A DEFINITION OF PHYSICAL BEAUTY

BY

Germain G. Grisez

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AN ABSTRACT

of the thesis, "A Definition of Physical Beauty," by Germain Grisez, submitted to the faculty of philosophy of the Dominican College of St. Thomas Aquinas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

The purpose of this thesis is to find real definitions of the term beautiful which is predicated in several diverse modes. We prescind from a consideration of transcendental beauty, that is, that beauty by which things are beautiful precisely insofar as they are. The paper is opened with an introduction in which the purposes, chief authorities, difficulty and method of the inquiry are set down.

We begin from two facts concerning the predication of the term beautiful: those things are called beautiful the sensing of which gives sense delight and those things are called beautiful the consideration of which according to a science or art gives intellectual delight.

Using principles from critica, we establish from these facts that certain trans-subjective objects are truly beautiful and that beauty is something on the part of the objects which results in their apprehension being delightful.

But an object may cause a delightful apprehension in two ways. First, a conjoined suitable good may cause a delightful apprehension because a subject is delighted to find out that a suitable good is conjoined to himself. The object in this case has the aspect of appetible. Second, an object may cause a delightful apprehension because it is so proportioned to cognition that the apprehension of it can be perfect—a perfect cognitive operation always being delightful if it is the object of appetite since appetite rests in perfection and perfection of cognition is perfection of the subject.

In the first case the object need not be formally beautiful, since beauty is not appetible, as is shown from the authority of St. Thomas and from experience. In the second case, then, the object is beautiful. Therefore, beauty is something on the part of the object of cognition by which it is proportioned to cognition in such a way that the cognition may be perfect.

Proper sensibles, common sensibles and singular material substances require an entitative disposition in order to be proportioned to perfect cognition. This disposition of a proper or common sensible gives it a proportion in itself so that it is suitable to external sense or common sense which also has a proportion within itself. The disposition of the singular gives it a proportion of proper and common sensible qualities according to its form, thus proportioning it to the consideration of the cogitative. Apparently, we have here several species of beauty with a common genus, for the ratio of the beauty of a singular is not verified in a proper or common sensible, although in each case the beauty is an entitative disposition. Furthermore, beauty is predicated univocally of all beautiful material singulars, for the same ratio is saved in all.

Intelligible beauty consists in the perfect intelligent coordination of things or principles by which the object of a science or art is proportioned to the perfect contemplation of one having the science or art. In this way beauty is predicated in the moral, rational, artistic and natural orders according to proportionality.

VERITAS!

A DEFINITION OF PHYSICAL BEAUTY

What is beauty? It is our present intention to try to answer this question according to the principles of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. To be quite exact, we shall seek a definition of physical beauty. By saying physical beauty, we intend to delimit our inquiry to exclude the consideration of metaphysical beauty—that is, the beauty which may convene to a thing by the very principles of being itself, that beauty by which a thing is beautiful precisely insofar as it is. We neither affirm nor deny the reality of such beauty, we prescind completely from any consideration of it.

On the other hand, we shall take the liberty of pointing out certain possible applications of our findings to the explanation of some of the trends in the fine arts. It is one of the purposes of this inquiry to attempt to determine concerning the nature of beauty in order that a more certain basis for esthetic theories may be obtained.

Our inquiry is made difficult by the lack of any special treatise on beauty by either Aristotle or St. Thomas.[1] But we shall attempt to direct our inquiry according to the illuminating remarks of these great leaders, at the same time following them in principles and spirit.

As to method, we shall begin by surveying the cases in which the term beautiful is predicated. From these cases we shall educe certain facts which ought to be verifiable in experience and acceptable to all. From these facts we shall reason to real definitions of physical beauty.

Whatever beauty is, we may take it as agreed upon in the beginning that we enjoy apprehending it.[2] This being true, if we wish to survey the cases in which we use the term beautiful, it would seem reasonable to follow the order of our diverse cognitive potencies, seeking in each case whether the object of this potency may be called beautiful, and if so, under what condition. Let us begin, then, with the simplest apprehension and advance step by step to the more complex.

Are any of the proper sensibles called beautiful? These are known by the simplest cognition, the immediate intuition

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1. Callahan, P. Fr. Leonard, O. P. in A Theory of Esthetic According to the Principles of St. Thomas Aquinas, Washington, D. C., 1947, p. 21, note 2, notes that the opuscula De Pulchro which was once ascribed to St. Thomas is now universally considered spurious. In any case, this work is not an ex professo treatment of beauty but is rather a fragment of a commentary on pseudo-Dionysius' treatise De Divinis Nominibus.

2. "...pulchrum autem dicatur id cuius ipsa apprehensio placet." Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 27, art. 1, ad 3um. "Quaedam...reddunt hominem placitum in oculis aliorum, quod pertinet ad rationem pulchritudinis." In Eth., lib. 1, lect. 13, #163. (Italics ours.) Callahan, op. cit., p. 47, defends the relation of apprehension to beauty at some length. This seems unnecessary to us for all using the word beauty seem to agree on this fact.

of the external senses.

Without a doubt, we must answer that some of these are called beautiful.[3] Only if we were defending a contrary thesis could we deny that some colors, some sounds and perhaps even certain odors are called beautiful.[4]

For example, upon seeing a piece of cloth of bright blue or olive green or even orange color in a shop window, we have all undoubtedly had the impression that the color seen was beautiful. Similarly with sounds. Anyone can recall the tone of a certain bell or horn or some other sound which impressed him as being beautiful. In regard to odors, we shall meet a certain disagreement. Some pleasant odors do not seem to deserve the name of beautiful. But recall, for example, the odor of the fresh air on some spring days—isn't that deserving of the name beautiful? Granted that there are certain agreeable odors which we would not call beautiful, for example, the smell of bacon frying, still there are some which seem worthy of the name.

What we have just said with regard to the beauty of proper sensibles will become even clearer if we search our experience for examples of ugly colors or sounds. Muddy colors, the sort which result from a careless mixture of pigments, and all colors which seem dirty or faded, even though they may be new,

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3. "...dicimus enim pulchra visibilia et pulchros sonos." Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 27, art. 1, ad 3um.

4. "...non enim dicimus pulchros sapores aut odores." Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 27, art. 1, ad 3um. But in In Eth., lib. 3, lect. 19, ¶604-612, St. Thomas classes odors with sights and sounds. We explain this discrepancy infra, p.

seem to deserve the title of ugly. On the other hand, we do not apply the term ugly to disagreeable odors. Rather, we call them foul. And that an odor be foul seems to be contrary to its being agreeable in the way in which we hesitate to call it beautiful.

As to temperatures, smoothness, hardness and tastes, we do not apply the term beautiful to any of these. For the temperature may be agreeable or not, but if it is agreeable we seem to set it in a class with those agreeable odors which we still do not call beautiful. A sign of this is taken from the contrary, for if the weather is disagreeable we say that it is foul rather than that it is ugly. The same thing may be said for the others.

As to the conditions required for calling a proper sensible beautiful, we seem to demand at least that in each case the object sensed be agreeable, that is, that sensing the object be pleasant.

Without making a further analysis of the signifi cance of beautiful as we apply it to proper sensibles, let us first go on to consider other applications. Do we call any of the common sensibles beautiful?[5]

Size, taken by itself, does not seem to be beautiful or ugly. It is only when it is considered as a modification of a subject that it is seen in this aspect.[6] However, this is

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5. "...experimur visiones esse delectabiles, puta pulchrarum formarum..." In Eth., lib. 10, lect. 6, #2028.
6. See: In Eth., lib. 4, lect. 8, #738.

not true of shape.[7] A complex geometrical figure, for example, if it is perfectly worked-out and neatly done seems to have a certain beauty. On the contrary, if it is irregular and sloppy, it merits the designation ugly.

Consider the matter of the shape of table tops as another case in point. A certain design which replaces the common rectangular one with rounded corners, slightly cut in at all four sides and one end a little wider than the other, has obtained a good reception in many places. The shape itself is thought to be more beautiful than the ordinary one.

Motion, again, does not seem to be either beautiful or ugly, although change is pleasant in a certain sense.[8] But the figure of certain motions, for example, an ascending and widening spiral, may be called beautiful. As in the case of the apprehension of proper sensibles, we seem to demand that the apprehension of the object be pleasant before we call the thing apprehended beautiful.

Thus far we have been considering the proper and common sensibles which we find called beautiful considered in a certain abstraction from the singular material substances in which they inhere. Now, considering these individuals, we find that there are some of every species which we call beautiful, some which we call ugly, and a multitude to which neither designation seems to apply.

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7. See: note 5 supra.
8. In Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 32, art. 2, St. Thomas gives a number of reasons why change is delightful.

Among natural individuals, we especially apply the term beautiful to certain human beings, animals and plants. The term seems to have acquired a certain sexual connotation as it is applied to human beings, so that we do not generally call men beautiful.[9] But forgetting this modern usage, we must say that there is no one who has not seen a woman or a man, a horse or a dog, a rose or a daisy which deserved and received the name beautiful.

Yet the term is also applied to non-living things, and this is especially true in the case of the heavenly bodies. For the moon, the setting sun, the first star appearing in the evening sky, all these are certainly deservedly called beautiful.[10] But even among sub-lunar things, there are a host which can be called beautiful, a crystal or a mountain, a drop of water or an ocean.

Among artificial individuals, we find again that some of every kind are called beautiful. For whether we consider the greatest structures of man, as the pyramids and sky scrapers, or common objects such as pieces of furniture or articles of clothing, or objects of fine art such as statues or pictures, we find in every class some that are called beautiful.

Just as in the case of the proper and common sensibles, we find also in regard to individuals that we call things beau-

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9. Aristotle and St. Thomas use beautiful of men also. See, e. g., In Ps. Dav., ps. 44b and Rhetoric, I, 5, 1361b7-14.

10. Among the perfections which the stars share is "pulchritudo earum quae est per claritatem, figuram et quantitatem." In Div. Nom., cap. 4, lect. 2, #301.

tiful whose apprehension delights us. Notice that in neither case do we call a thing beautiful if we are delighted in considering it with a view to something else—that is, if the object is delightful only because it is useful. For example, we do not call a cake beautiful if we are delighted in seeing it or imagining it with a view to eating it. In this case, we merely say that the cake is good.[11] Admittedly, the term beautiful may be applied to certain objects which are delightful only in view of some use—and this is especially evident in its application to certain women—but this is recognized as a somewhat improper use of the word. It would seem that to call such things beautiful is to use the term metaphorically.

Notice, again, that the delight which we experience in the presence of such beautiful objects as we have so far mentioned is not, generally speaking, a delight following upon decesion or choice. Rather, it is a spontaneous emotion, a delight surging up, a delight of the sensitive order. A sign of this is that in the absence of such an object we can re-experience the same sort of delight by imagining a beautiful object of this kind.[12] And, of course, sensitive delight follows the act of

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11. Callahan, op. cit., p. 73, cites St. Thomas, Sum. Theol., I, q. 91, art. 3, ad 3um, to show that the doctrine of the disinterestedness of our consideration of beauty is truly Thomistic. The moderns frequently credit Kant with originating the doctrine. We call upon introspection at the moment the use of the term beautiful seems appropriate to substantiate the point.

12. That the delight following immediately upon sense apprehension is a sense delight should be evident from considering examples in our experience. St. Thomas in In Eth., lib. 3, lect. 19, #604-612, carefully distinguishes this delight from that taken in food or sex but insists it is a corporeal delight.

the imagination. No scientific consideration of the moon, for example, will arouse in us the delight which we experience in simply imagining the silvery disk in the black of the night sky. On the other hand, even such a scientific consideration may arouse a certain delight in us, and may even lead us to call the moon beautiful, although we naturally realize that we are speaking in a somewhat diverse sense then.[13]

It may be objected that the moon itself is not sensible per se but only per accidens. The shape and color of the moon are per se sensibles, the moon itself is not. Without becoming involved in the problem of the singular in human knowledge, let it be sufficient to say here that this moon is not properly intelligible either.[14] Actually, the process by which we recognize the beauty of the moon, or of any other material singular, is not a simple operation but a complex process. Involved are both intellect and sense: the intellect apprehends the singular according to its universal nature while the cogitative apprehends it according to its singularity.[15]

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13. We shall see this at length in the latter part of our investigation, infra pp.

