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Aquinas on Friendship

DANIEL SCHWARTZ

AQUINAS ON FRIENDSHIP

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In Memory of my Father,
Julio Schwartz
(1939–99)

I was 4 or 5, climbed to the front seat of the green Peugeot, still in the garage (cold morning outside), when he told me about Ulysses' fellow sailors, how they covered themselves under sheeps' fleeces to escape the mighty, one-eyed, Polyphemus.

My father.

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Preface and Acknowledgements

In the last few decades philosophers have rediscovered friendship as a distinct topic of interest. Aristotle's thought has been, justifiably, the starting point for most philosophical work on friendship, and often its focus. This renewal of philosophical interest has seldom, however, translated into interest in what Aquinas and other medieval philosophers had to say about friendship. Interest in Aquinas's views on friendship has so far remained confined mainly to theologians.¹ The fact that Aquinas's views on friendship are not easily approachable (we find them scattered throughout his work, often within highly theological discussions) bears part of the blame for this state of affairs. Probably, though, we should lay some of the blame on the widespread perception that the Christian notion of friendship is far too removed both from the friendship theorized by the Greeks and from that which we experience in our lives.

This book can best be described as a journey into the territory of Aquinas's views on friendship. While the purpose of the book is to acquaint the reader with some of Aquinas's views on friendship, there

¹ A list of works on Aquinas on friendship from the last twenty years should include: C. Steel, 'Thomas Aquinas on Preferential Love', in T. A. F. Kelly and P. W. Rosemann (eds.), *Amor amicitiae: On the Love That Is Friendship: Essays in Medieval Thought and Beyond in Honor of the Rev. Professor James McEvoy* (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 437–58; J. McEvoy, 'The Other as Oneself: Friendship and Love in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas', in J. McEvoy and M. Dunne (eds.), *Thomas Aquinas: Approaches to Truth* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 16–37, and his 'Amitié, attirance et amour chez S Thomas d'Aquin', *Revue philosophique de Louvain*, 91 (1993), 383–408; A. W. Keaty, 'Thomas's Authority for Identifying Charity as Friendship: Aristotle or John 15?', *Thomist*, 62 (1998), 581–601; W. H. Principe, 'Loving Friendship According to Thomas Aquinas', in D. Goicoechea (ed.), *The Nature and Pursuit of Love* (Buffalo: Prometheus, 1995), 128–41; C. Osborne, *Eros Unveiled: Plato and the God of Love* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), chs. 6 and 8; W. Cizewski, 'Friendship with God: Variations on a Theme in Aristotle, Aquinas, and Macmurray', *Philosophy and Theology*, 6 (1992), 369–81; J. Porter, 'De Ordine Caritatis: Charity, Friendship, and Justice in Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*', *Thomist*, 53 (1989), 197–213; P. J. Wadell, *Friendship and the Moral Life* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989); F. Kerr, 'Charity as Friendship', in B. Davies (ed.), *Language, Meaning and God: Essays in Honour of Herbert McCabe* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1987), 1–23; G. L. Jones, 'Theological Transformation of Aristotelian Friendship in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas', *New Scholasticism*, 61 (1987), 373–99; J. Bobik, 'Aquinas on Friendship with God', *New Scholasticism*, 60 (1986), 257–71 and his 'Aquinas on *Communicatio*, the Foundation of Friendship and *Caritas*', *Modern Schoolman*, 65 (1986), 1–19.

is no attempt to provide an exhaustive description of Aquinas's theory of friendship (if we can, at all, speak of such a thing). This is more a terrestrial expedition than a reconnaissance flight.

The aim is not merely to present Aquinas's observations, comments, and reflections on friendship, but rather to engage them philosophically. To do so, Aquinas's arguments are sympathetically reconstructed and subjected to critical examination. I also seek to collect along the way those of Aquinas's thoughts that may be helpful in guiding our own reflections on friendship.

This book is intended not only for students of Aquinas's theological, moral, and political thought and historians of ideas, but also for those readers who, while not primarily interested in Aquinas, wish to discern the possible roles performed by friendship within the realms of ethics and politics.

My own interest in Aquinas and in friendship developed gradually as I grew acquainted with his works. It was only when I managed to transcend my own prejudices about theology and scholastic philosophy that I became able to appreciate the beauty of Aquinas's thought, its breadth, rigour, and depth. Aquinas is far from infallible, but it is easier to identify the flaws in his works if one approaches his texts with sympathy rather than hostility.

From the cluster of interrelated problem-based investigations emerges—I contend—a notion of friendship that is more flexible and more able to accommodate disagreement and lack of mutual knowledge than that proposed by Aristotle. I argue that Aquinas's reworking of the elements of Aristotelian friendship is partly a result of challenges posed by Christian ideas of friendship with God and of friendship with fellow believers (charity).

Aquinas's deviations from Aristotle also stem, of course, from his own genius and from his receptiveness to non-Aristotelian treatments of friendship and love such as those found in pagan and Christian Stoicism and Neoplatonism, biblical and patristic sources, and in the works of his contemporaries.

From a historical point of view, Aquinas's thoughts on friendship help further discredit romanticized images of European medieval society which picture these societies as cohesive and close-knit. Aquinas's views on friendship can be seen to some extent as a reaction to the shadow of doubt which conflict, misunderstanding, disagreement, and split, both at ecclesiastical and political levels, cast over the reality of Christian friendship. According to Aquinas, such conflicts are often

consistent with a form of friendship and involve no moral fault, stemming, rather, from ineliminable features of the human condition (mostly epistemological limitations).

Aquinas's friendship may also provide a model of friendship that is more suited to present-day societies than that which Communitarian-minded theorists find and praise in Aristotle. For one thing, Thomistic friendship seems to require less in the way of unanimity or shared opinions than that of Aristotle. But even if we fail to endorse Aquinas's model of friendship, his discussions of friendship remain exemplary in that they bear testimony to the efforts of a bright mind set on enriching and modifying Aristotelian friendship to suit the realities and intellectual and spiritual preoccupations of his own time.

This book is based on the dissertation I wrote for my doctorate at Oxford. Two of the original chapters have been thoroughly rewritten (Chapters 6 and 7) and a new chapter has now been added (Chapter 1). In addition I have introduced many changes to the rest, making alterations to contents as well as removing much inessential material.

The book opens in Chapter 1 with an overview of the larger themes to which belong the more focused studies that make up the rest of the chapters. Chapter 2 focuses on concord, or union of wills, as a central feature of Aquinas's notion of friendship. Next I address four different problems engendered by the view that friends will the same things: (i) we may not know what the friend wills or why he wills it; (ii) we may know what he wills, but we find ourselves in circumstances that make it unfitting for us to will the same (Chapter 3); (iii) the friend may tell us of his will but we cannot be sure of his sincerity; (iv) we do not know what the friend will will, which is important because friendship is future oriented, largely based on future expectations (Chapter 5). Chapter 4 examines the following question: if, as is shown, friendship is compatible with many different sorts of disunion of wills, when do we actually fail to satisfy the requirement of union of wills? Further, in which cases is such failure morally blameworthy? The answer to this question evolves into a discussion on the nature and effects of pride.

The popular perception that friendship is of little political relevance because it concerns a realm other than that of justice—the pre-eminent political virtue—impels me to probe into the relationship between friendship and justice. Does friendship, for Aquinas, exclude recourse to justice? What can be learned about the connection between friendship and justice from Aquinas's view that 'there is no merit without charity' (Chapter 6)? Chapter 7 explores the role played by penitential forms of

corrective justice in the restoration of friendship, when friendship has been disrupted by unjust acts.

My thanks are first and foremost to John Finnis who, as a doctoral dissertation supervisor, patiently corrected and commented on chapter drafts, revised translations, and prevented me from making mistakes I would otherwise have made. I have found Finnis's work exemplary both for its rigorous and precise treatment of the texts and for the original understandings they contain, which often run against conventional or even customary readings of Aquinas. I am grateful also to Richard Cross, who supervised me during the first stages of my doctoral work. I benefited from the comments, criticisms, and encouragement of Michael Inwood and Tim Chapell who as thesis examiners read an early version of this work. My friends Nir Eyal and Shlomi Segall read, commented, and discussed with me early chapter versions and helped me to refine many of the initial ideas. I am indebted for their suggestions and support on different occasions to: Roberto Franzosi (a bastion of inspiring enthusiasm), Jerry Cohen, Mark Philp, Fergus Kerr OP, Pamela M. Hall, Yonatan Witztum, Joe Shaw, Carlos V. Jalali, Asher Salah, Micah Schwartzman, Severine Deneulin, Carlos Pareja, Pablo da Silva, Eduardo Cassaroti SJ, Isabel Iribarren, Antonio Donato, Lisa Hill, and Alexandra Wright. Mario Sznajder and Luis Roniger provided wise advice throughout. Elizabeth Miles's excellent and applied editorial work was determinant in improving the quality of the manuscript. I owe many thanks to Cecilia Trifogli. She oversaw the progress towards the final typescript and gave valuable expert feedback, as well as the support needed for the enterprise. I am grateful also to an anonymous referee from Oxford University Press and to Peter Momtchiloff, the Philosophy Editor, for encouraging me to revise the original dissertation and for their pertinent suggestions concerning this task.

Two postdoctoral fellowships at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem—the 'Golda Meir Fellowship' at the department of Political Science, and the 'Young Truman Scholar Fellowship' at the Harry S. Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace—allowed me to revise the original dissertation. Thanks are due to those who assisted me financially and logistically during the writing of the dissertation on which this book is based: especially to Mr Ian Karten, to the staff of Trinity College, Oxford (too many to thank by name), to the Anglo-Jewish Association, and to Blackfriars, Oxford, for generously allowing me free access to their library. Teresa, my mother, and my sister Sheila were always there despite the distance, as was Shalhevet, my partner.

Some of the material contained in this book was presented at the Oxford Graduate Political Theory Seminar, at Claeh (Montevideo), at the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie of the Université catholique de Louvain, at the Department of Philosophy at the University of Haifa, and at the Van Leer Institute of Jerusalem. I am thankful for the comments received on these occasions.

Three chapters draw on previously published material. An earlier version of Chapter 2 appeared as ‘Aquinas on the Requirements of Concord: “Concord is a Union of Wills, Not of Opinions”’ in *Review of Metaphysics*, 57 (2003), 25–42. Part of Chapter 3 appeared as ‘Should We Will What God Wills?: Friendship with God and Conformity of Wills according to Aquinas’, in *Philosophy & Theology*, 15 (2003), 403–19. Chapter 6 derives from ‘Friendship and the Circumstances of Justice in Aquinas’, in *Review of Politics*, 66 (2004) 35–52. I profited from many of the comments made by the referees and editors of these journals. I thank the relevant publishers and editors for permission to use these articles.

This book is dedicated to my father, Julio Schwartz, whose death took place when I was still struggling to put this project together. The present work is a very modest homage to his unbounded love, to his self-sacrifice, integrity, and humour, to his *mentshheit*, and, also, to his love of books.

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Contents

<i>Abbreviations and Conventions</i>	xv
1. Larger Themes	1
1.1 Friendship and Amicitia	1
1.2 The Importance of Friends	3
1.3 Acts of Friendship	6
2. What Concord Requires	22
2.1 ‘Concord is a Union of Wills, Not of Opinions’	22
2.2 Disagreement and Friendship	31
2.3 Why Conflicting Beliefs Alone Do Not Create Discord: A Look at Heresy	34
2.4 Conclusion	41
3. Friendship and Conformity of Wills	42
3.1 Background	43
3.2 Conformity of Wills and the Friend’s Reasons	46
3.3 Conformity of Wills and Disparity of Circumstances	57
3.4 Ways of Willing the Same	61
3.5 Political Implications of Aquinas’s Position on the Conformity of Wills of Friendship	66
4. What Prevents Us from Joining Other People’s Projects?: Pride as an Impediment to Conformity of Wills	69
4.1 Nilling What Another Wills: Schism, Sedition, and Discord	70
4.2 Vainglory and Unwillingness to Agree with Others	72
4.3 Pride and Unwillingness to Agree with Others	74
4.4 Conformity of Wills Revisited	87
4.5 The Law as a Cure for Pride	88
4.6 Human Institutions and Pride	90
4.7 Summary	92

5. Friendship and Uncertainty: Presumptions and Hope	94
5.1 Present Friendship and the Presumption of Authenticity	95
5.2 Hope and Future Friendship	107
5.3 Conclusion	121
6. Friendship and Recourse to Justice	123
6.1 Justice between Friends	124
6.2 Friendship as a Condition of Just Exchange	133
6.3 Summary	139
7. Justice, Satisfaction, and Restoration of Friendship	142
7.1 Satisfaction and Friendship	143
7.2 Friendship and Quantitative Satisfaction	151
7.3 Summary	160
8. Concluding Remarks	162
Appendix The Duality of the Rational Volition in Christ's Human Nature and Friendship with God	165
<i>Bibliography</i>	167
<i>Index Locorum</i>	175
<i>Index of Subjects</i>	182
<i>Index of Names and Places</i>	187

Abbreviations and Conventions

I generally follow J. M. Finnis, *Aquinas: Moral, Political, and Legal Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

WORKS OF AQUINAS

<i>Car.</i>	<i>Quaestiones Disputatae de Caritate</i> (= <i>Virt.</i> q. 2)
<i>Cat. Aur.</i>	<i>Catena Aurea in quatuor Evangelia: Expositio in Matthaeum</i>
<i>Comp.</i>	<i>Compendium Theologiae ad fratrem Reginaldum</i>
<i>Dec.</i>	<i>Collationes de Decem Praeceptis</i>
<i>Div.</i>	<i>Expositio super Dionysium De Divinis Nominibus</i>
<i>Ep. Reg.</i>	<i>Epistola de Regimine</i>
<i>Eth.</i>	<i>Sententia Libri Ethicorum</i>
<i>Hebd.</i>	<i>Expositio libri Boetii De Hebdomadibus</i>
<i>Impugn.</i>	<i>Contra Impugnantes Dei Cultum et Religionem</i>
<i>In Eph.</i>	<i>Reportatio super Epistolam ad Ephesios</i>
<i>In Heb.</i>	<i>Expositio super Epistolam ad Hebraeos</i>
<i>In Hier.</i>	<i>Super Hieremiam et Threnos</i>
<i>In Ioann.</i>	<i>Reportatio super Ioannem</i>
<i>In Iob</i>	<i>Expositio super Iob ad Litteram</i>
<i>In Isa.</i>	<i>Expositio super Isaiam</i>
<i>In Matt.</i>	<i>Reportatio super Evangelium Matthaei</i>
<i>In I Cor.</i>	<i>Commentarium et Reportatio super Epistolam Primam ad Corinthios</i>
<i>In II Cor.</i>	<i>Commentarium et Reportatio super Epistolam Secundam ad Corinthios</i>
<i>In Rom.</i>	<i>Commentarium super Epistolam ad Romanos</i>
<i>Mal.</i>	<i>Questiones disputatae de Malo</i>
<i>Meta.</i>	<i>Sententia super Metaphysicam</i>
<i>Perf.</i>	<i>De Perfectione Spiritualis Vitae</i>
<i>Pol.</i>	<i>Sententia Libri Politicorum</i>
<i>Pot.</i>	<i>Quaestiones Disputatae de Potentia</i>
<i>Ps.</i>	<i>Postilla in Psalmos</i>

<i>Quodl.</i>	<i>Quaestiones de Quodlibet</i>
<i>Rat.</i>	<i>De rationibus Fidei ad Cantorem Antiochenum</i>
<i>ScG</i>	<i>Summa contra Gentiles</i>
<i>Sent.</i>	<i>Scriptum Super Libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardiensis</i> (I, II, III, IV)
<i>Sort.</i>	<i>De Sortibus ad Dominum Iacobum de Tonengo</i>
<i>Spe</i>	<i>Quaestio disputata de spe</i> (=Virt. q. 4)
<i>Spir.</i>	<i>Quaestio disputata de spiritualibus creaturis</i>
<i>ST</i>	<i>Summa Theologiae</i> (I, I–II, II–II, III, Suppl.)
<i>Unit.</i>	<i>De Unitate Intellectus contra Averroistas</i>
<i>Unio.</i>	<i>Quaestio disputata de unione Verbi incarnati</i>
<i>Ver.</i>	<i>Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate</i>
<i>Virt.</i>	<i>Quaestiones Disputatae de Virtutibus</i>

OTHER WORKS

<i>Benef.</i>	Lucius Anneus Seneca, <i>On Benefits</i> , section numbers according to the 1964 Loeb edition
<i>BF</i>	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologiae</i> (London: Blackfriars and Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1964–80)
<i>CCSL</i>	<i>Corpus Christianorum Series Latina</i> (Brepols: Typographii Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1957–) (148 vols. to date)
<i>CD</i>	St Augustine, <i>De Civitate Dei</i>
<i>DF</i>	<i>The ‘Summa Theologica’ of St. Thomas Aquinas literally translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province</i> (Westminster, Md.: Christian Classics, 1980 c.1911)
<i>Eud. Eth.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Eudemian Ethics</i>
<i>L.A.</i>	Cicero, <i>Laelius sive de Amicitia</i>
<i>Nic. Eth.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>
<i>NRSV</i>	<i>New Revised Standard Version</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972)
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: Migne, 1844–65), 221 vols.
<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologia Graeca</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: Migne, 1854–78), 161 vols.
<i>Rhet.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Rhetoric</i>

CONVENTIONS

a.	article
c	corpus
c.	chapter
d.	distinction
ex.	exposition
lc.	lectio
obj.	objection
q.	question
q. un.	unique question
qu.	subquestion
sc.	sed contra
sol.	solution
v.	verse

Paragraph and line numbers taken from editions are given in square brackets. Line numbers according to the Leonine edition when available, otherwise according to *Busa*; paragraph numbers according to the *Marietti* editions.

TRANSLATIONS

I have regularly used these translations:

- Summa Theologiae* (London: Blackfriars and Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1964–80).
- Fathers of the English Dominican Province, *The 'Summa Theologica' of St. Thomas Aquinas literally translated* (Westminster, Md.: Christian Classics, 1980 c.1911).
- T. Irwin, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 1985).
- C. I. Litzinger, *Commentary of the Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1964).
- R. McInerny, *Aquinas against the Averroists: On There Being Only One Intellect* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 1995).
- R. W. Schmidt, *The Disputed Questions on Truth* (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1954).

I have also consulted (without directly transcribing from):

- A. Damico, *The Literal Exposition of Job: A Scriptural Commentary concerning Providence* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989).
J. Oesterle, *Disputed Questions on Evil* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 1983).
P. Porro, *Tommaso, Commenti a Boezio* (Milan: Rusconi, 1997).
J. Procter, *An Apology for the Religious Orders* (London: Sands, 1902).
J. P. Rowan, *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle* (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1964).

For *ST* I rely on the translation by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (often with corrections of my own or that have been suggested to me), unless otherwise indicated. Latin words or phrases that appear after the corresponding English translation are given in curly brackets. Latin words or phrases that appear instead of their English translation are given in italics. All italics used for emphasis are mine unless otherwise indicated.

1

Larger Themes

1.1 FRIENDSHIP AND AMICITIA

Aquinas never wrote a work, or even a section of work, with the title '*De Amicitia*'. Insights and discussions about friendship, however, abound throughout his opera. An inventory of the contexts in which Aquinas devotes attention to friendship comprises discussions of the theological virtue of charity; the unity of Church, State, and family; and, of course, Aquinas's *Commentary* on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. This list is far from exhaustive, however. Isolated remarks, as well as clusters of observations, comments, and reflections about friendship abound in Aquinas's work, cutting across a wide array of topics.

For Aquinas, friendship is the paradigm ideal for the relationships that rational beings should cultivate. The set of potential friends includes besides fellow human beings, also angels and God. The idea of friendship with God undoubtedly places considerable strain on the conception of friendship that Aquinas inherited from Aristotle. According to Aristotle friendship requires equality of power and status as well as shared activities, choices, and feelings. Yet, arguably, we cannot share time and activities with God, we can talk *to* Him but generally not *with* Him, it is not clear that we can invariably rely on Him (many would say that it is clear that we cannot), and, finally, we have little idea what He is up to. In addition, there is an unbridgeable chasm between God's knowledge and power and our own.

Although theological discussions do not have human friendship as their main focus, they provide valuable material on the subject. For Aquinas, theological language is essentially analogic: it enables us to grasp otherwise inaccessible divine realities by drawing—at least indirectly, by negations—from world realities. Aquinas's observations on social life intended for analogical use are at least presumptively representative of his social views. Formally speaking, the use of analogy for pedagogical purposes does not commit one to asserting the reality of

the facts on which the analogy is established. Having said this, there is no reason to doubt that Aquinas was in fact committed to the reality of the observations about human relationships that ground the analogies that he used to clarify theological matters.¹

Are we in fact discussing friendship when we discuss *amicitia*? It is almost customary in treatments of pre-modern ideas of friendship to point out that Aristotelian *philia* and Thomistic *amicitia* significantly differ from what we now understand as friendship.²

One element of *philia-amicitia* that is often considered to be at odds with modern friendship is its wide reach. In the Aristotelian tradition, fellow soldiers, fellow travellers, and fellow citizens are friends, as are those who interact with a view to utility and those whose bond is founded on erotic love. Indeed, it would seem that almost anyone who is not an enemy, and is in some way engaged in a more or less stable and mutually beneficial relationship, is a friend. In contrast, the modern concept seems to apply to a smaller number of people. We tend to call friends those persons (usually not relatives) with whom we have a substantial degree of closeness and intimacy. Persons situated in more distant circles of interaction are regarded as friends only by stretching the reach of the term.

Secondly, the friendships which Aristotle called ‘of utility’ and ‘of pleasure’ (which are neither Aristotle’s nor Aquinas’s central case of friendship), are, in the modern understanding, often not considered friendships at all—the former considered merely a business relationship deprived of the measure of altruism that we expect from friends, the latter perhaps too transitory and one-dimensional.

Thirdly, and more crucially, the sharing of a goal—a central element of friendship within the Aristotelian tradition—seems marginal or even alien to the modern conception of friendship.³ Friendship (save perhaps for marital friendship) is often seen as having no other goal than

¹ See R. M. McNerny, *The Logic of Analogy* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1961), 114–22, and my ‘Aquinas on Friendship, Concord and Justice’, D.Phil. thesis (University of Oxford, 2002), pp. xix–xx.

² For good discussions on Aristotle’s *philia* and modern friendship see J. M. Cooper, ‘Aristotle on Friendship’, in A. O. Rorty (ed.), *Essays in Aristotle’s Ethics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), 301–3. For a parallel discussion on Aquinas’s *amicitia* and friendship see J.-P. Torrell, *Saint Thomas d’Aquin, maître spirituel* (Fribourg: Cerf, Éditions universitaires de Fribourg, 1996), ii. 367–9.

³ MacIntyre argues that the relegation of friendship to the private life is explained by the fact that the notion of political community as a common project is alien to ‘this modern individualist world’. ‘“Friendship” has become for the most part the name of a type of emotional state rather than of a type of social relationship.’ A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (London: Duckworth, 1985), 156.

generating a space of intimacy in which we seek solace from the world (for it is 'out there, in the world' that goals are pursued). It is the space for humour, confidence, chat about books and films, food and drink. There is deliberation, of course, but it is not always, or even normally, aimed at deciding upon common actions.

One should note first that it is not obvious that arguments against the correspondence between *philia* and friendship retain all their force when directed against the correspondence between medieval *amicitia* and friendship. Secondly, we should note that, even if we accept the account of friendship provided above as the idea now prevailing—although there are certainly reasons not to do so—the questions that I have chosen to discuss lose little of their pertinence. Questions about the unknowability of the friends' present and future wills, about the need to rely on presumptions, on the disrupting effects of pride, on the complex relationship between friendship and justice bear on modern friendship no less than they do on *philia* and *amicitia*. In other words, insofar as almost any concept of friendship will have to assume some level of congeniality or agreement between the friends' will, questions about this congeniality or agreement bear on friendship however plausibly conceived.

1.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDS

According to Aquinas we have the best chance to flourish morally, intellectually, and spiritually in a social life based on virtue: a *consociatio in virtute*. In *Summa Theologiae*, I–II Aquinas asks which, among a list of different goods, warrants being regarded as a constituent of happiness. Friendship is included in a list made up of enjoyment, understanding, a right will, a body, bodily health, external goods, and the fellowship of friends. Each of these has a role that is either preparatory towards, perfecting of, or concomitant with happiness.⁴

The happy person {felix} needs friends in this life.⁵ He does not need them for advantage, nor for enjoyment, as he has perfect enjoyment in his virtuous living and is in no need of material help.⁶ Friends are needed, rather, for good or virtuous activity. Aquinas endorses Aristotle's view that we need friends in order to have someone to benefit, to delight

⁴ *ST* I–II q. 4 a. 1c.

⁵ *ST* I–II q. 4 a. 8c.

⁶ Perhaps his happiness presupposes his possession of the necessary material needs.

in their so benefiting,⁷ and also to enjoy their own virtuous activity. But, he adds, the happy person needs the help of his friends also for *his own* performance of right works, in both his active and his contemplative life. Since we are less biased towards our friends than towards ourselves, and friends are similar to ourselves, we can, by looking at them, look at ourselves in a less biased fashion.⁸

The happy life demands the permanent availability of the resources which allow virtuous operation. Friendship is said to be one such resource: without friends the continuity of virtuous operation would be impaired; one would be likely to lose enthusiasm for and interest in the activity of virtuous living. The virtuous person will find it difficult to act virtuously continuously unless she experiences enjoyment in such activity.⁹ Friends' virtuous activity is one of the vital sources of enjoyment. The virtuous life is a sort of dialogue or conversation in which the friends act virtuously towards each other, thus mutually feeding the motivation of each to act in this way. Through our friends we expand our capacity to perform virtuous deeds, because friends are united to ourselves in such a way that their actions are, in some ways, also ours.¹⁰

The enjoyment afforded by friendly activity which is not strictly speaking virtuous, such as games and jokes, is also accorded a place, albeit a subordinate one within Aquinas's scheme. This sort of interaction offers the benefits of rest and relaxation which prevent exhaustion and tedium.¹¹

Although, according to Aquinas, the fellowship of friends is not required *de necessitate* for happiness in heaven or *patria*, it befits this status. It is important to keep in mind that solitary *beatitudo* is a limit case; it hypothesizes a scenario which Aquinas himself seemed to consider highly unlikely. Aquinas often depicts the blessed life in heaven as a communal, even political, life taking place in the city of 'celestial Jerusalem', where the pleasures of music and conversation would be cultivated.¹²

⁷ *Nic. Eth.* 1169^b12.

⁸ *Eth.* IX. 10 [1896].

⁹ *Eth.* IX. 10 [1897].

¹⁰ *Eth.* IX. 10 [1896]: 'Since a man's friend is another self, so to speak, the friend's actions will be his own in a sense.'

¹¹ *Eth.* IX. 10 [1893].

¹² See *ST* II–II q. 23 a. 1 ad 1; *Cat. Aur.* VI. 9 [116–18]; *In Heb.* 12. 4 ad v. 22 [706]; *Ps.* 43. 4 [62–4]. Aquinas inherited from doctrinal tradition the notion of '*communio sanctorum*', and often refers to a *societas sanctorum*. He also refers to the 'celestial society' (*ScG* III c. 144 n. 11; *Virt.* q. 2. a. 2c.; *Spir.* q. un. a. 6 sc. 3). Reaching heaven is often

One's beatitude concomitantly includes friendship with those who have been equally awarded the divine vision (if there are any, as it is most likely).¹³ A concomitance between *beatitudo perfecta* and friendship allows Aquinas to claim that while perfect beatitude, under some conditions, inevitably produces friendship, friendship is not an essential component of perfect beatitude.

In addition to the role it plays in human happiness, friendship provides, for Aquinas, the paradigm through which the theological virtue of charity can be best conceptualized. Friendship captures the many disparate elements that different authoritative sources, both biblical and patristic, assign to charity. Charity is a friendship involving love towards God and all rational beings capable of loving Him. Aquinas is not the first theologian to treat charity as a form of friendship, yet it does seem that it is his original contribution to bring charity firmly into the Aristotelian understanding of friendship.¹⁴

Some historians of friendship and some theologians have tended to see friendship as antithetical to charity. It is argued, first, that *caritas* corresponds to the Greek *agapê*, which is conceived of as standing in opposition to *eros*, the drive towards physical or intellectual unity with the beloved that is often associated with an acquisitive or possessive

represented as gaining citizenship in a blissful city: '[just as a] man by divine grace is admitted to the participation in the celestial beatitude which consists in the vision and enjoyment of God, becomes virtually a citizen and partner in that society of the blessed, that is called celestial Jerusalem.' *Virt.* q. 2 a. 2c: 'Man, however, it is not only a citizen of the earthly city, but he is also a participant of the city of celestial Jerusalem, whose ruler is the Lord, the citizens being the Angels and all the Saints.' *Virt.* q. 1 a. 9c. Also, *In Isa.* c. 3. 2 ad v. 15; *Quodl.* X q. 6 a. 1c. In *I Cor.* 13. 4 ad v. 13 [806] Aquinas brings this view directly into contact with friendship-theory. He explains that friendships are diversified by the type of union and that we have two different conjunctions with God, one with regard to participation in 'natural goods', the other with regard to beatitude. This participation makes us citizens of the celestial Jerusalem. For a more thorough treatment of this topic see J. Finnis, *Aquinas: Moral, Political, and Legal Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 327–31.

¹³ *ST* I–II q. 4 a. 8. ad 3.

