

John of Ripa on Experience and Reflexivity¹

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Abstract: According to Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), there are two requirements a subject must fulfill in order to be aware of an object: she must possess a mental representation (a “*species*”) of that object, and she must be related to that representation in a special way. Furthermore, Aquinas seems to think that when a subject fulfills these requirements, she is not only aware of an object, she also experiences her awareness of that object. John of Ripa (fl. 1350s) was one of many scholastics who endorsed this view of awareness. Ripa’s own version of Aquinas’s account has two intriguing features: Ripa attempts to (a) give a theory of the relation to a representation in virtue of which a subject is aware of an object as well as an explanation of why a subject who stands in this relation to a representation is aware of the representation’s object and (b) to give an account of why standing in this relation to a representation gives rise to reflexive experience of one’s own awareness. In this article, I show how Ripa attempted to accomplish (a) and (b).

Keywords: John of Ripa, Thomas Aquinas, Cognition Theory, Awareness, Subjectivity.

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