

## PHANTASM

In its current acceptance, the term phantasm signifies a representation or apparition distinct from the ordinary reality of things and frequently subjective in character. In the latter case it is commonly attributed to the IMAGINATION. For Aristotle, φάντασμα means image (*Anim.* 432a 9), a representation similar to sensation (except that it is immaterial) and needed for the activity of the INTELLECT. Scholastics such as St. THOMAS AQUINAS define phantasm functionally as a likeness of a particular thing (*Summa theologiae* 1a, 84.7 ad 2). It is found at the level of the internal senses and constitutes an indispensable step in man's knowing process, where its principal role is to supply a representation of concrete reality from which the intellect extricates the essential meaning (*C. gent.* 2.77; *Comp. theol.* 1.83; *Summa theologiae* 1a, 84.7).

**Explanation.** Because the internal SENSES reach material reality only through the medium of the external senses, they generally (i.e., with the exception of the CENTRAL SENSE) need a representation of this reality to serve as the expression (*species expressa*) of their knowledge. When transmitting the integral object of their sensations to the internal senses, the external senses are unable to know the meaning or function of certain aspects of reality perceived by the COGITATIVE POWER (*In three de anim.* 3). Moreover, imagination and MEMORY store the impressions of the central sense and the cogitative power respectively (*Summa theologiae* 1a, 78.4), since the reality affecting all the senses changes continually. A representation of this reality as known by these three internal senses is thus required to complete their knowing activity. The need for the phantasm must therefore be admitted not only in the imagination, as many scholastics teach, but also in the cogitative power and memory, as St. Thomas expressly holds (*C. gent.* 2.73). Besides, since the *species expressa* is to represent the object as known, the latter two senses cannot elaborate their specific activity of knowing if they do not express this knowledge through a phantasm distinct from that of the imagination.

While phantasms, as expressed species, are representations of things other than themselves, they are realities of the organic order (*In lib. de memor.* 3), as are the cognitive powers that produce them. It is possible to detect their presence in particular areas of the brain by means of suitable techniques. Phantasms are subject to the physiological and psychological conditions of the internal senses and are liable to change with time (*C. gent.* 2.73); thus they can become weak and disappear.

**Related Phenomena.** While ILLUSION is primarily a sensory phenomenon of the external senses, to the extent that it implies a perceptual judgment concerning the

data of SENSATION it also involves the internal senses. Imagination and memory can be active, particularly when there is interference of past experiences in the knowing process. The phantasms of these internal senses are joined to images directly brought on under the stimulus of actual sensations, and proportionately modify the whole as perceived and evaluated by the central sense and cogitative power. Such cases of illusion are limited because, in the wakened state, the imagination generally follows reason in preference to natural influences (*Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, 172.1 ad 3). However, because susceptible to the disturbing action of these influences, imagination is justly regarded as a source of error, and much more so than the external senses (*Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, 11.1 ad 3; *De ver.* 1.11). The typical illusion brought on by the imagination consists in presenting its phantasms to the consciousness of the subject with sufficient intensity to make it difficult to distinguish between things that are present and those that are merely representations of the imagination (*Summa theologiae* 1a, 17.2 ad 2).

Illusion consists principally in a distorted perception of a reality actually present to sensation. Hallucination, on the other hand, is produced by the interposition of an internal representation that is substituted, on the field of consciousness, for the perception of external reality. Its cause is the paroxysmal activity of the imagination's conserving and reproducing functions.

Following Aristotle, St. Thomas did not hesitate to attribute this hyperproduction of phantasms to biological factors—e.g., humoral circulation produces some phantasms (*Summa theologiae* 1a, 111.3)—or to the action of stupeficient substances (*De ver.* 13.1 ad 12). Devils also can bring on these apparitions (*De malo* 3.4).

The scholastic theory of phantasms is considerably elaborated with respect to dreams because of the related moral problems (*Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, 154.5), and even more so because of the paranormal states involved in visions and prophecies (*Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, 173.2, 3). A DREAM is essentially a product of phantasms appearing during sleep, while the senses are inhibited, so that the phantasms occupy almost exclusively what is left of the sleeper's consciousness. The causes of the production of these phantasms include everything that can act upon the imagination during sleep. St. Thomas draws up a systematic list (*Summa theologiae* 2a2ae, 95.6): first, internal causes, including those of a psychic nature (previous evening's preoccupation persisting during sleep), and those of a corporal nature (sleeper's organic disposition—whence Aquinas notes the usefulness of the study of dreams by doctors); and then external causes, including those of a physical nature (ambient temperature), and

those of a spiritual nature (God, through the ministry of angels, or even the devil). As the central sense frees itself of hypnogenetic inhibitions, the subject begins to make a distinction between phantasms and the reality affecting the senses, although this distinction remains imperfect so long as the central sense is not completely awakened (*Summa theologiae* 1a, 84.8 ad 2).