¹⁴ Charity was identified with *amicitia* at least as early as John Cassian (365?–433?), (e.g. at *Conferences*, XVI). See D. Konstan, 'Problems in the History of Christian Friendship', *Journal of Early Christianity*, 4 (1996), 106 and A. M. Fiske, 'Cassian and Monastic Friendship', *American Benedictine Review*, 12 (1961) on *caritas* and *amicitia*: pp. 202–5. According to Fiske, Cassian's views on charity are partially inspired by the ideas of Evagrius of Pontus, an Egyptian disciple of Macarius the Elder. Friendship was associated with *caritas*, before Cassian, by the Greek Fathers Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus, and John Chrysostom. See L. Pizzolato, *L'idea di amicizia nel mondo antico classico e cristiano* (Turin: Einaudi, 1993), 375–93, 404, 411 (page references are to the 1996 Spanish translation published by Mario Muchnik in Barcelona in 1996).

desire. Charity therefore would run against all types of friendship in which an erotic element is present. In connection to this claim it should be noted that, as explained below, for Aquinas, charity actually presupposes, rather than excludes, erotic (or, in somewhat dated English, 'concupiscible') love.¹⁵

There is, in addition, the view that, since charity is a sort of all-embracing friendship with rational beings, it is more in line with Stoic-minded ideas of a universal brotherhood than with the personal, exclusive attachments that we normally call friendship today. According to Lorraine Smith Pangle, exceptions aside, 'Christianity's call to devote one's heart as completely as possible to God, and to regard all men as brothers, made the existence of private, exclusive, and passionate attachments seem inherently questionable.'¹⁶ Consider, however, that Aquinas devotes a great deal of space to explain how charity joins already existing partial loves by reinforcing them while preserving their differing intensities, rather than by substituting them, or simply by uniformly extending blanket-like over them.¹⁷ Aquinas does not preach the obliteration of existing partialities in favour of a higher, all-encompassing, universal love. Rather, he focuses on how these partialities are transformed (not dissolved) by the advent of charity. Even in *patria*—that is, in our heavenly home—partial attachments would remain in place.

1.3 ACTS OF FRIENDSHIP

The three acts of friendship are '[f]irst benevolence, which consists in this that someone wills the other person good and his evil wills not, second, concord that consists in this that friends will and

¹⁵ III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1 ad 1. The thesis that *agapê* is opposed to *eros* became popular with A. Nygren's *Eros and Agape* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953 c.1930), see esp. 476, 483. But it has been argued that in Greek usage and in the Septuagint, the terms *agapê* and *eros* were sometimes used as synonyms or cognates rather than as antonyms; see W. E. Phipps, 'The Sensuousness of Agape', *Theology Today*, 29 (1973), 370–9. For more criticism on Nygren's thesis see C. Osborne's *Eros Unveiled: Plato and the God of Love* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), chs. 2, 3, and app.

¹⁶ L. Smith Pangle, *Aristotle and the Philosophy of Friendship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.

¹⁷ See *ST* II–II q. 26 a. 7 and the whole question devoted to the 'order of charity' (*ST* II–II q. 26 a. 1–13). That charity does not extend uniformly to everyone was already held by Cassian who, according to Fiske ('Cassian', 203), spoke of *caritas ordinata*.

reject the same things, third, beneficence, which consists in this that someone does good deeds for the person he loves and does not harm him.¹⁸

Aquinas, following Aristotle's lead, defines friendship by these three deeds, acts, or effects.¹⁹ *Concordia*, *benevolentia*, and *beneficentia* can be verified both in interpersonal friendship as in the friendship of a person towards himself. These features of friendship towards oneself propagate to the friend, since the friend is 'another self'. Just as we wish goods for ourselves, so we wish goods for the friend. Just as we act so as to achieve the things we desire, so we act similarly with regard to the friend. Just as we consent (presumably in the sense of giving practical approval) to the realization of perceived goods, so does love as extended to the friend include concord, in that we consent to his own realization of perceived goods.²⁰

Friends must know each other and know of their friendship.²¹ Hence, a controlling criterion in the specification of the acts of friendship is the extent to which these acts could be mutually performed by persons who are unfamiliar or unacquainted with one another. Benevolence taken on its own is thus insufficient for friendship, as one may will good things for people one is not acquainted with, such as a participant in a contest.²² Beneficence is the practical expression of benevolence.²³ Since benevolence can be directed at strangers, we must infer that beneficence too is insufficient proof of friendship. On the same ground concord about scientific matters does not evince friendship since it can happen between people who do not know each other.²⁴

The rest of this chapter is structured around these three acts of friendship. *Concordia*, *benevolentia*, and *beneficentia* present the larger themes within which the more detailed studies that make up the bulk of the book may be located.

¹⁸ *In Rom.* 12. 3 ad v. 15–17 [9–17] [996]; also *ST* II–II q. 80 a. un. ad 2; *Eth.* IX. 4 [1798], [1814], 5 [1820].

¹⁹ Aquinas uses sometimes 'effects' (*Eth.* IX. 1 [1757], 4 [1797]), but more often 'acts' (*ST* II–II q. 31 a. 1 sc., c.; *Eth.* VIII. 3 [1562], 5 [1596–7], [1600], IX. 4 [1797]), and sometimes 'deeds' (*Eth.* VIII. 3 [1583], 5 [1596], 6 [1607], VIII. 4 [1798], IX. 4 [1816], 5 [1820]).

²⁰ *III Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1c.

²¹ *III Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1 obj. 9, ad 10; *Eth.* VIII. 2 [1560], 3 [1564]; *In Ioann.* c. 13 lc. 7 [in v. 13:34] [182–5].

²² *Eth.* IX. 5 [1821] [1823]; *ST* II–II q. 27 a. 2c.

²³ *ST* II–II q. 31 a. 1c., a. 4 sc.

²⁴ *Eth.* IX. 6 [1830].

1.3.1 Concord and Choice

Concord, for Aquinas, designates the union of wills, equivalent to Aristotle's *homonoia*, which sustains common projects and life.²⁵ The virtuous person is in concord with himself in three different respects: by enjoying his own company, by conversing with himself (recollecting pleasant memories, envisioning anticipated achievements, engaging in theoretical thinking), and by agreeing with his own feelings.

Concord is principally about choices.²⁶ One's choices should concord with those of the friend. Choice is closely related to two central elements of Aquinas's theory of friendship: on the one hand, to the conceptualization of friendship as a habit, and on the other hand, to *dilectio*, the love that characterizes friendship.

Aquinas argues with Aristotle that friendship is neither a feeling nor an act, but rather a state or habit:²⁷ 'Friendship is a kind of virtue inasmuch as it is a habit of choice.'²⁸ Therefore, friends continue being so even when they do not perform the acts of friendship, say when they sleep or are temporarily far apart. Note that by 'friendship' Aquinas always means one's friendship towards the friend, that is, a relational property inhering in oneself, rather than a relationship conceived as something, as it were, 'hovering' between the two friends.²⁹

A virtue is a habit or disposition to make a certain type of choice.³⁰ When these choices are perfective of the human being, then the habit is a virtue. When they are detrimental the habit is a vice. Concord is the act of the habit of friendship by which one's choice of action is the same or closely related to that of the friend. Concord allows the friends

²⁵ III *Sent.* d. 28 q. 1 a. 2c., aut. delet. of III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1 in P.-M. Gils, 'Textes inédits de S. Thomas: Les premières Rédactions du *Scriptum super Tertio Sententiarum*,' *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, 46 (1962), 611; *In Rom.* 12. 3 ad v. 15 [12–13] [1996]; *Eth.* IX. 6 [1831–2].

²⁶ *Eth.* IX. 4 [1800], 6 [1830–1].

²⁷ *Eth.* VIII. 5 [1602–4].

²⁸ *Eth.* VIII. 1 [1538].

²⁹ In the medieval theory of relations a relation is an accident of one of the 'extremes' rather than a separate entity, just as A's 'being taller than B' or 'being B's father' was conceived to be an accident of A. See J. Brower, 'Medieval Theories of Relations', in E. N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2005 Edition), <[http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2005/entries/relations-medieval/](http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2005/entries/rerelations-medieval/)>.

³⁰ The close connection between the habit in which moral virtues consist and *electio* is repeatedly remarked upon by Aquinas partly because of the definition of virtue in *Nic. Eth.* 1106^b35: 'Virtue is a state that decides', 'Virtus est habitus electivus'. Quoted e.g. (in reference to moral virtue) in *ST* I–II q. 58 a. 1 obj. 2, ad 2, a. 2 obj. 4, a. 4c., q. 59 a. 1c., q. 64 a. 1. sc., q. 65 a. 1c.

to participate in the *communicatio*, or shared life, which is the basis of friendship.³¹ This would be impossible if they constantly chose to do different actions.

Friends typically act out of choice, rather than out of passion.³² From the fact that friendship is a source of choices, it follows that friendship can only take place between rational beings: only they are endowed with the ability to choose.³³ It is because the acts of friendship are chosen, and therefore undetermined, that these acts are expressive of the rational dimension of the friend's will; they are expressive of who he is.³⁴

Aquinas insists on referring to the love that binds friends as *dilectio*, defined as a love that involves choice.³⁵ One possible interpretation of this doctrine is that dilection is the love that follows from our determination, through choice, of the object of love, i.e. from the choice of friends. In this view *dilectio* would seem to be unrelated to concord, for concord concerns friends' choices, rather than one's choice of friends.

This interpretation is disputable, however. This becomes clear upon examination of some features of Aquinas's theory of love. Love as a passion is something impressed upon the lover: it is the instilling in the lover of a superadded form or *complacentia appetibilis* which makes the lover tend towards the beloved as a consequence of that form, just as in Aristotelian physics a stone naturally tends downward by virtue of its form.³⁶ In brute animals and in the unregulated sensual soul, this moving towards the beloved is voluntary yet unfree: while the lover is his own principle of action, the means (actions) which mark the progress towards union with the beloved are not freely chosen.³⁷

Yet, according to Aquinas, when the lover's love is intellectual or rational, or even when it is rationally controlled sensual love, the progression towards the beloved is marked by choice.³⁸ We do not

³¹ *ScG* III c. 151 n. 3; *Eth.* IX. 4 [1800], [1816]; *Div.* XI. 1 [885]; *In Ioann.* 13. 7 ad v. 34 [1838].

³² This point is frequently made by Aquinas, e.g. in *ST* II–II q. 26 a. 8 ad 1; *Eth.* VIII. 5 [1603]; *Virt.* q. 1 a. 5 obj. 5.

³³ *Eth.* VIII. 5 [1603]; *ST* I q. 2 a. 2c.; *I Sent.* d. 10 q. 1 a. 5 ex.; *In Ioann.* 21. 3 ad v. 16–17 [2622].

³⁴ *Electio* is the act of the rational appetite: *ST* I–II q. 13 a. 6 sc.; *Mal.* q. 16 a. 7 obj. 18; *Virt.* q. 5 a. 4 ad 13; *Eth.* I. 1 [8], III. 5 [60], 9 [486]. For examples of texts on *electio* and *libero arbitrio* see: *II Sent.* d. 7 q. 1 a. 1 ad 1, d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 ad 3, d. 24 q. 1 a. 2 ad 4, d. 24 q. 1 a. 3 ad 5; *ST* I q. 83 a. 3c.; *ST* III q. 18 a. 4c.

³⁵ *I Sent.* d. 10 q. 1 a. 5 ex., d. 41 q. 1 a. 2 sc. 1.; *III Sent.* d. 32 q. 1 a. 3 sc. 1., q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1 sc. 1.; *ST* I–II q. 26 a. 3c.; *Ver.* q. 6 a. 1c.; *Div.* IV. 9 [402]; *ST* I q. 60 a. 2c.

³⁶ *ST* I–II q. 26 a. 2c.

³⁷ See: *ST* I–II q. 13 a. 2c.

³⁸ *ST* I q. 26 a. 1c., q. 60 a. 2 ad 1; *In Ioann.* 21. 3 ad v. 16–17 [2622].

choose what to love, however we do choose those things that are loved because of their relation to that which we love. The actions which advance the progression towards the beloved are chosen from a number of eligible unnecessitated options.

Therefore *dilectio* concerns all the choices of actions conceived of as related to the object of intellectual love—in our case, the friend. Hence, the choices of the friends stem from *dilectio*. These are precisely the choices which concord unifies.

So concord is one of the acts of the habit of friendship: the friend chooses so that his choice may stand in a particular relation to his friend's. Further, because it is not merely passive, the love of friendship involves practical deliberation about the best way to realize the friendship. Practical conclusions do not follow by necessity but only through undetermined choice. Just as there are different ways of fulfilling the acts of courage or temperance (i.e. of determining what courage, or temperance, require in such and such contingences), there must be different ways of determining what acts eventuate friendship in such and such circumstances. Hence concord, as an act of friendship, does not eliminate the need to conduct practical deliberation in choosing the way towards realizing friendship. Chapters 2 and 3 develop this topic by asking what we must agree about with our friends, and what to do if we do not grasp the reasons behind our friends' wills.

1.3.2 Aptitudes for Concord

The sharing of goals is a fragile state of affairs that can be positively or negatively affected by various factors, such as the personal dispositions of the friends.

Aristotle believed that people lacking in virtue ('the base') are unequipped for friendship, even towards themselves.³⁹ Perhaps central among a number of reasons for this is that base people are unable to sustain concord over time. Their character lacks the stability and firmness necessary to achieve it.⁴⁰ This volatility is a result of a disordered soul: the base lack internal concord. Instead, they are the location of internal conflict between opposing forces. Their sensitive and rational appetites push in opposite directions, thus causing the same disharmony in the soul that is present in the incontinent or weak-willed.⁴¹

³⁹ *Nic. Eth.* 1166^b23–4.

⁴⁰ *Nic. Eth.* 1159^b7–10; *Eth.* VIII. 8 [1651].

⁴¹ *Nic. Eth.* 1166^b17–23; *Eth.* IX. 4 [1817].

Paradoxically, the base also have a great need for the company of other people. This permits them to distract themselves from what must be necessarily an irritating self-contemplation (the base cannot avoid awareness of their base past deeds and probable future ones).⁴²

The impact of vice and virtue on concord receives a more fine-grained treatment by Aquinas when he discusses the roots of factionalism and the destruction of concord. Discord is often a result of our unwillingness to admit the fallibility of our views: 'Among the proud there are always contentions.'⁴³ For Aquinas, pride and associated vices are often behind reprehensible forms of discord, conflict, and the breaking away of friendship.

Pride presents some philosophically interesting questions. Reprehensible pride involves an element of falsity: the belief that one is better—in some respect—than one really is. But if pride is a form of intellectual error then it is not clear what is reprehensible about it. Pride cannot be, on the other hand, a self-conscious lie—we can easily distinguish liars from proud people. Pride presents therefore the same paradox associated with self-deceit—namely whether self-deceit is genuinely possible in a unified self. Chapter 4 examines in detail the impact of pride on concord and shows how the power to introduce dissension can be used to promote one's self-image.

1.3.3 Benevolence and Beneficence: Selflessness or Self-Love?

As indicated above, two of the three central components, or 'acts', of friendship are the willing good things to your friends (*benevolentia*) and the performance of acts, such as granting gifts, that contribute to their obtaining these good things (*beneficentia*). The granting of benefits raises two important questions: (i) what is the appropriate relation between a person and his possessions that enables him to be a friend? and (ii) what resources are needed to fulfil this granting and returning of benefits?

What are the personal dispositions and affections behind beneficence? On the one hand it could be argued that the readiness to share, or even to give away, one's belongings is an expression of altruism, or, taken to an extreme, of selflessness. On the other hand it could be argued that this generosity, which concerns mostly external goods such as money, reflects not selflessness, but rather a healthy detachment from worldly goods.

⁴² *Eth.* IX. 4 [1816].

⁴³ Prov. 13: 10.

The first approach is often in evidence among the Apostles, particularly St Paul. He sometimes suggests that Christian charity involves a readiness to undergo loss and the patient forbearance of wrongs.⁴⁴

Aristotle supports the second approach—namely, that the best friendship involves a lack of undue attachment to external goods. Aristotle does not consider this lack of attachment to express selflessness, but to express virtuous self-love. Self-lovers, Aristotle says, are criticized not so much for loving themselves as for procuring for themselves money, honour, and bodily pleasures.⁴⁵ According to Aristotle no one would criticize a self-lover who procures for himself wisdom and virtue.⁴⁶ The self-lover with an appropriate conception of the good will seek to benefit his rational part rather than his sensual part, and hence will not go after worldly goods for their own sake. Rather, the virtuous self-lover will subordinate the acquisition and use of worldly goods to the pursuit of virtue.

It is not because the virtuous person disregards the value of external goods that he gives them to his friends. Rather, he does so because helping your friend is a virtuous and honourable act, and this is what the virtuous person aims for.⁴⁷ If external goods were deprived of all value, then granting them to your friends could hardly be regarded as a virtuous act. Aristotle goes on to argue that, in fact, giving your life for the sake of your friend is a perfect expression of virtuous self-love.⁴⁸

Someone who accepts Aristotle's view will have to interpret the texts of the Apostles on charity mentioned above, as recommending not selflessness, but an appropriate understanding of what goods are really important (and, correspondingly, what in oneself is worthy of love). This is precisely Aquinas's line. He characterizes *cupiditas*, the vice that constitutes one of the main enemies of charity,⁴⁹ not as an unspecific 'love of having', but rather as love of moneys, love of transient things, love of honours, and love of worldly things.⁵⁰ The person who

⁴⁴ E.g. Cor. 6: 6, 6: 7, 13:15; Luke 6: 30; Matt. 5: 40.

⁴⁵ *Nic. Eth.* 1168^b16–17.

⁴⁶ *Nic. Eth.* 1168^b25–8.

⁴⁷ *Nic. Eth.* 1169^a18–35.

⁴⁸ *Nic. Eth.* 1169^a25–6.

⁴⁹ Following Augustine's dictum that 'cupidity is the poison of charity' in *De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII*, I. 36 (*PL* 40. 25), and alluded to in *ST* I–II q. 99 a. 6 ad 1; *ST* II–II q. 118 a. 5 obj. 2 ad 2, q. 184 a. 2c.; *ST* III q. 79 a. 6 ad 3; *Mal.* q. 13 a. 2 obj. 2, ad 2; *Quodl.* III q. 6 a. 3c.; *Perf.* c. 6 [569].

⁵⁰ *ST* II–II q. 19 a. 3c. (*cupiditas* as love of moneys, worldly love); *ST* II–II q. 129 a. 2c. (as love of wealth and honours); *ST* I–II q. 30 a. 2 obj. 2. (as love of transient things, after Augustine), *Dec.* (proem.) (as love of holding to temporal goods, after Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus*).

on account of *cupiditas* cannot act in the spirit of charity has an incorrect appreciation of what goods are worth pursuing and retaining and, correspondingly, an incorrect understanding of what in himself is worthy of love. When discussing whether one should, out of charity, love oneself over other persons, Aquinas replies in a very Aristotelian fashion that 'A man ought to bear bodily injury for his friend's sake, and precisely in so doing he loves himself more [than the friend] as regards his spiritual mind, because it pertains to the perfection of virtue, which is a good of the mind.'⁵¹

So, in Aristotle's and Aquinas's view, *benevolentia* and *beneficentia* do not demand selflessness, but rather a correct appreciation of what is really valuable. Such appreciation engenders the sort of generosity that is peculiar to friendship. This generosity should not be confused with mere liberality. Liberality is the sort of largesse that one displays towards strangers rather than friends, as it need not reflect an informed concern for the well-being of the recipients.⁵²

For some Christian theologians and polemicists, property claims (i.e. demands to retain or to regain a thing) are closely connected to *cupiditas*. If property demands originate from *cupiditas*, and *cupiditas* is incompatible with charity—it is argued—then property demands are inconsistent with charity. For Aquinas, however, rights-based claims can arise from motives other than cupidity. They may even originate in a willingness to better the friend. Insofar as justice is a virtue, and acquiring virtues is good for a person, justice-based demands help the wrongdoer make progress towards virtue. Therefore, as Aquinas says, people making justice-based demands may be moved by the spirit of brotherly correction, rather than *cupiditas*, vengeance, or anger. Hence charity, and friendship, do allow for the defence of one's rights, and may even require it.

Charity requires that we be ready to undergo loss if such loss is necessary to avoid scandal or in situations of dire need by the unlawful possessor of one's belongings.⁵³ Not all scandals, however, give reason to forfeit one's legitimate claims, only scandals which involve public

⁵¹ *ST* II–II q. 26 a. 4 ad 2; *III Sent.* d. 29 q. un. a. 5 ad 3: 'To die for the sake of the friend is a most perfect act of virtue; because this act is preferred by the virtuous to his own bodily life. Yet when someone gives away his own bodily life for the sake of the friend, it does not follow that he loves his friend more than himself; but rather that he loves in himself the good of virtue more than the good of the body.'

⁵² *ST* II–II q. 117 a. 5 ad 3. To see this, contrast liberality with mercy and piety.

⁵³ *ST* II–II q. 43 a. 8c.; *IV Sent.* d. 38 q. 2 a. 4 sol. 3c.

shock damaging to the spiritual health of the community. In this regard Aquinas often gives the example of Thomas Becket's epic defence of the Church's rights. His actions were meritorious and compatible with charity even though they scandalized both king and public.⁵⁴ This topic is developed further in Chapter 6 where I examine Aquinas's views on the presumed incompatibility of friendship and right-based claims.

1.3.4 Hoped-for Goods and Friendship with the Benefactor

Hope receives little attention in Aristotle's account of human willing and action and almost none in his analysis of friendship. By contrast, hope is central to Aquinas's treatments of friendship. One of the reasons for this is hope's status as one of the theological virtues, causally prior to charity/friendship.

Faith, hope, and charity, the three theological virtues, are conceived of by Aquinas as stages in a process reaching its fulfilment in friendship with God. The genesis of this friendship is the appreciation, possible through faith, of the spiritual goods that human beings stand to gain (*beatitudo*). Human beings, however, must make themselves worthy of these goods in the eyes of God. For Aquinas, the process leading to friendship with God begins with the pursuit of these spiritual goods. God is first loved as a benefactor, and only at a later stage is loved irrespective of the benefits He confers.⁵⁵ If a human being disbelieves in his capacity to be worthy of these benefits, and so despairs, he will be unable to conceive of God as his own personal benefactor. He will fail to experience the interested love which ultimately, according to Aquinas, becomes friendship. It is hope therefore that makes friendship possible.

The thesis behind the role played by hope as a theological virtue is, then, that true friendship starts from interested love. Hope is not, strictly speaking, a specific component of friendship. It is rather a personal disposition associated with all of those enterprises which comprise future, challenging, but feasible goods.⁵⁶ Insofar as friendship is engendered by the common pursuit of a good, or by the reception of a good from a benefactor, then hope comes to bear on friendship, or, at least, on some friendships (those which present a challenge).

⁵⁴ IV *Sent.* d. 38 q. 2. a. 4 sol. 3 sc. 1, ad 5; *ST* II–II q. 43 a. 8 sc.; *Impugn.* IV. c. 3 ad 8 [463].

⁵⁵ *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 7c.

⁵⁶ See Section 5.2.1.2.

This view may seem difficult to reconcile with some common interpretations of Aristotle's theory of friendship. Aristotle contemplates three types of friendship: utility-, pleasure-, and virtue-based. One way of understanding this distinction, is to say that in the first two kinds, the friend is loved only as a source of utility and pleasure (rather than for his own sake). In virtue-based friendship alone the friend is loved *propter se*. If this reading of Aristotle is correct, then the friendship that hope makes possible (whether with God or with another benefactor) cannot be virtue-based friendship.

On a more refined understanding such as the one proposed by John Cooper, however, Aristotle does not mean that the friend is loved for his own sake only in virtue-based friendship.⁵⁷ Rather, Aristotle argues that the friend in virtuous friendship is loved in recognition of non-transitory features—that is, features that are not accidental to what he truly is (whether this love is dependent on the reception of benefits or not). In the other sorts of friendship, by contrast, the friend is loved in recognition of relatively ephemeral characteristics that are not essential to what he is. Notwithstanding this, these friendships do present love of the friend *propter se*, which is sustained so long as the general context of profitable exchange is preserved. If this reading is correct, then the presence of the interested love (typical but not restricted to non virtue-based friendship) does not exclude the love of the friend 'for his own sake'.

The fact that hope leads us to love someone on account of the benefit that we expect from him, does not mean that hope is necessarily associated with utility or pleasure. One can love both virtuously and interestedly when one of the reasons behind the love of the friend is to benefit the best part of one's own soul. The difference between the virtuous and the non-virtuous friend is not that the love of the former is interested while that of the latter is not, but rather that the virtuous friend has a correct appreciation of what goods constitute true benefits. The virtuous friend has, as Aristotle would put it, a self-love based on a correct understanding of his self, and therefore of what goods are truly beneficial to himself. He also has a correct understanding of the friends' self and so, of the goods that truly benefit him.

Hence Aquinas's view that hope is conducive to the best sort of friendship—i.e. friendship with God—ceases to produce a paradox if one accepts Cooper's interpretation of Aristotle's classification of

⁵⁷ Cooper, 'Aristotle on Friendship', 308–15.

friendship. Friendship with God can be based on the pursuit of benefits and, at the same time, be virtuous, given that the benefits involved are spiritual goods.

According to Aquinas, when we hope for benefits from a specific person, he becomes 'our good'.⁵⁸ This is supposed to explain how hope leads to the love of friendship that is typical of charity. It is difficult, however, to see how the benefactor's being 'our good' leads to the best friendship if 'being our good' is understood as 'being good for us'. There is, nevertheless, an alternative understanding of 'being our good'. Suppose our well-being is closely connected with the well-being of someone else. In such a state of affairs one's good and the good of the other person become virtually indistinguishable from each other. This may be a rather unlikely thing to happen, but it would explain how one can ascend from purely-interested to a non-purely-interested love without the latter becoming a love to the exclusion of oneself.

A more detailed account of the role of hope in sustaining friendship and in allowing us to overcome the doubts generated by the uncertainty surrounding future friends' wills is provided in Chapter 5.

1.3.5 Beneficence and Indebtedness

Friendship involves promoting the friend's well-being. Benefiting your friends generates in the recipient what we may term a debt of gratitude.⁵⁹ Aquinas calls this the 'debt of friendship' and 'debt of honesty' belonging to the broader category of 'moral debt'.

Aquinas posits two kinds of duty: legal and moral,⁶⁰ corresponding to the two kinds of justice postulated by Aristotle.⁶¹ A legal debt is a debt the payment and amount of which is dictated by codified law.⁶² Natural justice is the master directive guiding our best legislative efforts. Yet it cannot as such be codified since right reason may demand different things in different situations.⁶³ These contingencies cannot be brought

⁵⁸ *ST* I–II q. 62 a. 4c.

⁵⁹ *ST* II–II q. 106 a. 1 ad 3: 'Since true friendship is based on virtue, whatever there is contrary to virtue in a friend is an obstacle to friendship, and whatever in him is virtuous is an incentive to friendship. In this way friendship is preserved by repayment of favours, although repayment of favours belongs specially to the virtue of gratitude.'

⁶⁰ *ST* II–II q. 23 a. 3 ad 1; *ST* II–II q. 106 a. 5c.

⁶¹ *ST* II–II q. 80 a. un. c. quoting *Nic. Eth.* 1162^b20–1: 'There are two ways of being just, one unwritten, and one governed by rules of law.'

⁶² *ST* II–II q. 114 a. 2c.

⁶³ *Eth.* V. 16 [1086].

under the universal directives which are typical of positive law.⁶⁴ Thus the need to posit a moral duty defined as ‘that which one owes by reason of the rectitude of virtue’. Some moral duties are so important that without meeting them ‘moral rectitude cannot be preserved’.⁶⁵ Aquinas considers truth-telling, gratitude {*gratia*}, and *vindicatio* as moral duties of this kind.

In the context of friendship Aquinas identifies legal debt not as a debt required by law, but rather as a debt originating from an express pact. Since between friends there are no such pacts, friends’ debts are moral rather than legal.⁶⁶ Again the emphasis is on the difference between tacit understandings of what justice and decency require, and explicit, codified injunctions. Thus, the difference between moral and legal debts is not that one is required by justice and the other is not.⁶⁷

If natural justice demands that one return one’s friend’s favours, how is this exchange of gifts different from a normal commercial transaction in which one pays for what one has received? Although Aristotle gives some useful clues, he fails to give sufficient distinctiveness to friendly as opposed to commercial exchanges. Seneca, on the other hand, wrote an entire book on benefits, and if only for this reason, has a much more nuanced and detailed understanding of *beneficentia* and gratitude than Aristotle. Aquinas, understandably, takes Seneca and not Aristotle as the main authority on gratitude.

According to Seneca, the granting of benefits and their repayment differ from the repayment of a debt in a number of important respects. ‘The grandeur of the act is ruined if we make our benefits commercial transactions.’⁶⁸ A service is a benefit if it goes beyond the duties of one’s station or office.⁶⁹ For something to count as a benefit, rather than as a loan, it must be accompanied by an appropriate will and friendship on the part of the giver. A benefit ‘is the art of doing a kindness which both bestows pleasure and gains it by bestowing it, and which does its office by natural and spontaneous impulse. It is not, therefore, the thing

⁶⁴ *Eth.* V. 16 [1084–5].

⁶⁵ *ST* II–II q. 80 a. un.c. (my trans.).

⁶⁶ On absence of explicit pacts between friends see: *ST* II–II q. 78 a. 2 ad 2, q. 106 a. 1 ad 2; *Impugn.* II. c. 6 ad 27 [344]; *Mal.* q. 13 a. 4 ad 5.

⁶⁷ Moral debt comes under natural justice: *ST* I–II q. 99 a. 5c.; *ST* II–II q. 80 a. un.c., ‘duplex est iustitia’: *Eth.* VIII. 13 [1733] citing *Eth.* V. 16 [1081] in which it is claimed that the equitable is contained in the natural just, not in the legal just. The legal just has its origin in the inalterable natural just: *Eth.* V. 12 [1023].

⁶⁸ *Benef.* III. 14 § 4.

⁶⁹ *Benef.* III. 22 § 1.

which is done or given, but the spirit in which it is done or given, that must be considered.⁷⁰

The benefit is not the material good granted, but rather the will which accompanies it. It is to this will that we respond when we return the favour. Things are instruments to express this friendly will. In commercial exchange, on the contrary, our return corresponds to the value of the thing as such, irrespective of the intention or will that accompanies its granting.