14. The singular material substance is untetelligible in itself, and yet it is neither a proper nor a common sensible. This doctrine is held by all Thomists.

15. That the cogitative actually does apprehend the singular material substance according to its singularity is shown by St. Thomas in In De Anima, lib. 2, lect. 13, #398: "...cogitativa apprehendit individuum, ut existens sub natura communi; quod contingit ei, inquantum unitur intellectivae in eodem subiecto; unde (cogitativa) cognoscit hunc hominem prout est hic homo..." See also: Post. Anal., lib. 2, lect. 20.

We also apply the term beautiful to the objects of some intellectual operations. There are some operations of the intellect in which we take a very real delight, although it is a diverse delight from that noted in the operation of the sense cognitive potencies.

Here, again, we must take something from what we know by experience and attempt to discover a reason later. We do not call objects which we are coming to know beautiful, even though there may be a certain delight in the process of the mind by which we come to know things.[16] Rather, we call those things beautiful in the consideration of which according to an art or a science already acquired, we delight.

Let us begin with beauty in the moral sphere. We do not call a moral action, a human life or a social organization beautiful according as we come to know what these ought to be. On the contrary, we call the action, life or organization beautiful when, already knowing what these ought to be, we find some actual examples.

The same thing may be said of beauty in the rational order. If we have already acquired the art of logic, dialectic, rhetoric or poetic, then we are delighted when we find some actual example of demonstration, argument, persuasion, or poetry which embodies the ratio of the art in a full manner.

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16. This is common doctrine among all Thomists. Maritain, Jacques, Art and Scholasticism, London, 1946, p. 125, note 55, for example, clearly holds that the perception of beauty is not in a ratiocinative act. He holds this for a diverse reason than we, however, as is clear in loc. cit.. Our explanation is contained infra, pp.

This fact is especially exemplified in the artistic order. An engineer, seeing a bridge constructed according to the right principles of bridge-building, will be delighted and will call the object beautiful, even though he may have seen no beauty in bridges when he learned how to build them.

In order to obviate a certain confusion which might otherwise arise, it may be well to point out that the beauty of a well-lived life, a well-constructed argument, or a well-built house is something other than the beauty of the various sensibles which we noted above. There is a delight gained in the mere consideration of the life, argument, or building and so we call each of them beautiful, but their beauty arises from the fact that they embody a certain order which is laid down by reason and which is seen again by the intellect. Of course, the senses serve reason in its consideration of intelligible beauty just as they do in all of its activities. Furthermore, there is nothing to prevent the same object from being beautiful in both sensible and intelligible modes.[17]

Some objects may be beautiful in both the sensible and the intelligible modes, we say. Take, for example, the case of a well-built house. A simple person with no special understanding of house-building may call it beautiful because he

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17. This distinction between sensible and intelligible beauty is clearly drawn by St. Thomas in many places, e. g., In Ps. Dav., ps. 25e; Sum. Theol., II-II, q. 145, art. 2. In Maritain, loc. cit., and throughout his work the distinction becomes uncertain. On the other hand, De Wulf, Maurice, Art and Beauty, St. Louis, 1950, p. 200, makes this distinction quite clearly.

experiences a sense delight in merely looking at it. An architect or builder may call the same house beautiful, not so much because of anything sensible about it, but because it has the right ratio of house-building expressed in it.

Thus far, in pointing out the intelligible objects in which we take delight and which we call beautiful, we have only considered objects which depend on reason in some way for the order which is in them. This is true of all three spheres: moral, rational and artistic. But we also take delight in the intellectual consideration of nature, of reality and the real order as it exists independently of the reason.

Such delightful intellectual consideration occurs when we know the causes of reality, or better, when we know reality in its causes. For then we not only know that a thing is so and so, we know that it must be so and so.[18] The process of gaining a speculative science is one of conforming the mind to reality, but the consideration of reality according to a speculative science already acquired is a consideration of the conformity of reality, as it is, to its ideal and necessary conditions, the conformity of reality to intelligence. And Intelligence, infinite Intelligence, shines through reality and illumines it: "The heavens show forth the glory of God and the

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18. The intellect does not rest in knowing that a thing is, it always seeks the reason why it is so. It does this in order to attain the fullest certainty concerning the thing. The object of the intellect is certain knowledge, and so it rest only in certain knowledge. "Nec solum secundum sensum, sed etiam secundum speculationem intellectus (delectamur), inquantum scilicet speculatur aliquid verorum per certitudinem." In Eth., lib. 10, lect. 6, #2025.

firmament announces the work of His hands."[19]

This would seem to complete our survey of the various applications which we make of the term beautiful if we do not take into account its application to supernatural realities or to realities as known by supernatural knowledge. We are not making such a consideration here but are limiting our inquiry to the order which our weak philosophic light may illumine for us.

We have, in our survey, come upon two modes of beauty: that which conveneS to the sensible as such and that which belongs to the intelligible. We can, at this point, set down a pair of facts: Those things are called beautiful the sensing of which gives us delight of the sensitive order. Again: Those things are called beautiful the consideration of which according to a science or art gives us an intellectual delight.

It would seem that we must begin here if we are to discover the real meanings of the term beautiful. For upon this pair of facts everyone would seem to agree. And since we are hunting for real definitions, we must take as our starting-points some facts about the use of terms upon which there is

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19. Psalms, 18:1-2. St. Thomas comments: "Et ideo intelligantur isti coeli materiales indicare nobis gloriam Dei, non quasi animalia materialia, ut Rabbi Moyes dicit, sed in eius pulchritudine multo magis indicatur eorum artifex." In Ps. Dav., ps. 18a. In Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 13, art. 2, ad 3um, St. Thomas explains: "...virtus moventis apparet in motu mobilis. Et propter hoc in omnibus quae moventur a ratione, apparet ordo rationis moventis, licet ipsa rationem non habeant: sic enim sagitta directe tendit ad signum ex motione sagittantis.... Sicut autem comparantur artificialia ad artem humanum, ita comparantur omnia naturalia ad artem divinam." See also: II Sent., Prologus Sancti Thomae.

general agreement.[20]

First of all, then, we must take it as a principle that things which are called beautiful are beautiful in fact, at least in most cases. To deny this is the same as to deny the validity of all human cognition.[21] To defend the validity of human knowledge belongs to that part of metaphysics which is called critica. We must assume, for our inquiry, the results of the investigation and defense carried out in this science. Among these results is this fact, that all human cognition is reliable in itself and that error is the exception, the monster, rather than the rule.[22]

Taking this as granted, then, we can point out that these two facts, once admitted, must inevitably lead us to an objectivist theory of beauty if we have a true theory of knowledge. That is to say, these facts, viewed in the light of a correct theory of knowledge, must lead us to the conclusion that beauty is something on the part of the object—whether on the part of the object in relation to a knowing subject or not remains to be seen—rather than that it is a purely subjective charac-

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20. This Aristotealian process for hunting a definition is very well illustrated in the first book of the Ethics where the Philosopher uses it in hunting the definition of felicity.

21. To deny the validity of a whole group of judgments as a group is to assert that error is found in human judgments ut in pluribus. But this could only be true if to err were a property of judgment, that is, if judgment were per se fallacious.

22. In other words, it cannot be held that human cognition is erroneous per se but only per accidens. St. Thomas explains this with regard to intellectual cognition in III Cont. Gent., cap. 107: "...falsa enim iudicia in operationibus intellectus sunt sicut monstra in rebus naturalibus, quae non sunt secundum naturam sed praeter naturam;..."

teristic of apprehension.

For we have taken it as generally admitted that some objects known are called beautiful. For those holding the false principle that the idea (conceptus formalis) is a term which is known (quod), beauty becomes wholly subjective by this first agreement. For to them the object known is the idea. But we hold that the idea is merely a term in which (in quo) the form itself (conceptus objectivus) is known, and therefore we immediately assert the objectivity of beauty by admitting these facts. For we hold that it is the form itself, which exists both physically and psychically, and not merely the idea, which is the object known.[23]

From this, we can state what we have so far discovered in the following manner: Beauty is something on the part of the objects of certain cognitive operations, namely, of those which are perfected by delight.

The question now is this: What is required that a cognitive operation be perfected by delight?

There are two possible reasons for which a cognitive opera-

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23. The fact that the formal concept is a term in which and not a term which is known is so apparent that it cannot be subjected to demonstration, strictly speaking, for there is nothing more apparent to use as a means of demonstration. It can, however, be explained so that its intrinsic evidence is clear to us. This is done in critica.

Of course, we do not deny that the formal concept may be considered itself, as we are now doing, but such a consideration is wholly reflexive and secondary and depends for its very possibility on the primary apprehension of a trans-subjective form.

This form, because it is really distinct from its to-be, can be known in the formal concept which is essentially identical with the trans-subjective object.

tion might be delightful. In one case, it is not required that the object be formally beautiful; it is required that the object be beautiful, formally speaking, in the other. Let us consider these two cases.[24]

First, a cognitive operation is delightful if it is seen as the means by which an antecedently loved suitable good is possessed. Suppose a case in which a certain good which a man loves can be possessed by him cognitively. Then, suppose that he actually knows the beloved object in the manner required that it be possessed. His appetite, which has tended to the object, now rests in it as possessed. Now if he should further know his apprehension of the good as the means by which it is acquired, that apprehension will also become a term of appetite and an object of delight. In this case, the object is primarily appetible and delightful, the apprehension is a secondary appetible and is delightful secondarily, because it is the means by which the loved object is acquired.

Do we call the object <u>beautiful</u> in such a case? Is such goodness the objective requirement that is necessary in order

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24. "...apprehensio potest dici delectationis causa dupliciter. Uno modo, ex parte ipsius apprehensi; sicut cum apprehendimus aliquod bonum nobis conveniens, et inde delectamur;.... Alio modo ex parte ipsius apprehensionis; et cum quis delectatur non quidem de apprehenso, sed de ipsa apprehensione qua apprehendit;..." IV <u>Sent.</u>, d. 49, q. 3, art. 3, qu. 2, c. Our first case, the apprehension of a suitable good conjoined by means of apprehension, is included in the first mode of St. Thomas, the apprehension of a suitable good conjoined by any means. We do not consider other cases of the apprehension of the conjunction of suitable goods, for only this one can even allege a case for receiving the name of beauty. The second mode which St. Thomas sets down is identical with our second case.

that an apprehension be delightful in such a way that the object of the apprehension be recognized as beautiful?

We must reply, "No." For the object in this case has primarily the aspect of good or appetible. But the beautiful, as such, simply does not have the aspect of appetible. And so, the object in this case does not have the aspect of the beautiful. Rather, what is formally required on the part of the object in this case is a certain sort of goodness, of course, goodness which can be possessed by means of apprehension.[25]

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25. It is clearly the doctrine of St. Thomas that the beautiful, formally speaking, is not appetible: "...pulchritudo non habet rationem appetibilis nisi inquantum induit rationem boni: sic enim et verum appetibile est: sed secundum rationem propriam habet claritatem et ea quae dicta sunt,..." I Sent., d. 31, q. 2, art. 1, ad 4um. But if beauty is not appetible, then the beautiful object, formally as beautiful, is not delightful, for only the appetible is delightful. What, then, is the cause of delight which we experience in apprehending the beautiful? What is the appetible object in which the appetite rests? "...bonum dicatur id quod simpliciter complacet appetitui; pulchrum autem dicatur id cuius ipsa apprehensio placet." Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 27, art. 1, ad 3um. (Italics ours.) It is the apprehension of the beautiful which delights; the beautiful is not delightful.

De Wulf, op. cit., p. 198, seems to agree with this conclusion when he says: "Thus, beauty is not that which delights, but that whose apprehension or perception produces joy."