*See Also:* SPECIES, INTENTIONAL; KNOWLEDGE, PROCESS OF.

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[A. M. PERREAULT]

## PHARISEES

The predominant sect or religious party among the Jews in the time of Christ. After outlining their history and principal teachings, this article considers the NT references to them.

**History and Teachings.** The Pharisees were those who had “separated themselves” (Heb. *perûšîm*; Aram. *perîšayyā* from which comes the Gr. φαρισαῖοι) from others on the basis of ritual purity through minute observance of the Law. It would seem that the sect arose during the Greek period, as a continuation and development of the HASIDAEANS. At the time of the Maccabees, they were strong enough to offer efficacious support to the HASMONAEANS; they came into conflict with this dynasty, however, during the reign of John Hyrcanus (135–10.5 B.C.). In NT times the Pharisees were in conflict with the priestly SADDUCEES; the latter were conservatives who rejected the oral tradition accepted by the Pharisees. Most Pharisees were lay, but some priests as well as many of the doctors of the Law or SCRIBES joined their number.

The teaching of the sect was based on oral tradition as well as on the written Law. The Pharisees held for such religious truths as the resurrection of the body and the existence of angels. Since these doctrines were not clearly taught in the Pentateuch (the only Scripture accepted by the Sadducees), the Pharisees founded their belief in them upon later writings and oral traditions. In the field of morals the Pharisees taught a rigorous observance of the SABBATH and insisted on legal purity and the payment of tithes. They offered various opinions on minute observance of these and other precepts, to such an extent that their opponents accused them of degenerating into rigorism and casuistry and focusing on sterile externalism destructive of a real religious spirit.

After the destruction of the Temple and the overthrow of the Jewish state, the Pharisees became practically the only influential group among the Jews. Through the uncertain centuries that followed, they held the Jewish people together. Later rabbinical schools looked back with admiration upon the Pharisees as the true upholders of Israel’s Law and traditions. The rabbis of the TALMUD were their spiritual descendants.

**In the New Testament.** The fact that Jesus rejected much of the legalistic tradition of the Pharisees (Mk 7.1–23), sought to free people from its burden (Mt 11.28–30) and to interpret to them the profounder meaning of the Law (Mt 5.20–48), inveighed against externalistic pietism (Mt 6.1–18; 23.5–12, 23–31), and taught that redemption would come from Him (Mk 10.45) brought Him inevitably into conflict with the Pharisees. After His Ascension this conflict continued between the Christians and the Pharisees. While the debates between Jesus and the Pharisees recorded in the Gospels do recount historical events of His public ministry, their very preservation and the manner in which they are cast reflect the later struggle of the Church against the Pharisaic spirit both within and without.

The NT writers frequently mention the Pharisees, sometimes favorably, sometimes unfavorably. The Gospels narrate conflicts between the Pharisees and Jesus in Galilee (Mk 2.6–3.5; Lk 5.17–6.5; Mt 9.1–17; 12.1–45), in Jerusalem (Mk 11.27–12.40; Lk 20.1–47; Mt 21.23–22.46), and in several other less well-defined circumstances (Mt 15.1–20; Mk 7.1–23); and a strong condemnation of Pharisaism is found in Mt 23.1–36. Yet St. Luke relates incidents in which the Pharisees appear in a more favorable light (Lk 13.31; Acts 5.34; 23.6–9). It should be noted also that the Evangelists do not emphasize the activities of the Pharisees against Jesus in the Passion narratives. Only a few times are the Pharisees explicitly mentioned among those who brought about Jesus’ death (Mt 27.62; Jn 18.3). The same reluctance to identify Pharisees as enemies is found in the Synoptic tradition about the predictions of the Passion (Mt 20.17–19; Mk 8.31; 10.33; Lk 9.22; 18.31).

In spite of, or because of, this ambivalent attitude toward the Pharisees as manifested in the Gospels, some modern critics consider the Evangelists biased and their testimony about the Pharisees untrustworthy. Other scholars attempt to vindicate the Evangelists in their apparent hostility to the sect.

In recent years exegetes have sought to rediscover the literary origins of the narratives, to analyze the religious background of a given pericope in the life of the early Church, and to stress the theological purposes that led an Evangelist to incorporate a narrative into his Gos-