The repayment of a benefit differs from the repayment of a commercial debt in both timing and quantity: 'The man who is always eager to repay under all circumstances, has not the feeling of a grateful man, but of a debtor [...] [H]e who is too eager to repay, is unwilling to be in his friend's debt; he who is unwilling, and yet is in his friend's debt, is ungrateful.'⁷¹ One should not return the exact amount of what one has received, but if possible even more, thus extending the obligation and, therefore, the friendship, in what resembles a ball game:⁷² 'I ought to be more careful in the choice of my creditor for a benefit than a creditor for a loan; for I have only to pay the latter as much as I received of him, and when I have paid it I am free from all obligation; but to the other [the benefactor] I must both repay more, and even when I have repaid his kindness we remain connected, for when I have paid my debt I ought again to renew it, while our friendship endures unbroken.'⁷³

For Seneca, benefits are closely, perhaps even necessarily, linked with friendship, for benefit giving and return makes sense only within an ongoing relationship animated by mutual and acknowledged good willing. A benefit is a means both of initiating a friendship and of preserving it. It may fail to achieve this purpose if the receiver is uninterested in friendship: he will treat the benefit as a mere loan.⁷⁴

Aquinas endorses most of what Seneca has to say about gratitude, ingratitude, and benefits. However, there seems to be some ambiguity in his consideration of the debts of friendship. For while, as stated

⁷⁰ *Benef.* I. 6 § 1.

⁷¹ *Benef.* IV. 40 § 5, VI. 35 § 3, 41 § 1–2; see also *ST* II–II q. 106 a. 5c., ad 1.

⁷² Seneca uses Chrysippus' simile of benefit giving and receiving as a sports game in which the players skilfully pass the ball to each other. *Benef.* II. 17 § 3–4.

⁷³ *Benef.* II. 18 § 5 (with some modifications over Stewart's trans.). See also *ST* II–II q. 106 a. 6c.

⁷⁴ *Benef.* II. 21 § 2.

earlier, benefits generate debts the repayment of which is required by natural justice, Aquinas sometimes distinguishes between the 'equality of justice' and the 'equality of friendship'.⁷⁵ The first equality is said to be upset by a legal debt and the second equality is the one disrupted by a moral debt. Does this mean that, for Aquinas, repayment of moral debt is not in fact required by justice?

A solution is provided by Seneca's view that the true benefit is the good will of the giver, rather than the object given. Aquinas agrees.⁷⁶ The difference between legal and moral debt is not that one falls under justice while the other does not. Rather, the difference is that one concerns the return of things and the other the reciprocity of feeling. When Aquinas wonders whether returning for a benefit more than one has received upsets the equality of justice, he does not reply that justice does not govern friendly exchanges. Rather, his answer is precisely that gratitude (which is a part of justice) concerns the equality of wills: 'For while on the one hand the benefactor of his own free will gave something he was not bound to give, so on the other hand the beneficiary repays something over and above what he has received.'⁷⁷ The idea is that the will 'to give more than one has received in material goods' must match the friend's similar will. Hence, in the case of friendship and gratitude, the relevant currency of justice is not things but wills.⁷⁸

Friendship therefore requires moral resources, that is, it requires the capacity to perform acts that are worthy enough to put the friend in debt. Sometimes, however, a prospective friend lacks the resources to perform such acts, and hence cannot benefit/indebt the other friend so as to set the friendship in motion. This is discussed by Aquinas in the context of his theology of merit. There Aquinas explains how, by making part of the resources of one friend common to the other, friendship may help create the required conditions of beneficence. This view is discussed in Chapter 6.

Sometimes friends' acts not only upset the justice that is particular to friends, but also the general justice, i.e. they infringe upon the

⁷⁵ IV *Sent.* d. 14 q. 2 a. 1 sol. 2c., d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2 ad 1.

⁷⁶ *Eth.* VIII. 13 [1743], *Eth.* IX. 1 [1767].

⁷⁷ ST II-II q. 106 a. 6 obj. 3, ad 3.

⁷⁸ ST II-II q. 106 a. 5c.: 'In the friendship based on virtue repayment should be made with regard for the choice or motives [the feelings that move the will] of the giver since this is the chief requisite of virtue, as stated in *Nic. Eth.* VIII' 'In amicitia autem honesti debet in recompensatione haberi respectus ad electionem, sive ad affectum dantis, quia hoc praecipue requiritur ad virtutem, ut dicitur in *Nic. Eth.* VIII.' See *Nic. Eth.* 1163^a21-3.

right that the friend has qua person rather than qua friend. Are the responses to such infringements dealt with differently when they take place in the context of friendship than when they take place between strangers? What happens when the offender-friend lacks the resources to make appropriate restoration for the wrong inflicted? Aquinas raises this problem within his penitential theology. Again, Aquinas explains how the presence of friendship creates circumstances in which the less endowed friend can make an acceptable compensation and so restore the friendship. I discuss this topic in Chapter 7.

1.3.6 Friendly Acts and the Uncertainty of the Heart

Friends' acts are responses to the acts of the other friends. These acts are valuable insofar as they express valuable feelings, intentions, and choices.⁷⁹

Sometimes an act is not backed by the intention that it is supposed to express, and so it deceives. Given that the connection between acts and wills is not fixed we cannot know with certainty whether friendship actually exists. Augustine asks of Terence's 'evils of love',⁸⁰ 'Do they not often occur even in honourable friendships? On all hands we experience these slights, suspicions, quarrels, war, all of which are undoubted evils; while, on the other hand, peace is a doubtful good, because we do not know the heart of our friend, and though we did know it today, we should be as ignorant of what it might be tomorrow.'⁸¹

Aquinas believes that we should presume that other people's acts and words are authentic, i.e. that they reflect what they will or think.⁸² He argues that to assume the opposite without conclusive evidence would often entail doing an injustice. If presumptions are rules that instruct us in what to believe, it follows that, for Aquinas, holding what could be false beliefs is preferable to risking unjustly misjudging a person. In other words, our beliefs are not to be judged only in terms of their correctness or falsity, but also as bearers of a moral value which might not necessarily coincide with their truth value.

⁷⁹ *Eth.* VIII. 13 [1743], IX. 1 [1767]; *ST* II-II q. 106 a. 5c.

⁸⁰ See Parmeno's discourse in *Eunuchus*, I. i. 14–18: 'In love there are all these evils; wrongs, suspicions, enmities reconcilements, war, then peace; if you expect to render these things, naturally uncertain, certain by dint of reason, you wouldn't effect it a bit the more than if you were to use your endeavors to be mad with reason.' In *The Comedies of Terence*, trans. Henry Thomas Riley (New York: Harper, 1874).

⁸¹ *CD* XIX, 5.

⁸² See Section 5.1.1.

Aquinas's discussion of presumptions belongs to his detailed treatment of procedural justice, but also touches upon non-judicial cases; indeed, Aquinas provides examples which are relevant to friendship. These examples and the 'presumption of authenticity' are analysed in Chapter 5.

2

What Concord Requires

2.1 ‘CONCORD IS A UNION OF WILLS, NOT OF OPINIONS’

In at least six places Aquinas writes: ‘Concord is a union of wills, not of opinions.’¹ This dictum is problematic because one would think that without some union of opinions, union of wills cannot obtain. This chapter seeks to clarify the meaning of this dictum and to show that it does not imply that shared opinions are unnecessary for concord.

Aquinas employs the dictum ‘concord is a union of wills, not of opinions’ in three different kinds of contexts. The first context is his thorough examination of love and its effects. There he looks at the features displayed by the relationship between lover and beloved. The second context is that of disputes between persons who are bound by the friendship of charity: angels, Apostles, and Fathers of the Church. In this context Aquinas wants to show that the friendship which is a result of charity is not hindered by these disagreements. The third context is Aquinas’s discussion about whether we are to maintain friendly links with heretics. This chapter is organized accordingly, as each of the first three sections concerns one of these three contexts. The present section considers the meaning and background of Aquinas’s distinction between ‘union of wills’ and ‘union of opinions’ in the light of his theory of love. Section 2.2 shows how Aquinas employs this distinction to explain how friends can disagree with each other without harming the concord that should reign among them. Section 2.3 introduces and replies to two objections raised by Aquinas’s treatment of heresy.

¹ II *Sent.* d. 11 q. 2 a. 5 ad 1; III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1c.; an early draft has been published by P.-M. Gils, ‘Textes inédits de S. Thomas: Les Premières Rédactions du *Scriptum super Tertio Sententiarum*’, *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 46 (1962), 611–12; IV *Sent.* d. 13 q. 2 a. 3 obj. 1., ad 1; *ST* II–II q. 29 a. 1 obj. 2, ad 2; *ST* II–II q. 37 a. 1c.

Before proceeding it is important to advert to a tempting but probably false lead: to read ‘opinion’ against the background of the distinction between the different modes of cognition (opinion, science, understanding, and faith).² In his dictum, Aquinas does not seem to be using the term ‘opinion’ in this specialized manner, but rather as a general term to refer to beliefs.³

2.1.1 Aristotle and Aquinas on Beliefs and Concord

Aristotle introduces *homonoia* (‘concord’, or ‘unanimity’)⁴ in the ninth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* as part of his consideration of friendship. For Aristotle concord is of central political importance: ‘[C]oncord seems to be similar to friendship and they [legislators] aim at concord above all while they try above all to escape civil conflict, which is enmity.’⁵ In focusing on concord Aristotle expands:

Now concord {*homonoia*} also appears to be a feature of friendship.⁶ Hence it is not merely sharing a belief {*homodoxia*}, since this might happen among people who do not know each other. Nor are people said to be in concord when they agree about just anything, e.g. on astronomical questions, since concord on these questions is not a feature of friendship. Rather a city is said to be in concord when [its citizens] agree about what is advantageous, make the same decision, and act on their common resolution. Hence concord concerns questions for action, and more exactly, large questions where both or all can get what they want.⁷

Aristotle says that while shared beliefs are not a sufficient condition for concord, they are no doubt necessary. But beliefs about what?

² For definitions of the specialized meaning of opinion see *In Posteriorum analyticorum*, I. 44 [399] (5), [400] (6); *ST* II–II q. 2 a. 9 obj 2, ad 2.

³ Note, e.g. that heretics’ views (by definition held pertinaciously) are treated as ‘opinions’ (*ST* II–II q. 11 a. 2c.; *I Sent.* d. 33 q. 1 a. 5c.) and that views on speculative matters and celestial bodies (i.e. views on non-contingent matters) are referred to as ‘opinions’ when Aquinas uses the dictum. See n. 27, below.

⁴ As translated by F. D. Miller Jr., *Nature, Justice, and Rights in Aristotle’s Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), 136, 269. For a detailed treatment of Aristotle on *homonoia* see R. J. Klonoski, ‘*Homonoia* in Aristotle’s Ethics and Politics’, *History of Political Thought*, 17 (1996), 313–25, and the bibliography cited there.

⁵ *Nic. Eth.* 1155^a23–5.

⁶ Or ‘sentiment of friendship’ (sentiment d’amitié) with R. A. Gauthier and J. -Y. Jolif, *Aristote, l’éthique à Nicomaque* (Louvain: Publications universitaires; Paris: Beatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1970), ii/2, 736, 738.

⁷ *Nic. Eth.* 1167^a22–9.

We can answer this negatively by pointing out the kinds of beliefs that are *not* necessary for concord. To start with, it is not necessary to agree on things lacking practical concern. This does not simply mean that we do not have to agree on beliefs about stars or atoms, but also perhaps that we do not need to agree as to what remains beyond the power of the citizens to attain or as to what concerns other cities. And among the things that do concern the city we have to agree only on matters of importance. Left out are also matters which, despite being of practical importance, do not concern all citizens but only a group of them. The beliefs which are vital for the preservation of political unity are beliefs about matters that are of important practical nature for all citizens.

Although Aquinas invokes Aristotle's text on concord,⁸ his view on what concord requires is not identical to Aristotle's. Aristotle distinguished between two kinds of opinions: those which are required by concord and those which are not. Aquinas, instead, introduces a parallel, but different, distinction: a distinction between 'union of wills' and 'union of opinions'.

To examine concord as a feature of Aquinas's account of friendship one must start by looking at the dynamics of love. Love is a cornerstone of Aquinas's conception of human behaviour; it is, in his view, the motivating factor that lies at the root of all our actions.⁹ Every type of friendship involves love. Much of what happens between friends can be explained by examining the kind of love that keeps them together.

It was an accepted view, originating in Neoplatonism and influential in Christian mysticism, that love involves a certain movement toward a unity between the lover and the loved. When, in the *Sentences* (III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1c.), Aquinas introduces 'concord' as the fourth characteristic of reciprocal well-wishing and equates it to 'union of wills', this must be read in its proper context: as one of the sorts of union that are part of the dynamics of love.¹⁰

⁸ Attention is due also to another influential authority, that of Cicero. He argues that the essence of friendship lies in 'the most complete agreement in wills, in pursuits, and in opinions' (*L.A.* IV. 15), 'For friendship is nothing else than an accord in all things, human and divine, conjoined with mutual goodwill and affection...' (*L.A.* VI. 20).

⁹ *ST* I–II q. 28 a. 6c.; *Div.* IV. 9 [408]: 'Quia enim amor est communis radix appetitus, oportet quod omnis operatio appetitus ex amore causetur.'

¹⁰ On different types of union see: *Meta.* V. 3 n. 3 [779]; *ST* III q. 2 a. 1c. Cf. A. Krempel, *La Doctrine de la relation chez Saint Thomas: Exposé historique et systématique* (Paris: Vrin, 1952), 610–12.

2.1.2 What is United in a Union of Wills?

We can speak about wills being united on at least one of three different levels: (a) who wills?; (b) what is willed?; (c) for whom are things willed?

(a) *Unity as to the persons who will.* Aquinas does not think that lovers can fuse into each other or into a new compound being (which would imply destroying at least one of their previous selves). The problem of Aristophanes' lovers is old,¹¹ and one to which the doctrine of participation in both its Platonic and Thomistic modalities intended to give an answer.¹² Yet this much is clear: Aquinas rejects the idea of two individuals really sharing one and the same intellect; consequently, (and also because) he also rejects the idea of two individuals sharing one and the same faculty of will (in the same sense that Siamese twins can sometimes share organs and faculties).¹³ So, a real unity at the level of the faculty of willing (which would imply a real unity of intellect) is not an option.

(b) *Unity as to the thing willed.* No doubt there must be *some* description under which friends will the same thing. But must their

¹¹ They 'desire to grow together in the excess of their affection, and from being two to become one, in which case one or both would certainly perish'. Plato, *Symposium*, 192c.

¹² For Aquinas on participation see R. Te Velde, *Participation and Substantiality in Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden, New York, and Cologne: Brill, 1995) (meanings of participation: pp. 11–15; participation of goodness: pp. 26–30; participation of being: pp. 76–83). Also R. J. Henle, *Saint Thomas and Platonism* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1956), 374–86.

¹³ One of the arguments of Aquinas against the view that one intellect can be shared by two or all individuals is that this would imply an inadmissible sharing of the faculty of will. *Unit.* IV § 89: 'If then, there were one intellect for all it would necessarily follow that there is only one who understands and consequently only one who wills and of his will's choice {pro suae voluntatis arbitrio} uses all those things thanks to which men are diverse from one another. From this it follows further there would be no difference between men as to the free choice of will, but it would be the same for all, if, indeed, intellect, in which resides the principality and dominion of using all the others, is one and undivided in all. But this is clearly false, impossible, and repugnant to what is obvious: it destroys the whole of moral science and all those things that pertain to civil interchange, which is natural to man, as Aristotle says.' McInerney's trans. with a modification ('will's choice' instead of 'free will'). See also *Unit.* III § 82. Aquinas does grant the existence of collective wills, but allots to them a very weak mode of existence. For thorough and compelling discussion on this see T. Eschmann, 'Studies on the Notion of Society in St Thomas Aquinas: St Thomas and the Decretal of Innocent IV *Romana Ecclesia*', *Mediaeval Studies*, 8 (1946), 1–42; 'Studies on the Notion of Society in St Thomas Aquinas: Thomist Social-Philosophy and Theology of Original Sin', *Mediaeval Studies*, 9 (1947), 19–55.

wills coincide as to the thing willed in all its possible descriptions? Chapter 3 addresses this question.

(c) *Unity as to the intended recipients of the thing willed.* In *Summa Theologiae*, I–II q. 28 a. 1c. Aquinas distinguishes between two kinds of unions between lovers: real (physical closeness to each other) and affective. The affective union *is* love, and puts in motion the process toward real union, which is an effect of love.¹⁴ Affective union consists in some sort of apprehension and can take two shapes. In erotic love the lover apprehends the beloved as part of his own well-being. In love of friendship, unlike in erotic love, we do not have an expansion of the self such that it comes to encompass our friend's well-being.¹⁵ Rather, what matters is that we perceive the friend as a like.

Earlier, in *Summa Theologiae*, I–II q. 27 a. 3c., Aquinas is busy explaining how likeness {similitudo} 'causes' love. There he argues that likeness consists in the 'sharing of one form', so two persons alike 'are in some way one in that form', just as two human beings 'are one in their belonging to the human species'. The union which is present, or sought after, in love of friendship consists in having certain likeness (that is, sharing in one form or uniformity).¹⁶

Aquinas distinguishes between two modes of similitude: that of two things actually sharing the same quality, and of one thing being like the other only potentially or by way of inclination.¹⁷ In the voluntary pursuit of a desired potential similitude, similitude stands as a good

¹⁴ As is clear from *ST* I–II q. 28 a. 1 ad 2.

¹⁵ Nothing suggests that for Aquinas these two kinds of love cannot be present in one and the same relationship.

¹⁶ *ST* I–II q. 27 a. 3c.: 'the very fact that two men are alike, having, as it were, one form, makes them to be, in a manner, one in that form {duo sunt similes quasi habentes unam formam, sunt quodammodo unum in forma illa}: thus two men are one thing in the species of humanity, and two white men are one thing in whiteness'. Union *per similitudinem*: III *Sent.* d. 1 q. 1 a. 1 sc. 2; d. 5 q. 1 a. 1c. (similitude produces union *metaphorice* speaking), d. 13 a. 3 a. 1 ad 2 (union of grace as similitude); *ScG* IV c. 41 n. 10; *ST* I–II 9. 28 a. 1 obj. 2; ad 2; *Ver.* q. 29 a. 1 obj. 2, ad 2; and I *Sent.* d. 48 q. un. a. 1c.

¹⁷ *ST* I–II q. 27 a. 3c.: '[W]hatever is in potentiality, as seen, has the desire for its corresponding actuality; and it takes pleasure in its realisation, if it be sentient and cognitive being.' *Hebd.* II [299–309]: 'If, in fact, likeness is desired in itself, it follows that "that which desires something else shows itself to be by nature like that which it desires", in other words: it has a natural inclination towards that which it desires. Such natural inclination follows the very essence of the thing, just as a heavy object tends downwards according to the reason of its essential nature; sometimes it follows the nature of some supervenient form, for example, when someone, having acquired some habit desires that which is adequate to him according to that habit.' See *Hebd.* II. [370–5] and

which ‘moves’ the will by way of attraction. Present (rather than desired) similitude is a cause of love in a very different sense. Love of oneself propagates love to those who are one with oneself in that they share in a form. So because a human being, in loving himself, loves his humanity, he comes also to love—contingencies aside—those who share the form of humanity. In this manner, ‘the love of one goes to the other as toward himself, and wills him good as he wills to himself’.¹⁸

Aquinas’s discussions of concord are placed within a discussion of two kinds of relationships: (1) the relationship between lover and beloved, (2) the relationship between those who pursue a common end (or love the same person).¹⁹

I start by looking at (1) as discussed in the *Sentences* (III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 1c). A loves B. This, apparently, carries the consequence that the will of B becomes a sort of directing rule {regula operis} for A.²⁰ But, what does it mean for the will of the beloved to become a directive rule for the lover? There Aquinas argues that when the appetite or affection {affectus} fixes itself on an object apprehended as good, the loved good impresses its form on the appetite or affect of the lover, not unlike the way intelligible forms impress their form on the intellect. The fact that the beloved impresses its form on the lover’s appetite creates a kind of union: ‘the lover is one with the beloved, who is made into the form of the lover’.²¹ In this fashion, as Aquinas says, love can be said to be ‘transformative’.²²

Ver. q. 23 a. 7c. for the manner in which this applies to charity and habits as supervenient forms.

¹⁸ ‘Ideo affectus unius tendit in alterum sicut in unum sibi, et vult ei bonum sicut et sibi.’ *ST* I–II q. 27 a. 3c. Also III *Sent.* d. 29 q. un. a. 6c.

¹⁹ This distinction should not be confused with the distinction between love of friendship and erotic love: for Aquinas, both types of love involve a movement towards desired union, but differ as to the kind of union that they seek.

²⁰ This picture seems aptly devised for the theological case of love and friendship with God (charity). Aquinas’s discussion about love in III *Sent.* is inserted in the treatment of charity. *ST* has a different structure: love features there much before charity, under the heading of the passions. For the sharing in a form induced by grace see *Ver.* q. 22 a. 6 ad 2.

²¹ III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 1c.: ‘And because every thing that adopts the form of something, becomes one with it, so, by virtue of love, the lover becomes one with the beloved, who becomes the form of the lover.’ Also ad 5. See also III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1 ad 9: ‘homines per caritatem deiformes efficiuntur’.

²² III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 1c.; ad 4. ‘From this that love transforms the lover in the beloved, it makes the lover access the interior of the beloved and conversely, and in nothing lover and beloved remain disunited, in the same way that form is intimately connected with that of which it is the form, and conversely.’ Cf. *ST* I–II q. 32. a. 5c.

Things move (and human beings act) in accordance with their form {unumquodque autem agit secundum exigentiam suae formae}. In the case of human beings, this form—namely, the end we are after—is both our principle of action and a rule of our works {principium agendi et regula operis}. Thus, the lover whose affection is informed by the beloved becomes inclined by love to act according to what is required by [the form of] the beloved {secundum exigentiam amati}. Acting in this way is pleasurable {delectabile} since it is not imposed from the outside on the lover, but rather accords with his intrinsic principle of movement.

In what way should we understand Aquinas's saying that the beloved's will is the formal principle of the lover's will? It would be seriously wrong to think of the lover as a kind of robot who dumbly replicates the activity of the beloved's will. What Aquinas means is that the lover wishes as much as possible to be like the loved one, he wishes to possess this resemblance²³ in the way that suits his own nature.²⁴ In other terms, the lover wants to participate in the form of the loved one as much as his particular mode of being is open to it. This desired resemblance extends to a desire for resemblance as to the activity of the beloved's will as well. The lover wills his acts of will to resemble those of the beloved. Accordingly, when Aquinas gets to the point of explaining how the goodness of our wills depends on their conformity to God's will, he treats this kind of resemblance and imitation as a sort of participation in divine goodness.²⁵ Aquinas rightly calls our sharing the form of the

²³ *ST* I–II q. 19 a. 9 ad 1: 'The human will cannot be conformed to the will of God so as to equality {per aequiparantiam}, but only by way of imitation {per imitationem}. In like manner human knowledge is conformed to the Divine knowledge, in so far as it knows truth, and human action is conformed to the Divine, in so far as it is becoming to the agent: and this is by way of imitation, not by way of equality.' For more on resemblance and conformity see J.-P. Torrell's 'Imiter à Dieu comme des enfants bien-aimés: La Conformité à Dieu et au Christ dans l'œuvre de saint Thomas', in C.-J. Pinto de Oliveira (ed.), *Novitas et veritas vitae: Mélanges offerts au Professeur Servais Pinckaers à l'occasion de son 65^e anniversaire* (Fribourg, Cerf: 1991), 57–9.

²⁴ See *IV Sent.* q. 1. a. 1 qu. 1 ad 4.

²⁵ *Ver.* q. 23 a. 7c.: '[I]n every genus there is some one thing which is primary and the measure of all the other things which are in that genus, for in it the nature of the genus is most perfectly found. This is verified of the nature of colour, for example, in whiteness, which is called the measure of all colours because the extent to which each colour participates in the nature of the genus is known from its nearness to whiteness or its remoteness from it, as said in *Metaphysics* 1053 b 28 (X). In this way God Himself is the measure of all beings, as can be gathered from the words of Averroës [*Meta* X comm. 7] (VIII, 254a). Every being has *esse* in the proportion in which it approaches God by similitude {quantum ei per similitudinem appropinquat}. [...] Hence His intellect is the measure of all knowledge; His goodness, of all goodness; and, to speak more to the

divine will a 'conformity' rather than a 'unity' of wills, which is typically used to designate human concord. Unity of wills is a state of affairs that could be achieved by two persons modifying their wills so as to join a common cause, whereas conformity entails one person living up to a standard which itself remains fixed.²⁶

So far little has been said of 'concord'. What specific dimension of this movement toward unity of wills is brought to the fore by Aquinas's dictum that 'concord is a union of wills, not of opinions'? One explanation that Aquinas gives for his view that concord is not a union of opinions is that opinions belong to the intellect and the activity of the intellect precedes the activity of the will.²⁷ But, how can love (via concord) bind wills without binding opinions first? Does not Aquinas suggest that love somehow carries will away from intellect's rule?

A plausible solution to this query turns on the idea that the unitive effect of love takes place at a critical point in the process of deliberation toward action, namely, when we make a choice between attractive, intellect-approved 'packages of means'.²⁸ Unlike the conclusions derived

point, His good will of every good will.' *In Eph. 5. 1 ad v. 1* [267]: the perfection of human nature as consisting in union with God is achieved by imitating Him inasmuch as it is possible for us, 'so as to participate of Him', quoted in J.-P. Torrell, *Saint Thomas d'Aquin, maître spirituel* (Fribourg: Cerf, Éditions universitaires de Fribourg, 1996), 150.

²⁶ *Ver. q. 23 a. 7 obj. 11* argues that, just as relations between those who are similar by sharing in one form, as friends and brothers, are symmetrical, so conformity with God would involve symmetry. Aquinas replies (*ad 11*) that 'when the form is in one principally and in the other in a secondary way, the relation of similitude is not symmetrical'. He gives the example of Hercules and his statue: the statue is similar to Hercules but not vice versa.

²⁷ *III Sent. d. 27 q. 2 a. 1c. (autographi deleta)* in Gils, 'Textes inédits', 611–12: 'It is necessary that the beloved becomes the appetitive rule in the person who chooses, as the form is for the natural thing. Because of this concord is included in love, according as someone wills and acts as the friend in those things falling under the will, since love does not bind opinions that precede the will, because they are in the intellect. Hence [different/similar] opinions about things celestial and speculative do not belong to friendship, as said in *IX Nic. Eth.*' 'Oportet etiam ut amatum efficiatur regula appetitivi in his quae eligit, sicut forma rei naturali, et ex hac parte includitur concordia in amore, secundum quam aliquis vult et operatur eadem quae amicus in his quae voluntati subiacent, quia amor ligat, non in opinionibus quae voluntatem praecedunt, cum sint in intellectu; unde opiniones [-diversae-] (+eadem+) de caelestibus et speculativis non pertinent ad amicitiam, ut dicitur in *IX Ethicorum*.' Also *ST II–II q. 29 a. 3c*. Both texts are reminiscent of Aquinas's treatment of the order between opinions and choices in *Eth. III, 6* [456]: '[W]e must know that opinion, since it pertains to the faculty of knowledge, strictly speaking, precedes choice pertaining to the appetitive faculty, which is moved by the cognitive power.'

²⁸ I borrow the expression 'packages of means' from Finnis, *Aquinas*, 67. One should keep in mind that, for Aquinas, opinions themselves can in certain situations be objects

from premisses in speculative thinking, our choosing between packages of means assented to by the intellect {sententia vel iudicium} does not follow by necessity from the animating principle {principia} of (practical) reasoning (that is, the end).²⁹ Thus, love's effect on choice-making does not cause a departure from the rule of reason.

There is some textual support for this solution: Aquinas points out that the will of the beloved is not just a rule of operation, but also a *rule of choice*.³⁰ Notice, in addition, that, in two opportunities, Aquinas points out that opinions are not included under concord because opinions on speculative matters do not fall 'under the will' (whereas, for him, choices do).³¹ These texts suggest that the purpose of the dictum is to state that, in our choice between packages of means to which intellect has already given its assent, will's inclination to pick one option rather than another is in some way informed by love. Since the purpose of the lover is to imitate the beloved, he will choose in a way such that allows him to resemble the beloved. Because the proposals from which we pick count with the approval of intellect, the effect of love in our choice does not constitute a diversion from the rule of intellect.

It is important to keep in mind that this solution does not restrict the unitive implications of love on will to choice-making only, but rather, it simply identifies the specific aspect of the union of wills that Aquinas—so I argue—wishes to highlight in his dictum.

The above solution does not account for all the uses of the dictum. For it is clear that in a number of instances there is a different purpose to 'concord is a union of wills, not of opinions'. I turn to these instances in the next section.

of choice, inasmuch as choosing to hold a particular opinion can be a means to an end (I may choose to agree with Peter so as to gain his approval). See Section 2.3.

²⁹ *ST* I–II q. 13 a. 6 obj. 1, ad 1; obj. 2 ad 2. See also *Eth.* IX. 6 [1831].

³⁰ III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1c. Choice is particularly important in friendship because 'To consent with each other on these [that is, speculative matters] does not belong to the concept of friendship, because friendship proceeds from choice {amicitia ex electione est}, judgment on speculative matters, however, proceeds from the necessity of the conclusions.' *Eth.* IX. 6 [1831]. *ST* II–II q. 26 a. 8 ad 1: 'friendship of companions originates through our own choice, in those matters that fall under our scope of choice, for instance in matters of action'.

³¹ III *Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1c.

2.2 DISAGREEMENT AND FRIENDSHIP

Can friendship between lovers of a common good or person survive disagreement? There is a series of texts both in the *Sentences* and in the *Summa Theologiae* that look at this question.³²

In these texts the friends are bound by the friendship of charity, that friendship by which persons wish for their neighbour, as they wish for themselves, the ultimate good: union with God. They wish this for their neighbour because they believe that he shares with the other intellectual creatures the common quality of being capable of achieving such kind of union. At the same time, in the situation depicted by these texts, there is conflict. How, then can we speak of charity being present?

The key to understanding the meaning of the dictum in this context is the purpose it serves. The purpose is to warn against an unwarranted inference: that from the fact that there is a conflict of wills it follows that there is no union of wills and therefore no concord, love, or charity.

Aquinas asks how it is possible for angels to disagree given that they have charity.³³ The first objection argues that angels cannot dispute or fight {impugnari} amongst themselves since they have the theological virtue of charity which is incompatible with fighting and discord.

