

**SUMMAE DE CREATURIS**  
**Part 2: De Homine<sup>1</sup>**  
**Selections on the Internal Senses**  
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/323

**Question 37: On the Imaginative Power.**

**Article 1: What is the imaginative power?**

**/324b Solution:** It must be said that *imagination* is understood in many ways, and for this reason it has many names. For sometimes it is called the power which retains the images of the sensibles, when the senses have vanished from the organs of the common and proper senses. And in this sense it is properly said to be a power of the sensible soul proximate in location to the common sense, in which the images received from the senses are preserved. And according to diverse considerations, it has three names. For it is called *imagination* with respect to the forms which are the impressed images of the things which are outside. And it is called *formal (formalis)* on account of the fact that it possesses these imaginations more formally than does sensation: for sensation has them when matter is present, but imagination has them when not in the presence of matter. And it is called *spirit* by Augustine on account of the nature of those images: because they exist according to spiritual being (*esse spirituale*) in the imaginative power, although they are images of them. Hence in the *Literal Commentary on Genesis*, Augustine says that “spirit is a certain inferior power of the mind, upon which the images of things are impressed.”

Therefore, sometimes *imagination* is used for all the powers of the sensible soul, which operate **/325a** in accordance with the sensible received by the senses without the presence of matter, and without the notion (*ratio*) of past time, and thus it comprehends imagination, phantasy, and estimation. And it is understood in this way by John Damascene and Gregory of Nyssa. For Damascene says that the imaginative [power] is a power of the irrational soul, operation through sensation, which is also called *sensation (sensus)*. But imagination is a passion of the irrational soul which comes to be from the thing imagining (*ab imaginante fit*). But phantasy is a vain (*inanis*) passion made by no imaginable thing. Likewise Gregory of Nyssa says that the animal powers are divided into four, namely, into sensation, imagination, intelligence, and memory. And he is saying the same thing that the Stoics did, who said that there are four such powers, namely, imagination, the imaginable, the imaginative, and phantasy: and imagination is a passion produced from the imaginable; but the imaginable is that

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<sup>1</sup> From Volume 35 of *B. Alberti Magni Opera omnia*. Ed. A. Borgnet. Paris: Vives, 1896.

which makes this passion, and is subject to the image; but the imaginative is the power itself which draws the images to it; and phantasy is when we draw forth something vain (*attrahimus ... inanem attractionem*) in accordance with the imaginative, as in the case of those who are ill or depressed (*ut in infirmis et in melancholicis*). And it can be said that there is no difference amongst these things, except according to the alteration of names.

Sometimes imagination is used for a power which holds imaginations and operates upon them and which the intentions which are conjoined to the imaginations, and then it comprehends two powers, namely, imagination and phantasy. And this is how Aristotle seems to take imagination in the beginning of *De anima* 3, where he says that imagining is in us when we will. But what it is that operates upon imaginations, and what are the intentions conjoined to imaginations, will be made clear within.

Sometimes imagination is also used for the relation of a form received from the senses to the thing of which it is the form, and in this sense imagination properly is of service to memory, as Aristotle says in the chapter *De memoria*. And it is distinguished from phantasy, as it was said in the objections.

**/325b** And sometimes imagination is used for the power from which the images deposited upon the common sense flow out again. And this is how imagination is understood by Aristotle in Bk. 2 of the *De somno*, where he says that in sleep dream images (*imaginatioes somniales*) flow back into the organ of common sense.

But according to the most proper mode of taking the term, imagination is a power holding the images of the sensibles when the thing is not present, without eliciting any intentions not received through sensation by composing and dividing. For this latter power is phantasy according to Avicenna and Algazel.