However, the beautiful object, precisely because its apprehension does cause delight, does take on the ratio of a certain good, and so it is appetible materially speaking and secondarily. That is why St. Thomas can say that "...pulchrum addit supra bonum quaedam ordinem ad vim cognoscitivam;..." Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 27, art. 1, ad 3um. This manner of speaking may also be justified by the fact that the formal ratio of the good does not consist in the relation of being to appetite but in being itself as it founds the relation to appetite. (See: Gredt, Iosepho, O. S. B., Elementa Philosophiae Aristotelico-Thomisticae, Friburgi Brisgoviae, 1937, v. 2, p. 25.) In fact,

25. (continued from the preceding page)
it is the same subject which founds the relation to appetite and which is beautiful: "...pulchrum et bonum in subiecto quidem sunt idem, quia super eandem rem fundantur, scilicet super formam: et propter hoc bonum laudatur ut pulchrum. Sed ratione differunt. Nam bonum proprie respicit appetitum: est enim quod omnia appetunt. Et ideo habet rationem finis: nam appetitus est quasi quidam motus ad rem. Pulchrum autem respicit vim cognoscitivam:..." Sum. Theol., I, q. 5, art. 4, ad 1um. (Italics ours.)

It can be objected against this position that St. Thomas explicitly states that the appetite is terminated in beauty, for he states that "...appetitum terminari ad bonum et pacem et pulchrum non est terminari in diversa." De Ver., q. 22, art. 1, ad 12um. It must be said in response to this objection that beauty is used here materially. This is evident from the inclusion of peace, for although peace is certainly something desirable it is not desirable except insofar as it is seen as appetible, that is, insofar as it is considered under the ratio of the good. It may be considered under its own ratio forever without being seen as appetible. As a matter of fact, the sentence immediately following, loc. cit., indicates that the formal ratio of the good adds something to the formal ratio of the beautiful and not vice versa: "Ex hoc enim ipso quod aliquis appetit bonum, appetit simul pulchrum et pacem: pulchrum quidem, in quantum est in seipso modificatum et specificatum, quod in ratione boni includitur: sed bonum addit ordinem perfectivi ad alia." (Italics ours.)

Cajetan's remark, In Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 27, art. 3: "Pulchrum est quaedam boni species," must also be understood in this way. Pulchrum here cannot be taken formally unless the greatest commentator is to be understood to contradict the explicit doctrine of St. Thomas as stated in I Sent., d. 31, q. 2, art. 1, ad 4um, which we quoted above.

Pseudo-Dionysius, in his treatise De Divinis Nominibus, cap. 4, (in St. Thomas' commentary, cap. 4, lect. 5, #352-355), tends to a complete identification of the formal rationes of the beautiful and the good, ascribing final causality to both alike and differentiating them in nothing. St. Thomas comments upon this passage faithfully and explains it with a lucidity which is remarkable considering the near unintelligibility of the text. But at the end of his comment he states: "Quamvis autem pulchrum et bonum sint idem subiecto, tamen ratione differunt: nam pulchrum addit supra bonum, ordinem ad vim cognoscitivam illud esse huiusmodi." In Div. Nom., cap. 4, lect. 5, #356. Here, again, we must explain the use of the term addit as we did above, for if all the terms were taken formally beauty would be appetible which is in contradiction to the explicit statement in I Sent., d. 31, q. 2, art. 1, ad 4um, which we quoted above.

The theory that beauty is appetible according to its formal ratio seems to be in Plato and it has diffused itself from this source. Plato constantly affirms an absolute identity of

That the object as beautiful does not have the aspect of appetible is shown by the simple fact that we can take delight in the apprehension of an object and recognize it in its beauty without antecedently loving it. Rather, our recognition of an object as beautiful and our delight in the apprehension of a beautiful object is frequently antecedent to our love of the object itself. As a matter of fact, after we apprehend an object as beautiful and after we delight in its apprehension, we always love and delight in the object itself, more or less. The reason for this should become clear as we procede.[26]

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25. (continued from the preceding page) the beautiful and the good. See, e. g., Symposium, 204, "Love is of the beautiful." Lysis, 216, "For I affirm that the good is the beautiful." The context indicates that this is no mere material identification such as St. Thomas holds but is rather a formal one: beauty and goodness are considered to be simple synonyms.

26. That is to say, as we shall explain more fully later, that the object which is formally beautiful does take on the ratio of the good and does so necessarily. This occurs in the very apprehension of the beautiful object as such. It is a property of the apprehension of the beautiful object as beautiful that the object be seen as good also, although under a diverse formality. This fact helps to explain the frequent references which tend to identify the formal rationes of the beautiful and the good. St. Thomas, Sum. Theol., II-II, q. 145, art. 2, ad 1um, explains: "...obiectum movens appetitum est bonum apprehensum. Quod autem in ipsa apprehensione apparet decorum, accipitur ut conveniens et bonum...." (Italics ours.) What moves the appetite is an apprehended good. But what is seen to be beautiful is taken to be convenient and good. It should also be noted here that in the case in which the object is considered as good, it is the apprehended good existing physically that primarily moves the appetite; in the case in which the object is considered as beautiful, it moves the appetite primarily as it exists intentionally, and only in a secondary way (and insofar as it assumes the ratio of the good) does the physically existing object move the appetite. Beauty and good would be completely identified for those identifying esse physicum and esse intentionale. But we maintain this distinction against idealists, and therefore we maintain a formal distinction between the beautiful and the appetible.

What, then, is the second case in which a cognitive operation may be delightful? The answer is that a perfect cognitive operation may be the object of delight. Delight is the act of an appetite. Every appetite tends to perfections. When perfection is attained, the appetite of which that perfection is the object rests, and the rest of the appetite in the attained good is delight. The perfection of man, as man, consists chiefly in knowing.[27] Therefore, to know is delightful to man.

However, there are degrees of knowledge. In regard to the intellect, for example, there are simple apprehension, primary judgment, and the scientific consideration of reality. The first two of these operations are imperfect, they are intermediates between the primary state of pure potentiality to know and the final state of full actual knowing. Consequently, these first two operations leave something to be desired, and therefore such operations are not delightful according to themselves. The conclusion, then, is that for a cognitive operation to be perfected by delight it is pre-required that it be

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27. It must be noted well that we are considering man according to his nature and not according to grace which must, yet, be taken into account if a full view is to be had. Moreover, it must be noted that even in the natural order man is not perfect simply by knowledge alone but by knowledge is perfect only in a certain respect; man must have moral virtues in order that he may be perfect simply. Sum. Theol., I, q. 5, art. 4, ad 3um: "...non dicitur bonus homo, qui habet bonum intellectum: sed qui habet bonum voluntatem."

But we say that knowledge is the chief constituent of the perfection of man, as man, in the way in which St. Thomas says: "Cum igitur scientia sit perfectio hominis, inquantum homo, scientia est bonum hominis." In De Anima, lib 1, lect. 1, #3. See also: De Ver., q. 27, art. 2, c..

perfect in itself.[28]

But that a cognitive operation be perfect is not all we must require if it is to be perfected by delight. It is also necessary that the operation be the object of an appetite, for otherwise no appetite will rest in the operation, and so no delight will follow it. This seems almost too obvious to mention, and yet it is a principle which will aid us in our inquiry to solve some very knotty problems.

Appetite is of three modes. First, there is the will, a potency for choosing, seeking and enjoying objects presented as good by the intellect. Then, there is sense appetite, a potency for loving, delighting in and desiring objects presented as good by the imagination. Lastly, there is natural appetite. Natural appetite is not a potency. It is any object taken as it is naturally inclined to its own end and perfection. A stone, for example, has a natural appetite for a low

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28. "Ubicumque enim invenitur in aliquo cognoscente operatio perfecta, ibi etiam invenitur operatio delectabilis. Est enim delectatio non solum secundum tactum et gustum, sed etiam secundum omnem sensum. Nec solum secundum sensum, sed etiam secundum speculationem intellectus, inquantum scilicet speculatur aliquid verorum per certitudinem." In Eth., lib. 10, lect. 6, #2025. It might be thought that the only delightful cognitive operations are those of the more material senses, whose operations are not delightful for themselves but only in view of food or sex. But this is not true, for man takes delight in cognitive operations for their own sake. See: Sum. Theol., I, q. 91, art. 3, ad 3um. Nor should it be thought that every cognitive operation is delightful, for delight is in the perfect operation, as St. Thomas states. Therefore, the consideration of reality according to first principles is not delightful, for it is "... imperfectissima, sicut maxime universalis, rerum cognitionem in potentia continens; et est principium, non finis humani studii, a natura nobis proveniens...." III Cont. Gent., cap. 37.

place. According to natural appetite, things are said to love, desire or delight only metaphorically. Moreover, natural appetite, being the very thing as it is determined to its proper end, is determined to one object.[29]

Now any cognitive act is the object of some appetite, at least of the natural appetite of the cognitive potency involved. But it must be noted that if a particular cognitive act is only the object of a natural appetite there will be no sensitive or volitional delight in it. The only delight will be the metaphorical delight of a natural appetite, the termination of tending to perfection as the potency rests in perfection, act, attained.

It seems quite apparent that brute animals do not tend by sense appetite to the knowledge of which they are capable as to an object. For irrational animals live by sense appetite, and yet we do not observe them rapt in the mere contemplation of objects. Their sense appetites are directed to those things which physically preserve the individual and the species. In regard to brute animals, in other words, the order is not live to know but know to live.[30]

With man, on the other hand, we find the opposite situation. Man's natural life is ordered to intellectual activity:

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29. For an excellent and concise distinction of the three modes of appetite and their distinction, see: De Ver., q. 22, art. 3 and art. 4.

30. "Et ideo (animales irrationales) non delectantur nisi in his quae pertinent ad sustentationem naturae, propter quam dantur eiusmodi sensus animalibus." In Eth., lib. 3, lect. 19, # 611. See also: In Meta., lib. 1, lect. 1, #10; Sum. Theol., I, q. 91, art. 3, ad 3um.

man lives in order to know. To know is what man chooses, strives for, and voluntarily enjoys. The problem arises, however, as to man's sensitive activity.[31]

We have already granted that we take sense delight in certain acts of sense knowledge. We conclude, therefore, that our sense appetite must tend to these acts. In man's senses, it appears, there is a double order. Touch and taste are ordered primarily to the conservation of the individual and the species and we do not generally take delight in the operations of these senses for their own sake. Seeing and hearing, on the contrary, are ordered to reason. We do take delight in merely seeing or hearing, irrespective of whether the object is good for our sense life. To smell is sometimes delightful in itself, particularly in conjunction with acts of seeing or hearing in the examination of some object; but more often smelling is only accidentally delightful in view of sex or food.[32]

We can now say, therefore, that it is required that a cognitive act be pertect and that it be the object of sense appetite if sense delight is to follow upon it, or that it be perfect

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31. The entire first book of the Ethics is devoted to showing that man lives in order to know. The point seems very obvious to us, but it is directly contrary to the first principles of pragmatist doctrine, and is opposed by every consistent sensist.

32. "...ille sensus maxime ab omnibus diligitur, qui magis cognoscitivus est, qui est visus, quem diligimus non solum ad agendum aliquid, sed etiam si nihil agere deberemus." In Meta., lib. 1, lect. 1, #5. Apparently there are even some cases in which operations of the sense of touch are desired for their own sake: "...etiam in his quae ad tactum pertinent, est aliquod proprium bonum quae non est bestiae..." In Eth., lib. 3, lect. 20, #617. It is certainly true that smelling is sometimes desired for itself (although not generally): "...solus homo inter cetera animalia sentit et delectatur in odoribus florum et aliorum huiusmodi odorum..." In De Sensu, lect. 13, #189.

and the object of the will if voluntary enjoyment is to follow upon it.[33]

Now the question is: What is required that an operation of sense or of intellect be perfect?

We must observe, in the first place, that anything is perfect which is fully, considering what it is.[34] An operation of sense or of intellect is a union, an intentional union of a subject able to know and an object able to be known, in a cognitive act.[35] And therefore, for a perfect cognitive act three things are required: an object which can be known, a subject which can know that object, and the real intentional union of the subject and object.

But since we are considering a reality which is not always perfect, but which comes to be perfect from imperfection or potentiality, we must posit an intermediate perfection, a perfection bringing the knowable object from the completely indeter-

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33. It should be noted that if delight follow a cognitive operation immediately, it is a sense delight or a voluntary delight according as the operation is one of sense or of intellect: "...operationes mentis, idest intellectus, differunt specie ab operationibus sensus. Et similiter operationes sensuum abinvicem. Diversificatur enim secundum obiecta, et secundum potentias quae sunt operationum principia. Unde relinquitur, quod delectationes, quae perficiunt operationes, differunt specie." In Eth., lib. 10, lect. 7, #2041. But this is not to say that the will may not rejoice in an operation of sense, or the sense follow will in delighting in an intellectual operation, for such delight is not properly perfective of the operation.

