

Of the reflective and critical nature of judging, Aquinas was quite aware: "Intellectus autem habet apud se similitudinem rei intellectae, secundum quod rationes incomplexorum concipit; non tamen propter hoc ipsam similitudinem diiudicat, sed solum cum componit vel dividit.... et ideo in hac sola secunda operatione intellectus est veritas vel falsitas, secundum quam non solum intellectus habet similitudinem rei intellectae, sed etiam super ipsam similitudinem reflectitur, cognoscendo et diiudicando ipsam."²⁶⁰ Moreover, though one might urge that the resolutio in principia is simply a process of reasoning,²⁶¹ still it is reasoning only as long as it is process; in its term reasoning is understanding, for while reasoning proceeds from one element to another, still it reaches its goal with a many integrated into a single view; and that single view is understanding.²⁶² Perhaps the Thomist name for this critical act of understanding is the "intellectus ut terminus rationis."²⁶³ The most convincing text would be: "est enim rationis proprium circa multa diffundi, et ex eis unam simplicem cognitionem colligere.... rationalis consideratio ad intellectualem terminatur secundum viam resolutionis, in quantum ex multis ratio colligit unam et simplicem veritatem."²⁶⁴ However, the distinctions are not drawn ^{all at once and} explicitly: there is the critical act of understanding, which is prior to the act of judgment-assent; there is the act of judgment-assent which is the verbum of the critical act; there is concomitant consciousness and also reflective consciousness (explicit consideration) of the ~~xxx~~ judgment-assent; there is the contemplative act of understanding which