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The fleeting flash of prophetic vision: Meteorology and Metaphysics from Avicenna (and the Qurʾān) to Dante

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The Fleeting Flash of Prophetic Vision.

Meteorology and Metaphysics from Avicenna (and the Qurʾān) to Dante

Non c'è pensiero che imprigioni il fulmine
ma chi ha veduto la luce non se ne priva.

Eugenio Montale, *Per album*

Abstract This article employs a range of academic methodologies, including intellectual history, comparative literature, and history of philosophy, to explore the philosophical and scriptural origins of the concept of the "fleeting flash" of lightning (Arabic *al-barq al-ḫāṭif*, Latin *fulgor cito pertransiens*) employed in Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġazālī's *Intentions of the Philosophers* to describe a wakeful kind of veridical vision bordering on prophecy, and to suggest the connection between this *fulgor* and the "fulgore" striking the mind of the pilgrim in Dante's *Paradiso* 33, 141. The contribution investigates the Qurʾānic source for al-Ġazālī's original Arabic expression, showing its reprises in a highly theological passage of Avicenna's commentary on Book Lambda of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, as well as in Abū l-Fatḥ al-Šahrastānī's *Book of Religions and Sects*. As to the philosophical background of al-Ġazālī's doctrine, the article considers the relevance of Avicenna's teachings on psychology, showing in particular how Pietro Alighieri places his exegesis of the final canto of the *Commedia* under the aegis of the Arabic doctrine of the inner senses, which he took from Albert of Orlamünde's *Philosophia pauperum* (an epitome of Albert the Great's natural philosophy). In conclusion, the article advocates for a cross-cultural and comparative method of intellectual history, capable of highlighting the connections between meteorology and metaphysics in Dante's poetry and in his diversified potential sources, which definitely include Arabic-Islamic Peripatetic works.

Keywords Dante Alighieri, Arabic-Islamic philosophy, al-Ġazālī, Avicenna, Qurʾān

Beginning by the End: *Fulgore*

At the very end of the extraordinary journey recounted in Dante's *Divina Commedia*, the pilgrim's mind is struck by a sudden *fulgore*, "a flash of lightning, wherein came its wish" (*Paradiso* 33, 140–41: "se non che la mia mente fu percossa / da un fulgore in che sua voglia venne"). Unspeakably, the flash of divine light fulfils the yearning of the poet's mind, which is thus confronted with the by itself unknowable infinity of God's presence. A few years ago, this crowning line of the *Paradiso* was suggestively associated by Paolo Falzone, in passing, with a specific excerpt of a medieval Arabic-into-Latin translation of a philosophical text, in which an unexpectedly similar *fulgor* also appears (Falzone 46n1). The text in question is the *Summa theoricae philosophiae* (*Compendium of Theoretical Philosophy*), also known as *De philosophorum intentionibus*, the Latin version—penned by the Toledan translator

Dominicus Gundissalinus, and by his Arabic-speaking collaborator known as "Iohannes Hispanus"—of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġazālī's *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa* (*The Intentions of the Philosophers*).[1] In the last treatise of the Latin *Intentions*, al-Ġazālī (Latinized as Algazel) describes indeed a specific kind of quasi-prophetic visions in wakefulness as similar to a "fleeting flash" (*quasi fulgor cito pertransiens*).

Despite the closeness of the terminological parallel (the identity of the infrequent keyword *fulgor* / *fulgore*), the two texts at stake are, of course, very far removed from one another: what could indeed the *Divina Commedia*, the undisputed masterpiece of Italian poetry and a monument of Christian faith, have in common with an apparently obscure text of Peripatetic philosophy, originally written in the easternmost domains of the Islamic empire by a (nonetheless renowned) Muslim theologian? Falzone's proposal of connection was, accordingly, very cursory and conveniently cautious. Nonetheless, it was, to my eyes at least, very acute and persuasive, so that I deemed it worth following up on his brief pointer in a previous contribution of mine (Signori, "*Quasi fulgor*"). There, I endeavored to substantiate the claim of some sort of reading or 'memory' of al-Ġazālī's text on the part of Dante, without however suggesting the presence of a mechanical borrowing, or worse of a direct filiation of Dante's verse from this potential source. My goal was rather to show that a conceptual and formal correspondence between this line of the *Paradiso* and an Arabic philosophical text of the Aristotelian tradition, as surprising as it might seem at first glance, does, indeed, exist.

My analysis revealed that the simile of the fleeting flash pertains to a prophetological discourse of Avicennan allegiance,[2] and that this context chimes with some of the most prominent theoretical concerns of Dante's *Paradiso*. In particular, it is highly significant that (compositive) imagination (*phantasia* in Algazel's text) plays a vital role in bringing to the fore the contents of the wakeful quasi-prophetic vision, and that its subsequent ceasing is instrumental for an actual "revelation" to be acquired and preserved.[3] As to the crucial questions whether Dante could have known Algazel's Latin text directly, and whether Albert the Great, whose authority as a philosophical source for Dante has long been acknowledged in scholarship, might have acted as transmitter also regarding the issue of the prophetic lightning, I was able to establish that the Latin translation of the *Intentions* was available in Florence at Dante's times, and that Albert's most persuasive parallel passage for Algazel's *fulgor*, albeit likely known to Dante, is conceptually farther from *Paradiso* 33 than its Arabic-Latin counterpart.[4]

Building on these results, I wish to present here a companion piece to my previous article, with a different focus and a different agenda. To complement my earlier emphasis on the Latin (and Italian) side of the story, in what follows I will investigate its Arabic and Islamic background. In particular, I will explore the likely Qurʾānic source for al-Ġazālī's original Arabic expression, which will be later reprised *verbatim* by al-Šahrastānī in the exposé of the philosophers' doctrines he includes in his *Kitāb al-Milal wa-l-Niḥal* (*Book of*

Religions and Sects). Moreover, I will discuss a by all means pivotal occurrence of a similar turn of phrase in Avicenna's commentary on Book Lambda of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, originally part of his *summa* known as *Kitāb al-Inṣāf* (*Book of Fair Judgment*). This choice of focus stems from my conviction that a genealogical excavation into the origin of al-Ġazālī's Latin expression, which, following Falzone's lead, I have previously compared with Dante's poetry, can help to better understand not only the original Arabic text, but also Dante himself. This contribution will therefore endeavor to go to the roots of a Latin expression that is so prominent and expressively conspicuous in its immediate context as to make its poetic reuse by Dante at least plausible. If, indeed, these roots are ultimately to be found in the Qur'ān, as I am going to propose, then the strong theological significance of the expression and its literary sophistication will appear all the more sharp, and its contextual importance in the various authors we will be considering (Avicenna, al-Ġazālī, al-Šahrastānī, and Dante himself) all the more credible.

