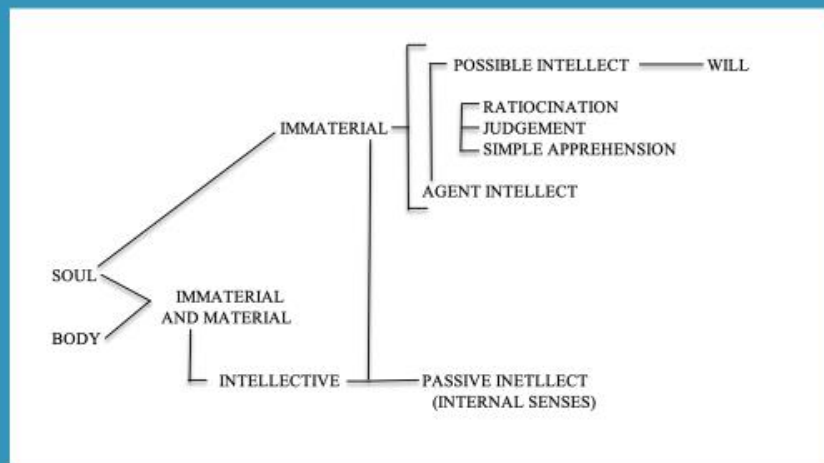


## Class Outline

# INTELLECTIVE FACULTIES & WILL



## I. AGENT INTELLECT

### A. The faculty

- Its primary function is to abstract the concept out of the phantasm in the imagination and press it into the possible intellect.
- It pulls all the pieces of the sensitive faculties together and creates a whole. It makes the sensible intelligible.
- St. Thomas calls it a light since it has the capacity to enlighten the possible intellect

### B. Process of abstraction - The agent intellect draws the intelligible species out of the phantasm present in the imagination. So the phantasm is drawn out of the matter – or drawn out of the concrete, singular and particular.

## II. POSSIBLE INTELLECT:

### A. The faculty itself:

- “The means by which the soul knows”
- The highest cognitive faculty
- We direct virtues and habits through the possible intellect.

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- It is where self-reflection occurs; so, it's important in moral life.
- The way that we reason should conform to truth.

B. The operations of the possible intellect: three acts

1. Understanding or Apprehension

- a. Understanding – the act of the possible intellect by which one apprehends the essence of a thing.
- b. Simple concept – or one which has been abstracted
- c. Complex concept – one which is the product of judgment or reasoning – may be re-grasped by intellect in act of understanding
- d. By an act of understanding the intellect is able to penetrate the interior of essence of the thing and see what it is.

2. Judgement

- a. An act by which it produces a proposition; that is terms are either affirmed or denied.
- b. We know something by composition or division.
- c. Every composition or division results in a proposition.
- d. When placed together (affirmation or composition); one thing is made of two.  
health and food ... healthy food)
- e. When two terms are denied of each other (negation or division).
- f. Judgment helps us gain knowledge of something more than what is gained by simple apprehension
- g. Different from the cogitative power – which composes and divides sensible species but does not understand the content of the species.
- h. 3 Kinds of Propositions
  - i. Complex concepts – The possible intellect able to form different concepts using other concepts.
  - ii. Existential proposition - Through an act of judgment the existence of a thing is either affirmed or denied.
  - iii. Judgment of the truth of a thing - Is one's concept in conformity with the way the thing exists in reality?

3. Ratiocination (reasoning)

- a. Moving from judgement to judgement - determines mental health in the way it conforms to the truth.
- b. Proper to man alone
- c. Discursive - a form of motion of the intellect
- d. One goes from one judgment to judgment
  - i.e. proceeds by composition & division
  - Syllogistic in form
- e. Also compares conclusions with premises

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C. Intellective memory

- 1 Pertains to the intelligible species
- 2 Refers only to something being considered in the intellect in the present.
- 3 Different from sensitive memory which refers to memory when one is speaking of the past.

D. Error

- 1 Error involves self-reflection
- 2 The possible intellect alone has the capacity for self-reflection
- 3 Error lies in judgment; judgment results in proposition
- 4 Error occurs when something is composed when it should be divided & divided when it should be united.

E. Self-Knowledge

- 1 Mental health dependent on self-knowledge
- 2 Possible intellect can reflect upon self; we can reflect upon our act of understanding
- 3 Self-concept and self-image is how we know ourselves
- 4 Our knowledge of self is an act of judgement – prone to error and influenced by appetites – often blind and easily moved to falsity

## Notes

*Introduction to the Science of Mental Health*, Chapter 4: The Cognitive Faculties – Section II, pp 51-71

## References

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