34. See: Sum. Theol., I, q. 4, art. 1, c..

35. The object and subject become one in the act of cognition. But not physically, for then it would be necessary to have rocks in the head in order to know rocks. Therefore, intentionally or immaterially. The object is essentially identified with the potency in act, but it remains diverse existentially. See: Maquart, F. X., Elementa Philosophiae, Parisiis, 1937, v. 2, pp. 240-249.

minate potentiality to be known and the potentially knowing subject from the completely indeterminate potentiality to know to a proximate disposition for union in the act of knowing. In other words, non only must there be a knowable object and a subject capable of knowing that object, but these must be fitly disposed if perfect union in the cognitive act is to be accomplished.[36] Of course, if the knowable and the potential knower are to be proximately disposed for union it is pre-required that they be in natural proportion to each other, and in this aspect their potentiality for union is not indeterminate but is completely determined.

What is required for fit disposition on the part of the potential knower varies with the diversity of cognitive potencies. In the case of the human intellect, for example, an impressed species of the object to be known is required, as well as intellectual virtue.[37] In the case of the senses, an impressed species is also necessary. No operative virtue is required, for the sense is in itself determined to its proper

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36. See: I Sent., d. 3, q. 2, art. 2, c.. Also, In Eth., lib. 10, lect. 6, #2023, where St. Thomas applies the general principle that the potential must be disposed to actuality to operations of the senses in particular: "Ad hoc ergo quod operatio sensus sit perfecta, requiritur optima dispositio ex parte utriusque, scilicet sensus et obiecti." The whole Aristotealian doctrine concerning virtue is dependent on this fundamental principle: nature does not actuate the potential which is indeterminate to multiple acts except it be determined to one by a dispositive act.

37. The need for an intelligible species is shown in Cont. Gent., lib. 2, cap. 98. Concerning the need for intellectual virtues, see In Eth., lib. 6, lect. 1. Also, in In Eth., lib. 6, lect. 3, #1143, St. Thomas states in a few words why we must have intellectual virtues for a perfect act of the intellect: "...virtutes intellectuales sunt habitus, quibus anima dicit verum." Truth is the object of the intellect, and it arrives at truth with certitude only if it has intellectual virtues.

object. But since every sense has a corporeal organ, an entitative disposition is necessary: the organ must be healthy.[38] In any case, if the various dispositions required of the cognitive potency be present, then the act of knowing ought to be perfect, and consequently delightful, as far as the subject is concerned.

But since the object is involved also, the object must be fitly disposed to the union. Something is required on the part of the object. What this something is depends upon what sort of cognitive union is to be accomplished.[39]

Whatever disposition it is which is required on the part of the object, it should serve to produce a perfect and delightful cognitive operation, supposing the required disposition on the part of the subject. Now we have established already that beauty is something on the part of the object of certain cognitive operations, namely, of those which are perfected by delight, that is, of those which are delightful immediately and for their own sake. It follows, therefore, that beauty is whatever is required on the part of the object to dispose it to cognition. And those objects are beautiful which are so disposed.[40]

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38. That an impressed species is required, see: Cont. Gent., lib. 1, cap. 46. All sense powers need an entitative disposition and some need a certain operative disposition as well. Concerning this, see: Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 56, art. 5, c..

39. As St. Thomas states, something is required on the part of both subject and object: "...quod operatio sensus sit perfecta, requiritur optima dispositio ex parte utriusque..." In Eth., lib. 10, lect. 6, #2023.

40. "...tunc perfecte sensus operatur quando est operatio sensus bene disposita ad aliquid pulcherrimum, idest conconientissimum, eorum quae sensui subiacent." In Eth., lib. 10, lect. 6, #2023. Fr. Callahan, op. cit., p. 29, seems to approach this theory: "In fine, beauty is a quality of a work of art or an object of nature, which by reason of its adaptation to the perceptive faculties of the subject, can arouse a feeling of admiration in him who contemplates it."

However, it may be objected that a case is possible in which there is a fit disposition on the part of the object but a lack of suitable disposition on the part of the subject. In such a case the union would neither be perfect nor delightful. But since beauty is that by which the very apprehension of an object is delightful, the object in such a case would not be beautiful, although it would be properly disposed. And this is contrary to the conclusion just reached.

This is a seemingly insurmountable difficulty, and yet it contains a serious and very apparent error. The objection assumes that the beautiful and that which is called beautiful are one and the same in every case. Obviously, there is no difficulty in there being more beautiful objects than are seen to be such, or even more objects seen to be beautiful than the ones called beautiful.[41]

In beginning to reason to the ratio of beauty we used as our starting points certain facts concerning the predication of the term beautiful. Our premise was not: Beauty is that by which the very apprehension of an object is pleasing. Our premise was: Objects are called beautiful whose very apprehension is pleasing.[42] The objection, on the other hand, makes use of the former premise. It may be easily distinguished, for beauty is

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41. Words signify concepts and concepts things. There is no difficulty in there being an object without a sign, although the reverse is impossible. See: Sum. Theol., I, q. 13, art. 1, c..

42. St. Thomas states our premise in Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 27, art. 1, ad 3um, and in similar terms in Sum. Theol., I, q. 5, art. 4, ad 1um. Attending to the letter of these statements, St. Thomas cannot be said to have defined beauty in these places, as he is often falsely said to have done.

on the part of the object and not on the part of the subject, and it perfects the object so that the knowing of it is delightful to a suitably disposed subject and not to any subject whatever.

The conclusion stands, therefore, that beauty is whatever it is on the part of the object of cognition which is required to dispose it to the intentional union. The question now is: What is necessary on the part of the object to dispose it to the intentional union?

Here we meet a further problem immediately, for even if we limit our inquiry to the consideration of human cognition, prescinding from that of separated substances, still man is capable of various intentional unions according to his various cognitive potencies. It will be necessary, therefore, to survey the objects of the various potencies once again, and to attempt to set down a real definition of <u>beauty</u> in each case.

Before undertaking this task, however, it may be well to propose two things. First, we should note the diversity between the cognitive and appetitive acts which follow upon the apprehension of beautiful objects and those which follow upon the apprehension of the good which is possessed by means of apprehension. Second, we should note the necessity of the apprehension of the very proportion of the object to cognition before the object can be recognized as beautiful.

In regard to the first point, we may recall that we noted above that in the case in which apprehension is delightful because it is the means by which the beloved good is possessed,

the delight which we take in cognition is secondary to that which we take in the object itself. The order of the cognitive and appetitive acts in this case may be set down as follows:

First, the object is recognized as a suitable good which may be possessed by means of apprehension.[43]

Second, the object is loved.

Third, the object is apprehended in the manner required that it be possessed.

Fourth, the appetite delights in the object as possessed.

Fifth, the apprehension is recognized as the means by which the good object is possessed, and therefore as itself a certain good.

Sixth, the appetite delights in the apprehension.

In this case the object is called <u>good</u> and the apprehension <u>delightful</u>. The object has the aspect of an absolute good, the apprehension that of a useful good. Both delight.

In the case of the apprehension of a beautiful object, on the other hand, the following order of cognitive and appetitive acts may be set down:

First, cognition is recognized as a perfective good.[44]

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43. This is not to say that the object need not be known absolutely and in itself before (at least in priority of nature) it can be known as good. We do not attempt to set down every act in this process, but only those important in distinguishing the two cases.

44. Again, the object must be known before this act, for the first thing known must be trans-subjective. Then the act of cognition must be known in itself (but reflexively) before it can be known as good. See: <u>In De Anima</u>, lib. 3, lect. 7-9.

Second, cognition is loved and desired.

Third, the subject, suitably disposed, apprehends the beautiful (or suitably disposed) object.

Fourth, the appetite delights in this cognitive act.[45]

Fifth, the appetite is recognized as proportioned to apprehension, and therefore as a suitable good insofar as it makes the perfect apprehension possible.[46]

Sixth, the appetite delights in the object, as in a certain good, that is, as in a beautiful object possessed.[47]

Here the cognitive act itself has the aspect of an absolute good, the object taking on the aspect of a useful good. We may say that the beautiful object as beautiful is not good, but precisely because it is beautiful it is good in a certain way. In other words, beauty formally consists in that by which the object is proportioned to perfect cognition. As a result of the fact that the perfect cognition is delightful, the object is consequently considered as a certain good. But then it is no longer being considered as beautiful only, although it may still only be called beautiful.[48]

This should become clearer from our consideration of the

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45. Fr. Callahan, op. cit., p. 29, states: "Thus for Aquinas the essential element of esthetic activity is the act of intelligence, while the posterior and consecutive factor is had in the complacence engendered by the activity of the perceptive faculties." (Italics ours.)

46. "Quod autem in ipsa apprehensione apparet decorum, accipitur ut conveniens et bonum..." Sum. Theol., II-II, q. 145, art. 2, adlum.

47. The appetite rests in the object as the object is good because beautiful, not precisely in the object as beautiful, for the beautiful as such is not appetible and therefore not delightful.

48. This explains the many non-formal considerations of beauty. Considering the object merely as beautiful, it is not delightful, for the beautiful is not delightful precisely as such.

second point, that is, the necessity of knowing the very proportion of the object to cognition before the object can be known as beautiful.[49]

Supposing a perfect, and hence a delightful cognitive operation, still the object would not be called beautiful unless its suitable disposition—its proportion to the cognitive union—were distinctly known. This is required since it is necessary that the proportion of the object to cognition be recognized distinctly from the good disposition of the subject before the object, as distinct from the subject, can be known as the cause of the delightful operation. But the object, as distinct from the subject, must be recognized as the cause of the delightful operation, if the object is to be given a separate designation precisely as it is the cause of the delightful operation. This is, as a matter of fact, what we do when we call an object beautiful. For we do not simply say: "This act of knowing is delightful." Rather, we say: "This object is beautiful." The conclusion then, is that not only is the proportion of the object known in the very act of knowing the proportioned object.[50] The proportion of the object to cognition is itself distinctly seen.[51]

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49. This is a question of knowing the object to be beautiful in actu signato; we know it in actu exercito as beautiful in the third act noted above but in actu exercito only in the fifth.

50. That is, not only must the beauty of the object be known in actu exercito in the knowing of the beautiful object.

51. That is, the beauty of the object must be known in actu signato if we are to be aware of the beauty of the object as such, and if we are to call the object beautiful. It is to be noted that it is in the very act of knowing the beautiful object as such that we recognize it as convenient to apprehension and so as a certain good. It is because of this that the distinction between the formal rationes of the beautiful and the good becomes foggy and is so easily overlooked.

Without the second act, the beautiful object would be known, and supposing the suitable disposition of the subject the act would be delightful, but the very beauty of the object would not be distinctly known, nor would the object be called beautiful.

We may illustrate this rather difficult point with an example. Take a case in which we have a beautiful color and a healthy eye. The eye sees the color. Since the operation of seeing is the object of sense appetite in man, sense delight follows. But to recognize the color as beautiful, not only must it be seen but its very proportion to the eye must be discerned. Otherwise, the seeing might be delightful, but the object seen could not be distinctly known to be beautiful and would not be called beautiful.

The precise manner in which the beauty of the object is so recognized in each case, however, is a very difficult point. But it is not our present concern to solve all of these particular psychological questions which are only related to our study.

In our prior survey we considered objects among proper sensibles, common sensibles, singular material substances, and properly intelligible objects which we found to be called beautiful. Now we return to this survey and seek the formal constituent of the beauty in each of these objects. And we shall follow the order which we previously established.

To begin, then, with colors. What is required that a color be disposed to sight? It should be observed that we must find what is required that a color be disposed to the seeing of a

healthy eye. For to the seeing of an unhealthy eye, something else might be required that the operation be possible at all, and certainly something else would be necessary that the operation be easy and pleasant. Such an operation could not possibly be perfect in a full sense, for the subject would be indisposed. But we wish to discover the beauty of color, which we have determined to be that by which the color is disposed in such a manner that it may be united to the potency in a perfect cognitive act.

Of course, first of all it is required that the very color be determinate and that it simply be. In other words, the primary requirement is the form and the inesse which constitute the color itself and make it actual in the subject. This is fundamental to any disposition of it. And the beauty of color will be that by which it is disposed in a certain way.