#### **Article 4: What is the activity (*actus*) of imagination?**

**/328b Solution:** It must be said that the activity of imagination is most properly to imagine (*imaginari*), as has been said **/329a** above. But secondarily, imaginations prepare for the operations of other powers which operate upon them in four ways. For the notion (*ratio*) of certain things is in images, as is especially the case with the notion of mathematical (*ratio mathematicorum*). And then it prepares images for the superior power that is intellect, or reason, as Avicenna says. But some things are compositions and divisions of images for the purpose of eliciting terrible or desirable, compatible or incompatible, intentions, and other intentions of this sort, which are always collected by the senses. And in this case images are preparatory to phantasy and estimation. But sometimes it is of service to memory, as Aristotle says, namely, when, through the images that are made ready in the soul, it is returned to the thing which was received in the past

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through sensation. But sometimes it prepares images for flowing back into the organ of common sense: and then it serves that sort of revelation which occurs in dreams.

## Question 38: On phantasy

### Article 1: What is phantasy?

**/330a** To the first one proceeds as follows:

For Aristotle says that phantasy is a motion produced by sensation in act.

But Algazel gives another definition, saying that phantasy is a power which operates by composing and dividing, sometimes in those things which are in the treasury of forms, and sometimes in those things which are in the treasury of intentions.

[Objections are presented to each definition].

**/331a Solution:** It must be said that phantasy is said in two ways, one in a broad sense and one in a strict sense. In the broad sense, it comprehends imagination, phantasy, and estimation, and it is so defined by the Philosopher in Bk. 2 of *De anima*, namely, as a motion produced from sensation in act. But in the strict sense, it is taken for the power which collates images through composition and division, and is so defined by Algazel. And therefore Algazel says that some people call it the cogitative power, as Avicenna called it. But the cogitative power, however, is only proper to human beings.

To the first therefore it must be said that phantasy is called a motion, not properly, but motion is taken there materially, for that motive potency itself which receives the sensible species from the sense and is moved concerning it **/331b** by a motion of discrimination and judgement (*discretio et iudicium*): because phantasy is taken according to the broad sense in that definition, as has been said.

### Article 2: Whether phantasy has any object?

**/332b Solution:** To this it must be said that if phantasy is taken in a general sense, then it is easy to resolve. But if it is taken in a strict sense, then it must be said according to some philosophers that nothing prevents diverse powers from operating on the same objects, just as the proper sense operates on the proper sensible by receiving it and judging it. But the common sense operates upon the same things by composing in act and dividing them, and by discerning the identity and diversity amongst them. Likewise imagination receives those things which are in the common sense: and if it composes or divides them, it only does this by the composition and division of the common sense. But phantasy has images by composing and dividing them in order to elicit true and false intentions.

**Article 4: On the act of phantasy**

**/334a Solution:** It must be said that if phantasy is taken broadly, then there will be slight difference between phantasy, imagination, and estimation with respect to activity, object, and organ. And in this way Aristotle seems to understand phantasy, for he says it is a power according to which phantasms come about in us, and that phantasy is a motion produced from sensation in act, which applies to the whole of the imaginative [power]. He also says that phantasy is true and false, which applies to the power of composing and dividing the images that have been apprehended. He also says that phantasy is a mover, through which one determines the delightful and sad, and the harmful and compatible by means of the apprehended image, which seems to apply to the estimation. But if it is taken strictly, then phantasy is distinguished from the imaginative by the fact that it does not belong to the same power in the lowest species to retain images, which comes about through the power of dryness, and to collate them, which comes about through the subtle and mobile power of spirit. And therefore certain authors following this argument distinguish between phantasy and the imaginative power.

**Question 39: On the estimative power****Article 1: What is the estimative power?**

**/336a** To the first we proceed thus:

1. Algazel, following Avicenna, says that the estimative is a power apprehending what is not sensed in the sensible object, as the sheep apprehends the hostility of the wolf. For this does not come about through the object, but through another power, which is to the animals what intellect is to humans.

On the contrary:

1. Diverse objects belong to diverse powers. Therefore, since phantasy and estimation are diverse powers, they have diverse objects. But it has been established above that the intentions not sensed in the senses, but which are nonetheless existent, are proper to phantasy. Therefore it seems that they are not the objects of the estimative power.

2. Moreover, it seems that the estimative is not an apprehending, but a motive, power: for the power determining hostility or **/336b** friendliness is the power which orders flight or imitation, and everything of this sort is motive. Therefore, since the estimative is a power of such a kind, it would seem to be motive itself.

