that conscience is a power; for Origen says<sup>†</sup> that “conscience is a correcting and guiding spirit accompanying the soul, by which it is led away from evil and made to cling to good.” But in the soul, spirit designates a power—either the mind itself, according to the text (Eph. 4:13), “Be ye renewed in the spirit of your mind”—or the imagination, whence imaginary vision is called spiritual, as Augustine says (Gen. ad lit. xii, 7,24). Therefore conscience is a power.

**Objection 2.** Further, nothing is a subject of sin, except a power of the soul. But conscience is a subject of sin; for it is said of some that “their mind and conscience are defiled” (Titus 1:15). Therefore it seems that conscience is a power.

**Objection 3.** Further, conscience must of necessity be either an act, a habit, or a power. But it is not an act; for thus it would not always exist in man. Nor is it a habit; for conscience is not one thing but many, since we are di-

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\* Cf. Alexander of Hales, Sum. Theol. II, q. 73 † Commentary on Rom. 2:15

rected in our actions by many habits of knowledge. Therefore conscience is a power.

**On the contrary,** Conscience can be laid aside. But a power cannot be laid aside. Therefore conscience is not a power.

**I answer that,** Properly speaking, conscience is not a power, but an act. This is evident both from the very name and from those things which in the common way of speaking are attributed to conscience. For conscience, according to the very nature of the word, implies the relation of knowledge to something: for conscience may be resolved into “cum alio scientia,” i.e. knowledge applied to an individual case. But the application of knowledge to something is done by some act. Wherefore from this explanation of the name it is clear that conscience is an act.

The same is manifest from those things which are attributed to conscience. For conscience is said to witness, to bind, or incite, and also to accuse, torment, or rebuke. And all these follow the application of knowledge or science to what we do: which application is made in three ways. One way in so far as we recognize that we have done or not done something; “Thy conscience knoweth that thou hast often spoken evil of others” (Eccles. 7:23), and according to this, conscience is said to witness. In another way, so far as through the conscience we judge that something should be done or not done; and in this sense,

conscience is said to incite or to bind. In the third way, so far as by conscience we judge that something done is well done or ill done, and in this sense conscience is said to excuse, accuse, or torment. Now, it is clear that all these things follow the actual application of knowledge to what we do. Wherefore, properly speaking, conscience denominates an act. But since habit is a principle of act, sometimes the name conscience is given to the first natural habit—namely, ‘synderesis’: thus Jerome calls ‘synderesis’ conscience (Gloss. Ezech. 1:6); Basil\*, the “natural power of judgment,” and Damascene† says that it is the “law of our intellect.” For it is customary for causes and effects to be called after one another.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Conscience is called a spirit, so far as spirit is the same as mind; because conscience is a certain pronouncement of the mind.

**Reply to Objection 2.** The conscience is said to be defiled, not as a subject, but as the thing known is in knowledge; so far as someone knows he is defiled.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Although an act does not always remain in itself, yet it always remains in its cause, which is power and habit. Now all the habits by which conscience is formed, although many, nevertheless have their efficacy from one first habit, the habit of first principles, which is called “synderesis.” And for this special reason, this habit is sometimes called conscience, as we have said above.

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\* Hom. in princ. Proverb. † De Fide Orth. iv. 22