When we come, however, to attempt to determine the formal constituent of this beauty of a color, we meet a certain serious difficulty. According to Aristotle and St. Thomas, the sense of sight and every cognitive power has in itself a certain proportion or ratio, taking the potency in itself. It is required, therefore, that the color be proportionate in itself if it is to be proportioned to vision. The reason is that since the sense in act and the sensible in act are one, the sense in potency and the sensible in potency must be similar, at least proportionally.[52]

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52. In De Anima, lib. 3, lect. 2, #597-598.

This theory seems sound fundamentally. Certainly human cognitive potencies are composite. The intellect, while it is completely simple considered physically, still has a certain composition in its acts, which must be multiplied for a full knowledge of even a single object. The senses, unlike the intellect, operate in corporeal organs of which they are the forms, and so in the very senses themselves there is a material composition. Moreover, the premise that the object to be known and the cognitive potency must be like is certainly true, if this likeness be understood as a proportional one.

But the next step in the theory may seem rather doubtful. The proper sensible, color, is composed of the contraries, white and black. In between are the various colors made of diverse proportions of the contraries. These contraries, combined in proportions of simple ratio, compose the only colors fitly disposed to the sense of sight.[53]

According to the theory the same thing may be said of the sense of hearing and sound, the difference in this case being that the contraries are high and low. We might just as well extend the theory to the rest of the proper sensibles also, even if we do not generally call them beautiful. For they too might be proportioned in themselves and so to the sense, and so they would be objectively beautiful, even though we do not delight in the very apprehension of the inferior senses for its own sake, since the appetite is not directed, generally

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53. In De. Sensu, lect. 7, #101-102.

speaking, to these acts per se but only per accidens, insofar as it is directed to their objects.

Musical theory seems to bear out the principle that the sensible having a proportion in itself is most suitably proportioned to sense, for this seems to be the case with regard to sound and hearing. But we have no sufficient evidence of the applicability of this principle to color. The difficulty is that we lack the scientific knowledge concerning the intimate structure of the senses which would be necessary to find what sort of proportion actually exists within them.

We do know this much, however, that it is in between colors, the more brilliant shades of red, blue and green, for example, which are the easiest to see. It is also true that any color must be distinct if the seeing of it is to be pleasant. That is, there are certain shades which are not especially agreeable although they lie between others which are especially pleasing. And the very light colors, for example, yellow or the pale tints, or the very dark ones, do not seem to be particularly suitable to sight in themselves.[54]

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54. White light, according to modern physics, contains waves of all the other colors' wave lengths. Darkness is not a positive contrary but only a negative one—mere absence. The various colors are obtained by omitting waves of some lengths while retaining others. The ancients knew, at least, that black or darkness is only a negative contrary of white, and so it is perhaps in a sense very like the modern one that their theory of color constitution is to be understood. Modern psychological theories seem to bear out, to some extent, the theory that the sense has a certain proportion in itself, for in sight, for example, there is given a multiplicity of principles partly allotted to seeing one color and partly to another. Certainly the fundamental principles of the theory of the ancients is sound but we must wait for advances in physics and psychology in order to explain its details more fully. For some explanation of the modern theories, see: Harmon, Francis L., Principles of Psychology, Milwaukee, 1938, pp. 148-177.

But if we grant the validity of the principles of the theory proposed by Aristotle and St. Thomas, we must at least hold that the proper sensibles must have a certain proportion in themselves if they are to be proportioned to sense. We may add further, that in each case the proper sensible must have the distinctness proper to it. In the case of color, for example, this is a matter of brightness. For sound, it is a matter of loudness. A sound must be loud enough to be perceptible and not so loud as to corrupt the sense.[55]

The result of our investigation, then, is that in regard to proper sensibles beauty consists in due proportion in the contraries composing the quality and distinctness, these being founded in the primary determination and reality of the very quality itself.[56] But what exactly this may mean in the case of any particular sensible we are at a loss to say.

There is a further problem with regard to color schemes and groupings of sounds. Some combinations of colors and

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55. "Et quia quaelibet proportio corrumpitur per superabundantiam, ideo excellens sensibile corrumpit sensum, sicut quod est excellenter grave et acutum corrumpit auditum..." In De Anima, lib. 3, lect. 2, #597. In this place St. Thomas apparently is speaking of an over-abundance in one of the contraries in the proportion which is so great as to destroy it and thus to corrupt the sense by its disproportion to it. But this seems to be within the sensible quality itself. The distinctness, of which we speak, seems to be outside this proportion, in a quality which perfects the sensible quality. St. Thomas indicates such a distinction in many places. See, e. g.: In Meta., lib. 2, lect. 1, #284.

56. Thus we have the fundamental perfection or integrity of the contraries, a proportion between them, and clarity in the presentation of the quality to the sense. We shall meet these three principles on each level of beauty, although analogically only. See: Sum. Theol., I, q. 39, art. 8, c., where St. Thomas ascribes these properties to beauty.

sounds are agreeable, others are not. Apparently, those are agreeable which do not include any completely disproportionate elements, and which taken as a whole have a proportion in themselves suitable to the sense involved. At the same time, the whole grouping must not require too great or too rapid readjustment on the part of the sense in its successive acts. But any definitive answer to this question would seem to require a more complete understanding of the proportion within the sense and within the sensible.[57]

With regard to common sensibles, of which we noted figures as the ones which receive the name of beautiful, we are in a similar difficulty. It seems to be required that a figure be regular or symmetrical, which is the same as proportionate, within itself.[58] It must not be too great to be proportioned to a single operation of the common sense, at the

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57. In music there would seem to be an appeal not only to the sense of hearing but to the common sense and to the cogitative as well. The sounds themselves are perceived by hearing, the rhythym by the common sense, and the repetition of a similar sound pattern by the cogitative. The intellect, of course, also gains something in the presence of music, and if there are words with the music, the intellect may be having a feast of its own.

58. Santayana, George, The Sense of Beauty, New York, 1896, pp. 93-94, makes some remarks which he intends concerning beauty in general which are in close agreement with our analysis of the beauty of the common sensible. It must be remembered in reading them that he does not take a broad view based on first principles and that he does not differentiate intellect and sense: "If symmetry, then, is a principle of individuation (psychologically speaking) and helps us to distinguish objects, we cannot wonder that it helps us enjoy the perception. For our intelligence loves to perceive; water is not more grateful to a parched throat than a principle of comprehension to a confused understanding. Symmetry clarifies, and we all know that light is sweet. At the same time we can see that there are limits to the value of symmetry. In objects, for instance, that are too small or too diffused for composition, symmetry has no value."

same time it must be sufficiently complicated to be significant. And it must have its own definiteness, that of size, not so small that it cannot be seen nor so large that it cannot be taken in with one glance.[59]

Thus far we have been considering the proper and common sensibles in a certain abstraction, as it were, from the singulars in which they are subjected. Without entering into the problems involved in the theory of abstraction, we may remark that there is a fundamental reason why we may consider proper sensibles and figures in themselves and find them beautiful, without adverting to the subjects in which they inhere. The reason, briefly, is this: the *per se* sensibles are known by the external senses and the common sense without their subjects being known by these same potencies, the subjects not being *per se* sensible objects.

One of the trends of modern art, the so-called abstract school, is based upon an attempt to appeal only to the external senses and the common sense. An object is produced which has a color suitable to the sight and a figure suitable to common sense, but which is nothing in itself other than a piece of plaster used as a vehicle for these qualities. The result is beautiful in a certain way: the object has a beautiful color and a beautiful shape, although as a production of art it is

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59. For a psychological analysis of the elements needed for a proportion to common sense, see: Harmon, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-216.
Aristotle seems to be speaking chiefly of this mode of beauty in the *Poetics*, 1450b34-1451a5. In this passage he sets down size and order as the elements constituting beauty. St. Thomas sometimes mentions size, as in I *Sent.*, d. 31, q. 2, art. 1, c., but he generally omits it as a requirement. No doubt this is explained by the fact that it sometimes belongs to clarity, as here, sometimes to perfection, as in the case of the beauty of the singular, and sometimes has no importance, as in intelligible modes of beauty.

not a beautiful object, for the artist has not even attempted to produce an object. The naive art-viewer requires more than a mere beautiful color and shape, he demands beautiful things, and so he asks: "What is this supposed to be? Whatever it is, I wouldn't call it beautiful." The abstract artist takes such criticism as naive because it was not his intention to produce a beautiful object, his only intention was to produce a beautiful shape and color and he had to use a lump of plaster or a canvas as a vehicle. To his mind, if he did not have to use and vehicle he would be so much the better off.[60]

This problem of the unintended and non-beautiful singular brings us to the next point in our inquiry. In what, precisely, does the beauty of the individual material substance consist? It is to this singular that we most often apply the term beautiful, as we have previously noted. And it is primarily for this beauty that we look when we seek beauty in the works of nature and art. This is precisely why the naive art viewer asks: "What is this supposed to be," when he first views the abstraction. He is seeking a beautiful individual and finding only a beautiful color and shape.

To understand the beauty of the singular, we must review the process by which we know the singular, for beauty in each

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60. Hiler, Hilare, Why Abstract?, New York, c. 1945, p. 25: "Or, to put it still another way: I found out that if I was so interested in all this wonderful color and wanted to handle it for its own sake, and in its relation to form (shape), I had better let myself be as free as possible from the associations and limitations of representation."

case is a disposition by which the object is proportioned to an intentional union. In knowing the singular, then, we begin with the sensations of the external senses. In these, the common sense recognizes the common sensible qualities and constructs an integrated sensible species of the object. According to this, the imagination forms a phantasm of the singular.

The cogitative, the highest of sense powers, which participates in the perfection of reason, compares the individual thus received with past experience. It is in this operation that the cogitative actually knows the singular substance as it is existing under such a nature. The precise operation and mode of operation of the cogitative is a mysterious point. But it appears that the cogitative is able to order the various sensible intentions of singular objects which are experienced. Because the phantasms of the cogitative are illuminated by the agent intellect, they acquire an insensate quality and become, in some way, general, so that they are not wholly proper to any one singular but convene to all according to sensible likenesses and diversities.

What seems to occur is that the cogitative compares the sensate intention of each newly acquired individual with its system of generalized phantasms and discovers some agreement with one of them. If such agreement is found, the intellect can immediately abstract the nature of the thing in question. If no precise agreement is found, the intellect recognizes sensible reality and seeks to discover more about it. Having attained, in any case, the notion of the thing in more or less

determination, the intellect perceives the singular in some fashion by a certain reflection.

This is a very sketchy outline of the various operations involved in knowing a singular, but it should be sufficient for our present purposes. We might note that for each of the generalized phantasms with which the cogitative works, there is at least one universal idea in the intellect, and that we have a great multiplicity of such generalized phantasms. On seeing a dog, for example, we might say to ourselves: "That is a dog." If we have had more experience with dogs, we might recognize it as a female immediately and say: "That is a bitch." But a dog fancier, who has general phantasms not only for dog and bitch but also for Dalmatian bitch might recognize the presented dog as such. Unfortunately, the entire working out of this theory is not to be found in the ancients and we have not the space here to present the details and the reasoning behind each of our statements.[61]

Our own question, however, is this: What is required of a singular material substance that it be proportioned to the operation by which the cogitative knows the singular substance as such?

Fundamentally, of course, the substantial form is required, for the substantial form is the basis of the reality. We suppose, of course, actual existence, for the thing would not be

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61. Barbado, Manuel, O. P., Estudios de Psicologia Experimental, Madrid, 1948, vol. 1, pp. 724-781, has the best available collection of material that we know of on the cogitative and its peculiar operations.

knowable except in that it is. Furthermore, the substantial form is the principle of the accidental determinations, insofar as they are specifically proper to the thing.

Upon this last fact, that the substantial form is the principle of the accidental determinations insofar as they are specifically proper to the thing, hangs the very possibility of knowing intellectually by means of senses, for it is because of this that there is a sensible likeness between things having a similar substantial form.