Fleeting Prophecies: Avicenna, al-Ġazālī and al-Šahrastānī

The main focus on Abū Ḥāmid al-Ġazālī (d. 1111) and his Latin alias Algazel in my previous article was justified from the point of view of Latin philosophy and its possible reception in Dante's vernacular. However, once the text is reinstated in its original context, its presuppositions and its rationale admittedly become much clearer. First of all, it is worth reporting here al-Gazali's text in full, in both its Arabic original (with an English translation) and its medieval Latin version.

Medieval Latin text Muckle 191.20–192.1	**Arabic-English translation** Signori, *Intentions* §439	**Arabic text** Dunyā 378.25–379.9[5]
Una est cum anima sic est fortis, quod non impeditur a sensibus, nec dominantur ei, nec submergunt eam ut propter eos prohibeatur ab intentione sua. Sed propter fortitudinem suam, dilatatur ad speculandum simul utramque partem, superiorem scilicet et inferiorem, sicut cum aliquis adeo fortis est, ut simul possit et scribere et loqui et intelligere loquentem. Possibile est igitur ut huiusmodi anima, quia	One of the two is that the soul is strengthened in such a way that the senses do not occupy it or overcome it so as to absorb it and to prevent it from its occupation. Rather, by its power, it is expanded to speculate on the superior side and the inferior side [D379] simultaneously, just as some souls are strengthened so that they [are able to] gather, in one [and the same] condition, the [act] of speaking and writing. Indeed, in some states it is permitted that the occupation of the senses is caused to subside by the likes	أحدهما أن تقوى[6] النفس قوة لا تشغلها الحواس ولا تستولى عليها، بحيث تستغرقها وتمنعها من شغلها، بل يتسع بقوتها[7] للنظر إلى جانب العلو وجانب | د٣٧٩ | السفل جميعاً، كما يقوى بعض النفوس، فجمع[8] في حالة واحدة، بين أن يتكلم ويكتب.[9] فمثل هذه النفوس يجوز أن يفتر عنها في بعض الأحوال شغل الحواس، ويطلع إلى عالم الغيب. فيظهر لها منه[10] بعض الأمور فيكون **مثل البرق الخاطف**. وهذا النوع من النبوة.

cessat ab occupatione sensuum, elevetur ad mundum superiorem, in quo apparet ei aliquid de rebus, sed hec apparentia est **quasi fulgor cito pertransiens**; et haec est una species prophetandi.

Si autem debilis fuerit phantasia, tunc id quod revelatur ei de occultis remanebit in conservatrice id ipsum, et fiet verum praesagium; sed si fortis fuerit, aptabitur ex natura sua ad conformandum. Hoc igitur est praesagium cui opus est interpretatione, sicut visio in hoc eget etiam interpre[M192]tatione.

of these souls, and [it is also permitted] that they ascend to the world of the unknown. Thus, some matters [coming] from it will appear to them manifestly, but it is **like the fleeting flash**. This species [belongs] to prophecy.

Then, if the imaginative [faculty] weakens, that which has been unveiled of the unknown remains in itself in the retention, and so it is an unadulterated revelation. If, [on the contrary,] the imaginative [faculty] is strengthened, it will be occupied with the nature of imitation. This revelation, then, will be in need of the allegorical interpretation, just as that vision is in need of the [dream] interpretation.

ثم إن ضعفت المتخيلة بقى في الحفظ ما انكشف من الغيب بعينه، وكان[11] وحياً صريحاً. وإن قويت المتخيلة اشتغلت بطبيعة[12] المحاكاة. فيكون هذا الوحي مفتقراً إلى التأويل، كما تفتقر تلك[13] الرؤيا إلى التعبير.

The context of this excerpt is an extensive discussion of various forms of divinatory experiences, which al-Ġazālī includes in the fifth and last treatise of his *Physics*, the section of his encompassing *summa* that deals with natural philosophy. While the fourth treatise of *Physics* has to do with doctrines ultimately reminiscent of Aristotle's *De anima* (*i.e.*, with psychology proper), the fifth tract deals with psycho-physiological material, with sizeable oneirological, prophetological, and eschatological projections. Albeit displaying specific and considerable Avicennan additions, heavily influenced by the Islamic context, this material ultimately derives from the peculiar Arabic reworking of Aristotle's *Parva Naturalia*, known in Arabic as *al-Ḥiss wa-l-maḥsūs* (*On the Sense and What is Sensed*) from the title of the first work of the collection (Hansberger 51). More particularly, the passage quoted above comes from a section on wakeful divinatory visions, part of a quartet devoted more generally to dreams and visions, either true or false: chapter V.5 deals with veridical dreams, V.6 with confused (and thus mendacious) dreams, our V.7 with veridical visions occurring while the foreseer is awake, and finally V.8 with false wakeful visions. Chapter V.9, immediately following this compact set of four oneirological chapters, is devoted to the analysis of the concept of prophecy, which, following Avicenna's account, is divided into three kinds: one dependent on the soul as a whole (or better, in Avicennan terms, on its motive faculty), one on its imaginative faculty, and the third on the speculative faculty of the rational soul. This further treatment is anticipated in our passage by the explicit reference to prophecy which immediately follows the mention of the *fulgor* / *barq*: "This species [belongs] to prophecy [*nubuwwa*]" (Latin *haec est una species prophetandi*). The kind of veridical wakeful vision

described by al-Ġazālī, and assimilated to the "fleeting flash" of light, is thus understood as a kind of prophecy, and therefore as a higher form of revealed knowledge—a circumstance which resonates well with the Dantean context from which we took our cue, where the *fulgore* reveals to the pilgrim, in unspeakable fullness, what he was willing to know of the divine essence. At the end of chapter V.7 in al-Ġazālī, our kind of vision is even called a "perfection" [*tamām*].

