

Article 11

**Are speculative reason and practical reason diverse powers?**

It seems that speculative reason and practical reason are diverse powers:

**Objection 1:** As *De Anima* 2 makes clear, the apprehensive power and the power that effects movement are diverse powers. But the speculative intellect is purely apprehensive, whereas the practical intellect is a power that effects movement. Therefore, they are diverse powers.

**Objection 2:** Powers are diversified by the diverse natures of their objects. But the object of the speculative intellect is the true, whereas the object of the practical intellect is the good; and these objects differ in nature. Therefore, the speculative intellect and practical intellect are diverse powers.

**Objection 3:** In the intellectual part of the soul, the practical intellect is related to the speculative intellect in the way that, in the sentient part of the soul, the estimative power is related to the power of imagining. But as was explained above (q. 78, a. 4), the estimative power differs from the power of imagining as one power from another. Therefore, the practical intellect and speculative intellect differ in the same way.

**But contrary to this:** *De Anima* 3 says that the speculative intellect becomes practical by extension. But it is not the case that one power is changed into another. Therefore, the speculative intellect and practical intellect are not diverse powers.

**I respond:** The practical intellect and speculative intellect are not diverse powers. The reason for this, as was explained above (q. 77, a. 3), is that something related incidentally to the nature of a power's object does not diversify the power. For instance, it is incidental to what is colored that it is a man, or that it is large or small; hence, all things of this sort are apprehended by one and the same visual power.

Now it is incidental to what is apprehended by the intellect that it is ordered or not ordered toward an action—but it is in this that the speculative intellect and the practical intellect differ. For the speculative intellect is such that it does not order what it apprehends toward an action, whereas the practical intellect is such that it does order what it apprehends toward an action. And this is just what the Philosopher says in *De Anima* 3, viz., that the speculative intellect differs from the practical intellect in its end. Hence, each is denominated from its end, the one being speculative, and the other practical, i.e., operative (*operativus*).

**Reply to objection 1:** The practical intellect is a power that effects movement not in the sense that it executes movement, but in the sense that it directs one toward movement. This feature belongs to it because of the mode of its apprehension.

**Reply to objection 2:** The true and the good include one another, since the true is a certain good (otherwise it would not be desirable) and the good is in a certain sense true (otherwise it would not be intelligible). Therefore, just as the true can be an object of desire insofar as it has the nature of a good, as when someone desires to have cognition of the truth, so the object of the practical intellect is a good that can be ordered toward action, under the concept of the true. For the practical intellect has cognition of truth in the same way that the speculative intellect does, but it orders the truth it has cognition of toward action.

**Reply to objection 3:** As was explained above (a. 7), there are many differences that diversify the sentient powers but do not diversify the intellectual powers.

## Article 12

### Is synderesis a special power distinct from the others?

It seems that synderesis (*synderesis*) is a special power distinct from the others:

**Objection 1:** Things that fall under the same division seem to belong to the same genus. But in Jerome's Gloss on Ezechiel 1:6, synderesis is divided off against the irascible, the concupiscible, and the rational, all of which are powers. Therefore, synderesis is a certain power.

**Objection 2:** Opposites belong to the same genus. But synderesis and sensuality (*sensualitas*) appear to be opposites, since synderesis always inclines one toward what is good, whereas sensuality always inclines one toward what is bad; this is why sensuality is signified by a serpent, as is clear from Augustine in *De Trinitate* 12. Therefore, it seems that synderesis is a power in the same way that sensuality is.

**Objection 3:** In *De Libero Arbitrio* Augustine says that present in nature's court of judgment (*in naturali iudicatorio*) are certain "rules and seeds of the virtues, both true and unchangeable," and these we call synderesis. Therefore, since, as Augustine claims in *De Trinitate* 12, the unchangeable rules by which we make judgments have to do with the higher part of reason, it seems that synderesis is the same as reason. And so it is a power.

**But contrary to this:** According to the Philosopher, the rational powers bear a relation to opposites. But synderesis does not bear a relation to opposites, but inclines one only toward what is good. Therefore, synderesis is not a power. For if it were a power, it would have to be a rational power, since it is not found in brute animals.

**I respond:** Synderesis is a habit and not a power, even though some have claimed that synderesis is a certain power higher than reason (*ratio*) and others have claimed that it is reason itself—not reason insofar as it is reason, but reason insofar as it is a nature.

To see this clearly, note that, as was explained above (a. 8), since man's discursive reasoning (*ratiocinatio*) is a movement, it proceeds from the intellectual understanding of certain things (*ab intellectu aliquorum*) that serve as unchangeable principles—viz., things known naturally without reason's inquiry—and likewise terminates in an intellectual understanding, insofar as we make judgments on the basis of principles naturally known in themselves (*per principia per se naturaliter nota*) about the things that we discover by reasoning discursively. But it is clear that practical reason reasons about actions (*de operabilibus*) in the same way that speculative reason reasons about speculative objects (*de speculativis*). Therefore, just as we have been naturally endowed with principles regarding speculative objects (*principia speculabilium*), so too we have been naturally endowed with principles regarding actions (*principia operabilium*).