It should be noted also that not only is there a sensible likeness between things having similar substantial forms, but there is also a sensible likeness between things having similar substantial forms and a certain fundamental accident. For example, there is a sensible likeness among all human beings. There is also a sensible likeness among all human males. There is a sensible likeness among all human females among themselves, and both a sensible likeness and diversity between them and the males—a likeness insofar as they agree in characteristics common to all human beings and a diversity insofar as they have certain characteristics proper to themselves as females which the males lack and vice-versa. Such fundamental accidents are those which determine sex, age, race, profession and so on. These sensible likenesses and diversities are the bases for the generalized phantasms which we mentioned before.

It is clear, then, that not only are the substantial form, or such a form with a certain fundamental accident, and actual existence necessary in order that an object be proportioned to

the cognition of the cogitative, but also certain sensible qualities are necessary. Not any sensible qualities, but those properly belonging to a thing according to its fundamental ratio.

What, especially, are the sensible qualities which are required? It would seem that most necessary is a certain figure or shape. On the whole, individuals of the same species appear to have a similar shape; individuals of diverse species appear to have diverse shapes. There is a good reason for this. Individuals of the same species have the same end and the same operations to attain their end. These operations require a certain definite corporeal organization. The same corporeal organization results in a similar shape, for shape is nothing else than the term of quantity. Individuals of diverse species with diverse ends require diverse organizations and have diverse shapes.

Within narrow limits, a certain variation in shape marks a diversity of fundamental accident among individuals of the same species. This is the case, for example, in the matter of sex. But more to be considered in the matter of diversity of fundamental accident is a diversity of proper sensible qualities. For example, coloring marks off races and even, to some extent, nationalities.

For a singular to be proportioned to human cognition, then, not only are the fundamental form and existence necessary, but also certain accidents, and especially shape and proper sensible qualities. And the shape and proper sensible qualities of any particular singular must be in accordance with its own proper

fundamental ratio.

Now it is a matter of experience that among individuals of the same species, for example, among rabbits, there can be a great deal of variation in shape and proper sensible qualities. It is not unthinkable that there be a rabbit of such a shape and color that it be unrecognizable as such. Again, we have often seen very typical looking rabbits. And there are all the degrees in between.

What can we say, then, of the constituent of the beauty of a singular thing? Fundamentally, such beauty consists in the substantial form and the fundamental accident or accidents which the thing may have.[62] Formally, it consists in the due proportion of the shape, or we can say "of the members," and of the proper sensible qualities in accordance with the formal fundament of the thing in question.[63] By its fundamental beauty a thing is proportioned to the simple apprehension of the intellect; by its formal beauty a thing is proportioned to the cognition of the cogitative and thus to the human intellect which depends upon senses.[64]

Thus, beauty is a disposition of the singular material substance by which it is so proportioned in itself that it is suitable to human cognition. It is a physical disposition,

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62. See: In Ep. I ad Cor., cap. 15, lect. 6.

63. St. Thomas sets down the requirements for this sort of beauty in many places, e. g., In Th. Ier., cap. 4g-h; In Div. Nom., cap. 4, lect. 5; Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 49, art. 2, ad lum.

64. Beauty disposes the thing in itself but in order ad aliquid. See: Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 55, art. 2, ad lum.

a quality of the first species. As such, although the beauty of a horse and a woman, a child and an old man, a soldier and a tulip are all different, still beauty is predicated of them all univocally. For the same formal ratio is saved in all of these cases, inasmuch as each has the due proportion of shape and proper sensible qualities proper to it in itself.[65] This is found similarly with regard to health, for although the univocates may differ in their health, in that the health of a woman and an old man, a child and a horse, a bug and an elephant are all different, still the same formal ratio of proportion of the humors according to the nature is found in all of these cases alike.[66]

We may note here that each singular has or lacks at least a triple beauty: beauty of color, beauty of figure and the proper beauty which belongs to it as a singular of such a nature. Sometimes these beauties do not wholly coincide with one another. An infant having the most beautiful color absolutely would not be the most beautiful infant. So it would seem that we must posit not one entitative disposition but at least the three, one for each of the three beauties. And we might as well add others for the other proper sensible qualities.

Apparently, these three beauties are not specifically the same, for the formal ratio of that of the singular as such includes a due proportion of figure and color according to the

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65. See: Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 49, art. 2, ad 1um; I-II, q. 50, art. 1, ad 3um; I-II, q. 55, art. 2, ad 1um; I-II, q. 52, art. 2, c.; In Phys., lib. 7, lect. 5, #6 (in the Leonine.)
66. See: In Ps. Dav., ps. 44b.

nature, while this cannot be understood to apply to the beauty of a color or a figure as such. Seemingly, then, there are a number of species of beauty having a common genus; at any rate, all of them have the common genus of entitative disposition.

A problem arises as to whether beauty as an entitative disposition is something real in the subject. It would seem not, for the disposition of the object in order to cognition seems to be relative to the cognition in question. But the knowing of an object does not put anything real in the object, rather, the knowing subject is perfected from the object and is really related to it.[67]

This difficulty must be answered from a consideration of the real order in the physical universe. The whole material universe exists for man and for his perfection. Man is perfected in diverse ways, but chiefly through knowing.[68] And so, the material universe is ordered not only to man's use, as animals are ordered to satisfy man's hunger, but also and more especially to his knowledge.[69]

With this in mind, we can say that each singular material being has a real relation, based on final causality, to human cognition.[70] It is because human cognition is one end of materi-

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67. And yet, St. Thomas certainly considers beauty to be a real entitative disposition. See, e. g.: Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 49, art. 4, ad lum; I-II, q. 50, art. 1, c..

68. See note 28 supra.

69. Cont. Gent., lib. 3, cap. 22. See also: II Sent., d. 1, q. 2, art. 3, ad 4um.

70. De Wulf, op. cit., p. 199: "The intimation of beauty rests in a determined adaptation of the order of things to contemplation of which this order is the food and end."

al reality that we can posit a real relation of each of these material singulars to cognition. The objective foundation for this relation is precisely that by which the object is disposed to cognition, beauty.

The beautiful object itself, on the other hand, is related to cognition as an extrinsic formal cause to that which it causes. This relation is only logical on the part of the object, but is real on the part of the cognition which the object causes. The beautiful object is really related to cognition as to an end; the knowing subject is really related to the beautiful object as to an extrinsic formal cause of cognition, for cognition takes place through the assimilation of the object by the knowing potency.[71] Beautiful objects, as such, have the aspect of a formal cause. Beauty itself, on the other hand, is the effect of cognition as of a final cause.

The very apprehension of the beauty of an object *in actu signato* would seem to belong to the intellect, for this apprehension involves a knowledge of a relation and relations can be known by the intellect alone.[72]

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71. In *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 5, art. 4, ad 1um, St. Thomas sets down the relation of an extrinsic formal cause to cognition as the causality proper to the beautiful as such. All Thomists hold this relation to be an *ens rationis*. As far as we know, St. Thomas does not explicitly say anywhere that the beautiful object is really related to cognition as to its end, but this would seem a valid deduction from the premises we have set down. A good statement of St. Thomas' doctrine concerning relations is in: *De Pot. Dei*, q. 7, art. 8-11.

72. This apprehension of beauty *in actu signato* is the fifth act of the six we noted above, pp. 28-29. In the third act of these six the beauty of the object is known (in the case of the material singular) in the act of knowing the beautiful object, *in actu exercito*, by the cogitative.

From this explanation of the beauty of the singular we can draw a number of interesting corollaries. For one thing, it is obvious that the general phantasms of different persons will differ according as their experience differs. This indicates that different persons ought to have divergent judgment concerning beauty, but always a judgment in keeping with their experience. In other words, people will like what they are used to. And this is actually the case. And, as we might expect, people of more similar experience have more similar judgment; two people of small and greatly divergent experience have greatly divergent judgment; and two people with a very broad experience always tend to agreement in esthetic taste.

It should not be thought from this fact, however, that beauty is relative to individual experience in such a way that what is truly beautiful to one can be truly not-beautiful to another. This would not be a legitimate conclusion from the fact that some fail to discern beauty and that others have no true judgment of it. For beauty disposes the object so that it is proportioned to human cognition as such, and to its demands as human cognition. It does not dispose the object in proportion to the cognition of this or that particular man, who may be far from the perfection in experience required of a man if he is to be able to acquire accurate intellectual understanding through his senses.

Our explanation also aids in making modern art, as well as classical art, intelligible as to its methods. In classical representation an attempt was made to perfectly copy the

most perfect individual in as great a detail as possible, in the belief that this method would capture the beauty of nature. This was really an attempt to compete with nature in the field in which nature is best suited to produce beauty. In any event, no classical artist could produce a work more beautiful than his model.

In the renaissance period, with the introduction of perspective and distortion, and theories of color and figure harmony, we find attempts to re-present an object, not according to exact copy but according as it looks to us in the light of our experience. Distortion and lighting were used to bring a new emphasis upon precisely the characteristics of objects which are common to all members of their classes. The colors and the figure of the object, at the same time, were frequently altered to produce an over-all work formed more in keeping with the demands of color and figure in themselves, prescinding to some extent from the requirements of the object as a thing of such a nature.

Moreover, the renaissance artist took into account the distortion of the intention of an object which results from peculiar emotional states or from a particular focusing of attention. For example, in painting a picture of a woman the artist might point up her face and hands to the relative neglect of of the rest of her figure. The reason is that the rest of the figure is not generally given the attention devoted to the face and the hands. Again, in painting a picture of a wild animal, the artist might enlarge and emphasize the rough paws, the

teeth and the tongue, thus presenting it as it would appear to someone gazing fearfully upon it. All of these techniques contributed to the production of an image with greater suitability to the eyes and to the common sense, but still with a suitability to the cogitative.

In the peculiar technique of emphasizing the common features to the neglect of the individual characteristics, the renaissance artist made a definite improvment on the work of the classical artist. For he removed himself from competition with nature and began working for a beauty distinctive of art.

All of the tendencies of earlier schools toward non-naturalistic re-presentation have been taken up and pushed ahead by our moderns. Not only are particular details toned down, they may be left out completely. Not only is an object painted as it would appear to one seeing it in a certain emotional condition, it may even be painted as it seems in a dream or is imagined by a lunatic. And, as we saw before, not only may the proportion within the color and figure be improved for the sake of vision and the common sense, an attempt may even be made to produce an object for these senses alone with no re-presentative value.[73]

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73. In setting up three periods in art we do not wish to propose a hard and fast division for this is impossible. There have been abstractionists and naturalists, expressionists and surrealists in all ages. But we do think of classical art as being perfectionistically naturalistic, renaissance art as romantic, while we seem to have a predominance of the insane in modern art. It is interesting to note that modern artists who try to throw substance out of nature are only following modern philosophies; the insanity of modern art seems to be due, at

All of these tendencies seem justifiable as art methods if they are kept within limits. But the artist fails if he so represents objects that the result convenes to the general phantasms of himself only or a few only. In other words, if a work of art cannot be seen to be beautiful by most experienced people, the artist seems to have failed in his attempt to produce beauty. The artist in the ivory tower who works, as he claims, only to express himself is the curse of the whole of modern art.[74] This would seem to be the case with

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73. (continued from the preceding page)
least to some extent, to the prior insanity of modern philosophy.

Any sampling of the works of modern artist and modern art followers should serve to convince us that modern art is following, in general, the tendancies which we have noted. For example, Schnier, Jacques, Sculpture in Modern America, Los Angeles, 1948, p. 56: "The expressionistic sculptor does not aim at a literal translation of his model, but he uses shapes and forms inspired by nature just as his feelings prompt him. To convey the feeling of strength in a statue, the hands may be made twice their natural size. If purple suggests itself as the color for painting the statue of a cow, the cow is painted purple. Proportions as they exist in nature are not duplicated in expressionistic sculpture. ... In his use of natural forms, the expressionistic sculptor on the one hand exaggerates, emphasizes, or wilfully distorts, and on the other subdues, slights, or completely eliminates details."

Another modern tendency is to display the natural material and use its characteristics as much as possible, especially its color. Berenson, Bernard, Aesthetics and History in the Visual Arts, New York, 1948, p. 61: "The enjoyment of materials and the enjoyment of color is perhaps more in the nature of actual than of ideated sensations. This may be why indulgence in the virtues of materials leads to an indifference first to form and then to representation, ending with a preference for artifacts, while those finally are cherished most which sacrifice most to displaying the character of the material." By actual sensations is apparently meant the sensations of the external senses, while all other cognitive operations are called ideated sensations. This author seems to have a very good point, the direction is toward a more simple and more material art, and this tendency is notable in literature and music as well as in sculpture and painting.