In the corpus of the article Aquinas uses an example from the Scriptures: Daniel prays to God asking him to forgive the people of Israel and release them from captivity under the Persians. The angel Gabriel appears to him and reports on a discussion or fight taking place between angels.³⁴ Siding with the interpretation of Gregory the Great,³⁵ and against that of Jerome, Aquinas explains that the angels were discussing the various merits and demerits of the Jewish people, while awaiting God's decision to be made known to them. And this, Aquinas tells us, is perfectly compatible with the friendship of charity. Directly replying to the first objection, Aquinas quotes Aristotle to make the point that 'friendship or concord is not incompatible with diversity of opinions, but only diversity of wills: hence this fight, which is a fight about the judgements that follows from diverse merits, is not an

³² *ST* I–II q. 29 a. 3 obj. 2, ad 2; *ST* II–II q. 37 a. 1c.

³³ *II Sent.* d. 11 q. 2 a. 5.

³⁴ Dan. 10: 13.

³⁵ *PL* 76. 19, § 17.

obstacle to the unity of charity, so long as their will is one: that the divine providence may be fulfilled'.³⁶

What unifies the angels' wills is their will that the divine providence may be fulfilled.³⁷ But the angels have different judgements on the merits of the people Israel. It is not clear whether these different judgements give rise to (or are a case of) conflicting wills or not. On this point one can think of two views: (1) the angels' assessments of Israel's merits cannot but produce in the angels various appetitive responses (wills) toward Israel's different possible fates; (2) the angels' various judgements do not generate or imply conflicting wills.

(2) seems wrong. It is clear from the text that the judgements in conflict are those that have been chosen by the angels based on their different views ('opinions') on the merits of Israel. That there is a conflict of wills is evident from the use of the word 'fight' to describe the situation. However, each angel must regard what he wills as at least capable of being part of the divine providence, and—one may assume—must be ready to abandon his will and join that of God when His will is disclosed. It is not clear from the text whether this would require from the angel to be ready to change the views on Israel's merits which led to the judgement that he chose. (To the extent that it does, these views come close to the more specialized sense of the word 'opinion'.)

The important thing is that in the case of the angels there is one union of wills (that the divine providence may be fulfilled) and one conflict of wills (they want different to happen to Israel—they have diverse judgements). The point of the dictum in this context is to assert that, as long as there is a union of wills, a conflict of wills which can be traced to blameless diversity of opinions³⁸ is no evidence of lack of the kind of concord which is an effect of love (because, in any case, love does not unite opinions).

Question 29 of the *Secunda Secundae* asks whether peace is an effect of the theological virtue of charity. In it, an imaginary objector points out that persons who seem to have possessed charity were nonetheless deeply

³⁶ '[A]micitiæ vel concordiae non repugnat diversitas opinionum, sed solum diversitas voluntatum: unde talis pugna quae est secundum iudicia ex diversis meritis sumpta, non obstat unitati caritatis, cum voluntas eorum sit una, ut divina scilicet providentia expleatur.'

³⁷ As in *ST* I–II q. 19 a. 10c.

³⁸ Since—as Aquinas thinks—opinions can sometimes be chosen, and these choices fall under the command of will, choices of opinions are susceptible of moral praise and censure also.

at odds with each other as far as opinions are concerned.³⁹ Augustine disagreed profoundly with Jerome on doctrinal matters.⁴⁰ Barnabas sharply disagreed with Paul as to whether to take John Mark to inspect the results of a previous mission, so much so, that they parted company.

Aquinas's overall strategy, again, is to explain to the objector that the conflict of wills originates in blameless diversity of opinions. Since concord (an effect of love) does not unite those opinions which are not under the command of will, from the presence of conflict of wills one cannot infer lack of concord, love, or charity.

In his reply Aquinas first distinguishes between goods and opinions: friends must agree unto goods. He divides goods into two kinds: primary and secondary goods. What friendship requires is that the friends' will be united insofar as primary goods are concerned. To will the same secondary goods is not a condition for friendship. Aquinas concludes that 'nothing hinders those who have charity from holding different opinions'. He justifies this by relying on the distinction between the mind's faculties that were alluded to earlier: 'opinions concern the intellect, which precedes the appetite that is united by peace'. That he writes 'appetite' instead of 'will' and that he says 'peace' instead of 'concord' should not concern us, for the will is one of the kinds of appetite we have (the rational appetite) and concord is one of the two dimensions of peace (the interpersonal aspect, as opposed to the intrapersonal one).⁴¹

But, would one not suppose that the disagreement between friends about secondary goods is caused by their conflicting opinions? Does not Aquinas sweep under the carpet the importance of opinions to concord?

In reply one may note that Aquinas does not deny that conflicting opinions are the cause of discord. On the contrary, he writes: 'for such a dissension [as to secondary goods] proceeds from a difference of opinion, because one man thinks that that which is the object of dissension belongs to the good about which they agree, while the other thinks that it does not'.

A further sign that Aquinas does not deny that the conflict of wills at the level of secondary goods is caused by a conflict of opinions is the fact that he argues that the conflict of wills will not persist once truth is fully known, in the world to come. If lack of knowledge of the truth is (at least partly) responsible for our dispute about secondary goods, it follows that this dispute originates in a diversity of beliefs (beliefs about

³⁹ *ST* II-II q. 29 a. 3 obj. 2.

⁴⁰ See also *ST* II-II q. 11 a. 2 ad 3.

⁴¹ *ST* II-II q. 29 a. 1c.

what is considered to be the case). So, we do actually need shared beliefs to have a shared will.

As in the case of the disputing angels, what makes conflicting beliefs compatible with friendship is a cognitive limitation on the part of the friends.⁴² There are matters in which we do not really know all the right answers. About these matters it is only natural that we will disagree and we will justifiably end up with conflicting wills.

Aquinas's allusion to the cognitive limitations of the present life does more than simply allow him to say that diversity of wills regarding secondary goods is compatible with friendship. By saying that perfect charity is not achievable, in every respect, in this world he is also arguing that some measure of disagreement is unavoidable.⁴³ In other words, that we should not expect total agreement as to beliefs, and consequently we should not expect total agreement (formal and material) as to the thing willed. What we can expect and achieve in this world is a *formal* union of wills. Material union of wills takes place when two persons will the same thing, while the formal union requires only that whatever is willed is willed 'under the form' of being part of that good on which wills converge.⁴⁴

This position manifests a good dose of realism, and safeguards against thinking about disagreement as merely a contingent shortcoming or a removable state of affairs.

2.3 WHY CONFLICTING BELIEFS ALONE DO NOT CREATE DISCORD: A LOOK AT HERESY

This section assesses the force of an objection to my reading of Aquinas. This objection arises from Aquinas's view that Christians should not

⁴² Heresy can only exist when one chooses beliefs on matters of faith that contradict the teaching of the Church (and obstinately maintains these) *after* these matters have been defined by the Church. *ST* II–II q. 11 a. 2 ad 3.

⁴³ A further reason for which concord is necessarily incomplete in this world can be found in Aquinas's *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle asserts that concord can only exist between decent or virtuous men {epieikēs} because (among other reasons) their views are stable. Aquinas, taking on Aristotle's use of the expression 'so to speak', adds: "'so to speak" because it is impossible for men to have absolute immutability in this life'; *Eth.* IX. 6 [1839].

⁴⁴ *Ver.* q. 23 a. 7c. [69–74]: 'But in the object of the will two aspects are to be taken into account: one which is, as it were, material—the thing willed; another which is, as it were, formal—the reason for willing, which is the end. It is like the case of the object of sight, in which colour is in effect material, and light is formal, because by light the colour is made actually visible.' See also *I Sent.* d. 48 q. un. a. 2c.

maintain friendship with heretics.⁴⁵ He also thinks that the heretics, in choosing to believe propositions which are contrary to those taught by the Church,⁴⁶ cease to be part of the Church. Since the Church is for Aquinas a society or community,⁴⁷ the case of the heretic would constitute a case in which difference of opinions is an obstacle, not only to interpersonal friendship but also to membership of a social group.

The objection argues that, given that, for Aquinas, Augustine, and Jerome, Paul and Barnabas and the disputing angels are friends, by the same account heretics and non-heretics should be considered friends also. After all, they present the formal unity of wills that friendship requires.⁴⁸

The structure of the reply to this objection is as follows:

For Aquinas:

- (i) despite first appearances, when we discuss heresy we discuss union of wills;
- (ii) the situation of the heretic and non-heretic does not resemble that of two persons who have conflicting wills because they blamelessly have different opinions, but instead that of two students, one of whom rebels against the teacher.

I then suggest three ways to depict the union of wills that exists between the two students.

The heretic is a Christian who pertinaciously maintains positions on matters of faith which either contradict or are not condoned by the

⁴⁵ III *Sent.* d. 23 q. 3 a. 3 qu. 2 obj. 2, sol. 2 ad 2.

⁴⁶ For Aquinas on *doctrina* see Y. Congar, 'Tradition et "Sacra Doctrina" chez Saint Thomas d'Aquin', in his *Thomas d'Aquin: Sa vision de théologie et de l'Église* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), 157–94, from Betz and Fries (eds.), *Église et tradition* (Le Puy and Lyons: Mappus, 1963). For Aquinas on papal infallibility see Y. Congar, 'Saint Thomas and the Infallibility of the Papal Magisterium (Summa Theol. II–II, q. 1, a. 10)', *Thomist*, 38 (1974), 81–105.

⁴⁷ For this theme see Y. Congar's '“Ecclesia” et populus (fidelis) dans l'ecclésiologie de S. Thomas', in his *Thomas d'Aquin: Sa vision de théologie et de l'Église* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), 159–73 from A. Maurer et al., *St Thomas Aquinas 1274–1974, Commemorative Studies* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1974).

⁴⁸ This objection is vaguely hinted by IV *Sent.* d. 13 q. 2 a. 3 obj. 1: 'Nothing must be opposed unless it damages friendship. But diversity of opinions does not run against the concord of friendship, as Aristotle says (*Nic. Eth.* IX). Hence [diversity of opinions] is not to be opposed'; ad 1.: 'Aristotle spoke only of speculative opinions. But consensus in the unity of faith is the starting point of the communion in charity. And hence dissent about faith excludes the familiarity of friendship.'

Church.⁴⁹ To be a heretic you must also hold that these propositions are part of the truth communicated by Christ (the heretic believes himself to be a Christian).

It would seem that heresy does not at all concern disunion of wills: it is concerned solely with beliefs (albeit with beliefs about matters of faith). Closer inspection shows this assumption to be unfounded.

For Aquinas faith engages the will at two different levels. There is, on the one hand, the allocation of trust to a person: the trust that *that* person is saying the truth.⁵⁰ On the other hand, there is the giving assent to the propositions maintained by this person. The proper content of faith is those propositions the truth or untruth of which we cannot see by ourselves due to our intellectual limitations.⁵¹ One does not need faith to believe that the sum of a triangle's angles equals 180 degrees. One does need faith to believe that one may rise from the dead in fulfilment of the Scriptures.⁵²

Aquinas distinguishes between faith as a virtue and faith as an act. 'The act of faith is to believe, as stated above, which is an act of the intellect directed to one object by the will's command.'⁵³ The will commands the intellect to believe in something.⁵⁴ If belief in matters

⁴⁹ Hence only a very special type of disagreement makes you a heretic. Aquinas makes his own Augustine's words that '[B]y no means should we accuse of heresy those who, however false and perverse their opinion may be, defend it without obstinate fervour, and seek the truth with careful anxiety, ready to mend their opinion, when they have found the truth'; and Aquinas adds: 'because, to wit, they do not make a choice in contradiction to the doctrine of the Church.' *ST* II–II q. 11 a. 2 ad 3.

⁵⁰ *Ver.* q. 14 a. 8c. [14–18]: '[However], faith cannot thus stand as a virtue, deriving from the evidence of things, since it deals with things which do not appear. Consequently, it must derive this infallibility from its adherence to *some testimony* in which the truth is infallibly found.' 'Now, whoever believes, assents to someone's words.' *ST* II–II q. 11 a. 1c. In *ST* II–II q. 2 a. 2c. Aquinas distinguishes between the material and the formal object of faith. The formal object of faith is 'the medium on account of which we assent to such and such a point of faith'. That medium is God. Hence we not only believe *in* a God, and *in* God, but also quite simply *believe* God. And Aquinas adds in the next article: 'in order that a man arrive at the perfect vision of heavenly happiness, he must first of all *believe God, as a disciple believes the master who is teaching him*'.

⁵¹ On limitation of intellectual capacity as requirement for belief see *Ver.* q. 14 a. 9c.

⁵² *ST* II–II q. 11 a. 2c. ⁵³ *ST* II–II q. 4 a. 1c. See also ad 3; *Ver.* q. 14 a. 1c.

⁵⁴ Aquinas's position has been seconded by people standing philosophically quite far from him. Miguel de Unamuno—by no means a follower of Thomas—cites him to argue that 'Faith is matter of will; it is the movement of the spirit (*ánimo*) towards a practical truth, towards a person, towards something which makes us live and not merely understand life.' *Del Sentimiento Trágico de la Vida* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1997), 210. One should, however, be cautious about the 'existentialist' mood that Unamuno finds in Aquinas. Faith requires also certain intellectual disposition or affinity. *ST* II–II q. 4 a. 2 ad 2: 'Not only does the will need to be ready to obey but also the intellect

falling within the province of faith were not voluntary, the act of faith could not be meritorious, as it is certainly taken to be by Aquinas.⁵⁵

Thus, we are dealing here with wills, not just with beliefs. We can now return to the initial question: does not the heretic share with the non-heretic a common good which would confer on them the formal union of wills characteristic of friendship? In other words, can it not be said of heretic and non-heretic that 'while one deems a certain thing good, the other thinks contrariwise' and that 'the discord is in this case incidentally contrary to the divine good or that of our neighbour'?⁵⁶

Aquinas, in any case, agrees that heretics and non-heretics will something in common. He argues that

- (1) *Haeresis* means choice. Choice is about means,⁵⁷ the end being presupposed.
- (2) In matters of belief, the will assents to *some* truth as its good. There are two kinds of truth. A 'principal truth' is, as it were, a 'last end', and 'secondary truths' are 'means' to this 'last end'.⁵⁸
- (3) The believer assents to a person's words. One can thus distinguish between the person and the things said by him (beliefs). The holding of the beliefs ('things said') has the character of means to an end, the end being the person himself.⁵⁹
- (4) Since choice is about means, the choice of the heretic is about those things by which he intends to assent with the person

needs to be well disposed to follow the command of the will, even as the concupiscible faculty needs to be well disposed in order to follow the command of reason; hence there needs to be a habit of virtue not only in the commanding will but also in the assenting intellect.' On will and beliefs see: W. James, 'The Will to Believe', in *Essays on Faith and Morals* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1943), 32–63 and B. Williams, 'Deciding to Believe', in *Problems of the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 136–52.

⁵⁵ *ST* II–II q. 2 a. 9c.

⁵⁶ *ST* II–II q. 37 a. 1c.

⁵⁷ For Aquinas means are not simply an instrument but also an intermediate or 'nestled' end. See Finnis, *Aquinas*, 35, 64. n. 20 and his 'Object and Intention in Moral Judgments according to St. Thomas Aquinas', *Thomist*, 55 (1991), 10–14.

⁵⁸ *ST* II–II q. 11 a. 1c.: 'Now, in matters of belief, the will assents to some truth, as to its proper good, as was shown above: wherefore that which is the chief truth, has the character of last end, while those which are secondary truths, have the character of being directed to the end.'

⁵⁹ *ST* II–II q. 11 a. 1c.: 'Now, whoever believes, assents to someone's words; so that, in every form of unbelief, the person to whose words assent is given seems to hold the chief place and to be the end as it were; while the things by holding which one assents to that person hold a secondary place.'

(Christ).⁶⁰ The heretic, while intending to assent to the things said by the person, chooses means (beliefs, 'things said') that cannot yield such assent.

The heretic, in willing to assent to the things said by Christ, shares a last end with the non-heretic, but differs as to the chosen means. Thus, apparently, what we have here is not different from what happens in incidental (that is, morally indifferent) discord: two people have different opinions giving rise to different choices of means, but they share an end, and so, accordingly, their wills are formally united.

Nevertheless, this picture is only superficially correct. A closer look reveals that the discord of the heretic is not innocent. This becomes clear in Aquinas's discussion on whether someone who chooses to believe only in *some* of the propositions in matters of faith taught by the Church has formed or unformed faith.⁶¹

Aquinas argues that if you pick only *some* of the propositions taught by the teacher (in this case the Church), you are, as it were, breaking away from your teacher.⁶² It may even be the case, one may speculate, that you assent to all the propositions that a particular teacher holds, and yet you do not do so 'in the manner of faith'; you do not hold these propositions as a consequence of the trust appropriate to the teacher. The fact that the propositions assented to by two persons are identical does not mean that one has trust or faith in the other.⁶³ This view is epitomized by the following passage:

[A]nyone who from among the many things taught by the Church holds those he likes and does not hold the ones he dislikes {quae vult tenet et quae non vult non tenet}, no longer holds fast to Church teaching as an infallible rule {sicut infallibili regulae}, but to his own will {propriae voluntate}.⁶⁴

There are two keys to this passage. First there is the expression 'holds fast ... to his own will'. This holding fast to one's will is the typical

⁶⁰ 'Accordingly there are two ways in which a man may deviate from the rectitude of the Christian faith. First, because he is unwilling to assent to Christ: and such a man has a bad will, so to say, in respect of the very end. This concerns the species of unbelief in pagans and Jews. Secondly, because, though he intends to assent to Christ, yet he fails in his choice of those things wherein he assents to Christ, because he chooses not what Christ really taught, but the suggestions of his own mind.'

⁶¹ The act of faith receives its form from the end. The act of faith is 'formed' when its end is that characteristic of charity, namely, love of God. *ST* II-II q. 4 aa. 3-4.

⁶² See *ST* II-II q. 5 a. 3.

⁶³ Compare with *ST* II-II q. 2 a. 10c. and *Ver.* q. 14 a. 1c. (towards the end).

⁶⁴ *ST* II-II q. 5 a. 3c. Cf. *Ver.* q. 14 a. 10 ad 10; *Car.* q. un. a. 13 ad 6; *III Sent.* d. 23 q. 3 a. 3. qu. 2 obj. 2; sol. 2 ad 2.

effect of pride. Pride features in Aquinas's discussion on heresy as one of its motivational sources⁶⁵ and is elsewhere identified by Aquinas as lying behind religious and political factionalism. The link between pride and the holding fast to one's own will is illustrated by this passage:

discord denotes a certain disunion of wills, in so far, to wit, as one man's will holds fast to one thing, while the other man's will holds fast to something else. Now if a man's will holds fast to its own, this is due to the fact that he prefers things that are his to things that are others' and if he does this inordinately, it is due to pride and vainglory.⁶⁶

The second key to the previous passage is that, in it, the Church occupies the position of a teacher. Thus, the situation of the heretic is not correctly represented by the picture of two persons converging in an end but disagreeing as to the choice of means. In Aquinas's mind the right representation of the situation of the heretic is this: we have a teacher (the Church), who teaches those things giving assent to which would yield actual assent to Christ. Suppose the teacher has two students, both willing to give assent to Christ. Yet one of them 'holds fast to his own will' rather than the will of the teacher. This means that he follows his own will in the choice of beliefs intended as means of giving assent to Christ. Notice that this picture is quite different from the one composed of two believers (say, Augustine and Jerome) disagreeing between them, for in the former case we have both the added figure of the teacher (who has made public his teaching), and the added event of rebellion against him by one of his students.

Is there a formal union of wills between the heretic and non-heretic such as suffices for friendship? And if there is, what kind of friendship does it yield? To examine this question it is important to keep in mind the right representation of the situation: a teacher with two students, one of whom chooses to believe what he deems best to believe.

⁶⁵ *ST* II-II q. 11 a. 1 ad 2, ad 3.

⁶⁶ *ST* II-II q. 37 a. 2c.: 'discordia importat quandam disgregationem voluntatum: inquantum scilicet voluntas unius stat in uno et voluntas alterius stat in altero. Quod autem voluntas alicuius in proprio sistat, provenit ex hoc quod aliquis ea quae sunt sua praefert his quae sint aliorum. Quod cum inordinate fit, pertinet ad superbiam et inanem gloriam.'

Do the two students share in a common end? The union of wills between the two students can be depicted in three different ways:

(a) The students share an end in that they both intend to assent to Christ's word. They do not share an end in that one of the students wills to do this by adhering in his choice of means to the choice of the teacher, while the other adheres to his own will. Although both want to give assent to Christ's word, only the one who regulates his choice of means by the will of the teacher does so objectively. So, although they aim at the same end, they do not as a matter of fact share it.

(b) Assenting to what is taught by the teacher is not only a means to a further end, but is in itself a (proximate) end, intended by one student and not by the other. The students do not share in the kind of friendship and concord that *this* common end can give rise to (presumably, this would be the friendship of charity).

(c) Whatever the truth of (a) and (b), what makes friendship difficult is not the ineffectiveness of the means chosen by the heretic (as argued by (a)). Rather the difficulty is generated by the heretic's decision to break away from the directing rule of the teacher. The teacher is no longer a rule for choosing. This generates a difficulty for friendship not simply because (as (b) argues) the students cease sharing a proximate end. The absence of this participation in a common end is not incidental; instead it is intentionally brought about by the heretic. In breaking away from the teacher, the heretic declares himself self-sufficient as to the choice of the intermediate ends in matters of faith. In the same way that rebelling against the teacher (rather than incidentally disagreeing) involves rejecting friendship with him, so rebelling against the directing rule of a teaching consortium or group of which one is a member (once such directing rule has made explicit what we should choose after due deliberative process) involves rejecting membership in this body. This is the significance of 'holding fast to one's will' in opposition to the expressed resolution of a group.⁶⁷ In this view, the reason why there is no friendship between heretics and non-heretics is that the heretic, in rebelling against the explicit teaching of the Church (of which he is a member), intentionally rejects (as opposed to incidentally lacks) that formal union of wills necessary for friendship of charity.

⁶⁷ In like manner Aristotle's *homonoia* requires from the members of the *polis* to 'act on their common resolution'. *Nic. Eth.* 1167^a29–30.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Working behind Aquinas's dictum that 'concord is a union of wills, not of opinions' is his theory about love and what love does. The proper effect of love is to unite persons. Love unites them formally: the lover aims to resemble (participate in the form) of the beloved. The lover's movement toward resemblance involves a movement toward resemblance as to his acts of will. 'Concord is a union of wills, not of opinions' emphasizes a particular aspect of this movement toward resemblance: the effect of love on choice-making.

Those who love one and the same person commonly participate in the form of the beloved, and they are 'one' in that form. Formal 'union of wills' leaves plenty of room for disagreement and the resulting conflicting wills. In fact, for Aquinas, we should not expect to achieve complete union of wills, both formal and material, in all subjects in this life. As long as our knowledge is incomplete a level of conflict of wills will remain. 'Concord is a union of wills, not of opinions' serves the purpose of asserting that, as long as this conflict originates in blameless diversity of opinions, the presence of disunion of wills is no evidence of lack of charity, love, or concord.

Aquinas's theory of friendship gives rise to the objection that in Aquinas's own view heretics and non-heretics present the formal union of wills that would—so it has been argued—suffice for friendship. The reply is that, although there is some formal union of wills uniting heretics and non-heretics, the problem here is that there is also an element of intentional rejection on the part of the heretic: rejection of the directing rule of the teacher as the rule guiding the choice of beliefs.

3

Friendship and Conformity of Wills

Aquinas endorses the view attributed to Cicero that ‘friends will and nill¹ the same things’. He also believes that friendship with God is not merely possible, but is something that should be pursued. Friendship with God raises two difficulties which extend also to many other sorts of friendship:

- (1) the reasons why the friend wills what he wills are often unknown to us;
- (2) it is not always appropriate (and sometimes it is morally wrong) for us to will what our friend wills, given that his circumstances may be radically different from ours.

I will argue that Aquinas’s answer to the first question is that friendship does not require from us that we will what the friend wills, unless we grasp at least one way in which the friend’s end is present in the thing willed. This position also provides a solution for the second question.

Further, even supposing that conformity of wills as to the thing willed was required by friendship, for Aquinas, even when one wills the same object² as the friend, one can (and sometimes should) simultaneously avert the object, both rationally and emotionally.

¹ To nill (*nolle*) that *p* is to will that not-*p*.

² I use the expressions ‘conformity of wills as to the object’ and ‘as to the thing willed’ interchangeably. This use requires making some qualifications. As Pilsner explains (p. 5), Aquinas uses the word *objectum* in at least three different ways: to refer to (i) a reality to which the action relates (for instance, in the theft of a hot dog, the hot dog [my example]), (ii) the formal aspect of a thing which specifies an operation (the hot dog’s belonging to another), (iii) a proximate end of action referred to some more remote end (the hot dog seen as both intrinsically desirable and ordered to the more remote end of sustenance). My use of ‘object’ in this chapter corresponds to one of the senses of (i). ‘One of the senses’ because (i), besides the thing willed, also covers other ‘realities related to the action’ (for instance—in my example—the person from whom the hot dog was stolen). J. Pilsner, ‘The Specification of Human Actions in St. Thomas Aquinas’, D.Phil. thesis (University of Oxford, 1997). Sense (i) is discussed in pp. 60–78. See also T. G. Belmans, ‘La Spécification de l’agir humain par son object chez saint Thomas d’Aquin’, *Divinitas*, 22; 23 (1979), 336–56; 7–61.

3.1 BACKGROUND

3.1.1 The Aristotelian Framework: Conformity of Wills between Unequal Friends

Aristotle thought it possible for unequals to be friends. The broad notion of friendship (*philia*) extends beyond its paradigm relationships between equals to relationships of a different kind, between unequals: 'a father towards his son, and in general an older person towards a younger, or a man towards a woman, and of any sort of ruler towards the one he rules.'³ Aristotle here seems to loosen or abandon the requirement that friends must will the same things: 'Each does not get the same thing from the other, then, and must not seek it [...].'⁴ In political rule, for instance, the superior, the ruler, gets honour, while the inferior, the ruled, gets profit.⁵ A qualified equality remains even in friendship between unequals, because each receives in proportion to his worth.⁶ This 'equality', however, does not correspond exactly to the equality of justice, for sometimes we are simply unable to give anything that is adequately proportional to the worth of the superior, so we simply give what we can. This is most clear in the case of parents, whom we cannot recompense for having given life to us.⁷

Aristotle seems to set a limit to the amount of inequality that is permissible within friendship:

if friends come to be separated by some wide gap in virtue, vice, wealth, or something else; [...] then they are friends no more, and do not even expect to be. This is most evident with gods, since they have the greatest superiority in all goods. But it is also clear with kings, since people who are greatly inferior to them do not expect to be their friends; nor do worthless people expect to be friends to the best or wisest.⁸

However, an alternative reading is possible. The passage does not discuss how much inequality friendship can admit. Instead, it discusses the extent of departure from the original relative standing of the friends (whatever the relative standing may be) that would still allow the relationship to be regarded as the same friendship that preceded the

³ *Nic. Eth.* 1158^b12–14, *Eud. Eth.* 1238^b18–21.

⁴ *Nic. Eth.* 1158^b20.

⁵ *Nic. Eth.* 1163^b5–8.

⁶ *Nic. Eth.* 1158^a26–9; 1163^b11–12.

⁷ *Nic. Eth.* 1163^b15–20.

⁸ *Nic. Eth.* 1158^b33–1159^a3.

alteration. This interpretation makes it difficult to explain why Aristotle uses the example of the gods, as it seems that the gap between us and the gods is not one which is open to change, but rather is a built-in inequality.

Whatever the merits of the alternative interpretation, this passage does not offer sufficient proof that Aristotle ruled out friendship with the gods. There are a number of places in which Aristotle explicitly allows for such friendship.⁹ This warrants the view that, at the very least, Aristotle vacillated regarding the possibility of friendship with the gods.

Aristotle, interestingly, devotes no attention to the fact that unity of wills seems difficult to achieve in friendship between unequals and leaves this problem largely unattended. The medieval thinkers who conceived of the relationship with God as one of friendship and took seriously Aristotle's (and Cicero's)¹⁰ view that friendship requires conformity of wills, offer their own solutions to this problem.

3.1.2 Obstacles to Common Willing between Unequal Friends: (i) Inequality of Knowledge and (ii) Disparity of Circumstances

Aquinas's most detailed mature discussion of the way wills conform is *De Veritate*, q. 23 a. 8.¹¹ There Aquinas asks: 'Are we obliged to conform our will to the divine will as regards the thing willed {in voluto} so as to be bound to will what we know God wills?'¹² The question is a difficult one because, on the one hand, Aquinas argues that a will is good insofar as it conforms to the divine will.¹³ On the other hand, in this life we cannot fully know what God wills.¹⁴ Hence it seems that there is little chance for human beings to will rightly.

⁹ *Eud. Eth.* 1238^b18–20; 1242^a32. See also J. Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 397.

¹⁰ Cicero often alluded to the unity of wills that should prevail among friends (*L.A.* IV. 15; VI. 20). However, the standard quotation on this regard made by Scholastic authors, 'nam idem velle atque idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est', was miscited to Cicero. (A shorter version of this sentence—'amicorum est idem velle et nolle'—is attributed by Aquinas to Cicero in *Ver.* q. 23 a. 8 sc. 2 and *ST* II–II q. 29 a. 3c.) Actually, the sentence is ascribed by Sallust to Catilina. *Bellum Catilinae* (London: Heinemann; New York: Putnam's Sons, Loeb Classical Library, 1931), p. 34, ch. 20 [4–5]. Quoted in *Sent.* d. 48 q. un. a. 4 sc. 2; III *Sent.* d. 28 q. 1 a. 3 sc. 2; *ST* I–II q. 28 a. 2c.; *ST* II–II q. 25 a. 6 ad 4, q. 29 a. 3c.; q. 104 a. 3c.; *ST* III q. 18 a. 5 ad 2; *Ver.* q. 23 a. 8 sc. 2; *In Rom.* 12. 3 ad v. 15 [12–13] [996]; *In Iob* 1 [833]; *ScG* III c. 95 n. 5, c. 151 n. 3.