3. Moreover, it can be asked of what intellect the claim that the estimative is to the animals what the intellect is to humans is to be understood. For if it is understood of the speculative intellect, it is false.

For the power determining true and false in images by collation (*conferendo*) is in animals in place of the speculative intellect. But this is not the estimative power, but phantasy. But if it is understood of the practical intellect, or that related to action,<sup>2</sup> then the estimative would seem to a motive, and not an apprehending, power.

If this is conceded, then on the contrary:

1. Whatever things are of the same division, are of the same genus: but the estimative power, the imaginative, and phantasy are posited in the same division by Avicenna and Algazel. Therefore they are of the same genus. But phantasy and the imaginative power are in the genus of apprehending powers: therefore, likewise the estimative.

2. Again, Algazel says that there are five internal senses, namely, the common sense, imaginative power, estimation, phantasy, and memory. But sense /337a implies apprehension (*sonat in apprehensionem*). Therefore the estimative is an apprehending and not a motive power.

**Solution.** It must be said that, when phantasy is taken in a broad sense, then the estimative power will be a certain part of phantasy, as has been said above. But if it is taken in a strict sense, then the estimative is a power following upon phantasy and distinct from it, and it is that which determines imitation and flight in regard to apprehended intentions. Which intentions, I say, are conjoined by composition and division of phantasms, but which are not, however, received from the senses.

*To the first* it must be said, therefore, that to receive that intention by way of the speculative truth alone differs from accepting it under an appetible or detestable notion. And phantasy accepts the intention in the first way, the estimative power in the second.

*To the second* it must be said that “apprehending” is said in two ways. For a power is called apprehensive when it receives a species, insofar as it is the principle of any sort of cognition, be it speculative or operative. And in this way the Philosopher seems to understand the term in *De anima* 2, where he says that the different types of reception itself are science, opinion, and prudence; for science and opinion pertain to speculation, and prudence to operation. And this is the way in which those who divide the sensible apprehensive power into five different powers which are called the internal senses understand it. But an apprehending power is also said to be one which receives the species ordered

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<sup>2</sup> *de intellectu practico sive activo*. This is obviously **not** a reference to the agent or active intellect (*nous poištikos*) of *De anima* 3.5; “active” here is used literally, meaning “related to action.”

towards speculation of the truth alone: and in this way the estimative faculty is not apprehending. Likewise, motive is said in two ways. For a power is called motive if it immediately moves the organs towards a motion which proceeds to flee from harm, and to acquire what is suitable. And in this way nothing but the appetitive power, along with its parts, is motive, as will be proven below, when it will be disputed concerning what is motive. And in another way a power is called motive when it is determining, by way of /337b cognition, of that which is a processive motion of animals. And in this way the practical intellect is motive through its knowledge, as Averroes says. And likewise phantasy and the estimative power are practical according to Avicenna and Algazel.

*To the other argument* it must be said that the similitude is to the practical intellect, which is, however, an apprehending power.

*To the final two arguments*, it must be said that when the apprehending power is divided into five interior senses, it is taken in the first way, and not the second.

## **Article 2: What is the object of the estimative power?**

And it seems from the foregoing that the object of the estimative power is that which is not sensed, but which is, however, acquired (*sumitur*) from what is sensed. For Avicenna and Algazel say this.

Therefore it is asked whether it is universal or particular?

But it seems that it is not particular.

1. For everything particular is a proper, a common, or an incidental sensible. And I say this if it is corporeal. But they say that that which the estimative apprehends is not sensed in anyway. Therefore it does not seem to be particular.

2. Again, everything which determines being worthy of flight or imitation seems to be made to be such through some common thing controlling the flight or imitation. But the estimative universally determines the shape of everything, and the image of every one of the senses (*de omni figura et omni imaginatione sensuum*). Therefore it seems to do this through some common ruling thing: and again its object in this way will be common, and not particular.