74. Indeed, it seems to be proper to God to create solely in self-expression, whereas it is required that man gain some more ultimate good from his work in order to fill up his imperfection. It seems to us that it is not rash to question the sincerity of the so-called expressionists.

surrealistic art and certain of the symbolists.

But it would seem to be the work of another inquiry to determine concerning this question. For we have not proved that art should seek beauty, and we have not shown that it is not the proper end of art to serve as a means of self-expression. All that we can do here with certainty is to set down our conclusions concerning beauty and to note that artistic methods are intelligible, to some extent, in view of our conclusions.

Having now sufficiently treated the meaning of the term beautiful as it is predicated of sensible objects, we must now attempt to determine the meaning of this term as it is applied to those intelligible objects to which we previously discovered it to be applied. These were: human actions, lives and societies, demonstrations, scientific systems, arguments, speeches, and poetry, productions of all of the arts, and nature itself as it is the object of speculation.

We know from our prior argument that beauty in these instances must be that by which the objects are perfectly disposed in proportion to perfect intellectual cognition, that is, to the consideration of an intellect which is itself disposed to an intentional union with reality, in other words, to an intellect having intellectual virtues.[75]

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75. To better understand why intellectual virtues are required that an operation be perfect and delightful, recall that delight perfects an unimpeded operation proceeding from a virtue. See: In Eth., lib. 7, lect. 12, #1493. This definition, of course, convenes only to properly human delights.

What, precisely, does an intellectual virtue do for a man? In general, we can say that it gives unity to his knowledge of reality taken according to one formality. Man's knowledge of reality, even considering reality only according to one formality, needs to be given unity because this knowledge is not one in itself—man does not know reality fully according to a single act.[76]

There are two reasons why man's knowledge of reality is not attained in a single act. One of these is on the part of reality itself, for it is not simple but composite. A single substantial individual requires not only a substantial form but also many accidental perfections and a proper relation to all other things in order to be perfect.[77] The other reason why man's knowledge of reality must be given unity is on the part of the intellect, for it is able to attain only one form at a time in its primary act.[78]

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76. That man's knowledge is not perfect in its simple acts and that it is not unified according to itself are facts which are too evident to need proof here. Likewise, it is clear enough that intellectual virtues do unify knowledge. They do this by rectifying the intellect. What this means, exactly, is a difficult problem. Art is defined as the right *ratio* of the object to be made and prudence the right *ratio* of things to be done. St. Thomas also calls science the right *ratio* of things to be speculated. (See: *Sum. Theol.*, I-II, q. 57, art. 4, c.) *Rectification* must not be understood in the narrow sense of inclining (which is the sense in which it is applied to appetites) for the term is used analogically of the intellect. Rectification of the intellect is through an enlightening. We may conceive the *recta ratio* as a suitable plan, in a sense analogous to that in which Divine providence is called a *ratio*. (See: *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 22, art. 1, c.)

77. I *Sent.*, d. 3, q. 2, art. 3, c.

78. This does not convene to intellect as such, but to the human intellect which depends upon phantasms. But no intellect can know *through* more than one form at once, for the form actuates the intellect and it cannot be in diverse acts at the same time.

But in reality there is not only multiplicity and complexity, there is also a certain unity, a unity which has a faint resemblance to the perfect unity of utterly simple perfection. And so man is able to have a certain unity in his knowledge of reality, in such a manner that his knowledge will have some resemblance to the perfect knowledge of utterly simple perfection. He attains this unity by searching out the relation of one bit of knowledge (and since knowledge is of things, of one thing) to another, and when he finds such relations he has found a unity which was hidden in his knowledge. For things which are related are one, as related they are so unified that they may be known in one act. For example, son and father, since they are related, are known together, and no one can know what a father is unless he understand son at the same time.[79]

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79. From the example it is clear that father and son are not known in the same way when son is known in the knowledge of father. For in this case the son is only known insofar as he is related to the father and is not known absolutely and in himself. Similarly, everything which falls under the consideration of a science is known only insofar as it pertains to the subject of the science, and the whole science is contained implicitly in the subject.

St. Thomas frequently stresses the fact that the proper object of any science is a certain order. In In Eth., lib. 1, lect. 1, #1-2, he proposes the following exposition: "Ordo autem quadrupliciter ad rationem comparatur. Est enim quidam ordo quem ratio non facit, sed solum considerat, sicut est ordo rerum naturalium. Alius autem est ordo, quem ratio considerando facit in proprio actu, puta cum ordinat conceptus suos ad invicem, et signa conceptuum, quia sint voces significativae. Tertius autem est ordo quem ratio considerando facit in operationibus voluntatis. Quartus autem est ordo quem ratio considerando facit in exterioribus rebus, quarum ipsa est causa, sicut in arca et domo.

In objective reality, things are unified by real relations also, for it is in being really related to each other that things substantially divided are joined together. Man, in considering reality according to unified knowledge, either discovers that he has conformed his mind to reality, in the case of speculative knowledge, or that he must conform reality to his mind, in the case of practical knowledge.

In the case of prudence and the arts, it is only after man has done something that the reality which he knows through these habits is perfectly proportioned to his mind. Although there are always more ultimate reasons, this is the proximate reason why man acts, to conform reality to himself. Having done so he can consider the reality which he has brought into conformity with his mind, and in this consideration find his mind and reality in agreement. This act of consideration performed after a work has been accomplished is not an act of practical knowledge, strictly speaking, for it is in no way ordered to operation. Rather, the artist or the prudent man considers the artistic product or the human act already per-

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79. (continued from the preceding page)
"Et quia consideratio rationis per habitum perficitur, secundum hoc diversos ordines quos propria ratio considerat, sunt diversae scientiae. Nam ad philosophiam naturalem pertinet considerare ordinem rerum quem ratio humana considerat sed non facit; ita quod sub naturali philosophia comprehendamus et metaphysicam. Ordo autem quem ratio considerando facit in proprio actu, pertinet ad rationalem philosophiam, cuius est considerare partium orationis adinvicem, et ordinem principiorum adinvicem et ad conclusiones. Ordo autem actionum voluntarium pertinet ad considerationem moralis philosophiae. Ordo autem quem ratio considerando facit in rebus exterioribus constitutis per rationem humanum, pertinet ad artes mechanicas."

formed as though in a certain contemplation.[80]

It is this simple act of consideration of reality according to an intellectual virtue which is the most perfect operation of the intellect. For in this act the intellect attains reality not only partially and incompletely, but actually gains for itself the whole perfection of reality, insofar as this is possible. All prior acts of the intellect are relatively imperfect. All of them leave something more to be desired. And so the appetite for knowledge rests in none of them, but only in the simple consideration which is the term of them all.[81]

Now, what is required on the part of objects that such a consideration be possible, supposing the intellect to have the required virtues? Fundamentally, the actual existence and specific determination of the objects to be grasped as one is necessary. But this is not the condition formally necessary for the perfect act of knowledge. For this act of knowledge presupposes the imperfect acts which require formally only the actuality and specific determination of objects. What is formally required of objects in order that they be proportioned to the act in which the intellect most perfectly operates considering them, is the very relation of the objects among themselves

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80. This act of consideration of the work already performed is essentially speculative. The mode of consideration is not that of composition but that of resolution. The object of the truly practical consideration, as such, is never beautiful, for it is not disposed to the cognition of the intellect. Nor is its consideration delightful for itself, not only because it is not disposed but also because the appetite is in the object and not in the apprehension—the apprehension of practical intellect always has the aspect of a means.

81. See: In Meta., lib. 1, lect. 3, #66-67.

according to the demands of intelligence.

It would seem that we are demanding that nature itself be established according to the demands of reason, when it is the intellect which must conform itself to nature in speculative science. Certainly the natural order does not depend on science when science is gained only from a consideration of that very natural order.

We must agree with the objection that it is absurd that anything should conform to the same science which depends on it. When we say that reality, in order to be proportioned to the consideration of man having speculative science, must have an inter-relation of objects according to the demands of intelligence, we do not mean according to the demands of the same intelligence which it itself determined.

Rather, we mean that if reality is to be proportioned to the perfect consideration of the speculative intellect it must be conformed to a practical intellect, and must have its co-ordination according to the demands of a practical intellect. For the co-ordination of individuals in any real order must be for the sake of the order of the whole to an extrinsic final cause. This being true, the inter-relation of objects in any real order must be according to the demands of intelligence, for it is proper to intelligence to perceive an end and to co-ordinate various elements in order to that end. Formally required of reality, then, in order that it be proportioned to the perfect act of the intellect, is the inter-relation of its various elements according to the demands of intelligence, or,

to say the same thing more simply, intelligent co-ordination.

It might also be objected that the moral act or artistic product need not have intelligent co-ordination of its various elements in order to be proportioned to the consideration of the prudent man or the artist. For the prudent man can know the bad work as well as the good, and the same may be said for the artist. In fact, only the man having intellectual virtue is suited to judge a bad work.

The reply to this objection is that the moral act or the artistic product which falls short of the order which it ought to have, and so is a bad work, is not knowable insofar as it falls short of its due perfection, but only insofar as it retains something of the intelligent co-ordination which it is expected to have. Evil, precisely as such, is unknowable, for it is privation: it is nothing where something ought to be. The evil thing is a good thing which is not good enough. It is knowable insofar as it is perfect and actual and good. On the part of the intellect, the consideration of a bad work is not pleasing to the prudent man or the artist for he desires not any knowledge of human acts or artistic productions but a perfect knowledge. In his somehow speculative consideration of a work already made or an operation already performed, he desires the knowledge of a perfect work or operation, for the speculative consideration of the prudent man or artist depends upon the object, just as every speculative consideration.

We should also note that while the intellect in a perfect

act of consideration perceives the intelligibly beautiful, the same objects have some sensible elements. Since man perceives by means of his senses, it pertains to the full force of things intelligibly beautiful that they be beautiful in sensible modes also, insofar as this is possible.

Let us consider, then, precisely in what the intelligible beauty of various objects consists. We may begin with moral beauty. This may be either the beauty of a single human act, or of a whole group of moral acts covering an entire lifetime or some part of it. Again, it may be the beauty of the ordination of some society which is brought about according to moral science and prudence.[82]

The beauty of a moral act consists fundamentally in the very generic goodness of the act itself, or at least in its generic indifference. For, clearly, that cannot be ordered according to right reason which is, in itself, disordinate. But more pertinent to the formal beauty of a moral act is the order which reason establishes in the circumstances of it.[83] This co-ordination of circumstances may be regarded doubly. If it be considered merely as that by which the act is constituted perfect in order to its final end, then it is seen merely as the objective goodness—or rather, as part of the objective

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82. "...pulchrum in rebus humanis attenditur prout aliquid est ordinatum secundum rationem:..." Sum. Theol., II-II, q. 142, art. 2, c..

83. In Eth., lib. 1, lect. 13, #159-160; In Ep. I ad Cor., cap. 2, lect. 2.

goodness—of the concrete act. If, on the other hand, the very co-ordination of circumstances be recognized as the revelation of intelligence and the cause of the perfection by which the act is supremely morally intelligible, then the co-ordination of circumstances is seen as beauty.[84] It should be noted, however, that the circumstances and their co-ordination bear slightly different relationships to one another as good and as beautiful. Of the circumstances considered as good and as that by which the act is good, the end is most important. As beautiful, on the other hand, the mode of acting, the condition of the agent, and the means employed assume greater importance. For these things are more evident while the end is often hidden to the beholder.[85]

It should also be noted that it is not necessary that the more beautiful act be that which is better, or that a more malicious act be uglier.[86] For in some acts, especially in those of temperance, a greater indication of reason's ordination is present than in others which are better in themselves, for example, in those of justice.[87] On the other hand, a serious injustice, such as a great theft, might not be so ugly as a slight act contrary to temperance, for example, gluttonous eating. We might note, furthermore, that acts of temperance and intemperance frequently have conjoined a sensible beauty or ugliness

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84. In Ep. I ad Cor., cap. 11, lect. 2.
85. See: In Eth., lib. 1, lect. 13; Sum. Theol., II-II, q. 103, art. 1, ad 3um; II-II, q. 145, art. 1, ad 3um; II-II, q. 145, art. 2, ad 2um; II-II, q. 145, art. 4, c..
86. See: Sum. Theol., II-II, q. 116, art. 2, ad 2um.
87. See: Sum. Theol., II-II, q. 141, art. 2, ad 3um; II-II, q. 142, art. 4, c..

recognizable by the cogitative, while acts of justice and injustice do not have such a sensible beauty or ugliness conjoined, or at least not in so great a degree.