The importance of the mode of quasi-prophetic vision described in our passage seems indeed to be confirmed by the second part of the text quoted above, in which the highly theological notions of 'revelation' [*waḥy*] and of its 'allegorical interpretation' [*taʾwīl*] (Griffel 89–90n3 for this rendition) are significantly brought to the fore. This important text—which also has a parallel in a further, late *summa* by Avicenna, the *Pointers and Reminders* [*al-Išārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*][14]—involves crucial notions of dream interpretation and allegorical exegesis, which it would be too lengthy to explore here in full. Suffice it to say that the visionary "fleeting flash" mentioned by al-Ġazālī appears coherently framed as a kind of highly prophetic *waḥy*, something 'revealed' to the foreseer without the concurrence, and beyond the reach, of their rational capabilities; and precisely because of this it needs an interpretation, *i.e.*, the extraction of an inner meaning from an outward symbol, or image.[15] This is in keeping with previous scholarly recognition of the notion of *waḥy* as specifically reserved to prophetic revelation in al-Ġazālī's philosophical and theological production (Treiger 65–66).

A further element of al-Ġazālī's text which needs to be underlined is the reference to the "world of the unknown" [*ʿālam al-ġayb*], toward which the soul is dragged, and which it sees in its truthful vision. This reference is doubled by the formula "that which was unveiled of the unknown" (Arabic *mā inkašafa min al-ġayb*, Latin *id quod revelatur ei de occultis*). For the sake of Dante's potential reception of this text, it seems particularly significant that the formula *yaṭluʿu ilà ʿālam al-ġayb* is rendered into Latin as *elevetur ad mundum superiorem*. With that, the Latin text effectively interprets the Arabic original, by stating that the vision draws the soul up to a higher, loftier world—again, it would seem, an aspect common to Dante's own *fulgore*, which draws the mind up and beyond itself, to the highest possible object of contemplation. More generally, the description of the elevation to a *mundus superior*, a higher world, appears to be much in keeping with Dante's journey up to the Empyrean Heaven, described throughout the *Paradiso* and achieved in its last cantos.

Interestingly, al-Ġazālī's original Arabic text, and particularly the expression *al-barq al-ḫāṭif*, is reprised and quoted *verbatim* by a further Muslim author, Abū l-Fatḥ al-Šahrastānī (d. 1153), in his comprehensive book on religions and sects, the *Kitāb al-Milal wa-l-Niḥal*. The book includes a lengthy section on the doctrines of the peculiar "sect" represented by the philosophers of Aristotelian allegiance (the *falāsifa*). This treatment of Arabic philosophy is actually modelled almost exclusively on Avicenna's system of thought, taken as paradigmatic of the entire movement of *falsafa*. In turn, some important junctures and

doctrines of Avicenna's system are expounded by al-Šahrastānī *via* al-Ġazālī's version of them in the *Intentions of the Philosophers*. Our passage is cited in the section on natural philosophy of the *Milal*, as the third point of the sixth treatise in that section (Mahnā–Fāʿūr 575.6–10; French transl. Jolivet–Monnot 482–83). While the excerpt constitutes a condensed compilation of al-Ġazālī's longer passage quoted above, the Qurʾānic expression *al-barq al-ḫātif* (at line 8) is reprised *verbatim*. Al-Šahrastānī's quotation, along with several others occurring in the same area of the text, testifies to the enduring relevance of al-Ġazālī's reformulation of key philosophical doctrines developed by Avicenna, in so far as the text of the *Intentions* is used as a proxy to the master's own works whenever an abridged, clear, and structurally coherent version was needed. Beside the general quality and accuracy of the philosophical exposé penned by al-Ġazālī, in the specific case we are treating this abiding historical relevance might have been prompted further by the peculiar nature of the quoted excerpt, which includes a prominent Qurʾānic reminiscence.

Storms and Lightnings from the Qurʾān to Avicenna

The particular effectiveness of al-Ġazālī's turn of phrase is more easily explained if one considers that its ultimate source is, in all likelihood, the holy book of Islam. The most relevant passage to assess this derivation is the following.

***Qurʾān*, Sūrat *al-Baqara* [*The Cow*] (2.19–20), transl. Arberry**

أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِم مِّنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٩﴾ يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ۖ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُم مَّشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

[19] [O]r as a cloudburst out of heaven in which is darkness, and thunder, and lightning [*barq*] – they put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps, fearful of death; and God encompasses the unbelievers; [20] the lightning wellnigh snatches away their sight [*yakādu l-barqᵘ yaḫṭafu abṣārᵃ-hum*]; whensoever it gives them light, they walk in it, and when the darkness is over them, they halt; had God willed, He would have taken away [*la-ḏahaba*] their hearing and their sight. Truly, God is powerful over everything.

In these beautiful ayahs from the sura of the *Cow*, the "unbelievers" [*kāfirūna*] are all but blinded by a veritable divine lightning [*barq*], which suddenly erupts from the darkness of a deafening thunderstorm and almost "snatches away their sight." The verb used by the Qurʾān to capture this dazzling quality of the God-sent *barq* is *yaḫṭafu*, from the same root (*ḫ-ṭ-f*) that al-Ġazālī employs, in the present participle (*ḫāṭif*), as a determination of the flash of lightning that he likens to the wakeful divinatory vision. It is particularly remarkable, in this imaginative and yet highly balanced Qurʾānic text, that the lightning is both the

only source of light and guidance in the obscurity of the tempest *and* a possible cause of blinding and despair. What gives the light and allows to discern the road is also, by that very same token, the potential instrument of bedazzlement and sightlessness. Metaphors aside, this seems to imply that God can be the source of both revelation and concealment: He can make Himself known and visible, but also cloak His essence from the gaze of human beings.