¹¹ Other important discussions—to which I will make reference as well—are in I *Sent.* d. 48 q. un. a. 2 and *ST* I–II q. 19 a. 10.

¹² *Ver.* q. 23 a. 8c. [1–4]. ¹³ *Ver.* q. 23 a. 7c.

¹⁴ *Ver.* q. 23 a. 7 ad 1. Also *ST* I–II q. 19 a. 10 ad 1.

Moreover, all things that take place in some way—even if only permissively—accord with the divine will. Yet calamities often make us wish that reality were other than it is. But how can anyone say that we will wrongly when we wish that these calamities would not happen to us or the ones we love? Can we expect a son not to will that his father live when all suggests that his father's death is imminent (and thus that this is God's will)?¹⁵ The problem can be placed in a non-theological context. Take the case of the prisoner who has been sentenced to death. We may perhaps expect him to accept the sentence as just, but can we expect from him to actually will that he may suffer death?

So, there are two central obstacles to conformity of wills with God:

(i) *ignorance concerning the divine will*—this ignorance is twofold: we often do not know what God wills and we never fully understand why He wills it. This lack of knowledge poses an obstacle to our capacity of willing the same as God (or at least to will the same because of His reasons).

(ii) *disparity of circumstances*—there are certain things which may belong to the manifest will of God and yet which may be wrong for us to will given the extreme disparity of circumstances.¹⁶

3.1.3 Leaving out the Moral Evaluation of Will

From studying Aquinas's notion of friendship between God and human beings, one can learn much about what kind of conformity of wills friendship requires. However, one runs the risk of confusing two separate elements: the kind of conformity of wills required by friendship on the one hand, and the kind of conformity of wills needed for the wills of the friends to be good on the other hand.

Clearly it is difficult to separate between these two elements when one is discussing the relationship between human beings and God. Presumably, what is against friendship with God is also against morality, and vice versa. Yet in human relationships it is clear that the requirements of morality and the requirements of friendship do not always concur. Human beings, unlike God, are fallible. What other persons will is not

¹⁵ Aquinas poses this question in *Ver.* q. 23 a. 8 obj. 2.

¹⁶ God wills justice be done (and this may require one's damnation) but one should *not* will one's own damnation. *Ver.* q. 23 a. 8 ad 2.

the rule and measure of our will,¹⁷ and yet friendship may sometimes require that we acquiesce to the friend's will.

Hence, it is important to distinguish notionally the demands exerted upon willing by God's absolute goodness from the demands exerted by our friendship with God. Consequently, in the discussion that follows I will be interested in the question, 'When does my will satisfy the condition of being morally good?', only to the extent that it illuminates the question, 'When does my will satisfy the conditions required by friendship?'

3.2 CONFORMITY OF WILLS AND THE FRIEND'S REASONS

3.2.1 Conformity of Wills and Grasping the Friend's Reasons

The key to Aquinas's solution to the problem which ignorance of the divine will poses for friendship with God ((i), above) is contained in his statement that

[T]he will of God cannot be fully known to us. Hence, neither can we fully conform our will to His. But we can conform to it in proportion to the knowledge which we have [...]¹⁸

The manner after which we can conform to the divine will depends then on our degree of knowledge of the divine will. Hence, we must look at the components of an act of will,¹⁹ so that we may know which of its elements are capable of being known by us. Accordingly, Aquinas starts by writing that

In regard to the thing willed {volitum} we are in a sense obliged to conform our will to God's and in a sense we are not. We are obliged to conform our will to God's in this respect (as has been said), that the divine goodness is the rule and measure {regula et mensura} of every good will. But, since good depends upon the end, a will is called good on the basis of its relation to the reason for willing, which is the end. *The reference of the will to the willed thing, however, does not in itself make the act of will good, since the willed thing stands materially, as it*

¹⁷ 'the will of one man is not in itself the rule of another man's will'. I *ST* II-II q. 37 a. 1 ad 1.

¹⁸ *Ver.* q. 23 a. 7c. [207-11].

¹⁹ As Aquinas reminds us, we are discussing not the faculty of the will, but rather the acts elicited by this faculty: '[H]ere it is inquired about conformity as regards the act of will.' *In I Sent.* d. 48 q. un. a. 2c.

were, to the reason for willing {*secundum ordinem ad rationem volendi*}, which is the upright end. One and the same willed thing can be desired either rightly or wrongly according as it is referred to different ends; and on the other hand different and even contrary willed things {*volita*} can both be willed rightly by being referred to an upright end. Therefore, although the will of God cannot be anything but good, and whatever He wills He wills rightly, nevertheless the goodness in the very act of the divine will is viewed from the standpoint of the reason for willing, {*ex ratione volendi*} that is, the end to which God refers whatever He wills, His own goodness.²⁰

In this passage Aquinas relies on the distinction between the formal and the material aspect of the act of will—introduced in the article that precedes it.²¹ The *matter* of the will is provided by the object; the *form* of the will is provided by the end. From this one may conclude that we must conform with God's will only as regards the end (the form) but not as regards the willed thing (the matter). But on further inspection this reading seems deficient, for Aquinas goes on to say that

we are obliged to conform absolutely to the divine will in regards to the end, but in regards to the thing willed only according as {*secundum quod*} when viewed under the aspect of its relation to the end. This relation ought always to please us too, though the same willed thing can justly displease us under some other aspect, such as its being referable {*ordinabile*} to some contrary end. Hence it is that the human will is found to conform to the divine will in the thing willed inasmuch as it [i.e. the human willing] relates itself to the divine will.²²

²⁰ Ver. q. 23 a. 8c. [85–107]: '[I]n voluto quodammodo tenemur nostram voluntatem conformare divinae, quodammodo vero non. Secundum hoc enim, ut dictum est, art. praeced., voluntatem nostram divinae conformare tenemur quod bonitas divinae voluntatis regula est et mensura omnis bonae voluntatis. Cum autem bonum ex fine dependeat, voluntas bona dicitur secundum ordinem ad rationem volendi, quae est finis. Comparatio vero voluntatis ad volitum absolute non facit actum voluntatis esse bonum, cum ipsum volitum se habeat quasi materialiter ad rationem volendi, quae est finis rectus: potest enim unum et idem volitum bene vel male appeti, secundum quod in diversos fines ordinatur; et e contrario diversa et contraria volita potest quis bene velle, in finem rectum referendo utrumque. Quamvis ergo voluntas Dei non possit esse nisi bona, et omne quodcumque vult, bene velit; tamen bonitas in ipso actu voluntatis divinae consideratur ex ratione volendi, id est ex fine ad quem ordinat quidquid vult, qui est bonitas sua.'

²¹ Ver. q. 23 a. 8c. [184–92]: 'But in the object of the will two aspects are to be taken into account: one which is, as it were, material—the thing willed; another which is, as it were, formal—the reason for willing, which is the end. It is like the case of the object of sight, in which color is in effect material, and light is formal, because by light the color is made actually visible.' See also I *Sent.* d. 48 q. un. a. 2c.

²² Ver. q. 23 a. 8c. [106–17]: 'Et ideo divinae voluntati simpliciter in fine conformari tenemur; in voluto autem nonnisi secundum quod illud volitum consideratur sub ordine ad finem. Qui quidem ordo semper nobis debet placere, quamvis hoc idem

To say that one must will that which is willed by God under the form provided by the way the willed thing relates to the end is different from saying that we are not at all obliged to will that which God wills. If we know the object of God's will, then we must will that very same object as well, *to the extent that we are capable of willing it in a particular fashion*: relating our willing of it to God's will and goodness.

But can we really will, both materially and formally, the same object that God does? We would be in a position to achieve both formal and material conformity only if we fully understood the relation between God's object and God's end.

To recast the argument so far, Aquinas argues that a God's willing is composed of:

- (i) its end (*e*);
- (ii) the thing (or, loosely speaking, 'object') willed (*o*);
- (iii) the relationship between end and thing willed (*r*), which provides the form under which *o* should be willed.

Anything that God wills He wills as related to goodness {sub ratione boni}.²³ So we know *e*. This leaves open three logically possible situations:

Situation a: We do not know *o*. In this situation the best we can do to conform to God's will is to will objects *a, b, c* ... so long as we will them under the form of being directed to *e*. This requires also that these objects be actually capable of being conducive to *e* (some objects, for instance some sorts of moral evil, are incapable of being so).²⁴ This is formal conformity of wills alone.

Situation b: We know *o* ('God wills this drought') and at least one way in which *o* relates to *e* (one *r*). We are in a position to be able to will the object under the form of its relation to the end. This is formal conformity of wills together with some degree of material conformity. This material

volitum possit nobis merito displicere secundum aliquam aliam considerationem, utpote secundum quod in contrarium finem est ordinabile. Et inde est quod voluntas humana secundum hoc invenitur conformari divinae voluntati in volito, quod se habet ad finem divinae voluntatis.'

²³ *ST* I–II q. 19 a. 10c.

²⁴ *I Sent.* d. 48 q. un. a. 2 ad 5: 'ita etiam volitum improporionatum ad bonitatem, quantumcumque sit bonus finis, nunquam bonitatem recipit; et talia sunt quae per se sunt mala, ut furari et huiusmodi'.

conformity can be either absolute or qualified. It is absolute if we will what God wills, grasping every way in which it relates to *e* and without 'movement to the contrary'. It is qualified if we will the same thing as God under some, but not all, of its relations to *e*, and will it not, or nill it, under its relations to other ends.

Situation c: We know *o* but do not know any *r*. (We do not grasp any way in which the drought relates to God's end.) I will present a reading of Aquinas that holds that, in *situation c*, friendship does not require one to conform as to the thing willed. I will then set forth some objections to this reading and reply to them.

It would seem that if we know *o* but not any *r* (say, we do not grasp any way in which a drought relates to God's end) then we are actually unable to will *o* in the way God wills it: under the form provided by *r*. For we should will the same object as God, not in any manner whatsoever, but in a very special manner. If we will *o*, but we are unable to will *o* under a form provided by *r*, then we are willing it under a form different from God's (in which case we would actually be willing a different end to God's).

This yields the conclusion that in cases in which we do not grasp any relation (*r*) between God's object (*o*) and God's end (*e*), we are not required to will the same object. It may be argued, in addition, that, for Aquinas, not only does friendship with God not require us to will *o*, but it would actually be wrong to will *o*. For instance, it would be wrong to will one's father's death just because this seems to be what God wills. In failing to grasp how one's father's death contributes to God's end, we simply cannot will it rightly.

Aquinas's distinction between the three states in which human beings may find themselves gives currency to this reading. First there are the blessed, whose will conforms with God's both as to ends and as to objects. Their material conformity is absolute, that is, they perceive every reason relating the object to the end. Then there are the sinners whose will differs from God's in many things, and, finally, there are the 'righteous wayfarers' (*iusti viatores*),

whose will adheres to the divine goodness but who as yet do not so perfectly contemplate it that they clearly perceive every relation to it of the things to be willed; they conform to the divine will as regards those things willed *for which they perceive the reason* {ad illa volita quorum rationem percipiunt}, though there is in them some affection for the contrary, an affection which is praiseworthy

because of some other relationship [to the divine goodness] in those objects of will.²⁵

We are expected to conform with God '*in voluto*' only insofar as we see a relationship between object and end. At the most, the just wayfarer can achieve a formal conformity of wills together with a qualified material conformity. But sometimes he may be incapable of achieving any kind of material conformity. Consider Aquinas's own example:

A man, for instance, who wishes his father to live because of his filial affection while God wishes him to die, if he is just {*iustus*}, subjects his own will to God's [or renounces to his own will] {*divinae voluntati supponit*}²⁶ so as not to bear it impatiently if the will of God contrary to his own will is fulfilled.²⁷

The passage does not suggest that the just wills his father's death, not even qualifiedly. The attitude that he has is one of subjection or renunciation. To subject one's will to the will of another or to renounce

²⁵ *Ver. q. 23 a. 8 c.* [128–37]: '*Iusti vero viatores quorum voluntas adhaeret divinae bonitati, et tamen eam non ita perfecte contemplantur, ut omnem ordinem volendorum ad ipsam manifeste percipiant, conformantur quidem divinae voluntati quantum ad illa volita quorum rationem percipiunt, quamvis in eis sit aliqua affectio ad contrarium, laudabilis tamen propter alium ordinem in eis consideratum.*'

²⁶ My translation departs from *DF. Supponere* ('to stand for') when used in this context is not exactly 'to subject', rather, as similar uses of the expression suggest, it signifies to renounce one's will and let another's will stand instead of ours. So, Aquinas uses this expression when interpreting Christ's assertion that he is not implementing his own will in the world but that of his Father. Similarly in his treatise on spiritual perfection Aquinas singles out as a mark of perfection to renounce not just one's external possessions but also one's private will. *Perf. c. 10* [603]; *In Ioann. 6. 4 ad v. 39* [922].

²⁷ *Ver. q. 23 a. 8 c.* [140–5]: '*sicut ille qui vult patrem suum vivere propter affectum pietatis, quem Deus vult mori; si iustus sit, hanc suam propriam voluntatem divinae supponit, ut non impatienter ferat, si Dei voluntas in contrarium propriae voluntatis impletur.*' Compare with Jorge Manrique (1440–79) who makes his father say:

Let's waste no more time,
In this mean life,
'Tis so,
That my will lies,
In conformity with the Divine
In all;

And I consent to my dying,
With will prone to comply,
Clear and faultless;
Want to go on living
When God wants man to die
'Tis madness.

No gastemos tiempo ya
En esta vida mezquina
Por tal modo,
Que mi voluntad está
Conforme con la divina
Para todo.

Y consiento en mi morir
Con la voluntad placentera
Clara y pura;
Que querer el hombre vivir
Cuando Dios quiere que muera,
Es locura.

one's will is different from actually willing the same object that the other wills. The mark of the just person is not his superior perception of the way the object of God's will relates to His end, but rather, his patient bearing of God's will.

3.2.2 Misgivings about Aquinas's Position

This subsection sets out an objection to the view attributed above to Aquinas. The objection argues that friendship with God requires that we will what He wills, *even* when we do not grasp any relation between that thing and God's end. Friendship with God requires, for example, that we will the evils that God brings upon us.

If one wills a certain object and the friend (God) wills the contrary, how is it possible that when the will of the friend is fulfilled one remains a friend? Would not one be angry at the friend, and interrupt the friendship? A close concern is poignantly expressed by St Bonaventure. When presenting arguments against the view that we have to conform to God's will only with regard to the things commanded by Him {*Dei mandata*} but not with regard to His actions {*Dei opera*}, he asks:

How come our will does not resist the divine will when God wills something and we totally will the opposite? Clearly [our will] totally rejects it [i.e. the divine will].²⁸

Even Aquinas himself, in his *Commentary on the Book of Job*, seems to say that Job should conform to God, and so apparently will his own misfortune:

And Job shows why he hopes for this outcome [his own death], adding: 'and let me not contradict the speeches of the Holy One, that is, of God, by contradicting His judgements or the sentence by which He has afflicted me.' For Job feared that by his many afflictions he might be reduced to impatience so that his reason might not be able to repress his sadness. *Now the condition of impatience exists when someone's reason is so reduced by sadness that it contradicts divine judgements. But if someone should suffer sadness according to his sensual side but his reason should conform to the divine will, there is no defect of impatience,* and so Eliphaz was charging Job in vain when he said, 'Now the stroke has

²⁸ 'Et iterum, quomodo non recalcitrat voluntas nostra voluntate divinae, quando Deus vult aliquid, et nos omnino volumus contrarium? Omnino videtur ei repugnare.' (Introducing St Augustine's view.) St Bonaventure, *Opera Theologica Selecta* (Florence: Collegii S Bonaventurae, 1932), i. 858 (I *Sent.* d. 48 a. 2 qu. 2c.).

come upon you and you have failed' [4:5], for although he was saddened, he had still not failed.²⁹

Job's reason (that is, his rational will) conforms with God's will; his fear is that emotional resistance³⁰ may lead him away from reason. He must not contradict the present divine judgements, that is, his own afflictions, in order not to fail or defect³¹ from God. Yet Job himself did not grasp how his predicament related to God's end. How then could he have been expected to will what God willed? And, if he were in fact expected to do so, would not Aquinas be contradicting his position advanced earlier: that we are obliged to will what God wills only when we grasp at least one way the thing willed by Him relates to His end?

This problem can be approached by relying on the categories outlined above. The situation of Job falls in the category of 'just wayfarers' who do not will all the things that God wills, and the things that they do will in conformity with God, they will only qualifiedly. The question then is whether Job should will those of his afflictions which result from divine judgements qualifiedly or whether he is not required to will them at all.

There is a sense in which Job could perhaps be said to be at least *capable* of willing qualifiedly his own predicament: if one takes the view that the sufferings inflicted on the just by God are beneficial evils (just as unpleasant medical treatments are), and that qua beneficial they should be willed by the sufferer. Just as we have reasons to will qualifiedly the doctor's treatment even when we do not grasp the way the cure works, so Job has reasons to will qualifiedly his predicament even if he does not grasp precisely how such predicament relates to God's end (only knowing that, in fact, it does).

Consider, however, Aquinas's reply to the objection that '[a]ccording to Cicero, friendship is willing and nilling the same thing. But everyone

²⁹ *In Iob* 6 [123–36]: 'Et quare hoc optet ostendit per id quod subdit *nec contradicam sermonibus sancti*, idest Dei, hoc est eius iudicii sive sententiis quibus me afflixit. Timebat enim Iob ne per afflictiones multas ad impatientiam deduceretur, ita quod ratio tristitiam reprimere non posset; impatientiae autem ratio est cum ratio alicuius adeo a tristitia deducitur quod divinis iudiciis contradicit; si vero aliquis tristitiam quidem patiatur secundum sensualem partem sed ratio divinae voluntati se conformet, non est impatientiae defectus, et sic frustra Eliphaz arguebat Iob ubi dixerat *nunc venit super te plaga, et defecisti*: licet enim tristaretur non tamen defecerat.'

³⁰ Aquinas's examples of sensory aversion (pain, bitter medicine) are intended also to cover aversion at the level of human emotions (sadness, pain at the loss of loved ones).

³¹ 'To fail' is the translation of 'deficere' which also means 'to defect' or 'fall away'.

is obliged to have friendship for God. Hence everyone is obliged to will what God wills and not to will what He does not will':³²

Friendship consists in a concord of wills {concordia voluntatum} rather as regards the end than as regards the things willed themselves. A fever patient whose craving for wine was denied by his physician because of their common desire for the patient's health would find in that physician a truer friend than if the latter were willing to satisfy the patient's desire for a drink of wine at the peril of his health.³³

The example is intended to show that even when someone wills something opposed to something we will, he may be still be our (best) friend because he wills something—or some more final end—which we also will. It also points out that the patient's friendship to the doctor does not require of him to will the prescribed treatment, at least not before the doctor makes the prescription known to him. Since Aquinas uses this example to shed light on human–God relations, it would seem that friendship with God is preserved even when there is not even qualified (let alone absolute) material conformity *in volito*.

But, one may wonder, would not the situation change after the doctor makes manifest his prescription? Arguably, the patient would then have a good reason to abstain from wine. Doing so would not, however, require of him to eliminate his desire for wine, only to subject his desire for wine to the rule of reason which, again, is to subject himself to the rule of the doctor. This would produce a qualified conformity of wills.

Thus, it would seem that there is always a reason to will what God wills (if only qualifiedly) because it is always true that whatever God wills is ordered to His end (on the assumption that His end is ours too). Yet there are a number of observations which, taken together, strongly suggest (but do not prove) that this is not Aquinas's position:

(1) In *De Veritate*, q. 23 a. 8 Aquinas is not interested in the question whether what is willed by God is, in fact, ordered to the divine end (this is never doubted). Instead, the question that matters to him is whether we can will it under a form provided by its end. The expression that he uses regarding wayfarers is that they *do not perceive* the *ratio* ordering the willed thing to divine goodness, while the *beati* fully contemplate

³² *Ver.* q. 23 a. 8 sc. 2 [54–8].

³³ *Ver.* q. 23 ad sc. 2 [199–206]: 'Ad secundum dicendum, quod amicitia consistit in concordia voluntatum magis quoad finem quam quoad ipsa volita. Plus enim esset amicus febricitanti medicus qui ei vinum negaret propter desiderium sanitatis, quam si vellet eius desiderio satisfacere de vini potatione in periculum sanitatis.'

these *rationes*. What seems central is the grasp of the *ratio*, not the knowledge that a *ratio* exists, for it is in this respect that the blessed are more capable than the wayfarers of willing what God wills.

(2) The view that (i) the fact that whatever God wills is good provides sufficient reason to will it too is incompatible with Aquinas's view that (ii) the just wayfarers do not will *all* things that they identify as being willed by God.

(3) Recall that, concerning the upright son, Aquinas does not argue that after the father's death the son's will conforms (even qualifiedly) to God's *in volito*. Instead, what we have is the son's subjection to God's will (or renunciation to his own will in favour of God's). Puzzling as this subjection or renunciation (or perhaps obedience)³⁴ might be, the ensuing situation cannot be regarded as one of conformity; conformity requires two wills but in the example there is only one. In any case, the upright son knows *that* his father's death contributes to God's end and yet Aquinas does not put this forward as a reason to will the father's death.

(4) It is true that, for Aquinas, even when we do not perceive the relation that binds what God wills with His end, we should adopt an attitude of willing acceptance or even complacency towards the implementation of God's will in the world,³⁵ yet nowhere does Aquinas argue that this attitude can be counted as a conformity of wills. We know that all events are somehow part of a divine plan, but it is not clear that this is enough to will (rather than merely to accept) all these events.

(5) For Aquinas we can only will objects that are apprehended as having the attribute of goodness (*g*) (this should be taken in the same sense as 'only illuminated objects can impress the faculty of sight').³⁶ Suppose that 'whatever God wills' is apprehended as having goodness. Does it follow that, if, say, God wills a drought, then this apprehended goodness extends to the drought too—and so the drought, as such, can impress the will?

Consider these two possibilities: (i) a person wills (or claims to will) the drought considered as willed by God or (ii) the person wills the

³⁴ Note that, for Aquinas, obedience to God consists not in willing what He wills, but rather, in willing what He wants us to will. What He wants us to will is known principally through divine precepts. *ST* II–II q. 104 a. 4 ad 3. See also *ST* I q. 19 a. 12c.; *ST* II–II q. 186 a. 5 ad 5.

³⁵ *Ver.* q. 23 a. 8c.

³⁶ *ST* I–II q. 8 a. 1c. For a parallel between will and sight see *ST* I–II q. 10 a. 2c.

drought because of the goodness *in* the drought, the existence of which is evidenced by the fact that God wills it. Below, I briefly analyse these two possibilities.³⁷

(i) In my example there is nothing about the drought as such that makes it commendable to the person's will except that it is willed by God. The moment God ceases to will the drought, the drought ceases to impress his will. Here, *g* ('being willed by God') is simply an accident of the drought. If someone wills the drought he wills it only *accidentally*: what impresses his will is an accident of the drought. Moreover, *g* is an accident externally imposed on the drought and—from the perspective of the person under discussion—it is not considered as arising from anything *in* the drought. Since the object that in fact impresses the will—the true carrier of *g*—is not the drought itself but 'the drought as willed by God', we must say that this is what is actually being willed, not the drought as such. But God wills the drought; He does not will the drought 'inasmuch as it is willed by Himself'. Thus, in this case, there is no conformity of wills as to the thing willed.

(ii) Suppose that whatever God wills, He wills because there is some goodness that inheres therein.³⁸ We could then perhaps say that when we will the drought we will it not just because God wills it, but because of the goodness that inheres in the drought (the presence of which is evidenced by the fact that God wills it).

Here one must introduce a not yet discussed qualification invited by Aquinas's parallel between sight and willing: that between coming across something that has attribute *g* and coming across the same thing in such a way that *g* is 'on display' to us.³⁹ One may come across an illuminated

³⁷ If an apple is willed by John, we can consider (i) the features of the apple that give rise to this relation or (ii) the relation itself (being willed), which, in turn, can be taken (ii. i) as an accident of the apple (considered apart from the accidents that give rise to it) or (ii. ii) as *genera*, that is, as an object of thought abstracted from the things related. Below I discuss only (i) and (ii. i). For this latter distinction see *ST* I q. 28 a. 2c. See also R. M. McNerny, *The Logic of Analogy* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1961), 45–8.

³⁸ This goodness need not precede temporally His act of willing. It is possible that God in His very act of willing something instils in the thing willed something which makes the thing good (that is, something different from the fact that it is willed by Him).

³⁹ *ST* I–II q. 10 a. 2c.: 'But if the sight were confronted with something not in all respects colored actually, but only so in some respects, and in other respects not, the sight would not of necessity see such an object: for it might look at that part of the object which is not actually colored, and thus it would not see it. Now just as the actually colored is the object of sight, so is good the object of the will. [...] Whereas any other particular goods [other than a good universal and good from every point of view], in so far as they are lacking in some good, can be regarded as non-goods: and from this point

object but face only its dark side, so that its colour (say green) will not leave its characteristic impression (greenness) in the faculty of sight. Equally it can be argued that the possession of goodness by a thing is not enough for it to impress the will. Its goodness must be on display to us; it must be encountered *as* goodness.

Suppose person A, facing the illuminated side of an object, communicates to B, who faces the unilluminated side, that the object is green. B understands that if he were on A's side he would see the object green, but he does not yet see it *as* green (although he could try to visualize it as such). Similarly, if A, who has a degree in meteorology, communicates to B, who is ignorant about meteorology, that the drought is in some respect good, B will understand that if he knew meteorology, the drought would impress his will (the drought would be capable of being willed by him). B could even try to imagine a situation in which the drought displays goodness in a way that would impress his will. Yet this seems more difficult than visualizing something as green; without the necessary knowledge of meteorology this attempt seems likely to fail.⁴⁰ Simply knowing that the drought has goodness is not enough for it to be able to impress the will. Still, to the extent that B could come to learn meteorology we can say that the drought is potentially an object of B's will (it has not yet actualized its power to impress B's will).⁴¹

(6) Even if we reject the previous suggestion it is important to bear in mind the conclusion of the previous chapter: that, for Aquinas, the conformity of wills with God that matters is *that which makes our will good*,⁴² that is, concord should be an instance of our general desire to be like God, to the extent that this is possible for us. But, if we merely

of view, they can be set aside or approved by the will, which can tend to one and the same thing from various points of view.' (This text does not establish but rather invites my argument.) Other examples of parallels between willing and seeing can be found in *I Sent.* d. 45 q. 1 a. 2 ad 1; *Ver.* q. 23 a. 7c.

⁴⁰ It seems difficult to visualize something as good without also 'visualizing' the reasons that make it good (except in the most abstract way or by resorting to analogies). ('Visualize leprosy as a good thing.') Even if one manages to visualize or imagine a situation in which something considered unattractive is encountered as attractive, it is debatable whether (a) the attraction that ensues is real or imagined, (b) the person who experiences the attraction is myself or an imaginary me (me in such and such situation). For interesting modern discussion on visualizing, see N. Newton, 'Visualizing is Imagining Seeing: A Reply to White', *Analysis*, 49 (1989), 77–81.

⁴¹ In the same sense that Aquinas, in discussing potential willing, refers to the parallel of unilluminated coloured objects, which are 'potentially visible'. *I Sent.* d. 45 q. 1 a. 2 ad 1.

⁴² See the second passage quoted from *Ver.* q. 23 a. 8c.

copy the output of someone's will, we are not participating in the kind of imitation that could make us similar to Him (just as the person who imitates the virtuous without himself having virtue is merely superficially similar to them). The imitation and similitude that Aquinas calls for is not the external resemblance achievable via bypassing the manner after which ends are embodied in objects.

3.3 CONFORMITY OF WILLS AND DISPARITY OF CIRCUMSTANCES

3.3.1 The Scotist Challenge

John Duns Scotus challenged the view that friendship with God requires some sort of common willing. He thought it out of place to enquire about the kind of conformity of wills that should prevail between the creatures and God. The circumstances of each are dissimilar to such an extent that we should not even take upon ourselves the task of finding a way in which their wills can conform.⁴³

Furthermore, note that the problem posed by disparity of circumstances is not essentially related to our failure to grasp the way the friend's object relates to the shared end. Consider again the case of the son who faces the imminent death of his father. It is only partially true that what prevents the son from willing—as God does—the death of his father is his lack of understanding of the way this object relates to God's end. There is another, far more important difficulty: the fact that the person whose death God seems to will happens to be *his* father and not just any other man, or someone else's father. It is this circumstance (and not lack of knowledge, understanding, or grasp) that makes it so difficult for him to conform with God's will.

For Aquinas the rightness of one's will depends also on the circumstances, that is, on the relation between the agent and the things external to him. It may be rational for me to will *o* in circumstances *a*, but not in circumstances *b*. To will *o* in circumstances *b*, just because a friend does so, would *prima facie* be to will against reason, and so against friendship, insofar as friendship only obtains between reasonable beings.⁴⁴

⁴³ And as a consequence of this, for Scotus, conformity with the divine will cannot be required for the act of will to be morally right. John Duns Scotus, *In I Sent.* d. 48 q. un. in *Opera Omnia* (Hidesheim: Georg Olms, 1968, c.1649), ii. 1392.

⁴⁴ See *ST* I–II q. 18 a. 3c.; *ST* II–II q. 25 a. 3c.

In what follows I discuss two different solutions to the problem posed by disparity of circumstances and consider an objection against the second of these solutions (the solution that I take to be Aquinas's).

The first solution calls in the requirement that a friend wills what is good for the other friend.⁴⁵ Clearly, in judging what is good for each friend, one must consider what is good in *his friend's* circumstances. Thus, according to this, the disparity of circumstances between them should be no impediment to the common willing required by friendship.

This solution fails. The reason is that the mutual good-wishing love that is supposedly left unperturbed by disparity of circumstances is not the same as the common willing that characterizes friendship. As explained in the previous chapter, the sharing of an end produces, but is not in itself, the good-wishing love for all those who are capable of sharing this end. The problem under discussion is not this by-product of good-wishing love but the common willing that originates it.