A consideration of these factors helps to explain, to a certain extent, the irrationalities of so-called Victorian morality. By this code the decent thing must be done and the indecent thing avoided. It is not surprising that grave injustices might be condoned and judged to be only slight evils while any intemperance would be strongly condemned. By loosening itself from the firm principles of morality, the Victorian age marked a path. The result is that a number of people do not even consider the intelligible beauty of moral acts as a moral norm, but only the sensible beauty or ugliness that is concomitant. Thus the tremendous importance of etiquette and the fact that the gravest offense is to do what is simply not done or to do even the usual thing in an unusual manner.[88]

If the clarity of reason is most obscured by intemperance, it is contained essentially in the contemplative life, to which intemperance, by binding reason, is most opposed. In the contemplative life reason gives intelligent co-ordination to its own acts, insofar as these are human acts.[89] In the active life, on the other hand, it is the will, the passions and the exterior actions as commanded by the will, which participate

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88. For a very brief but lucid display of the fundament of moral principles: In Ep. ad Rom., c. 12, lect. 1.
89. Sum. Theol., II-II, q. 180, art. 2, ad 3um.

reason's clarity insofar as they are ordered by the light of reason. But the beauty which the contemplative life has is a hidden beauty, for it is a beauty of interior acts which do not demand exterior expression, and so it is known and enjoyed only by the contemplative himself.

The moral beauty of an entire life consists in virtue itself, fundamentally, and formally in the co-ordination of many human acts according to reason.[90] It necessarily implies all the goods which are necessary in leading a virtuous life. Other things which tend to increase the clarity of reasonable ordination in the life make for a greater beauty or a certain ornateness of the necessary beauty.[91]

The beauty of a society consists in the co-ordination of many members of the society in virtuous operations. All that is said of the beauty of a life applies here, except that here the beauty formally consists in the co-ordination of the members in the performance of virtuous works, while in the case of a single life the beauty is in the co-ordination of the single acts.[92]

The intelligible beauty of a product of art consists in the co-ordination of its integral parts in view of the end.[93]

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90. See: Sum. Theol., II-II, q. 145, art. 2, c..
91. IV Sent., d. 49, q. 5, art. 1, ad lum.
92. St. Thomas mentions social beauty in at least two places: Sum. Theol., I-II, q. 105, art. 1, s.c.; In Ev. sec. Ioan.,
93. De Wulf, op. cit., p. 63, takes the position that not only by its intrinsic co-ordination is a work beautiful but also by extrinsic factors which set-off the intrinsic beauty. We prefer to say that a thing is beautiful only by that which is within it, although extrinsic factors may make this beauty more apparent.

Machines, with their multitude of parts each serving a particular function in the whole, and each in exact co-ordination with all of the others, display this mode of beauty in a very high degree. But every product of art is a participant in this beauty to some extent, for every product of art is made in the image of man and displays the genius of its maker.

Many products of art have a sensible beauty also. Among useful products this may be only a beauty of color or figure which is given to the work with the express purpose of making it more pleasing to the eyes of man. Again, a useful product may acquire, in the mind of man, a status similar to that of individual material substances, in that man may have a general phantasm by which he recognizes the object. In this case, the product may have a beauty like that of a singular material substance. Such may be the case, for example, with a fine cathedral. The viewer, upon seeing it, may say: "It is pure Gothic." The difficulty which the artist faces is that sensible beauty, that of color, figure, or even that of the singular, may not be attainable if intelligible beauty is to be saved.[94]

In many works of art the intelligible end of the work is a certain operation which is performed through the work or, as if, by it. In such cases, the co-ordination which constitutes the beauty of the work is especially apparent when the object

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94. An example of this is in Sum. Theol., I, q. 91, art. 3, c.. Apparently Gill, Eric, Beauty Looks after Herself, New York, 1933, failed to take this point into consideration.

is in operation. For example, a house has a certain intelligible beauty which consists in the proper co-ordination of all of the materials and of the integral parts of the house. But a house is made to shelter human beings and so it seems to lack in beauty, in that its beauty is not so apparent, if it is unused. Even more, the sensible beauty of the house which is discernible by the cogitative is partially lost if the house is desolate and empty.[95]

As in the case with moral acts, it is not necessarily a better product of art which is more beautiful. A house, for example, having better materials will not be more beautiful than one which has poorer materials co-ordinated in the same way. But contrary to the case in moral acts, detracting from the beauty which a product of art might have sometimes causes it to be a better product. For example, to produce a house with a less perfect co-ordination of materials in view of the end, sheltering, taken absolutely, may result in a product better accomadated to the needs and desires of some particular householder. In other words, the value or goodness of a work of art is judged in relation to its capacity to satisfy legitimate human desires which are particular, while the beauty of the work is judged according to the very end of the work itself which may be taken in the abstract. This is to say nothing of the frequent necessity of disregarding sensible beauty in favor of a greater intelligible beauty, or the beauty of some part in

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95. See: In Ps. Dav., ps. 25e.

favor of the beauty of the whole.

Much debate has been spent on the question of whether an object which can be used for immoral purposes only or an object which constitutes ut in pluribus a serious occasion of sin can be beautiful. Certainly it is obvious that such an object can be sensibly beautiful. For it may have a beautiful color or shape or may even have that disposition by which its accidents are proportioned in accord with its fundamental ratio. It seems that such an object may also be intelligibly beautiful, considered precisely as an object of artistic production. For it may have an intelligent co-ordination of its various members in view of its end, even though that end may be contrary to the moral welfare of man.[96] But this is not to justify the production of such a work, for the artist would sin as a man in producing a work of this kind. And such a work, it should be noted, could not be called good as a work of art, for it would be useless in satisfying legitimate human desires.

The intelligible beauty of an argument, a sermon or a poem is like that of a product of a factive art. It consists in the co-ordination of premises, opinions, persuasive reasons or comparisons in view of the conclusion sought, whether that conclusion be the certain judgment of logic, the probable one of dialectics, the persuasion produced by rhetoric or the aestimation which poetry causes. The beauty of a scientific

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96. De Wulf, op. cit., p. 104, seems to agree with this conclusion. We do not state it as certain but only as probable. It lies outside the immediate area of our investigation anyway.

system would consist in the co-ordination of the various parts, the tracts and the demonstrations in each tract, according to the proper subject.

In the case of poetry, the sensible and the intelligible beauty must be well distinguished. The reading of poetry results in the formation of certain sensate intentions which may be judged beautiful or not according to the work of the cogitative. The poem itself, on the other hand, is composed of a number of comparisons, which ought to be co-ordinated according to the primary end which is to lead the reader to form a certain aestimation (a cogitative comparison or "judgment") concerning something. The intelligible beauty consists in the co-ordination of the comparisons, not in the beauty of the sensible imagery which is used.[97]

Here again, the question arises as to whether a work of a rational art can be beautiful although it may lead to a false conclusion. The demonstrative argument and the scientific system as such cannot include falsity. But a dialectical argument can lead to a false opinion, a speech to an unsound persuasion, or a poem to a bad aestimation. The answer here, it seems, is analogous to that in the case of a product of an art:

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97. This is not the place to enter the complications of poetic theory. We presuppose what we consider to be the theory of Aristotle and St. Thomas. The end of poetry, as we see it, is to lead men to virtue. It does this by presenting certain sensate intentions to them and leading them to certain aestimations. These aestimations are important for the work of prudence. Poetry uses words to call up the sense intentions and lead to the aestimations. It is in aiming at an aestimation rather than at a judgment properly so-called that poetry is formally separated from prose. Much ordinary advertising and propaganda are poetical in this sense.

all of these can be beautiful so long as they retain intelligent co-ordination within themselves, for this is what is formally required for beauty.

When we come to consider physical reality as it exists independently of man's activity, we find that there is intelligible beauty in it. In fact, there are diverse modes of intelligible beauty according to the diverse formalities under which physical reality may be considered.

The naturalist, considering reality as it is mobile, discovers in each species of natural thing a co-ordination of its parts and processes in view of the very form which is also the term of motion. The biologist, dissecting the smallest insect, can find beauty in the co-ordination of part and part, cell and cell, organ and organ. The form is the fundamental principle of this co-ordination insofar as it organizes the matter, and it is the end of this co-ordination insofar as the organization is for the perfection of the form. It is this very co-ordination, issuing from the form as fundament and terminating in it as end which makes reality intelligible to the naturalist, who views reality in the terms of change.

Again, viewing the whole universe of mobile beings as a certain unit,[98] the naturalist discovers a grand beauty in it. This beauty consists in the co-ordination of all the parts of the physical universe, the diverse species of mobile beings, by relations of specific and generic likeness and likewise by

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98. Aristotle does view the universe of mobile beings as a unit in De Coelo, lib. 1. Unfortunately, certain false presuppositions impeded his inquiry so that the truth in it is limited. But the method is that proper to the naturalist.

relations of final causality. It is founded, as in its principle, in the very specific perfections of the mobile beings and is terminated, as in its end, in the perfection of the universe of mobile beings as a whole, that is, in the integrity of the physical universe.[99]

Whether the mathematician, contemplating reality in abstraction from the conditions necessary for physical existence, finds a further beauty in it is a serious question. The mathematician considers separately the form by which a being is quantified and the forms which follow from this quantification although these forms cannot exist separated from the conditions of matter. He thus prescinds from mobile beings as they are good, for they are good only in their physical reality and through their movement.

It seems, however, that he does discover a certain beauty, a beauty which consists in the intelligent co-ordination of the elements of quantities which results in their integrity. For example, the co-ordination of lines and angles which form a certain species of figure.[100]

Since we have delimited our inquiry to physical beauty, we will not take into account the beauty which the metaphysician may find in reality as he gazes upon it.

In using the term <u>beauty</u> to designate the various modes of intelligent co-ordination which we have pointed out, we do

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99. See: <u>De Coelo</u>, lib. 1; <u>Cont. Gent.</u>, lib. 3, cap. 70, cap. 71, cap. 94.

100. See: <u>Meta.</u>, lib. 13, cap. 3, 1078a31-1078b7.

not equivocate, certainly, for in every case we mean to designate the very elements of the object according as they are related to one another according to the demands of over-mastering intelligence, such that the object is proportioned to the perfect cognitive act of simple consideration. And yet we do not use the term univocally in these cases, for the co-ordination of circumstances in a human act or of processes in a mobile being are simply diverse in nature. We must, therefore, use the term analogically, and the concept which it signifies must be one, not simply, but proportionally only.

If we wish to describe beauty as we thus conceive it, we must say that it is nothing else than an object proportioned to that in it by which it is suitable to perfect cognition. The similarity of proportion of object to its own peculiar perfection, in each case, serves as the basis for the unity of our analogous concept.

We have previously seen that the beautiful object, because it is beautiful, does take on the aspect of good. Or, again, the beautiful object may be loved for its own sake independently of the apprehension of it as beautiful. In either case, the possession of the object, as the possession of a certain good, is delightful. And, as we noted before, if the possession is by cognition, the cognitive act itself is delightful insofar as it is the operation by which the suitable good is attained. In such a case, we may call the object <u>beautiful</u> although we are not formally considering it as such. We are formally considering the object as good and appetible, although it is also truly

beautiful. But this use of the term beautiful is material rather than formal.

Again, the delightful cognition itself may be called beautiful by analogy of attribution. This is manifestly the case, for example, when we say: "That is a beautiful sight, it is beautiful to see." Here we attribute the name of beautiful which properly belongs to the object to the very delightful cognitive act itself, since it is in a certain way the effect of the beautiful object.

But we have considered intelligible reality according as it is beautiful in comparison to perfect human cognition, the simple gaze of the well disposed mind of man. But to the absolutely perfect cognition, the highest and first speculative act, the subsisting to-know of God, that object alone is perfectly proportioned and so beautiful which is infinite in perfection without composition, very Divinity Himself, to Whom be honor and glory forever and ever.

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