***Qur'ān*, Sūrat *al-Nūr* [*The Light*] (24.43), transl. Arberry**

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُزْجِي سَحَابًا ثُمَّ يُؤَلِّفُ بَيْنَهُ ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُ رُكَامًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ وَيُنَزِّلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِن جِبَالٍ فِيهَا مِن بَرَدٍ فَيُصِيبُ بِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَصْرِفُهُ عَن مَّن يَشَاءُ ۖ يَكَادُ سَنَا بَرْقِهِ يَذْهَبُ بِالْأَبْصَارِ ﴿٤٣﴾

[43] [H]ast thou not seen how God drives the clouds, then composes them, then converts them into a mass, then thou seest the rain issuing out of the midst of them? And He sends down out of heaven mountains, wherein is hail, so that He smites whom He will with it, and turns it aside from whom He will; wellnigh the gleam of His lightning snatches away the sight [*yakādu sanā barq*^{i}*-hi yaḏhabu bi-l-abṣār*^{i}].

Interestingly, the very same complex of ideas recurs almost identical in a further passage of the Qur'ān, from the sūra of *Light*, which rehearses the imagery of the storm, and even repeats the exact same structure of the clause concerning the lightning (with the verb of approximation, *kāda*, introducing the action almost performed by the *barq*). A couple of differences between the two Qur'ānic texts, however, do stand out: *Qur'ān* 24.43 is richer in meteorological elements than *Qur'ān* 2.19–20 (it explicitly evokes rain and hail, as opposed to the sole thunder of the other text); further, it mentions the "gleam" (*sanan*) of the divine lightning (*barq*) as the properly blinding element of the sudden burst of light; finally—and most notably for our purposes—it uses the verb *yaḏhabu* rather than *yaḫṭafu* to express the subtraction of sight caused by the flash (though *ḏahaba* also occurs in 2.20). While the context is very close, therefore, it is *Qur'ān* 2.19-20 that provides the closest terminological parallel for al-Ġazālī's choice of words in the *Intentions*.[16]

This same Qur'ānic background is certainly at the basis of a germane passage in the portion of commentary on Book Lambda of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* of Avicenna's *Kitāb al-Inṣāf* (*Book of Fair Judgment*). The *K. al-Inṣāf* must have been a comprehensive *summa* of philosophy, which however got lost at a very early stage (in 1030, just a couple years after its drafting) and is now extant only in fragments (Gutas 144–55). The relevant excerpt for this analysis, taken from Avicenna's commentary on Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Λ 7, 1072^{b}14–16, reads as follows (Geoffroy, Janssens, and Sebti 59.151–54, my translation):

> We say: As for us, despite the weakness of our conceptualization of the strong intelligized [objects] and our immersion in the corporeal nature, we may nonetheless get some fleeting access [to them] [*qad natawaṣṣalu ʿalà sabīl al-iḫtilās*], in such a way that a conjunction [*ittiṣāl*] with the First True is manifest for us. It is then as a magnificent happiness [*saʿāda ʿaǧība*] in very LITTLE TIME. HE HAS THIS STATE ALWAYS, WHILE

> THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US, because we are corporeal [beings] and we cannot look [*lā yumkinunā an našīma*] at that divine lightning-bearing cloud [*tilka l-bāriqa l-ilāhiyya*] except fleetingly [*ḫatfat*^{an}] and furtively [*ḫulsat*^{an}].[17]

The precise connection of the final sentence of this passage with *Qurʾān* 2.19–20—which shares with it the usage of both the roots of 'lightning' (*b-r-q*) and of 'fleetingness' (*ḫ-ṭ-f*) — has already been acknowledged in scholarship (Bertolacci, "Power" 573n45), although the phrase is considered by the editors of Avicenna's commentary as a mere "tournure littéraire" (Geoffroy, Janssens, and Sebti 96–97n46). It goes however to the merit of the editors of the Arabic text that they recognized, in the phrase *an našīma tilka l-bāriqa*, the traces of the fixed expression *šāma barq*^{an}, in the highly specific sense of "looking at the sky during a storm to see where the lightning will strike" or "where it will rain" (*ibidem*; the meaning is registered in Lane 1634b). Further, it is remarkable that Avicenna in his commentary uses the quite technical word *bāriqa*, which appears to be referring to the quality of emitting flashes of lightning possessed by a raincloud (Kazimirski I 114b "qui lance des éclairs (nuage)"; Lane 191b "shining, gleaming, or glistening", but also more specifically "having, or containing, [or emitting,] lightning"; Geoffroy, Janssens, and Sebti 96–97n46). It seems, therefore, that Avicenna's metaphysical and theological explanation of the partial, always imperfect knowledge we may acquire of the divine essence specifically rests on a coherent meteorological metaphor. Divine essence is represented by a stormcloud—a darkened, *per se* unknowable object—which can emit sudden, luminous lightnings. In turn, our efforts to look at the divine cloud are likened to the weather-forecasting gaze of someone furtively watching the sky in order to understand where the lightning will strike. The fugacity of this human gaze is justified by the blinding quality of the flash of light that the *bāriqa* can discharge, much in keeping with the insistence of the Qurʾānic texts we have considered before on the double nature—illuminating and yet paradoxically obscuring—of the divine lightning.

Meteorology and Metaphysics: Dante's *Folgorazioni*

After the analysis of both the Qurʾānic and the philosophical contexts which make use of the imagery of the "fleeting flash" in Arabic milieu, we are now in a position to better reflect on the general role of such images of fulguration in metaphysics and poetry. With admirable continuity in both time and space, meteorology appears, indeed, as a repository of metaphors and similes from which philosophers, theologians, and poets alike have drawn aplenty in order to grasp even a tiny spark of the godhead's glorious presence ("una favilla sol de la tua gloria", as Dante puts it in the same last canto of the *Commedia* from which we took our cue). Wonder and awe in the presence of exceptional natural phenomena is recognized as a pivotal starting point of philosophical reflection since the time of Aristotle, at

the very least (*Metaphysics* A [I] 2, 982b12-14: "For it is owing to their wonder that men both now begin and at first began to philosophize . . . e.g. about the phenomena of the moon and those of the sun and the stars, and about the genesis of the universe", transl. Ross 1554). The commentary by Alexander of Aphrodisias on this passage further emphasizes the specific meteorological nature of many phenomena causing initial wonder in the soon-to-be philosopher: "He (*scil.* Aristotle) says that men at first came to investigate and philosophize because they wondered at the apparent strangeness of ordinary things around them: for example (as the case might be) why amber attracts chaff-like things and the magnet iron, or what the rainbow is, or about the composition of the clouds in general, or where claps of thunder come from, or how flashes of lightning occur." (Dooley 36).