Now the first principles regarding speculative objects that we have been naturally endowed with do not involve any special power, but instead involve a special habit, which is called the *intellective understanding of principles* (*intellectus principiorum*), as is clear from *Ethics* 6. Hence, the principles that we have been naturally endowed with regarding actions do not involve a special power, either, but instead involve a special natural habit, which we call *synderesis*. Hence, synderesis is said to goad us toward what is good and to murmur about what is bad (*instigare ad bonum et murmurare de malo*), insofar as (a) we proceed to discover things on the basis of the first principles and (b) we pass judgment about what has been discovered.

It is clear, then, that synderesis is a natural habit and not a power.

**Reply to objection 1:** Jerome's division is made according to a diversity of acts and not a diversity of powers. But diverse acts can belong to the same power.

**Reply to objection 2:** Similarly, the opposition between sensuality and synderesis is made by reference to an opposition of acts and not an opposition of diverse species within a single genus.

**Reply to objection 3:** Unchangeable natures of the sort in question are the first principles of

actions, concerning which one cannot be in error. And they are attributed to reason as a power and to synderesis as a habit. Hence, we make natural judgments by means of both, viz., reason and synderesis.

## Article 13

### Is conscience a power?

It seems that conscience (*conscientia*) is a power:

**Objection 1:** Origen says that conscience is “the spirit corrector” and “companion teacher of the soul, by which the soul is separated from what is bad and adheres to what is good.” But ‘spirit’ names a power in the soul, either the mind—this according to Ephesians 4:23 (“Be renewed in the spirit of your mind”)—or the imagination; hence, it is also called an imaginative spiritual vision, as is clear from Augustine in *De Genesi ad Litteram* 12. Therefore, conscience is a power.

**Objection 2:** Nothing is subject to sin except a power of the soul. But conscience is subject to sin; for Titus 1:15 says, “Their mind and conscience are defiled.” Therefore, it seems that conscience is a power.

**Objection 3:** Conscience must be either an act or a habit or a power. But it is not an act, since in that case it would not always remain in a man. Nor is it a habit, since in that case there would be many such habits and not just one; for in our acting we are directed by many cognitive habits. Therefore, conscience is a power.

**But contrary to this:** Conscience can be laid aside (*deponi potest*), but a power cannot be laid aside. Therefore, conscience is not a power.

**I respond:** Properly speaking, conscience is an act and not a power. This is clear both from the name ‘conscience’ and also from what is attributed to conscience by common linguistic usage.

For according to the strict meaning of the word, conscience implies an ordering of knowledge toward something, since ‘conscience’ means ‘knowledge with another’ (*cum alio scientia*). But the application of knowledge to something is accomplished through an act. Hence, from the meaning of the name it is clear that conscience is an act.

The same thing is evident from what is attributed to conscience. For conscience is said to testify, to bind (*ligare*), or to goad (*instigare*), and also to accuse (*accusare*) or rebuke (*remordere*), or to restrain (*reprehendere*). And all of these follow upon the application of our cognition or knowledge to the things we do. This application is accomplished in three ways. First, insofar as we recognize that we have done or not done something—this according to Ecclesiastes 7:23 (“Your conscience knows that you have often spoken ill of others”), and it is in this sense that conscience is said to *testify*. Second, our knowledge is applied when through our conscience we judge that something should be done or should not be done, and it is in this sense that conscience is said to *goad* or *bind*. Third, our knowledge is applied when through our conscience we judge that something that has been done was good to do or was not good to do (*quod est factum sit bene factum vel non bene factum*), and it is in this sense that conscience is said to *excuse* (*excusare*) or to *accuse* (or *rebuke*).

Now it is clear that all these things follow upon the actual application of knowledge to what we do. Hence, properly speaking, ‘conscience’ names an act. However, since habits are the principles of acts, sometimes the name ‘conscience’ is attributed to the first natural habit, viz., synderesis, in the way that in the Gloss on Ezekiel 1:6 Jerome calls synderesis ‘conscience’, and in the way that Basil calls natural judgment ‘conscience’, and in the way that Damascene says that conscience is the law of our intellect. For it is common for causes and effects to be named by one another.

**Reply to objection 1:** Conscience is ‘spirit’ in the sense that ‘spirit’ is standing in for ‘mind’, since conscience is a sort of dictate of the mind.

**Reply to objection 2:** Defilement (*inquinatio*) is said to exist in a conscience not in the sense that

conscience is the subject of the defilement, but in the sense that what is known exists in the cognition of it, i.e., insofar as someone knows himself to be defiled.

**Reply to objection 3:** Even if the act does not always remain in its own right, it nonetheless remains at all times in its cause, which is the power and the habit. And even if there are many habits by which a conscience is informed, all of them nonetheless have their efficacy from a single first habit, viz., from the habit with respect to the first principles, which is called 'synderesis'. This is why, as was noted above, this habit especially is sometimes called conscience.