3. /338a Again, anything which, as a being of a single mode (*uno modo ens*), is received from every sensible of its own species, would seem to be a universal, just as human being is received under one idea (*ratio*) from Socrates and Plato. But that which determines something to be worthy of flight according to a single mode is received by the sheep from every wolf, and what determines it not to be worthy of flight is received by the sheep from every shepherd; therefore this will be a universal. And since it is an object of the estimative power, then the object of the estimative power will in this way be a universal.

On the contrary:

1. Every power of the sensible soul is a power operating in an organ. But there is no universal reason in a species which is established in an organ. Therefore no power of the sensible soul is a power operating according to a universal reason. The first point is proven by the fact that no power of the sensible soul can be separated from an organ, as the Philosopher says. For the intellect alone is the act of no body. The second is proven from what Avicenna says, that whatever is in a corporeal organ must include quantity and shape (*est cum quantitate et figura*).

2. Moreover, all science is caused by a universal reason. Therefore, if brute animals were perceptive of universals, they would also be perceptive of the sciences through discovery, learning, and study, which is false.

**Solution:** It must be said with Avicenna that the intentions received from the senses which are not apprehended by sensation are apprehended in two ways: namely, by universal reason, and in this way to elicit them from the senses belongs to experience and to the intellective power. And in another way they are received from intentions which are never separated from the senses, which are here and now. And in this way too they are received in two ways, namely, insofar as they are the principle of the true and false in particulars (*in partibus*), and in this way they belong to phantasy; or insofar as they determine the harmful or suitable in the case of appetible things, and in this way they belong to the estimative power.

**/338b** *Therefore it must be said to the first* that it is false, unless it is understood to apply to bodies existing in external things. But if it is understood of things which are in us by way of composition and division, like the true that the false, or from the ordering to the appetite, like the harmful and the suitable, then it will be a false proposition.

*To the next* it must be said that although something which is ruling and common is in the estimative power, however, it is not considered according to the notion of its community (*secundum rationem communitatis suae*): because otherwise it would be necessary for the estimative power to separate the common from the particular through the notion of its community. But it considers it as here and now (*cum hinc et nunc*), by which something particular is grasped.

*To the next* it must be said that the estimative power has more in common with nature in the way it causes motion (*magis imitatur naturam in movendo*), than it does with the knowledge and art of the practical intellect. For which reason, although the sheep in one way receives hostility in every wolf, however, it does not use inquiry and counsel in the mode of fleeing it, after the manner of human beings. But every sheep flees every wolf in the exact same way (*uno modo etiam*). And this is what Damascene says, that it is more as if the brutes were acted upon, than that they act. And Avicenna says the same thing, namely, that by a natural instinct the brutes are moved, and not towards the notion of what



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is apprehended, and therefore they do not consider the universal notion.

**/339b**

**Article 4: What is the act of the estimative faculty?**

And it seems, according to Avicenna and Algazel, that its action is to determine concerning what is to be fled and imitated through the apprehension of what is suitable and not suitable amongst particulars.

To the contrary:

Investigation, disposition, preference, and opinion (*sententia*) precede every determination of an operation in which it is possible to do otherwise, as is clear from Damascene, who says that first indeed one investigates and takes counsel, then he is disposed towards and loves what he has judged on the basis of counsel, which is called opinion. Then after disposition choice comes about, and then he makes the impetus towards operation. Therefore since estimation in brutes forms opinions (*sententiet*) about what is to be fled or imitated, it seems that inquiry and counsel precede that opinion, especially when it is concerned with things which can possibly be otherwise.

If perhaps it be said that these things are lacking in brutes, although they are nonetheless necessary, this is no objection (*nihil est*). Because nature is not lacking in necessary things, nor is it abundant in what is superfluous, as Aristotle says in *De anima* 3.

**Solution:** It must be said that the act of the estimative power is what has been said: but in brutes counsel and investigation do not precede it, on account of the fact that brutes are given impetus towards their acts by way of nature, and not by way of deliberation.

*To the last argument,* it must be said that nature is not lacking in brutes in the way of what is necessary to its species, although they have a more imperfect nature than human beings. And therefore they are lacking in many things that human beings have. For the human being is the most perfect of animals, as is held in Book 12 of the *De animalibus*.