Similarly, the Bible and the Qurʾān alike often insist on the manifestations of the divine in weather signs, from the gentle breeze to the menacing storm, from the fire to the clouds (a detailed *conspectus*, with reference to Hebrew terminology, is provided by Scott). The revelation to Moses of the Ten Commandments in *Exodus* 19, 16, for instance, is announced, anticipated, and framed by a storm with thunders and lightnings, sign of the unapproachable majesty of the divine ("Iamque advenerat tertius dies, et mane inclaruerat; et ecce coeperunt audiri tonitrua ac micare fulgura et nubes densissima operire montem"); and in the Gospel of Matthew, the coming of the Son of Man is similarly likened to a lightning seen from East to West (*Mt* 24, 27: "sicut enim fulgur exit ab oriente et paret usque in occidentem, ita erit adventus Filii hominis"). Further, light metaphors in all their astounding variety abound throughout the history of theology and metaphysics as substitutes for the inexpressible characteristics of the divine essence or proxies for the intelligibility of immaterial substances (Tarrant; Schroeder; Bertolacci, "Power"). It comes thus as no wonder that Dante himself should have picked up on this extremely rich tradition, and that his own poetical works teem with references to moments of fulguration (Santagata; Mocan, *Arca* 235; Stabile).

The *Commedia* itself abounds with such imagery. In *Paradiso* 21, 4–12, Beatrice warns Dante that if she were to smile, her ever-increasing paradisiac beauty would quite literally reduce him to ashes—as in the mythical episode of Semele, burnt by the vision of Zeus—just as a bolt of lightning may incinerate the leafy branch it strikes ("tanto splende / che 'l tuo mortal podere, al suo fulgore, / sarebbe fronda che trono scoscende"). It is remarkable that the lightning is designated here with the word *fulgore* (from Latin *fulgor*), the same occurring in *Paradiso* 33, rather than with *folgore* (from Latin *fulgur*), which would be the standard term for a lightning in early Italian.[18] This atypical choice notwithstanding, the subsequent mention of thunder (*trono*) makes the meteorological underpinning of the metaphor indubitable. By consequence, it is not entirely far-fetched to assume a meteorological foundation for the *fulgore* of the last canto, too. A confirmation of this can be found in *Paradiso* 23, 40–45, in which lightning (called "fire from out a cloud", "foco di nube") is used as a paradigmatic example of "ec-stasis", of the expansion of the mind out of itself, so much

that memory cannot hold and retain the vision—precisely as it happens in *Paradiso* 33 (Barolini 223; Mocan, *Arca* 233–54). Once again, therefore, interpreting the *fulgore* of *Paradiso* 33 (also) as a Ġazālīan *fulgor*—with its background in the Qurʾānic and Avicennan 'meteorological theology' we have been considering earlier—helps bridging the gap with the *foco di nube* of *Paradiso* 23, and allows thus to reinforce the already well-argued structural connection between these two pivotal moments of Dante's journey.[19]

In both *Paradiso* 23 and *Paradiso* 33 we might then have the description of a fugacious, rapturous vision transcending the normal capacities of the human intellect. And in both cases, we might face the same meteorological-prophetic image: that of a lightning, a flash of light suddenly exploding in the mind of the pilgrim, blinding his human faculties, but also thereby satisfying his will. In this direction, the Qurʾānic background we have explored before comes in particularly handy, for it allows to specify the precise semantics of *ḫāṭif* not only as "fleeting", but also as "dazzling" or "blinding". It is *ḫāṭif*, in sum, that which (almost) snatches away the eyesight due to its excessive, abrupt splendor. In this regard, it is all the more relevant that Dante's own *fulgore*, with the striking force of its sudden light, seems to retrieve, albeit for sure unconsciously, the original Qurʾānic meaning of the expression—the blinding quality of the flash of lightning of divine glory, which conceals itself in the very moment in which it reveals its full brightness to the weak eyes of the pilgrim.

Phantasy and Memory: Pietro Alighieri Reader of Avicenna and Albert of Orlamünde

If Dante had any access to al-Ġazālī's text at all, he must have read it in its Latin version, which renders *ḫāṭif* with the elegant expression *cito pertransiens* ("immediately," "promptly passing away"). The Latin translation effectively highlights a different element implicit in the semantics of Arabic *ḫāṭif*, which represents, in turn, one last crucial aspect of similarity between the contexts of Algazel's and Dante's *fulgores*—that is, the utter fugacity of the vision, and thus, implicitly but well perceivably, the inadequacy of memory (and of any other retaining faculty, for that matter) with respect to it. It is well-known that precisely this is one of the core ideas of the last canto of the *Comedy*. It appears very clearly, for instance, in *Paradiso* 33, 55–63, in which the pilgrim's memory famously yields to the last "oltraggio" and the vision ceases almost entirely ("quasi tutta cessa / mia visïone"; see Pertile 247–63). Likewise, the notion of the ephemerality of the vision surfaces in the ever-famous, extraordinary simile with Neptune seeing the shadow of the ship Argo navigating the seas above him for the very first time (*Paradiso* 33, 94–96: "un punto solo m'è maggior letargo / che venticinque secoli a la 'mpresa / che fé Nettuno ammirar l'ombra d'Argo") and, of course, in the passage from which we took our cue, at the very end of the canto (lines 142–45). Here, it is another faculty of the soul, distinct from memory— the *alta fantasia*—to be recognized as failing after the dazzling flash of the last vision. As I have noticed elsewhere, this

reference to the "lofty phantasy" chimes well with a further element of the text by al-Ġazālī we are exploring, in which the compositive imagination (Arabic *mutaḫayyila*)—rendered in Latin with the term *phantasia*—plays a central role not only in generating the vision, but even in ensuring the preservation of a veridical trace of the revealed content (Signori, "*Quasi fulgor*").