Consider instead Aquinas's discussion about the discord caused by the disparity of circumstances between the judge and the thief's wife in *Summa Theologiae*, I–II q. 19 a. 10c.⁴⁶ The judge wants to punish the thief, the wife wants him released, and both are willing rightly, for each wills on account of something that has a genuine character of good, which is all fine as long as they relate these conflicting wills to the general or common good {bonum commune}.⁴⁷

So, in some situations, equally rational wills representing the legitimate interests of the parties involved clash. In these situations conformity of wills would seem to run counter to reason. To avoid this conclusion Aquinas distinguishes between conforming as to the goal and as to the thing willed. The former kind of conformity is satisfied when two friends will the same goal, even when, as a consequence of their differing circumstances, they have different views on what are the goods in which this common end materializes. In doing so the friends are both willing according to their own circumstances (and interests) and conforming (in some way) to the other's will. Thus, the solution to the problem posed by disparity of circumstances is identical to the solution to the

⁴⁵ *Rhet.* 1380^b35 (II) (also 1381^a19) cited by Aquinas in *ST* II–II q. 26 a. 4c., a. 6 obj. 3; q. 27 a. 2 obj. 1.

⁴⁶ *ST* I–II q. 19 a. 10c. On this point see Finnis, *Aquinas*, 252 n. 167.

⁴⁷ *ST* I–II q. 19 a. 10c. Willing rightly requires not only that the particular good on account of which a certain outcome is willed is a genuine good, but also that one may relate the particular good to the general or common good {bonum commune}.

problem posed by the failure to grasp the way in which the thing willed by the friend relates to the shared end.

This last conclusion can be objected to on the grounds that in *Summa Theologiae*, I–II q. 19 a. 10c. Aquinas is not concerned to show that the judge and the thief's wife are friends, but only that the wills of both can be good and yet conflict. Thus, formal conformity of wills cannot be taken as a solution to the problem that disparity of circumstances poses to friendship, but only to the problem that it poses to the goodness of our acts of will. So, according to this objection, I am mistakenly presenting a solution that Aquinas devises for one kind of problem as his solution for another.

It is of course true that the explicit concern of *Summa Theologiae*, I–II q. 19 a. 10c. is the goodness of our acts of will and what this goodness requires in terms of conformity with God's will. This fact notwithstanding, the conformity demanded by the goodness of the act of will is closely connected to the conformity required by friendship with God. As explained in the previous chapter, the aspiration to conform one's will to God's is an aspect of the lover's desire to imitate the beloved as to his acts of will. In the case of God, we will to resemble Him as to His acts of will in this respect: that our will, as His, is good.⁴⁸ In conforming our will with God, our will participates in His goodness, and at the same time we imitate God in the way that friends should. An easy objection is that since will always aims at that which is perceived as good, then it follows that everyone's will conforms with God's.⁴⁹ Aquinas responds that we fail to conform *in bono* when the rational will does not tend to that which constitutes its proper good, but instead deviates towards the good proper to the concupiscible or the irascible power. So, it seems that, for Aquinas, the *assimilatio* to the will of God that we should cultivate consists in the fact that we do not deviate from what our rational will grasps as good. It could therefore be argued that the requirement of conformity of wills with God does not add anything over and above the way we should will anyway, that is, rationally.

When Aquinas argues that formal conformity of wills with God/the judge suffices for the will of the human being/the thief's wife to be good, he is at the same time arguing that formal conformity of wills suffices for friendship. Accordingly, it is in fact correct to take *Summa Theologiae*, I–II q. 19 a. 10c. as a relevant solution to the problem that

⁴⁸ I *Sent.* d. 45 q. 1 a. 2 ad 4; d. 48 q. un. a. 2c.

⁴⁹ I *Sent.* d. 48. q. un. a. 2 obj. 3.

disparity of circumstances poses to the conformity of wills characteristic of friendship, and not only to the conformity of wills needed for our wills to be good.

There is, however, a remaining problem that needs addressing. Despite the fact that well-wishing love is generated by—but, as argued, not identical with—conformity of wills, it remains to be seen whether God (and the judge) does in fact display this kind of love. Perhaps God does not always will what is good for me, but rather what is good for some other entity, for example ‘the good of the universe’.⁵⁰ Analogously, the judge wills ‘the good of society’.⁵¹ This latter good may not always be compatible with one’s own good.⁵² This is clear from the fact that one’s death may perhaps benefit society but it is normally considered to be harmful for oneself.⁵³ If this is in fact so, then there would be a good reason not to consider the judge and the judged (and his wife) as friends, and to consider whatever kind of conformity between our will and the judge’s as one that is not required by friendship.⁵⁴

In this respect it is worth noting Aquinas’s view that ‘among the best of all the parts of the world are God’s saints [. . .] He takes care of them in such a way that he doesn’t allow any evil for them which he doesn’t turn into their good.’⁵⁵ From this and other passages Eleonore Stump concludes that Aquinas ‘feels that (at least for creatures with minds)

⁵⁰ *ST* I–II q. 19 a. 10c. ‘bonum totius universi’.

⁵¹ *ST* I–II q. 19 a. 10c. ‘status communem’ which translates as ‘the state of public order’ (*BF*) or ‘common estate’ (*DF*) or ‘the common weal’ (Finnis, *Aquinas*, 123).

⁵² Punishment is always bad for the punished. See Finnis, *Aquinas*, 282 n. 45.

⁵³ Aquinas would not agree. In *ST* II–II q. 25 a. 6 ad 2 he argues that the judge who condemns a criminal to death acts not out of hatred, but out of the love of charity when he prefers the public good to that of an individual person. He then adds that death is not harmful to the sinner in all respects: it (presumably not the death itself, but rather knowledge of the death sentence) may generate in the sinner the expiation of guilt (provided ‘conversion’ takes place), and even if this does not happen, death (that is, death itself) at least destroys the capacity to carry on sinning. (For Aquinas sinning is harmful to oneself.)

⁵⁴ But this is by no means obvious since Aquinas subscribes to the Stoic and Ciceronian view that all human beings are friends of each other. *Perf.* c. 15 [14] [637] [27–31]: ‘because all human beings share in the nature of the species, every human being is naturally a friend to every human being; and this is openly shown in the fact that one human being guides, and aids, in misfortune, another who is taking the wrong road’. Trans. Finnis in *Aquinas*, 111 n. 36.

⁵⁵ *In Rom.* 8. 6 ad v. 28 [41–55] [697], trans. by Stump. ‘Aquinas on the Sufferings of Job’, in Eleonore Stump (ed.), *Reasoned Faith: Essays in Philosophical Theology in Honor of Norman Kretzmann* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 336.

suffering is justified only in the case it is a means to the good for the sufferer herself'.⁵⁶

Yet the analogy breaks down: while God is always a friend of those who love Him (even when He judges them), the human judge may not always be the friend of those whom he judges (he may not wish their good). If this is true, whatever the conformity that must be displayed by the judged (or his family), this conformity is not required by friendship.⁵⁷

3.4 WAYS OF WILLING THE SAME

Even if it were the case that friendship requires that the friends will the same thing (see *Situation b*, in 3.2.1, above), it remains to be seen how this condition is satisfied.

One obvious place to look at the way Aquinas deals with the problem of conforming with the will of a friend who wills something that we avert is his *Commentary on the Book of Job*. One of the central questions in the *Commentary* is: is it permissible for the righteous person to be saddened by the sufferings inflicted by God?

One of the most interesting features of Aquinas's *Commentary* is his emphatic rejection of the Stoic view that the virtuous man should not allow the loss of external goods to sadden him (external goods refers in this context to all that is beyond one's control).⁵⁸ Aquinas

⁵⁶ Stump, 'Aquinas on the Job', 337. She groups together Aquinas's view with that of William Rowe.

⁵⁷ Thus, while the human judge communicates the sentence to the suspect as a fait accompli, if God extraordinarily let someone know about his own damnation he would do so only as a warning. Otherwise—if God was simply letting the person know his sentence—the person would fall in despair. *Ver. q. 23 a. 8 ad 2*.

⁵⁸ *In Iob* 1 [737–49]: '[T]he Stoics said that external goods are not in any way the goods of man and that there could be no sadness in the heart of the wise man over their loss. The opinion of the Peripatetics, however, was that external goods are indeed a kind of goods for man—not his principal goods, of course, but ordered as it were instrumentally toward the principal good of man, which is the good of his soul. And on this account they allowed moderate sadness at the loss of external goods, that is, provided that reason is not absorbed by the sadness to such an extent that it departs from rightness. And this opinion is the truer one and agrees with Church doctrine, as is clear in Augustine in his book *City of God*.' Aquinas is alluding to *CD XIV. 9*. See also *In Iob* 3 [1–15]; 6 [78–90], [151–69], and J.-I. Saranyana, 'Sobre la tristeza: Santo Tomás comenta el Libro de Job', in *Atti del congresso internazionale* (Naples: Edizioni Domenicane, 1976), iv. 122–36. On the compatibility between moral virtue and sadness see *ST I–II q. 59 a. 2c*.

argues that it is not merely *permissible* for the virtuous man to feel sad about the bad things that happen to him, but also that to feel in this way is appropriate. He states, for instance, that ‘not to be pained over dead friends seems to be the mark of a hard and insensitive heart, but it is the mark of a virtuous man to experience this not immoderate pain [...]’.⁵⁹

But, if this is so, then how is it possible to say that the human being is still a friend of God, when, instead of willing what God wills, he is actually saddened by the fact that God wills the contrary of what he does?

Indeed, what should we make of Aquinas’s enthusiastic rejection of Stoicism given that at the same time he argues that

[Now] it is the mark of friends to will and to nill the same things. Hence, if it follows from divine approval that someone is despoiled of his temporal goods, if he loves God he ought to conform his own will to the divine will, so that considering this he [Job] should not be engrossed by sadness.⁶⁰

Can one be saddened by those things that God wills and yet will these very things? Aquinas’s solution draws on the classic example of the bitter medicine:⁶¹

For it would not be pleasing to God that anyone suffer adversity except for the sake of some good coming from it. *Hence, although adversity is bitter in itself and generates sadness, it still ought to be agreeable in consideration of its usefulness on account of which it pleases God, [...]*. For even over the taking of bitter medicine a person rejoices with reason because of the hope of health, although he is repelled in the sense of taste. And because joy is matter for giving thanks, Job concludes this third reason in thanks giving, saying ‘Blessed be the name of the Lord!’ The name of the Lord is blessed by men, indeed, *inasmuch as they*

⁵⁹ *In Iob* 1 [757–60] translating *amicis* as friends (instead of as ‘loved ones’ as Damico translates).

⁶⁰ *In Iob* 1 [831–6]: ‘Tertio ostendit idem ex beneplacito divinae voluntatis dicens *sicut domino placuit ita factum est*; est autem amicorum idem velle et nolle: unde si ex beneplacito divino procedit quod aliquis bonis temporalibus spoliatur, si Deum amat, debet voluntatem suam voluntati divinae conformare, ut hac consideratione tristitia non absorbeat.’

⁶¹ *Eud. Eth.* 1238^b5–9: the good man ‘will wish for his friend what is good, the absolutely good absolutely, and conditionally what is good for the friend, so far as poverty or illness is of advantage to him—and these for the sake of absolute goods; taking a medicine is an instance, for that no one wishes, but wishes only for some particular purpose’, trans. J. Salomon in J. Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, Bollingen Series, 1995).

have evidence {notitia} of His goodness, namely, that He dispenses all things well and does nothing unjustly.⁶²

The person who drinks the bitter medicine does so voluntarily. She both wills and wills not to drink the medicine. She wills it for a fitting reason: because she values health over gustatory displeasure. Yet gustatory displeasure is still something that is a true evil (relative to the senses) and, all other things being equal, we are justified in avoiding. The evil which is the bitter medicine becomes a good only on account of the particular circumstances. The sensible person should avert the bitter medicine under the description that makes it an object of aversion ('bitter') and should will it under the description that makes it desirable. By deliberating, she will compare these two descriptions and decide which one should prevail.

It is not part of the virtue of the person to will absolutely (that is, independent of the circumstances) the repellent medicine. On the contrary, there would be something unnatural if this was the case.

[Now] it is natural to the sensual nature that it be delighted and rejoice in fitting things and be pained and saddened over harmful things. Reason cannot remove this condition, but moderates it in such a way that reason does not turn aside from its rightness through sadness.⁶³

The mark of the virtuous person is that she manages to overcome—proceed in the face of—(rather than to eliminate or to ignore) her natural aversion. And yet the natural aversion and the accompanying feelings persist after one manages not to be driven by them. The parallel is similar to the classic example of the courageous person. The courageous person is not the person that does fear not, but rather the one who *despite* his fear does what he should do.⁶⁴

⁶² In *Iob* 1 [846–61]: 'Non enim esset placitum Deo quod aliquis adversitatem pateretur nisi propter aliquod inde proveniens bonum: unde adversitas, licet ipsa ex se amara sit et tristitiam generet, tamen ex consideratione utilitatis propter quam Deo placet debet esse iocunda, sicut et de apostolis dicitur *ibant apostoli gaudentes* etc.; nam et de sumptione medicinae amarae aliquis ratione gaudet propter spem sanitatis licet sensu turbetur. Et quia gaudium est materia gratiarum actionis, ideo hanc tertiam rationem in gratiarum actionem concludit dicens *sit nomen domini benedictum*. Benedicatur quidem nomen domini ab hominibus inquantum de eius bonitate notitiam habent, quod scilicet omnia bene dispenset et nihil agat iniuste.'

⁶³ In *Iob* 3 [7–12]: 'est autem naturale sensibili naturae ut et convenientibus delectetur et gaudeat et de nocivis doleat et tristetur: hoc igitur ratio auferre non potest sed sic moderatur ut per tristitiam ratio a sua rectitudine non divertat'.

⁶⁴ This is further shown by Aquinas's commentary on Job's assertion that 'My fortitude is not the fortitude of stones': 'for the fortitude of stones is without sensation.'

Thus it is clear that for Aquinas friendship is compatible with this simultaneous willing and averting. One may even go on to argue that, insofar as friendship can only take place between rational beings,⁶⁵ and it is rational to avert harmful things, then friendship would not only be compatible with aversion of the object of the friend's will, but can actually require it.

This last conclusion is open to one serious objection: for Aquinas, to be saddened by adversity is not strictly a consequence of one's rational aversion, rather, it is simply a justifiable sensorial or emotional response.

According to this objection, for Aquinas, in cases such as that of the bitter medicine, one's will conflicts with natural desires and aversions. The aversion of medicine manifests a natural, pre-reflective aversion which cannot really be called 'will'. A 'will' (*voluntas*) must for Aquinas proceed from rational volition. Thus we cannot say that the patient both wills and wills not to have the bitter medicine. We have a case of conflict between rational volition and emotions (or, in Aquinas's terminology, will against sensitive appetite), rather than a case of a conflict of wills in the person.

This is a plausible objection. Nevertheless it appears that the example of the bitter medicine is not applicable only to cases in which the rational appetite conflicts with sensations and emotions. It also illustrates cases when one rational appetite conflicts with another.⁶⁶ This is, at the very least, suggested by the following excerpt from the *Commentary of the Sentences* clarifying the concept of 'voluntas naturalis':

There is, on the one hand, a certain will natural to us by which we will that which is a good in itself for the human being qua human being; and this follows the apprehension of reason insofar as it considers things independently of circumstances. In this manner a human being wills knowledge, virtue, health

Now a man's fortitude is accompanied by a sense of harmful things, because of which he adds "nor is my flesh of bronze", that is, without sensation, because, however strong mortal man's reason may be, it is still necessary that on the side of the flesh he experience the sense of pain. And by this observation is excluded the rebuke of Eliphaz, who was censuring sadness in blessed Job. [...] At the same time, too, by this observation is refuted the opinion of the Stoics, who say that a wise man is not saddened, of which opinion Eliphaz seems to have been. Blessed Job, however, intends to defend the position which the Peripatetics also posited, that a wise man is indeed saddened, but through reason he strives not to be led into an unsuitable condition.' *In Iob* 6 [153–69], see also 6 [78–94].

⁶⁵ *ST* II–II q. 25 a. 3c.

⁶⁶ Besides, sadness can, in a loose sense, inhere in the intellect. *Ver.* q. 26 a. 3 ad 6. See also Saranyana, 'Sobre la tristeza', 131–2.

and so on. There is also, however, a deliberated will that follows that act of the reason which deliberates about ends and various circumstances, and in accordance to this will we incline towards that which gets the character of goodness from the purpose or from some circumstance.⁶⁷

This kind of *voluntas naturalis* follows reason just as *voluntas deliberata* does (see Appendix).⁶⁸ Aquinas gives the example of a surgical intervention. The patient's 'deliberated will' wills the operation on account of the end, which is health. However the operation in itself (considered independently of the end) is resisted not only by the senses but also by the 'natural will'.⁶⁹

So when you avert war in general, but will a particular war, the case is not one in which reason imposes itself over the emotions. Rather, we have a case in which, upon deliberation, one decides that something which is and remains harmful is, in these specific circumstances, a good. Yet both the emotions and the natural will may persist in averting war. Hence the conflict awakened when one wills what seems harmful is not simply one between a 'gut feeling' and the dictates of reason, but one (also) between two or more intelligible goods: in this example, peace and justice.

We can conclude that, for Aquinas, even supposing that friendship requires a conformity of wills as to the thing willed, this is compatible with, at the same time, (a) averting this thing emotionally and according to the senses, and (b) willing it not, or willing against it, for all the valid reasons which make it a true evil.

⁶⁷ 'Est et quaedam voluntas in nobis naturalis qua appetimus id quod secundum se bonum est homini, inquantum est homo; et hoc sequitur apprehensionem rationis, prout est aliquid absolute considerans: sicut vult homo scientiam, virtutem, sanitatem et huiusmodi. Est etiam in nobis voluntas deliberata consequens actum rationis deliberantis de fine et diversis circumstantiis, et secundum hanc tendimus in illud quod habet rationem bonitatis ex fine vel ex aliqua circumstantia.' I *Sent.* d. 48 q. un. a. 4c.

⁶⁸ Aquinas's examination of the characteristics of the human will of Christ sheds further light on the nature of the distinction between 'deliberated' or 'rational' will and 'natural will'. It shows that, for him: (i) the 'natural will' is called properly a kind of willing and is altogether distinct from the sensory desire or 'sensory will' (which can be called a will only by participation) (*ST* III q. 18 a. 2c.; a. 3 obj. 1, c.); (ii) friendship requires that friends conform as to their 'deliberated' or 'rational' wills, but allows that they disagree both as to their 'natural wills' and their 'sensory wills' (*ST* III q. 18 a. 5 obj. 2, c., ad 2); (iii) a situation in which the same person wills something by an act of the 'rational' or 'deliberated' will, and yet wills against it by an act of the 'natural', presents a case of conflict but not contradiction of wills (*ST* III q. 18 a. 6c.).

⁶⁹ I *Sent.* d. 48 q. un. a. 4c.: 'et ideo sectionem solum voluntas deliberata eligit, sed voluntas naturalis et appetitus sensitivus abhorret'.

Conformity of wills as to the object, when it is a requirement of friendship, is compatible with these three situations:

- one wills the same object as the friend, but does not will it (or will against it) for all the valid reasons that make it a true evil;
- one emotionally and sensorially averts the object willed by one's friend;
- one wills the same object according to the 'natural will' but not according to the 'deliberated will'.

3.5 POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF AQUINAS'S POSITION ON THE CONFORMITY OF WILLS OF FRIENDSHIP

Friendship with God is a peculiar case of a broader type of friendship: friendship between unequals. Aquinas's solution to the problem posed by conformity of wills to friendship with God requires him to loosen the requirements of this friendship. In doing so he also loosens the requirements of friendships such as those (in Aristotle's words) of a 'father towards his son, and in general an older person towards a younger, or a man towards a woman, and of any sort of ruler towards the one he rules'.⁷⁰

If the conclusions that are true of friendship between human beings and God apply to friendships between the ruler (whether one person or many) and the citizens, then one may make the following inferences:

In case that (a) the ruler and the citizens have a common goal and (b) the object of the ruler's wills is manifest, then:

- (i) friendship with the ruler does not require that we will the same object, except insofar as we have good reasons to believe that the common goal indeed materializes in the object chosen by the ruler;⁷¹
- (ii) even when (i) is the case, friendship allows that we (a) may feel emotional repulsion towards the object, and (b) that vis-à-vis

⁷⁰ *Nic. Eth.* 1158^b12–14.

⁷¹ These reasons can be of many different sorts including, for instance: appraisals of the expertise of the ruler; and interest in the maintenance of a scheme of cooperation provided by a system of laws.

willing the object on account of the right reasons, we also will it not on account of the reasons that make it evil.

Take the case of a military campaign launched by the ruler. Insofar as the citizens take it that the ruler is committed to their common good, and they have reason to believe that war, in those particular circumstances, is conducive to this good, then they have a good reason to support this particular military campaign. Yet insofar as they know that military campaigns require them to leave their families, march long journeys, eat poor food, accept orders, put their lives at great risk, and kill other men, they are justified in being saddened at the prospect of a military campaign and in averting it on account of the reasons that make war undesirable.

The foregoing paragraphs may seem to some to be rather uninspiring. For a start, the idea that the relationship between the ruler and the ruled is captured by the notion of friendship seems out of place in modern politics, dominated as it is by mutual suspicion and a fair amount of cynicism. One may also remain unmoved by the idea that when this relationship with the ruler actually falls within the boundaries of friendship there is still a margin of liberty as to whether we have to agree with him as to the object of his will. To say that when we agree with him as to the object we may nevertheless be grudging and have mixed feelings is not very reassuring. One may argue further that since (unlike with God) we have no duty to be friends with the ruler, whatever friendship with the ruler may require and allow is of little practical consequence. The objector could finally add that while it is true that Aquinas introduces some flexibility regarding the conformity of wills that assures friendship with God, we have no explicit proof that the same applies to human friendships, except perhaps in the analogy of the doctor.

It is true that as far as I have shown in this chapter, Aquinas does not explicitly apply the conclusions about conformity of wills required by friendship with God to friendship with the political ruler. But this is no reason to disregard the political importance of the foregoing discussion. For one can extract from the previous discussion a reading along the following lines.

Aquinas certainly does not argue that all contingent relationships between the ruled and the ruler take place within the boundaries of friendship. All that he can be taken to believe is that even when it is the case that the relationship between the citizen and the ruler is (as it

needs not be) one of friendship, then this friendship does not require that the citizen will the same object as the ruler in the absence of good grounds for doing so. And even if the citizen, upon reflection, does will the same object, it is still compatible with friendship (and sometimes necessary) for him to avert emotionally the very same object that he wills according to the circumstances. He may also will against it on account of the reasons that make the object an evil.

It is true that Aquinas's favourite example is not the ruler, but the doctor. Yet it is in principle possible that political rule resembles the rule of the doctor.⁷² For is not the ideal ruler someone who, for Aquinas, looks after our own good, and possesses some superior expertise about how to achieve it (a knowledge that we may freely acknowledge)? Indeed Aquinas thinks that in a hypothetically extended state of innocence, Adam would have had some kind of (political) rule justified by his superior knowledge.⁷³ This side of the Fall, it may be the case that the rulers are definitely unlike doctors who want to cure us, their knowledge less than perfect, their intentions under suspicion. Even in the limiting case in which political rule does resemble the doctor-patient relationship, political rule, if we follow Aquinas, would still allow (and perhaps require) disagreement of wills as to the object in which the common good materializes.

In being friends with God, we are not requested to ignore our natural emotions, attachments, and fears. Equally, in being friends with a ruler we are not requested to ignore (and perhaps we are requested *not* to ignore) our legitimate circumstance-related particular interests.

⁷² Aquinas makes use of the analogy between doctors and rulers in *ScG* III. c. 146 n. 5 and *Eth.* III. 8 [474]. See also Plato, *Laws*, 720c–e.

⁷³ Lordship over free human beings is partly justified by inequality of knowledge: 'if one man surpassed another in knowledge and justice, this [the having of *dominium*] would not have been fitting unless these gifts conduced to the benefit of others'. *ST* I q. 94 a. 4c. Such inequality of knowledge would have been inevitable: '[as regards the soul], there would have been inequality as to righteousness and knowledge. For man worked not of necessity, but of his own free-will, by virtue of which man can apply himself, more or less, to action, desire, or knowledge; hence some would have made a greater advance in virtue and knowledge than others.' *ST* I q. 96 a. 3c. John Finnis notes, however, that Aquinas does not say that in the state of innocence 'there would be need for specifically *political* government or law' (*Aquinas*, 248, italics in the original). For contrasting views on the nature of Aquinas's political authority see R. Markus, 'Two Conceptions of Political Authority, De Civitate Dei, XIX 14–15 and Some Thirteenth Century Interpretations', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 16 (1965), 68–100 and P. J. Weithman, 'Augustine and Aquinas on Original Sin and the Function of Political Authority', *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 30 (1992), 353–76.

4

What Prevents Us from Joining Other People's Projects?: Pride as an Impediment to Conformity of Wills

The discussion about conformity of wills in the previous chapters overlooks a number of challenges raised by the observation of a simple fact: the wills of the persons who surround us are already formed. This means that, to be friends with other people, who will different things to me, either they must change their will or I must. If we leave out the first option, friendship with other people would (at least sometimes) require me to adapt my will to theirs. Thus the condition of conformity of wills seems to require one to abandon one's own judgement in order to secure the good of friendship.

Further, it is not clear, from the discussion so far, what the condition of conformity of wills requires from individuals prior to the actual constitution of their ties of friendship.

This chapter shows that the thoughts above, if conceived as challenges to Aquinas's position, arise from a deficient understanding of his censure of people's unwillingness to join wills with others. This chapter traces the motivational background of attitudes that instantiate this kind of unwillingness. The route chosen will take us to the notion of vainglory and—with special emphasis—to *superbia*, that is, roughly translated, arrogance or unreasonable pride.

Establishing how pride prevents us from entering constructive social and political ties with others, will allow us to approach conformity of wills from a perspective different from the one adopted in the previous chapter. 'Conformity of wills' is a property of individuals which is logically prior to the constitution of their social links: it is the readiness to join others in their wills (projects, paths of action, etc.) even when doing so undermines one's thoughts of one's own excellence.

4.1 NILLING WHAT ANOTHER WILLS: SCHISM, SEDITION, AND DISCORD

There is, Aquinas argues, a class of acts which is specifically aimed at preventing the conformity of one's will with the will of others. In this case, lack of conformity of wills is not a direct consequence of one person willing one thing and the other person willing another.

Take Juan and Pablo:

- (i) Juan wills X;
- (ii) Pablo wills that what he wills be not the same as what Juan wills;
- (iii) Pablo wills not-X (Pablo nills X).

It is clear that the specific nature of the good sought or opposed (X) is wholly inconsequential for the position adopted by Pablo. While Juan may be willing X in good faith, what Pablo seeks is simply a state of affairs in which his will differs from that of Juan. For Pablo to nill X is simply a means to achieve discord.

Pablo's attitude may make one wonder: why would anyone seek discord? His attitude strikes one as capricious and even malicious. Nonetheless, rational agents can and sometimes do choose discord as a means to a future end, and the motivations for that attitude are, at the very least, intelligible. A political party, for instance, may oppose a policy sponsored by an adversary without finding faults in the policy itself. Take the case of a party which refuses to support in Parliament a law on environmental issues simply because it has been presented to the House by the extreme right. The party may do so because to vote together with the right would reflect badly on it (its supporters may accuse the party of entering an unholy alliance). Or, again, the party may consider that the specific benefits of the law are outweighed by the long-term harm that may result from giving strength to the extreme right. In this example lack of conformity of wills is a proximate good (rather than the accidental outcome of two agents willing different things).

Aquinas singles out two vices which directly oppose conformity of wills: schism and sedition, both of which are opposed to charity and to peace.¹

Schism and sedition have much in common. Both vices are opposed per se to the unity of a social group, that of the Church in the case of

¹ *ST* II–II q. 34 prol.; *ST* II–II q. 39 prol.

schism, and that of the political community, the state, in the case of sedition.² 'Wherefore the sin of schism is one that is directly and per se opposed to unity.'³ '[S]edition is contrary to the unity of the multitude, viz. the people of a city or kingdom.'⁴

The unity of a social group, as Aquinas often argues, is twofold. On the one hand there is the order between its members and, on the other hand, the order of its members to the common goal (which should be sought after by the authority).⁵ Hence, both the suspension of social intercourse {communicatio}⁶ with fellow members and the refusal to acknowledge (just) authority qualify as cases of either schism or sedition.⁷ Of all sins against the neighbour, schism is seen as the gravest since it opposes the spiritual well-being of society, to which the unity of the Church is directed.⁸ The gravity of sedition, however, must not be underestimated. As Aquinas sometimes reminds us,⁹ according to the Bible, when Dathan, Abiram, Korach, On, and 250 prominent family leaders of Israel rebelled against the leadership of Moses the earth swallowed them up as punishment.¹⁰

² *ST* II–II q. 42 a. 1 ad 2.

³ *ST* II–II q. 39 a. 1c.: 'Peccatum schismatis dicitur quod directe et per se opponitur unitati.'

⁴ *ST* II–II q. 42 a. 2c.: 'seditio opponitur unitati multitudinis, idest populi, civitatis vel regni'.

⁵ *Ver.* q. 5 a. 3c.; *ScG* II c. 42 n. 4; *Div.* IV. 1 [285]; *Eth.* prol. On the unity of the Church: see *ST* II–II q. 39 a. 1c.; Finnis, *Aquinas*, 23; A. Krempel, *La Doctrine de la relation chez Saint Thomas* (Paris: Vrin, 1952), 626–31.

⁶ For the meaning of *communicatio* or community see J. Bobik, 'Aquinas on *Communicatio*, the Foundation of Friendship and *Caritas*', *Modern Schoolman*, 65 (1986), 1–19. Bobik surveys the following articles: L. Bond, 'A Comparison between Human and Divine Friendship', *Thomist*, 3 (1941); J. W. Rausch, *Agape and Amicitia: A Comparison between St. Paul and St. Thomas* (Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1958) (as quoted by Bobik); J. Wilms, *Divine Friendship according to St. Thomas*, trans. M. Fulgence (London: Blackfriars Publications, 1958), on community: pp. 18–19; J. Keller, 'De virtute caritatis ut amicitia quadam divina', in *Xenia Thomistica* (vol. ii) (Rome: Typis Poliglottis, 1925), on community: pp. 246–8; L.-B. Gillon, 'A propos de la théorie thomiste de l'amitié: "Fundatur super aliqua communicatione" (II–II, q. 23, a. 1)', *Angelicum*, 25 (1948), on community: pp. 15–17; G. Savagnone, 'L'amicizia nel pensiero di S. Tommaso d'Aquino', *Sapienza*, 34 (1981), on community: pp. 436–40.

⁷ *ST* II–II q. 39 a. 1c. on schism. Sedition differs from schism in these two respects: that the unity that it attacks is that of the political entity, and that, unlike schism, it involves preparations towards combat. *ST* II–II q. 42 a. 1 ad 2. Cf. *ST* II–II q. 39 a. 4c.

⁸ *ST* II–II q. 39 a. 2 ad 3.

⁹ *IV Sent.* d. 13 qu. 2 a. 2 obj. 4; *In Rom.* 13. 1 ad v. 2 [182–7] [1027]; *Ps.* 54. 13 [5–9]; *ST* II–II q. 39 a. 2 obj. 1.

¹⁰ Num. 16: 1–2, 31–2 (the fate of On is uncertain as he is not mentioned after the outbreak of the rebellion).

Both schism and sedition constitute cases of discord.¹¹ Someone is directly guilty of the sin of discord in manner when ‘he knowingly and intentionally dissents from the divine good and from that good of his neighbour which he ought to support’.¹² We have discussed discord in Chapter 2. However, the point that I want to call attention to has not been discussed thus far: the connection between discord, vainglory, and pride:

discord denotes a certain disunion of wills, in so far, to wit, as one man’s will holds fast to one thing, while the other man’s will holds fast to something else. Now if a man’s will holds fast to its own, this is due to the fact that he prefers things that are his to things that are others’, and if he does this inordinately, it is due to pride and vainglory. Therefore discord, whereby a man holds to what is his own, and departs from that of others, is reckoned to be a daughter of vainglory.¹³

The inordinateness that makes some discord sinful amounts to an exaggerated preference for that which belongs to oneself. This exaggerated preference manifests itself in the unwillingness to be in accord with the will of other people. And this, Aquinas tells us, is a disorder characteristic of pride or vainglory. What it is precisely that one prefers inordinately is not very clear from this text. One needs to look at vainglory and pride in order to uncover the motivations of the person who wills discord.

4.2 VAINGLORY AND UNWILLINGNESS TO AGREE WITH OTHERS

Why would anyone seek discord? The relation between vainglory and discord provides a first approximation to the motivational basis of discord.

¹¹ ‘seditio, sicut et schisma, sub discordia continetur’, *ST* II–II q. 42 a. 2 ad 3, and he adds, ‘they are both a discord, not of one individual against another but between one faction and another’.

¹² *ST* II–II q. 37 a. 1c.: ‘per se discordat aliquis a proximo quando scienter et ex intentione dissentit a bono divino et a proximi bono, in quo debet consentire’.

¹³ *ST* II–II q. 37 a. 2c.: ‘discordia importat quandam disgregationem voluntatum: inquantum scilicet voluntas unius stat in uno et voluntas alterius stat in altero. Quod autem voluntas alicuius in proprio sistat, provenit ex hoc quod aliquis ea quae sunt sua praefert his quae sint aliorum. Quod cum inordinate fit, pertinet ad superbiam et inanem gloriam. Et ideo discordia, per quam unusquisque sequitur quod suum est et recedit ab eo quod est alterius, ponitur filia inanis gloriae.’ On filiation of vices: ‘illa vitia quae de se nata sunt ordinari ad finem alicuius vitii capitalis, dicuntur filia eius’. *ST* II–II q. 132 a. 5c.

Vainglory is the inordinate expression of one's own excellence. This can be manifest in two ways: directly or indirectly. A person manifests his excellence in an indirect way when 'he strives to make known his excellence by showing that he is not inferior to another'.¹⁴ One can seek to show that one is not inferior to another by seeking discord: 'whereby a man is unwilling to give up his own will, so as to agree with others'.¹⁵ Thus, at least sometimes, it is inordinate to assert one's superiority or one's non-inferiority to another by being unwilling to give up one's will in order to agree with him or others.

Yet, in a different text, Aquinas adds another form in which resistance to agreeing with others can constitute a case of vainglory. A man acts vaingloriously when 'he does not make his will concord with the will of those who are better than him'.¹⁶ Presumably, Aquinas criticizes the person, who, while recognizing that the will of others is better (in some unspecified regard) than his, still refuses to join in. One may safely assume that this case is covered by the one discussed in the preceding paragraph: the reason not to agree is one's unwillingness to accept the superiority (in some unspecified regard) of the other person.

Before attending to the moral evaluation of vainglory it is important to take note of Aquinas's central psychological insight: opposition to the wills of another can be a means of expressing the way we perceive our standing in relation to him.

It is important to note that Aquinas does not criticize the desire to make one's excellence known to others. What he objects to are those instances in which the manifestation of one's excellence departs from the rule of reason. To refuse to give up one's own will in favour of that of other people, *when the reason to do so is to manifest one's excellence*, falls (apparently) within that category.

This last conclusion, however, is not directly formulated by Aquinas. When he discusses whether the desire for glory constitutes a sin, Aquinas says that the desire for glory can be sinful when (among other ways) 'a man seeks glory for that which he does not possess, or that which is unworthy of glory, for instance when he seeks it for something frail and

¹⁴ *ST* II-II q. 132 a. 5c.: 'alio autem modo nititur aliquis manifestare suam excellentiam indirecte, ostendendo se non esse alio minorem'.

¹⁵ *ST* II-II q. 132 a. 5c.: 'dum non vult a propria voluntate discedere, ut aliis concordet'.

¹⁶ *Mal.* q. 9 a. 3c. [31-3]: 'non concordat homo propriam voluntatem voluntati meliorum'.

perishable'.¹⁷ This would suggest that using one's will to manifest one's superiority over others is not sinful when we are, in fact, superior in a respect which is worthy of glory.

One can argue plausibly, however, that to use our capacity to refuse to agree as a means to manifest one's excellence falls within the category of 'seeking glory for that which one does not possess'. The refusal to agree is intended to express certain qualities of the refuser. A person arguing his case to a hostile multitude impresses us as someone brave, determined, committed to his views; someone who inspires respect. One might further be inclined to think that there must be some soundness to his views if he is willing to risk so much to defend them.

When a person refuses to agree with others exclusively as *a means* to the goal of commanding these sentiments (and not as a consequence of the aforementioned virtues of himself and his views) he is seeking glory for something that is not there. A person manipulates his power to refuse as a device which enables him to mimic persons whose refusal genuinely warrants the aforementioned sentiments. The refusal to agree of the person who acts vaingloriously is an externally visible attitude which lacks the corresponding internal attributes. It is time to turn to the root of vainglory, namely *superbia*.¹⁸

4.3 PRIDE AND UNWILLINGNESS TO AGREE WITH OTHERS

The key to understanding why, for Aquinas, it is sometimes objectionable to stick to one's own will and refuse to join forces with others, is pride. Pride is essentially an inordinate desire for one's own excellence which one satisfies by misascribing goods¹⁹ to oneself. This (self-induced) false image of oneself causes a faulty way of relating to other persons, to authority, and to the Law.

Pride holds a cardinal place in both the Bible and patristic literature. The Original Sin has often been said to be an act of pride.²⁰ The importance of this event for Jewish and Christian theology and ethics cannot be overestimated.

¹⁷ *ST* II–II q. 132 a. 1c.

¹⁸ *ST* II–II q. 132 a. 4c.

¹⁹ 'Goods': anything valuable, including virtues, skills, talents, and capacities.

²⁰ *ST* II–II q. 163 a. 1c.; II *Sent.* d. 22 q. 1 a. 1c.; *CD* XIV. 13, 1.

Pride constitutes a distinct topic of discussion in Aquinas's *Commentary on the Sentences*, the *Disputed Questions on Evil*, and in the *Summa Theologiae*. This chapter will not offer a thorough examination of pride. Such a task would require, among other things, studying the authorities consulted by Aquinas (fundamentally St Augustine and Gregory the Great).²¹ Instead, I will take a more restricted approach, one which will (4.3.1) define pride and (4.3.2) explain why it is opposed to friendship. Priority will be given to the texts from the *Summa Theologiae*.

4.3.1 Pride: 'Overstepping What One Is'

Why is pride a sin?

[P]ride {superbia} is so called because a man thereby aims higher than he is; wherefore Isidore says (*Etym.* X): 'A man is said to be proud, because he wishes to appear above {super} what he really is; for he who wishes to overstep beyond what he is is proud.' Now right reason requires that every man's will should be directed to that which is proportionate to him. Therefore it is evident that pride denotes something opposed to right reason, and this shows it to have the character of sin, because according to Dionysius (*Div. Nom.* iv, 4), 'the soul's evil is to be opposed to reason.' Therefore it is evident that pride is a sin.²²

Aquinas's answer is engaging but not completely clear. Expressions such as 'to aim higher than he is' and to 'overstep beyond what he is', may give rise to misgivings. Should one not try to perfect oneself, and so go beyond 'what one is'? What is wrong with rising above one's present state? The key to reading Aquinas accurately is to clarify what the ambiguous 'is' stands for. Does it stand for natural faculties? For social role?

One must single out two elements in order to elucidate this query. The first element is one's self-appraisal. Aquinas defines the specific²³ nature of pride as an 'inordinate appetite for one's own

²¹ See Matthew Baasten, 'Gregorian Elements in Aquinas', in *Pride according to Gregory the Great* (Queenston and Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 119–37.

²² *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 1c.: 'superbia nominatur ex hoc quod aliquis per voluntatem tendit supra id quod est, unde dicit Isidorus, in libro *Etym.* "superbus dictus est quia super vult videri quam est, qui enim vult supergredi quod est, superbus est." Habet autem hoc ratio recta, ut voluntas uniuscuiusque feratur in id quod est proportionatum sibi. Et ideo manifestum est quod superbia importat aliquid quod adversatur rationi rectae. Hoc autem facit rationem peccati, quia secundum Dionysium, IV cap. de *Div. Nom.*, malum animae est praeter rationem esse. Unde manifestum est quod superbia est peccatum.'

²³ Pride is also a 'generic' sin because all vices can arise from pride (although they do not invariably do so). *ST* I–II q. 84 a. 2c.; *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 2c.; *Mal.* q. 8 a. 2c.

excellence'.²⁴ He also thinks that 'all excellence results from a good possessed'.²⁵ So the 'is' of 'higher than he is' must have something to do with the goods that one possesses. Aquinas must mean that the person who oversteps what he is attributes to himself goods he does not have. The proud person's self-appraisal (whom he takes himself to be) does not correspond with what he actually is (has).

Second, there is a public, visible, dimension to the 'is' of 'overstepping what one is'. The proud person 'wishes to appear (or be seen) {vult videri} above what he really is'. Consider for a moment the accusatory question, 'Who do you think you are?' This is normally taken to mean: 'the capacity in which you act is not backed by certain required qualities that would warrant acting in such capacity'. Aquinas seems to be thinking along these lines when, after asserting that pride cannot be imputed uniformly to different individuals, he adds:

also it happens that to one person is not imputed as pride everything that is imputed to another, and in this manner pride is not imputed to a bishop if he exercises that which belongs to his very excellence; pride is imputed however to a clergyman or a simple priest if he attempts to do those things which belong to the bishop.²⁶

The simple priest, in acting like a bishop, acts as if he had what it takes to be a bishop. If a fellow priest reacts by saying: 'Who do you think you are?' he intends to confront him with the fact that he is not a bishop (and with the self-delusion involved in believing that he is).

'Excellence' in this passage seems to be a quality other than the possession of goods themselves, but rather one that supervenes on them.²⁷ Actions and words project to others an image of ourselves. When I convey to others an excellence that is not backed by corresponding goods, I 'overstep what I am': I produce a public image of myself that does not fit reality.

To conclude, one oversteps 'what one is' when (i) one misattributes to oneself goods that one does not have (and the excellence that supervenes on these goods) and, in consequence, (ii) one's deeds and words produce a correspondingly wrong public image of oneself. If this

²⁴ *ST* I-II q. 84 a. 2c.; *ST* II-II q. 162 a. 2c.

²⁵ *ST* II-II q. 162 a. 4c.

²⁶ *Mal.* q. 8 a. 2c. [48-55]: 'ideo contingit quod aliquid non imputatur uni ad superbiam quod alteri imputaretur; sicut episcopo non imputatur ad superbiam si exerceat ea quae ad propriam excellentiam pertinent: imputaretur autem hoc ad superbiam clerico, vel simplici sacerdote, si ea quae sunt episcopi attentaret'.

²⁷ For further discussion on the meaning of 'excellencia', see P. J. Weithman, 'Thomistic Pride and Liberal Vice', *Thomist*, 60 (1996), 247-8, 253.

reading is correct, when Aquinas argues that '[R]ight reason requires that every man's will should tend to that which is proportionate to him' the expression 'to him' means the actual goods that he possesses.

On a superficial reading, Aquinas seems to argue that reason acts as a moderator of the natural desire for excellence. All humans naturally desire excellence, but some do so inordinately.²⁸ There is an easy parallel in gluttony: reason tells us that ingestion of only a certain amount of food is good for the body, but nevertheless the appetite disobeys this rule and indulges in harmful behaviour.

This easy example gives rise to three queries, the solution of which allows a more refined understanding of pride.

First, it does not seem that in the case of pride the appetite rebels against the intellect in exactly the same sense as it does in the case of gluttony. Rather, it would seem that it is the will (*voluntas*) itself that rebels against the rule of reason.

To solve the first query one must first notice that for Aquinas pride is a desire for a thing of a kind that is difficult to get (*arduum*).²⁹ This desire belongs to the irascible part of the appetite.³⁰ Although Aquinas normally locates the irascible part of the appetite within the sensitive appetite, he argues that it also extends to the intellective appetite or will. Only in that manner can it be explained, for example, that angels who own only intellective volition, can fall into pride, as is the case with demons.³¹ The point is that a creature who wills only the kind of things that are willed by the intellectual appetite or will (*bonum spirituale* as opposed to *bonum sensibile*) can seek them in a way that disobeys reason. This position is important for Aquinas, for otherwise it would be very difficult to explain how our First Parents in the State of Innocence (i.e. a state in which the senses could not bring the human being to act against the dictates of reason) could, nonetheless, sin.³²

The second concern is that the proud person may genuinely believe that he merits the excellence that he ascribes to himself (and so, that he possesses the goods to which such excellence corresponds). If this

²⁸ *ST* I–II q. 84 a. 2c.; *Mal.* q. 8 a. 2c. [28–32]: 'Among the various things that man desires is excellence. It is natural, not only for men but for all things, to desire, in the wanted good, perfection which consists in a certain excellence.' 'inter alia autem quae homo desiderat, unum est excellentia. Naturale enim est non solum homini, sed etiam unicuique rei, ut perfectionem in bono concupito desideret, quae quadam excellentia consistit.'

²⁹ *II Sent.* d. 42 q. 2 a. 4c.

³⁰ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 3c.; *Mal.* q. 8 a. 3c.

³¹ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 3c.

³² *ST* I q. 63 a. 2 ad 2; *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 3c.

were the case, pride would be rooted simply in a (morally indifferent) intellectual mistake: just as a man may believe himself rich and act accordingly, while unaware of the fall in his shares on Wall Street.

Indeed, pride cannot be explained as either completely self-conscious misadjudication of excellence, on the one hand, or mere intellectual mistake on the other. Aquinas's explanation of the peculiar situation of the proud person reflects this complexity. After arguing that the modest person subjects himself to the law of reason because he has an accurate estimation of himself (*veram existimationem de se habet*), Aquinas adds that

[P]ride does not observe this rule of right reason, for he [a proud man] esteems himself greater than he is: and this is the outcome of an inordinate desire for his own excellence, since man is ready to believe what he desires very much.³³

In Aquinas's opinion the situation of the proud person is something like self-induced deceit. Pride does not start from simple intellectual error, but can produce it. It is the will that puts in motion a process that can eventually distort one's self-appraisal.³⁴

The third, and perhaps most important concern of the three, has to do with the meaning of 'inordinate desire'. It is customary to think that 'inordinate' here is predicated of the magnitude of the desire's intensity. So the glutton, say, has a stronger desire for gustatory pleasure than the frugal person. Yet, in the case of pride, the desire for excellence counts as inordinate not because of its exaggerated magnitude but rather because, in order to satisfy it, one ascribes to oneself what one has not.³⁵

³³ 'Hanc autem regulam rectae rationis non attendit superbia, sed de se maiora existimat quam sint. Quod contingit quod ex inordinato appetitu propriae excellentiae: quia quod quis vehementer desiderat, facile credit.' *ST* II-II q. 162 a. 3 ad 2; cf. *II Sent.* d. 42 q. 2 a. 4 ad 1.

³⁴ See *ST* II-II q. 161 a. 2c.

³⁵ This reading finds support in Aquinas's assertions that 'humility has essentially to do with the appetite, in so far as a man restrains the impetuosity of his soul, from tending inordinately to great things: yet its rule is in the cognitive faculty, in that we should not deem ourselves to be above what we are'. *ST* II-II q. 161 a. 6c., and that '[W]hen a man ascribes to himself a good greater than what he has, it follows that his appetite tends to his own excellence in a measure exceeding his competency: and thus we have the third species of pride, namely "boasting of having what one has not"'. *ST* II-II q. 162 a. 4c. Both texts argue that the inordinateness typical of pride has to do with the overruling of the knowledge we have about who we are (rather than the intensity of the desire for excellence). While I argue that, for Aquinas, the 'disordinateness' of the desire resides primarily in its production of self-misattribution of goods, Weithman ('Thomistic pride', p. 256) seems to think that the desire is disordinate when one desires that which is inappropriate for the kind of being one is. The two accounts are reconcilable. A good might be inappropriate because one lacks a certain required aptitude for it (that is, one's

It is not clear whether for Aquinas, there is some necessary causal link between the intensity of desire and a false self-ascription of goods worthy of excellence. In other words, it is not clear whether he thinks that a certain magnitude of desire for excellence necessarily produces such misascription. In principle, it is possible to isolate the intensity of the desire from its (delusive) satisfaction: a person with a weak desire for excellence may be tempted to satisfy it in a delusive manner (by resorting to the false self-ascription of goods) while a different person with a much stronger desire may not do so.

It seems that Aquinas does not find fault so much in the intense desire for excellence as in its delusive satisfaction (through self-misascription of goods). The truly perverse thing about pride is that it satisfies a desire (which in itself is a desire for a good thing) by deceiving others, and worse, by deceiving oneself.³⁶

4.3.2 Pride and the Others (I): Standing Out and Dismissing Others

This subsection argues that, for Aquinas, pride often translates in an exaggerated desire to stand out which can be an instantiation of an inordinate desire for one's excellence (4.3.2.1). The inordinate wish to stand out makes us dismiss others in three ways: by looking down on them, by looking only at their faults, and possibly, to do this in a vain effort to imitate people who dismiss correctly: people who dismiss only what is worth dismissing (4.3.2.2).

4.3.2.1 *Excellence as Being Outstanding*

In the *Summa Theologiae*, as elsewhere, Aquinas subscribes to Gregory the Great's characterization of pride. Gregory argued that pride manifests

nature is not capable of incorporating that kind of good). Therefore the disordinate wish may often presuppose a misascription of goods (aptitudes).

³⁶ There is an additional, and at least equally central, censurable aspect to pride (which I do not sufficiently discuss here): the rejection of being the kind of being one is. The desire to be some higher kind of being logically involves the desire of self-annihilation. Yet covetousness can induce the delusive belief that we can become like a higher being not just as to accidental features but also as to nature while remaining ourselves. Even without falling in this self-destructive delusion one may wrongly wish to be similar to God by (a) wishing to achieve a lawful similarity without external help (that is, wishing self-sufficiency) or (b) wishing to be similar in respects which our nature is unable to emulate (for instance wishing to have the power to create the heavens and the earth). *ST* I q. 63 a. 3c.

itself when people 'boast of having what they have not, or despise others and wish to appear the exclusive possessors of what they have'.³⁷ According to Aquinas there are three ways of considering the good by virtue of which we wish to gain excellence. Pride is diversified in these three ways. First, we can consider the good in itself, second the way one becomes a possessor of that good, and third,

the manner of having it {modus habendi}, in so far as a man obtains greater excellence through possessing some good more excellently than other men. As a result, his appetite is borne inordinately towards his own excellence: and thus we have the fourth species of pride, which is 'when a man despises others and wishes to be singularly conspicuous'.³⁸

A similar argument appears in *De Malo*. Aquinas, commenting again on Gregory's typology of pride, distinguishes between three ways in which, in desiring an excellent good, one may exceed the appropriate measure. The first has to do with the appropriateness of the good for the person who wishes it. The second has to do with the way the good is acquired or achieved. The third has to do with the way the good is held:

In the third mode someone can exceed his proper measure with regard to the way of having {modum habendi}, as when someone fastens to have something over others which it is proper to have on the same basis with others.³⁹

Here, what is condemned is the desire to have more of a thing than others, or to exclude others from having it, when it is the kind of thing that all should have on the same basis. The set of objectionable attitudes comprised under this type of pride is enriched further by Aquinas's reply to an objection to the effect that 'to wish to be seen belongs to vainglory rather than pride'. He answers:

to will to stand out belongs to pride as its consequence: the fourth mode of pride essentially consists in the fact that a man presumes of himself as if he, in some singular way, excels over everyone, and that his heart attends to that excellence.⁴⁰

³⁷ *Moralia sive Expositio in Librum Job* (PL 76. 258) quoted in *ST* II-II q. 162 a. 4 obj. 1 and *Mal.* q. 8 a. 4 obj. 1.

³⁸ *ST* II-II q. 162 a. 4c.: 'ex parte modi habendi, prout excellentior aliquis redditur ex hoc quod aliquod bonum excellentius ceteris possidet. Unde et ex hoc etiam fertur inordinate appetitus in propriam excellentiam. Et secundum hoc sumitur quarta species superbiae, quae est cum aliquis, despectis ceteris, singulariter videri.'

³⁹ *Mal.* q. 8 a. 4c. [31-5]: 'Tertio modo potest aliquid excedere propriam mensuram quantum ad modum habendi, ut scilicet aliquis afficiatur ad habendum aliquid supra ceteros, quod competit sibi similiter habere cum ceteris.'

⁴⁰ *Mal.* q. 8 a. 4c. ad 4: 'quod etiam velle singulariter videri, consequenter ad superbiam pertinet: essentialiter autem quarta species superbiae in hoc consistit quod

These passages provide a set of attitudes and motivations related to pride: to wish to have a good in a more excellent manner than the rest; to wish to be singularly conspicuous; to presume; to wish to have more of a good than others; or to wish to be the exclusive possessor of something. The nuances are many; but if one had to pinpoint the dominating motivation behind pride *modus habendi* one should probably single out the desire to stand out.

The proud person conceives excellence not simply as something derived from the possession of goods, but also as his position relative to others. The extent to which one stands out results from the goods one possesses, but also from the goods possessed by others. If I wish to stand out, I desire not only things for myself but also things for others, for example that they may have less of certain valuable stuff than I have.

One must, however, clarify the nature of Aquinas's critique. Clearly he criticizes the wish for an exclusivity which, if obtained, would deprive other persons of something that ought to be shared. Yet he does not seem to object to the wish for exclusivity except if such wish causes one to misascribe to oneself the exclusive possession of a good.

4.3.2.2 *The Wish to Stand Out and the Dismissal of Others*

There are at least three ways in which the wish to stand out relates to dismissive attitudes:

First, when one wishes to be superior to others, *ipso facto* one wishes that others be inferior to oneself. When pride gives rise to the false belief that one is superior to the others, *ipso facto* it also gives rise to the false belief that others are inferior to oneself.

Second, Aquinas also notes that the defects in other people are often taken as evidence of one's own excellence. To the extent that one desires excellence one may look only at the faults of others in order to improve one's self-image. Saints, however, instead of looking at each other's defects, look at each other's virtues.⁴¹ Aquinas believes that those aspects of other people's behaviour that one takes into consideration constitute a morally relevant choice. In a way, one browses the outside world for elements to nurture with evidence one's own inflated conception of

homo praesumat de se, ac si singulariter omnes excelleret, et ad huiusmodi excellentiam animus eius afficitur'. Translating 'animus' as 'heart', since Aquinas is not referring to the soul but to the affective disposition of a person.

⁴¹ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 3 ad 2.

oneself. In carefully selecting only those facts that back this conception of oneself one intentionally ignores those elements that may refute it.

Third, there is an interesting Aristotelian insight about why those who think themselves worthy of great things, when, in fact, they are not, display dismissive attitudes:

They do this because they are imitating the magnanimous person though they are not really like him. They imitate him where they can; hence they do not do actions expressing virtue, but they despise other people. For the magnanimous person is justified when he despises, since his beliefs are true; but the many despise with no good reason.⁴²

Aristotle argues that people with an unfounded belief that they are worthy of great things despise just as much as the worthy person does. Nevertheless, the person with an unfounded high opinion of himself does not know how to despise correctly, for, lacking virtue, he lacks the knowledge of what or who deserves to be despised. For Aristotle, this dismissive behaviour exemplifies the general behaviour of those who think highly of themselves: they mimic the external behaviour of the genuinely magnanimous.⁴³

4.3.3 Pride and the Others (II): Pride as an Obstacle to Learning from Others

For Aquinas, pride prevents us from gaining knowledge from others. It also prevents us from enjoying the greatness which is not ours; we find it upsetting insofar as it confronts us with our own self-deceit.

Gregory asserts in his *Moralia* and is quoted by Aquinas as saying that ‘A puffed-up mind is a hindrance to truth, for while it swells it overclouds.’⁴⁴ Aquinas cites this quotation to support his view that pride prevents people from gaining knowledge about the truth. This is because the proud person is not willing to subject his intellect to God.⁴⁵ Nor is the proud person willing to learn from fellow human beings.⁴⁶ In this

⁴² *Nic. Eth.* 1124^a 30–^b6.

⁴³ It is important to point out, however, that here Aristotle is not properly speaking about pride, but rather about people who lack the virtues to accompany their good fortune (some lottery winners, for instance).

⁴⁴ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 3 obj. 1 (*PL* 76. 269) ‘Obstaculum namque est veritatis tumor mentis: quia, dum inflat, obnubilat’ (trans. *BF*).

⁴⁵ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 3 ad 1.

⁴⁶ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 3 ad 1: ‘Nor does he deign to learn anything from man, whereas it is written (Eccl. 6: 34): “If thou wilt incline thy ear, thou shalt receive instruction.”’

sense, pride, which aims at excellence, frustrates its very purpose, for in order to learn from others (which is a condition of self-improvement) one must be willing to recognize the superiority of another's knowledge.⁴⁷

Not only does pride make it difficult to gain knowledge of the truth, but it also prevents us from enjoying its possession. 'Because the proud, through delighting in their own excellence, disdain the excellence of truth.'⁴⁸ Gregory, quoted by Aquinas, expresses this as follows: 'the proud, although certain hidden truths be conveyed to their understanding, cannot realize their sweetness: and if they know of them they cannot relish them'.⁴⁹

The argument is that the proud approach truth as a good that may confer upon them a certain aura—'excellence'—which constitutes their true goal. Yet the much brighter aura of truth frustrates the attempt of the proud to stand out. Life offers instances in which we experience something similar to the experience to which Aquinas and Gregory allude. Consider the familiar experience of reading a book on a topic one is writing about. As the pages go by and one realizes that the book is extremely good, the delight of discovering more about one's topic is gradually overshadowed by one's displeasure at finding out how poor one's own work looks in comparison. A similar feeling may be provoked by the sight of a great work of art or a magnificent landscape.

People with an inflated conception of themselves find some things about the outside world (other talented people, truth, beauty) distasteful, for it is a reminder of their real worth. This distaste—one may infer—is twofold: one realizes one's true worth, but one also realizes, perhaps with embarrassment, the extent of one's self-induced delusion. It is the perversion of the role of reason, put to work to the satisfaction of desire, that Aquinas seems to find most hideous about pride. The outside world is distasteful to the proud because it confronts them with their self-deceit.

⁴⁷ So, Augustine argues that pride aims to be uplifting but achieves the opposite effect, because pride rejects subjection to God, and it is only through subjection that one can excel. *CD XIV*. 13, 1.

⁴⁸ *ST II-II* q. 162 a. 3 ad 1: 'Quia superbi, dum delectantur in propria excellentia, excellentiam veritatis fastidiunt.'

⁴⁹ *Moralia*, *PL* 76. 269: 'si secreta quaedam intelligendo percipiunt, et eorum dulcedinem experiri non possunt: et si noverint quomodo sunt, ignorant quomodo sapiunt'.

4.3.4 Pride and the Others (III): Pride and Unwillingness to Submit to Law and Authority

Sometimes rejection of the authority of a person and his law is a consequence of pride. This rejection can be classed as pride when it proceeds from an inordinate desire for excellence leading to the affirmation of one's own excellence in relation to the person(s) who enact(s) the law.

Aquinas's dominant interest when discussing pride is, indeed, its effect on the way human beings relate to law and authority. Consider these three texts:

pride is opposed to humility. Now humility properly regards the subjection of man to God, as stated above. Hence pride properly regards lack of this subjection, in so far as a man raises himself above that *which is appointed to him according to the divine rule or measure* [...] The root of pride is found to consist in man not being, in some way, subject to God and His rule.⁵⁰

But on the part of aversion, pride has extreme gravity, because in other sins man turns away from God either through ignorance or through weakness, or through desire for any other good whatever; whereas pride denotes aversion from God simply through being unwilling to be subject to God and His rule [...] Wherefore aversion from God and His commandments {praeceptis}, which is a consequence as it were in other sins, belongs to pride by its very nature, for its act is the contempt of God. And since that which belongs to a thing by its nature is always of greater weight than that which belongs to it through something else, it follows that pride is the most grievous of sins by its genus, because it exceeds in aversion which is the formal complement of sin.⁵¹

⁵⁰ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 5c.: '[S]uperbia humilitati opponitur. Humilitas autem proprie respicit subiectionem hominis ad Deum, ut supra dictum est. Unde e contrario superbia proprie respicit defectum huius subiectionis: secundum scilicet quod aliquis se extollit supra id quod est sibi preafixum secundum divinam regulam vel mensuram.'