From the point of view of the history of psychological doctrines of Arabic origin, one further consideration imposes itself. Throughout the famed Dantean tercets that we have briefly considered, the lexicon describing the faculties responsible for the soul's cognitive functions is frequently employed. These faculties—the common sense, the faculty of forms or retentive imagination, the imaginative faculty or compositive imagination or phantasy, the estimative faculty, and memory— are known altogether as "internal (or 'inner') senses" in the Avicennan tradition.[20] They also feature prominently in al-Ġazālī's *Intentions*, in particular in the Fourth and Fifth treatises of his *Physics*. It seems thus very noteworthy that Pietro Alighieri, Dante's son, quotes precisely this famous doctrine by Avicenna in the first redaction of his commentary on the *fulgore* and the *fantasia* of *Paradiso* 33 (Nannucci 739).

> Ultimo dicit quod ejus mens fuit percussa a quodam fulgore, in quo ejus voluntas fuit finita, unde ejus desiderium ex parte objecti, et ejus velle ex parte sui, volvebatur in non plus velle; et sic non ulterius volebat videre per amorem, idest per Deum moventem coelum et stellas, unde ejus haec alta phantasia defecit. Et sic vide quomodo auctor hanc suam fictam poesim ponat sub sensu communi et phantasia, in qua quilibet sensus particularis non judicat nisi de proprio objecto, sicut visus de colore, auditus de sono, et eorum differentiis. Ad quam phantasiam, sive sensum communem, vires particulares recurrunt in somnio, et ut a principio formali fluunt in vigilando, in qua etiam formas sensibiles absentes videmus. Qui sensus communis, in quantum non obedit rationi, dicitur phantasia; qui sensus communis est vis animae sensibilis ordinata in prima concavitate cerebri, recipiens per se ipsam proprie omnes formas, quae imprimuntur a quinque nostris sensibus secundum Avicennam.

The quoted passage by Avicenna is taken from chapter I.5 of the treatise *On the Soul* (*Kitāb al-Nafs*) in his *magnum opus*, the *Book of Healing*/*Cure* (*Kitāb al-Šifāʾ*), which could be read in a widespread Latin translation at Dante's times: "Virium autem apprehendentium occultarum vitalium prima est fantasia [Arabic *banṭāsiyā*, as a calque from Aristotelian Greek φαντασία] quae est sensus communis; quae est vis ordinata in prima concavitate cerebri, recipiens per seipsam omnes formas quae imprimuntur quinque sensibus et redduntur ei" (Van Riet 87.19–22). However, the greatest part of Pietro's passage appears to derive almost *verbatim* from the German Dominican Albert of Orlamünde's (fl. late 13th century) compilation of five natural tracts by Albert the Great, an introductory work alternatively known with the title of *Philosophiae naturalis Isagoge* or *Philosophia pauperum*, and more particularly from chapter 14 of its section *De anima* (Borgnet 517).[21] Both the quotation of the

doctrine of the inner senses by Pietro and its derivation from an Albertist companion to natural philosophy are extremely noteworthy to our purposes.

First of all, it is remarkable that a key psychological doctrine by Avicenna is quoted by Dante's son in this very point, because it shows awareness, already in the first phase of the *secolare commento*, of the persuasiveness and reasonability of referencing philosophical texts of the Aristotelian tradition (and more particularly of Avicenna's) as companion pieces to Dante's description of his journey to *Paradiso*. Pietro even states that his father (the *auctor*) "puts his fictive poetry" (or perhaps, better, his "poetical fiction") under the aegis of the "common sense" or "phantasy." Moreover, it is a fact well-ascertained in scholarship that Algazel was seen in the Latin Middle Ages as a follower and abridger of Avicenna: their systems of philosophy were considered to be equivalent, and sometimes reference to the one demonstrably entailed reference to the other (Cortabarría 259–62; Bertolacci, "Reception" 264–66; Signori, "*Ut limpidius*" 499–505). Thus, Pietro's reference to Avicenna seems to be an indirect, but not less significant confirmation of the aptness and the plausibility of a cross-reference to al-Ġazālī too on this point. Furthermore, the ascertainment of the source for Pietro's reference—Albert of Orlamünde's epitome of the more famous Albert the Great—places the exegetical effort of Dante's son under the tutelage of a certainly simplified, yet well-perceivable philosophical current, *i.e.*, the one inaugurated by Albert the Great's imposing work as a commentator of Aristotle. Given the impact exerted by Albert himself on Dante's own philosophical thought, the relationship between the *Philosophia pauperum* and Pietro Alighieri appears to reproduce, *in minore*, an analogous doctrinal influence, which might thus appear as a particularly persuasive tool of historical exegesis.

Conclusions

By taking the cue from a specific text of the Avicennan tradition, al-Ġazālī's *Intentions of the Philosophers*, this article has surveyed both the philosophical and the scriptural ancestry of the image of the "fleeting flash" of lightning (Arabic *al-barq al-ḫāṭif*, Latin *fulgor cito pertransiens*) employed in the text to describe a wakeful kind of veridical vision bordering on the metaphysical value of prophethood. While the possibility itself of an influence of this text on Dante is grounded in the existence of the medieval Latin version of it, the exploration of its Arabic and Islamic background has led us to consider some interesting and tightly connected Qurʾānic texts, which have demonstrably influenced Avicenna himself in the context of his commentary on one of the most purely theological chapters of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Λ 7, as well as an example of the reception of al-Ġazālī's felicitous formulation in a widespread exposé of the Islamic philosophers' doctrines, al-Šahrastānī's *Book of Religions and Sects*.

The emphasis, drawn from the Qurʾānic sources, on the twofold nature of the divine lightning—sole source of illumination, and at the same time blinding force that leaves the mind inexorably *percossa*—has allowed us to reflect on the close connections between metaphysics and meteorology in Dante's *Paradiso*. While this connection might be seen, at least in part, as a commonplace of scriptural imagery (certainly not exclusive of the *Qurʾān*, and even less so of philosophical discourse on prophecy), it is undeniable that it is very well captured by al-Ġazālī's *fulgor*, too. Furthermore, the rendition *cito pertransiens* of the Latin translation for the original Arabic *ḫāṭif* arguably emphasizes the transience and fleetingness of the vision, in a way that fits well with the menacing presence of oblivion and forgetfulness in Dante's heavenly journey. The yielding of memory, as well as the failure of the *alta fantasia* in *Paradiso* 33, evoke in turn another specific tenet of Avicenna's and al-Ġazālī's philosophical psychology, *i.e.*, the doctrine of the inner senses. It is thus noteworthy that Pietro Alighieri quotes in his commentary *ad locum* precisely this teaching of Avicenna, although he does that, admittedly, in a simplified and somewhat streamlined fashion, by quoting—implicitly but literally—the epitome of Albert the Great's natural philosophy penned by his namesake Albert of Orlamünde.

All this appears in my view to corroborate the hypothesis advanced elsewhere (Falzone 46n1; Signori, "*Quasi fulgor*") that al-Ġazālī's text on the *fulgor cito pertransiens* might indeed be taken as a *locus parallelus* for Dante's *Paradiso* 33, 140–41. This very possibility attests to the momentous impact of the transmission of Arabic Peripatetic ideas to Dante's poetry. However, if the various links in the chain of *Quellenforschung* I have tentatively proposed here are all solid, we would be faced with a further, surprising fact, and one of such cultural importance that it would be difficult to overestimate it: namely, that the *fulgore* with which Dante concludes his *Paradiso* would conceal, *in nuce*, a retrospective reference to the very heart of Islamic revelation, in other words a mediated quotation from the Qurʾān. The fact that this quotation, if it exists at all, is obviously completely unconscious on Dante's part does not, I think, diminish the historical fascination of this possible cross-cultural encounter, which would leap over ideological fences to describe, in a flash of light, an otherwise utterly impossible vision of God.

However, even if one preferred not to speak here of any kind of proper historical derivation, the cultural connection between Avicenna, al-Ġazālī, and the Qurʾān that we have studied has unearthed a system of concepts and metaphors which, *mutatis mutandis*, can be easily retrieved in Dante's own thought and poetry. The human mind in its quest for God as a lightning, erupting in an ecstatic intuition; but also the lightnings of divine glory striking the mind of the poet *qua* theologian *qua* philosopher, revealing and blinding at the same time. Be this association of meteorology and metaphysics an anthropological constant or the fruit of a certain, maybe specifically medieval way of conceiving the relationship with nature and the divine, it seems at any rate to have had a momentous cultural

impact, which should be studied in detail in order to better understand Dante's reception and poetic elaboration of these ideas.

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[1] Editions of the Arabic text, none of which is critical, can be read in al-Kurdī; Dunyā; Bīğū; al-Mizyadī 9–222. The medieval Latin version is av ailable in Lohr (for the logical section) and Muckle (for the metaphysical and physical sections). More recently, St. Clair has edited anew the Latin translation of the sole fourth treatise of the *Physics*. A full Spanish translation is in Alonso; two Turkish translations in Erdemci and Karagözoğlu; an English translation of the sole *Logic* in Street; of the prologue, epilogue and prefaces in Signori, "Liminary Texts"; of the entire text in Signori, "Intentions." As first noticed by Jules Janssens, the *Intentions of the Philosophers* can be seen as an "interpretive translation" of Avicenna's Persian encyclopaedia, the *Book of Science for ʿAlà al-Dawla* (*Dānešnāme-ye ʿAlā'ī*); cf. Janssens 164.

[2] For Avicenna's theory of prophecy cf. at least Hasse, 154–74 and, most recently, Bertolacci, "Metaphysical Proof."

[3] Compare the account of the failure of the *alta fantasia* and its implications in Mocan, *Trasparenza*, 147–87 (see esp. 156).

[4] The parallel passage is taken from Albert's *De somno et vigilia* III.1.10, ed. Donati 72. Albert's treatise was certainly known to Dante, who quotes it in the *Convivio*, but the *fulgor* appearing there is the cause of a dream (not a vision *in vigilando*) and is not qualified as being fugacious or rapturous. As to the Latin text of the *Intentions* in Florence, it is transmitted by two manuscripts demonstrably pertaining to the Franciscan *studium* of Santa Croce: MS Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Conv. Soppr. G.4.354 (which does not transmit the *Physica*) and especially MS Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 15 sin. 9. Dante might have also come into contact with Algazel's text in Bologna, since we have notice of the presence of a manuscript transmitting it in the library of the physician Tommaso d'Arezzo (see the entry of the inventory concerning a "Methafisicam (*sic*) Algazelis" in Gargan 94–95).

[5] The text in Dunyā's edition is unsatisfactory, and I have therefore checked it against two Arabic manuscripts: MS Madrid, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, àrabe 1105, fols. 41r–105v (henceforth indicated with *siglum* M) and MS İstanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Yeni Câmi 735 (*siglum* Y).

[6] Reading تقوى [*taqawwiya*, V stem, or *taqwà*, I stem] with M and Y for Dunyā's لقوى [*li-quwà*], which should be interpreted as a dative of possession ("the faculties of the soul are such that…"). The reading of MY corresponds to that of the Latin version.

[7] Reading بقوتها [*bi-quwwatihi*] with M for وبقويها [*wa-yaqwī-hā*] printed by Dunyā. In this case too, the reading of M corresponds to that of the Latin version.

[8] M: تجمع.

[9] M: أن تكتب وتتكلم وتسمع [*an taktaba wa-tatakallama wa-tasmaʿa*]. Once more, the reading of M corresponds to the Latin version, also in the order: *scribere – loqui – intelligere loquentem* (the latter being a plausible interpretation of *an... tasmaʿa*, lit. 'listening').

[10] M: فيه, Latin: *in quo*.

[11] M: صار, Latin: *fiet*.

[12] M: لطبيعة.

[13] M: في ذلك, Latin: *in hoc*.

[14] Ibn Sīnā, *al-Išārāt wa-l-Tanbīhāt* IV.22, ed. Forget, 216.15–217.3; English translation in Inati, 102, modified: "That which is among the traces under consideration and is maintained in memory with stability, whether in the state of wakefulness or sleep [*fī ḥālⁱ yaqẓat^{in} aw nawm^{in}*], is either an inspiration [*ilhām^{an}*], a pure revelation [*waḥy^{an} ṣurāḥ^{an}*], or a dream that does not require allegorical interpretation [*taʾwīl*] or <dream> interpretation [*taʿbīr*]. But that which itself has ceased, while its semblances and effects remain, requires one of the two: revelation [*waḥy*] requires interpretation and dream [*ḥulm*] requires <dream> interpretation. This varies in accordance with individuals, times, and habits."

[15] The Latin text has *praesagium* 'omen', 'foreboding' for *waḥy* in lieu of an equivalent of 'revelation.' Despite this inaccurate rendition, the Latin version is clear as for the necessity of an 'interpretation' for these kinds of visions, since it translates with *interpretatio* both *taʾwīl* and *taʿbīr* (Muckle 191).

[16] Further Qurʾānic texts employing one or the other of the two triliteral roots on which we have focused our attention (*ḫ-ṭ-f* and *b-r-q*) appear overall farther removed from al-Ġazālī's work, despite their intrinsic interest for a complete taxonomy of phenomena of blinding and bedazzlement of divine origin in the *Qurʾān*. For instance, in the surah of the *Resurrection* (*al-Qiyāma*) the root of the 'ligthning' (*b-r-q*) is used in a verbal form to express the idea of "dazing" or again "dazzling" the sight: "[7] But when the sight is dazed [*bariqa l-baṣar^{u}*] [8] and the moon is eclipsed, [9] and the sun and moon are brought together, [10] upon that day man shall say, 'Whither to flee?'" (*Qurʾān* 75.7–10, transl. Arberry). For the verb of root *ḫ-ṭ-f* in the Qurʾān see also 37.10: "except such as snatches a fragment [*illā man ḫaṭifa l-ḫaṭfat^{a}*], and he is pursued by a piercing flame [*šihāb^{un} ṯāqib^{un}*]" (which refers to devils eavesdropping on the "lofty congregation" [*al-malaʾ al-aʿlà*] of the angels and being punished for that). Finally, for the lightning [*barq*] as the bringer of fear and hope [*ḫawf wa-ṭamaʿ*] in the *Qurʾān* see also 13.12 and 30.24.

[17] Small caps indicate the text of the Arabic translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Compare the French translation in Geoffroy, Janssens, and Sebti 58: "Nous disons : quant à nous autres, en dépit de la faiblesse avec laquelle nous nous représentons les intelligibles puissants, et bien qu'immergés dans la nature corporelle, nous pouvons cependant parvenir furtivement à ce que se présente à nous une jonction [*ittiṣāl*] avec le Vrai Premier. C'est alors comme une félicité admirable, qui ne dure qu'un très $^{1072b15-16}$ court moment. Et cet état, Lui, Il le possède éternellement; or cela, pour nous, est impossible, car nous sommes des [êtres] corporels, et nous ne pouvons scruter la nuée [d'où jaillit] cette fulgurance divine qu'à la dérobée et de manière furtive."

[18] Oscillation between *fulgur* and *fulgor* is a problem internal to later Latin writings, and then transmitted to Romance vernaculars and early Italian. The *Vocabolario dantesco* distinguishes between *fólgore*, with the meaning of 'lightning', and *fulgóre*, with the meaning of 'intense luminosity'. While *folgore* occurs five times in the Commedia (twice in *Inferno*, twice in *Purgatorio*, and only once in *Paradiso*), the eight occurrences of *fulgore* are all concentrated in the last cantica. Nonetheless, as will be made clear in the text, there are probably good grounds to assume that the distinction in Dante is less sharp than it would appear from the entries of the *Vocabolario dantesco* (Murru "Folgore"; Murru "Fulgore").

[19] Within the centuries-long history of the commentatorial tradition on the *Commedia* there are multiple traces of a meteorological understanding of the *fulgore* of *Paradiso* 33, in keeping with the interpretation advanced here. See, *e.g.*, the comments *ad locum* by Goeschel ("Erst ergreift ihn die Gnade, wie schon so oft geschehen ist, sie ergreift ihn, *wie ein Blitzstrahl aus der Höhe*"); Carroll ("And then one *lightning-flash* of supernatural power smote his mind and gave him his wish"); Singleton ("His mind, his power of vision, is uplifted by a flash, *a lightning bolt from above,* and the desired vision and comprehension is given to him, through highest grace"); and Chiavacci Leonardi ("*un fulgore*: dice una *illuminazione simile a un lampo*, brevissima ed intensa"); emphasis always added. All commentaries are quoted from the website of the Dartmouth Dante Project.

[20] For a comprehensive presentation of the history of the inner senses see Wolfson; for a historical and interpretive study particularly attentive to the Latin reception of Avicenna's teaching on the issue see Di Martino.

[21] To facilitate recognition of this hitherto unnoticed dependence, I report here the text of Albert of Orlamünde's chapter, in which I have highlighted in italics the parts reused by Pietro: "Sequitur de potentiis animae sensibilis apprehensivis deintus, quae sunt quinque secundum Avicennam: quarum prima est phantasia, quae est sensus communis: secunda est imaginatio: tertia imaginativa, sive cogitativa, sive formativa: quarta aestimativa: quinta memorativa, sive memorabilis. Necessitas *phantasiae sive sensus communis* probatur ex eo quod *quilibet sensus particularis non judicat nisi de suo objecto, sicut visus de colore* et ejus differentiis, *auditus de sono* et ejus *differentiis*, et sic de aliis: sed constat quod commune judicium habemus de omnibus: judicamus enim, quoniam color non est sonus, nec odor, etc.; ergo necesse est quod habeamus aliquod commune judicativum interius, quod inducet de sensibilibus omnibus, quod a Philosopho vocatur sensus communis . . . . Est ergo una vis sensus interioris, quae etiam est communis, in quantum *ad* ipsam *recurrunt vires particulares in somno*, et in quantum ab ipsa sic*ut a formali principio fluunt in vigilando*. Item constat quod *videmus formas sensibiles absentes* et non tantum praesentes et constat quod non videmus sensu exteriori. Quod ergo virtus apprehensiva sensibilis interior, sive *sensus communis* sit, manifestum est, quae *in quantum* consideratur ut natura quaedam et *non obediens rationi dicitur phantasia*. *Sensus* ergo *communis est vis animae* sensibilis *ordinata in prima concavitate cerebri, recipiens per seipsam omnes formas quae imprimuntur quinque sensibus* et redduntur."