⁵¹ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 6c.: 'Sed ex parte aversionis, superbia habet maximam gravitatem: quia in aliis peccatis homo a Deo avertitur vel propter ignorantiam, vel propter desiderium cuiuscumque alterius boni; sed superbia habet aversionem a Deo ex hoc ipso quod non vult Deo et eius regulae subiici [...] Et ideo averti a Deo et eius praeceptis, quod est quasi consequens in aliis peccatis, per se ad superbia pertinet, cuius actus est Dei contemptus. Et quia id quod est per se, semper est potius eo quod est per aliud, consequens est quod superbia sit gravissimum peccatum secundum suum genus: quia excedit in aversione, quae formaliter complet peccatum.'

if [the sin] is considered as to affection, [then] not always in every sin there is the sin of pride: because not always this [i.e. what is sinful] is done from actual contempt of God or His law.⁵²

These three passages indicate the existence of a close link between pride considered as a specific sin⁵³ and the unwillingness to subject to the authority of God and His law. Yet much remains to be clarified. We must find out what precisely is it that is rejected (4.3.4.1), and why pride (i.e. inordinate desire for excellence) generates this rejection (4.3.4.2).

4.3.4.1 *Unwillingness to Subject to Whom?*

Pride can be present in the unwillingness to be subject to God and His rule, measure, law, or precepts. This lack of subjection to God can also be present in (some) rejection of the authority of (one or many) human superiors.

As the last quoted passage suggests, the rejection of human rule constitutes a case of pride *only* when it is also a case of lack of subjection to divine rule. Yet, in a different passage, it would seem that Aquinas is arguing that *any* rejection of human rule manifests pride, because it *always* implies a transgression of divine rule:

Pride is always contrary to the love of God, inasmuch as the proud man does not subject himself to the divine rule {divinae regulae} as he ought. Sometimes it is also contrary to the love of our neighbour; when, namely, a man sets himself inordinately above his neighbour: and this again is a transgression of the divine rule, which has established order among men, so that one ought to be subject to another.⁵⁴

But this passage does not warrant such an interpretation: pride is present only in the subversion of *the order among men which was established by God*. Nothing in the passage suggests that all *de facto* human rule accords to the divinely instituted order.⁵⁵

⁵² *Mal.* q. 8 a. 2c. [124–7]: ‘si vero consideretur quantum ad affectum, non semper in omni peccato est peccatum superbiae: quia non semper hoc aliquid agitur ex actuali contemptu dei vel legis ipsius’.

⁵³ *ST* I–II q. 84 a. 2c.

⁵⁴ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 5 ad 2: ‘[S]uperbia semper quidem contrariatur dilectioni divinae: inquantum scilicet superbus non se subiicit divinae regulae prout debet. Et quandoque etiam contrariatur dilectioni proximi: inquantum scilicet aliquis inordinate se praefert proximo, aut ab eius subiectione se subtrahit. In quo etiam derogatur divinae regulae, ex qua sunt hominum ordines instituti: prout scilicet unus eorum sub alio esse debet.’

⁵⁵ Yet one may argue that for Aquinas, as far as pride is concerned, what matters is not so much what type of regime one attacks (either divine or civil) but rather what

4.3.4.2 *When is Unwillingness to Subject Oneself to Law and Authority a Case of Pride?*

I will maintain that, for Aquinas, unwillingness to subject to authority and the law is a case of pride only when, in rejecting the law, one is affirming one's own excellence.

Let us go back to the central text of this section:

But on the part of aversion, pride has extreme gravity, because in other sins man turns away from God either through ignorance or through weakness, or through desire for any other good whatever; whereas pride denotes aversion from God {habet aversionem a Deo} simply through being unwilling to be subject to God and His rule {ex hoc ipso quod non vult Deo et eius regulae subiici} [...]. Wherefore aversion from God and His precepts {praeceptis}, which is a consequence as it were in other sins, belongs to pride by its very nature, for its act is the contempt of God. And since that which belongs to a thing by its nature is always of greater weight than that which belongs to it through something else, it follows that pride is the most grievous of sins by its genus, because it exceeds in aversion which is the formal complement of sin.⁵⁶

It will facilitate our understanding if we exemplify the first segment of the passage. Consider theft: someone who desires a thing that belongs to another may steal out of weakness ('it was so easy to do it!'), ignorance (he did not check whether the appropriated item had an owner), or desire for some other good (he decides to steal in order to buy medicine for his ill wife).

But what does it mean to steal 'simply through being unwilling to submit to the law'? Presumably this kind of theft is just a means to instantiate my rejection of the reigning system of laws or the enacting authority.

Engaging in illicit actions in order to convey one's rejection of the law or system of laws that make that particular action illicit is a practice long known in politics. These are symbolic acts which are often used to assert how one feels regarding the law and, principally, regarding the person or group who enacts it. To break the law is often a means of saying, 'I do not recognize the authority of this person or group to enact laws.' This

motivations stand behind this course of action. Insubordination would constitute an act of pride if it is an act of affirmation of the possession of what one knows one lacks (for instance superior understanding about the science of government). It is conceivable that one might rebel against a tyrant out of pride (for instance in the self-deceitful belief that one can oppress the people better than the tyrant does).

⁵⁶ *ST* II-II q. 162 a. 6c.

statement is not only informative about one's beliefs about authority and the law but also about the kind of person one believes oneself to be.

Take the case of a colonel who refuses to carry out his general's order. His insubordination may be an affirmation of this view: 'I am not inferior to the general.'⁵⁷ The insubordination on the part of the colonel is caused by beliefs not only about the lack of competence of the general but also about his own skills and virtues. The colonel may believe, for example, that he is more able in directing soldiers in war. Insubordination is, in a sense, a show of force, which may be backed by real strength or may just be a bluff. If the soldiers refuse to follow the colonel the mismatch between his self-attributed strength and his real strength will be all too evident. Reality sometimes makes apparent the gap between self-ascribed power and real power (soldiers refusing to carry out Ceaușescu's orders, for example).

The examples of theft and insubordination are intended to make these points: illicit acts that question the system of law or the authority of the person(s) who enact(s) them are acts of pride *if*

- (i) they are affirmations of one's non-subordination to the legislating authority;
- (ii) they are a means to affirm one's excellence by misattributing some good or capacity to oneself.

4.4 CONFORMITY OF WILLS REVISITED

This chapter opened by pointing to two challenges to the requirement of conformity of wills. We are now in a position to dispel these misgivings.

The first challenge stems from Aquinas's criticism of unwillingness to conform one's will to that of others.⁵⁸ Would not the abandonment of one's will and adoption of that of a different person amount to an abandonment of one's own judgement?

⁵⁷ Public authorities (which are the only ones who can judge or appoint judges) are considered superior with respect to those who fall under its *potestas*. *ST* II-II q. 67 a. 1c.: 'Coercive power is not exercised in human affairs, save by those who hold public authority: and those who have this authority are accounted the superiors of those over whom they preside[.]' Thus, to submit to the judgement or law of somebody is to concede a certain type of superiority.

⁵⁸ For example, Aquinas's criticism of the person who decides to believe only *some* things of those taught by Christ, discussed in Sect. 2.3, above. Cf. *ST* II-II q. 5 a. 3c.; *Ver.* q. 14 a. 10 ad 10; *Car.* q. un. a. 13 ad 6; *III Sent.* d. 23 q. 3 a. 3 qu. 2 obj. 2; sol. 2 ad 2.

This challenge is founded on a misunderstanding about the nature of Aquinas's criticism of the person who sticks to his own will. Aquinas does not criticize the person who sticks to his own will because he finds the views of others to be faulty. Rather, his criticism is directed against the person who sticks to his own will as a means to convey to others that he is not inferior to them. Acting in this way is against reason when such a person affirms an excellence which in fact he does not possess.⁵⁹

The second challenge is that, granted that conformity of wills is a condition of friendship, this requirement does not pose any obligations for a person prior to his (voluntary) entering into ties of friendship.

We now know that friendship requires a certain predisposition, prior to establishing the relationship, which makes it possible for individuals to build ties of friendship. This predisposition can be defined as a readiness to join action with other people, despite not being ourselves the initiators of such course of action. To be so predisposed, one's judgement must be capable of resisting becoming an instrument for the delusive satisfaction of one's desires of grandeur.

The analysis carried out in this chapter enables us to approach the requirement of conformity of wills from a new perspective. What this requirement amounts to is a certain readiness to be able to cooperate with others without our pride getting in the way. Admittedly, when we formulate the requirement thus, the importance of the questions discussed in the previous chapter concerning the extent to which our wills must conform in order to meet the requirement of conformity of wills becomes less prominent.

4.5 THE LAW AS A CURE FOR PRIDE

'It is easier to write against pride than to overcome it,' says Quevedo.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the situation is not hopeless: beyond a certain point pride can be avoided:

⁵⁹ What if he does possess this excellence? Is then the affirmation of it objectionable? Clearly it is objectionable if the means chosen to convey this excellence is discord. Yet proclamations of truly possessed excellence are normally considered presumptuous, even when they do not use discord as a means to convey it. On presumption as overconfidence about what is uncertain, see Ch. 5.

⁶⁰ Francisco de Quevedo, *Virtud Militante contra las cuatro pestes del mundo, invidia, ingratitud, soberbia, avarizia*, ed. Alfonso Rey (Santiago de Compostela: Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 1985 c.1634), 132 (my trans.).

it is difficult to avoid a sin, on account of it being hidden. In this way it is difficult to avoid pride, since it takes occasion even from good deeds, as stated. Hence Augustine says pointedly that it 'lies in wait for good deeds'; and it is written: 'In the way wherein I walked the proud have hidden a snare for me.' Hence no very great gravity attaches to the movement of pride while creeping in secretly and before it is discovered by the judgement of reason: but once discovered by reason it is easily avoided.⁶¹

It can be avoided by considering facts such as 'one's own infirmity', 'God's greatness', and 'the imperfection of the goods of which man prides himself'.⁶²

Whatever the effectiveness of Aquinas's cure, it remains that for Aquinas it is possible *to an extent* to avoid pride. It is possible to avoid it when it acquires the characteristics of a grave sin. And it becomes a grave sin precisely when the judgement of reason puts us in a position to do something about it.

But the passage above goes beyond declaring the avoidability of pride. It takes up the idea that there are certain facts about the world which allow us either to modify or to perpetuate and strengthen our perception of ourselves. According to Aquinas one has the capacity to prioritize groups of facts and so to validate particular images of oneself.

Humility (one of the permanent foundations of the order of virtues which, in a way, resembles a building)⁶³ requires keeping in mind those facts that permit an adjusted conception of oneself ('adjusting facts'): for example, knowledge of one's faults.⁶⁴ In the same breath Aquinas points

⁶¹ *ST* II-II q.162 a. 6 ad 1: 'Et hoc modo superbiam difficile est vitare, quia etiam ex ipsis bonis occasionem sumit, ut dictum est. Et ideo signanter Augustinus dicit quod bonis operibus insidiatur et in Psalmo dicitur, "in via hac qua ambulabam, absconderunt superbi laqueum mihi". Et ideo motus superbiae occulte subrepens non habet maximam gravitatem, antequam per iudicium rationis deprehendatur. Sed postquam deprehensus fuerit per rationem, tunc facile evitatur.'

⁶² *ST* II-II q.162 a. 6 ad 1. This view is popular in many different ethical traditions. 'Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said "the thunder was created only to straighten the distortions in the heart".' Talmud Babli, Seder Zera'im, Brakhot, ⁵⁹a.

⁶³ *ST* II-II q. 161 a. 5 ad 2.

⁶⁴ *ST* II-II q. 161 a. 2c. In *ST* II-II q. 161 a. 3 ad 2 Aquinas cites the gloss on St Paul's statement 'Esteem others better than themselves' (Phil. 2: 3): 'We must not esteem by pretending to esteem; but we should in truth think it possible for another person to have something that is hidden to us and whereby he is better than we are, although our own good whereby we are apparently better than he, be not hidden' (*PL* 192. 232). 'Non hoc ita debemus aestimare ut nos aestimare fingamus; sed vere aestimemus posse aliquid esse occultum in alio quo nobis superior sit, etiam si bonus nostrum, quo illo videmur superiores esse, non sit occultum.'

out that one should not stoop to an equally mistaken self-abasement: 'as when a man, not realizing his own honour, compares himself with yoked animals and becomes like them'.⁶⁵

4.6 HUMAN INSTITUTIONS AND PRIDE

A person who satisfies an undue desire for excellence by resorting to the misascription of goods would have trouble joining most sorts of communities. He would dismiss the ideas of others and refuse to take part in their projects if that would reflect badly on his self-perceived excellence. He would be unable to participate in a constructive exchange of ideas since learning from others would be to admit inferiority. Most serious of all, he would be unwilling to submit to the law and authority since doing so means, again, admitting inferiority to the person or persons who rule.

Can law do anything to reduce the levels of pride in a community? We have previously seen that for Aquinas there are certain facts that, when taken into consideration, allow us to correct our appraisal of ourselves. For instance, someone who wrongly ascribes to himself an excellent moral status may be able to correct this view by paying attention to his moral shortcomings.

Aquinas thinks that law is a fact of the kind that allows the proud to correct their assessment of themselves. In other words, law is the mirror in which one can measure oneself and correct whatever distortions one may have indulged in in order to satisfy one's desire for excellence. The standards set by law allow us to become aware of our own faults.

This line of thought is embraced by Aquinas when discussing the question: 'Why was the written law given only in Moses' time?' He starts by noting that

every law is imposed on two kinds of men. Because it is imposed on some men who are hard-hearted and *proud*, whom the law restrains and tames {duris et superbis, qui per legem compescuntur et domantur}, and it is imposed on good men, who, through being instructed by the law, are helped to fulfil what they desire to do.

He then argues that

⁶⁵ ST II-II q. 161 a. 1 ad 1, quoting Ps. 48: 13.

it was fitting that the Law should be given at such a time as would be appropriate for the overcoming of man's pride [...] Wherefore, after those times [Abraham's], it was necessary for a written law to be given as a remedy for human ignorance: because 'by the Law is the knowledge of sin' (Rom. 3:20). But, after man had been instructed by the Law, his pride was convinced of his weakness, through his being unable to fulfill what he knew.⁶⁶

There is no reason to assume that this statement restricts itself to the salutary effect of divine law on the proud. Conceivably, other types of law exert this salutary effect as well.⁶⁷ While knowing the divine law made humans aware of the deficiency of their knowledge with regard to salvation, other types of law may make humans aware of their limitations and faults in other respects. The premiss is that pride is removed by knowledge of oneself. Law, which by its nature is publicly available,⁶⁸ allows us to gain knowledge of ourselves and our shortcomings.

What are we comparing ourselves with when we measure ourselves by the standards set by the law? If we think about human law, these standards would be the norms accepted by a community of rational beings.

Not only does law contain standards to measure oneself, it also compels us to take these in account: if we overlook law we are forcibly reminded of its being there by the judge and the punishment inflicted.⁶⁹ This view generates a further challenge: Aquinas earlier had argued that to acknowledge the law constitutes already an act of humility inasmuch as by doing so one recognizes the superiority of the legislator. How can a proud person ever come to acknowledge the falseness of his self-appraisal if he rejects the standards set by the law as the correct standards by which to judge himself?

⁶⁶ *ST* I–II q. 98 a. 6c.: 'Cuius ratio potest accipi ex duobus, secundum quod quaelibet lex duobus generibus hominum imponitur. Imponitur enim quibusdam duris et superbis, qui per legem compescuntur et domantur, imponitur etiam bonis, qui, per legem instructi, adiuvantur ad implendum quod intendunt. [...] conveniens igitur fuit tali tempore legem veterem dari, ad superbiam hominum convincendam. [...] et ideo post haec tempora fuit necessarium legem scriptam dari in remedium humanae ignorantiae, quia per legem est cognitio peccati, ut dicitur rom. iii. Sed postquam homo est instructus per legem, convicta est eius superbia de infirmitate, dum implere non poterat quod cognoscebat.'

⁶⁷ Especially if one takes into consideration that for Aquinas the 'Old Law' contained, apart from moral and ceremonial precepts, judicial precepts governing interpersonal relationships and setting forth a political constitution.

⁶⁸ *ST* I–II q. 90 a. 4c.

⁶⁹ *ST* I–II q. 90 a. 3 ad 2; q. 96 a. 5c. Cf. Finnis, *Aquinas*, 222 n. 20.

Aquinas has an optimistic answer to this question. He justifies the fact that the law was only given during Moses' time, because among other reasons,⁷⁰

man was proud of two things, viz. of knowledge and of power. He was proud of his knowledge, as though his natural reason could suffice him for salvation: and accordingly, in order that his pride might be overcome in this matter, man was left to the guidance of his reason without the help of a written law: and man was able to learn from experience that his reason was deficient, since about the time of Abraham man had fallen headlong into idolatry and the most shameful vices.⁷¹

The optimism rests upon the conviction that the person who believes himself to be capable of being a law unto himself because he wrongly attributes to himself this or that quality (or thinks that the qualities that he truly possesses are sufficient) is confronted with the falseness of his self-assessment by experience itself.

The core idea is that the experience that shows us most powerfully that we have made too much of ourselves is failure. It is failure that compelled proud men to realize their limitations with respect to knowledge about salvation. Failure compels us to reconsider the beliefs we have about ourselves. In Aquinas's view, some experiences have the power to make us realize the need to accept law, and some human beings must go through these experiences in order to embrace it willingly.

But is Aquinas's optimism justified? It seems that we cannot really be sure that every or even most proud persons will be eventually confronted by failure with the falseness of their beliefs about themselves.

4.7 SUMMARY

The argument that emerges from the reconstruction of Aquinas's thought up to now is as follows:

⁷⁰ Among the other reasons: law belongs only to free peoples, but until Moses' times Israel was either not numerous enough to be called a people, or enslaved. *ST* I–II q. 98 a. 6 ad 2.

⁷¹ *ST* I–II q. 98 a. 6c.: 'De duobus enim homo superbiebat, scilicet de scientia, et de potentia. De scientia quidem, quasi ratio naturalis ei posset sufficere ad salutem. Et ideo ut de hoc eius superbia convinceretur permissus est homo regimini suae rationis absque adminiculo legis scriptae, et experimento homo discere potuit quod patiebatur rationis defectum, per hoc quod homines usque ad idololatriam et turpissima vitia circa tempora Abrahae sunt prolapsi.'; ad 1.

- (i) Some people will to prevent the conformity of wills which is a requirement of friendship.
- (ii) Insofar as this falls within the sin of discord, the motivations behind it are: (a) undue manifestation of one's own excellence (vainglory) and (b) misascription of goods in order to satisfy the desire for excellence (pride).
- (iii) Pride moves us to avoid acting in ways that would imply admitting the superior excellence of another, for instance, (a) submitting to law and authority, (b) learning from another, (c) joining the wills (i.e. their projects, paths of action, etc.) of other people when we are not ourselves the initiators of these projects, paths of action, etc.
- (iv) In view of (c) it is possible to interpret the requirement of 'conformity of wills' as a property of individuals which is logically prior to the constitution of their social links: *the readiness to join others in their wills (projects, paths of action, etc.) even when this undermines one's self-perceived excellence*. This allows us to save the principle of 'conformity of wills' from the objections marshalled against it in the introduction.
- (v) There are certain facts in the world that allow us to adjust the beliefs we have about ourselves.
- (vi) Law is one such fact.

5

Friendship and Uncertainty: Presumptions and Hope

As established in Chapter 3, for Aquinas the reality of friendship is conditional on the friend's will because friendship requires some conformity of wills between the friends. This chapter considers two different sources of the uncertainty that—according to Aquinas—surrounds the operations of others' wills:

1. The human heart cannot be scrutinized by other human beings.¹
2. We have no certain knowledge of future singular contingents. Future operations of others' wills are singular and contingent.²

Aquinas's account of the uncertainty surrounding present and future operation of the will is complex and contains a number of difficulties. For the purposes of this chapter it suffices to agree that, for Aquinas, we do not have direct access to other people's wills, nor can we forecast with certainty what other people will will.

What other people will, now and in the future, is something to be taken into account in many sorts of practical reasoning. Can I trust this

¹ 'The heart of man is perverse and inscrutable, who can know it? I am the Lord who searches the heart, and proves the reins: who gives to everyone according to his way.' Jer. 17: 9–10 quoted in *ST* I q. 57 a. 4 sc.; *ST* III q. 59 a. 2 obj. 3; *Ver.* q. 8 a. 4 sc. 8.

² *ST* I q. 94 a. 3c.: 'those things which cannot be known by merely human effort, and which are not necessary for the direction of human life, were not known by the first man; such as the thoughts of men, future contingent events, and some individual facts, as for instance the number of pebbles in a stream; and the like'. Cf. *ST* I q. 94 a. 4 obj. 5; ad 5. We have *some* knowledge of the future: 'Forasmuch as it [the future] exists in its cause, the future can be known by us also. And if, indeed, the cause be such as to have a necessary connection with its future result, then the future is known with scientific certitude, just as the astronomer foresees the future eclipse. If, however, the cause be such as to produce a certain result more frequently than not, then the future can be known more or less conjecturally [per quamdam conjecturam vel magis vel minus certam], according as its cause is more or less inclined to produce the effect.' *ST* I q. 86 a. 4c.

person? Is this a person with whom I should cooperate? In the absence of some way to overcome the problem posed by uncertainty, practical reasoning would not be able to proceed to its conclusion.

This chapter has two sections. Section 5.1 discusses the presumption of authenticity³ as a possible device to overcome the problem posed by uncertainty about others' *present wills*. Section 5.2 discusses hope as an aid to overcome the problem posed by uncertainty about others' *future wills*. Both these sections also explore the relationships between self-love and self-assessment that are presupposed by hope and the presumption of authenticity.

This chapter argues that Aquinas thinks that in the absence of evidence to the contrary we should presume that other persons' communicational acts reflect their will. He also thinks that hope, in being an aid to the motion of the will, reduces the uncertainty surrounding the attainment of one's goal. This goal can be the common goal that animates a particular friendship. Therefore, hope, in making the goal appear feasible, indirectly enhances the prospects of the persistence of friendship.

This chapter also argues that for Aquinas both the presumption of authenticity and the habit of hope presuppose a certain degree of modesty.

5.1 PRESENT FRIENDSHIP AND THE PRESUMPTION OF AUTHENTICITY

5.1.1 Rules of Presumption and Their Use in Friendship: '*de quolibet praesumendum est bonum, nisi probetur contrarium*'

Friendship is one of the varieties of social relations, the reality of which depends on certain operations of the will. Assessing friendship's reality requires knowledge of certain facts about the other person's feelings, intentions, beliefs. Yet this cannot be known directly or with certainty. Since friendship is a good, and it allows us to achieve other goods, uncertainty translates into risk.

³ John Finnis uses the term 'authenticity' in a narrow, technical way, to signify the 'harmony between one's judgements and one's behaviour, which [when taken together with inner integrity] we can call *practical reasonableness*', in 'Is Natural Law Theory Compatible with Limited Government?', in R. P. George (ed.), *Natural Law, Liberalism, and Morality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 4. In my treatment I mean by authenticity the more general harmony between behaviour (including communicational behaviour) and wills, feelings, intentions, and judgements.

It is tempting to detect here a case which would call for the invocation of the concept of hope: we can say that we 'hope' that present friendships are real. Yet this would not be a conventional use of Aquinas's concept of hope (hope is for *future* things).⁴ Instead, I will approach the problem posed by the uncertainty about the present wills of others by examining Aquinas's discussion of the use of rules of presumption. Aquinas proposes a rule of presumption that can be formulated thus: 'in the absence of contrary evidence presume that persons mean what they say'. I will call this a 'presumption of authenticity'.

Rules of presumption are best known in their legal versions. Some examples of legal presumptions are 'that a child born during a lawful wedlock is legitimate; that a person who, without reasonable explanation, has not been heard from for at least seven years is dead; that a marriage regularly solemnized is valid; that a child under fourteen years of age has no criminal intention'.⁵

In an illuminating article Edna Ullmann-Margalit provides an examination of presumption by looking at the way in which rules of presumption are employed in legal matters. She points out that a rule of presumption 'is concerned not so much with *ascertaining* the facts as with *proceeding* on them, as its rule interpretation brings out. Presumption rules belong to the realm of praxis, not theory.'⁶ In other words, a rule of presumption has the form: 'if conditions *p* apply you shall proceed as if *q*' (when *q* is a factual state).⁷ She insists that a rule of presumption is not an inference; when I act upon it I am not making any claim as to the truth value of *q* itself.⁸

Aquinas expressly resorts to a rule of presumption to overcome the difficulty posed by the inaccessibility to the wills of others. Consider the following texts:

[objection]

Further, the mental consent {consensus mentalis} of one person cannot be known to another, except in so far as it is expressed in words. If then the expression of words is not enough, and inward consent is required in both parties, neither of them will be able to know that he is truly married {si vero

⁴ ST I-II q. 40 a 1c.; *Spe* q. un. a 1c. See discussion in n. 49, below.

⁵ E. Ullmann-Margalit, 'On Presumption', *Journal of Philosophy*, 80 (1983), 144-5.

⁶ Ibid. 147 (her italics). ⁷ Ibid.

⁸ 'the presumption rule involves no commitment to, nor guarantee of, the truth value of the presumed fact *q*. It makes no claims upon its subjects' cognitive or epistemic systems. The rule entitles one to hold *q* as true for the purpose of concluding one's practical deliberation on the impending issue; it neither requires nor entitles one to believe that *q*.' Ibid. 149.

conjunct to the other; and consequently whenever he uses marriage he will commit fornication.⁹

[reply]

If mental consent is lacking in one of the parties, on neither side is there marriage, since marriage consists in a mutual joining together, as stated above {mutua conjunctio} (*ST Suppl.* q. 44 a.1c.). However, one may believe that in all probability {probabiliter} there is no fraud {dolus non esse} unless there be evident signs thereof {signa evidentiæ doli appareant}; *because we must presume good of everyone, unless there be proof of the contrary*. Consequently the party in whom there is no fraud is excused from sin on account of ignorance.¹⁰

Some of the general features of presumption as analysed by Ullmann-Margalit seem to be present in this passage from Aquinas. The question with which Aquinas is concerned is a practical question and one of legal and moral connotations: interior consent is necessary for making intercourse licit, yet one cannot know with certainty whether interior consent to marry is actually there. There is a rule of presumption in place, which says: 'when there is express exterior consent one is entitled to proceed as if there was interior consent too' (and as a consequence, in the case discussed, as if the marriage is real).¹¹ This could be generalized into a rule of presumption which governs the realm of *conversatio*, the typical activity of friends:¹² 'in the absence of evidence to the contrary, believe that other persons are not lying'. This rule of presumption, in turn, derives from the more general rule invoked by Aquinas: 'de quolibet praesumendum est bonum, nisi probetur contrarium', 'good is to be presumed of everyone unless the contrary is proved'.¹³ It is important

⁹ *ST Suppl.* q. 45 a. 4 obj. 2 (= *IV Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 2 qu. 4 obj. 2): 'Praeterea, assensus mentalis alterius non potest esse alicui notus, nisi quatenus per verba exprimitur. Si ergo expressio verborum non sufficit, sed consensus interior requiritur in utroque conjugum; tunc neuter poterit scire de altero an sit ei verus conjux; et ita erit fornicator quandocumque matrimonio utetur.'

¹⁰ *ST Suppl.* q. 45 a. 4 ad 2. 'Ad secundum dicendum, quod si desit consensus mentalis ex parte unius, ex neutra parte est matrimonium: quia matrimonium consistit in mutua conjunctione, ut dictum est. Tamen probabiliter potest credi dolus non esse, nisi signa evidentiæ doli appareant: quia de quolibet est praesumendum bonum, nisi probetur contrarium; unde ille ex cuius parte dolus non est, a peccato excusatur per ignorantiam.'

¹¹ If there are grounds to presume that matrimonial consent is a product of coercion the matrimony may not be valid *in foro Ecclesiae*. *ST Suppl.* q. 47 a. 3c.

¹² The span of meanings of *conversatio* is very wide: it conveys dialogue, social intercourse, business, and interchange.

¹³ *IV Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 2 sol. 3 ad 2; d. 15 q. 2 a. 5 sol. 3 obj. 1; ad 1. Also d. 32 q. 1 a. 2 sol. 1 ad 2; *ST II-II* q. 70 a. 3 obj. 2, ad 2; *Quodl.* I q. 8 a. 2 obj. 1 (about presuming good intentions of prelates); *In Ioann.* [421] [lines 476–8] in v. 2: 24: 'It is

to note that the use of this rule of presumption is not unconditional. If harm or violation of rights {iniuria} is likely to result from applying the rule, then the rule should not be applied. For instance, in trials we may rule out the reliability of some witnesses (e.g. relatives and people who are employed by or otherwise dependent on the accused) without needing to prove that they lie. Aquinas argues that the rule of presumption should be used 'provided this does not threaten injury to another: because, in that case, one ought to be careful not to believe everyone'.¹⁴

What can we learn from the example of matrimony about the use of this rule of presumption in friendship? Matrimony is for Aquinas a kind of friendship.¹⁵ Like all friendship, matrimony requires certain acts of the will on the part of the person who, we presume, is a friend. But these acts we cannot know. We cannot just sit and wait for an accumulation of evidence such as would cast out all doubt. This will not happen—and where do we draw the line anyway? So we presume that the friend's communicational acts (which are not restricted to verbal acts)¹⁶ convey his actual intention.

From this perspective, friendship and other sorts of human cooperation resemble a 'working thesis', a conjecture we act upon, the validity of which is subject to review. The validity of the presumption may never be totally confirmed but it gains credibility as evidence in its favour accumulates.

Friendship is not simply a state of affairs, but involves a past history. This past history allows us to assess the meaning and reliability of each item of new evidence. As Aquinas argues in commenting on Aristotle:

conceded that a man in lack of knowledge has to presume good of everyone; however, after the truth about someone becomes known, man has to relate to them according to their condition.'

¹⁴ *ST* II–II q. 70 a. 3 ad 2.

¹⁵ Matrimony is essentially a *conjunctio* importing an *adunatio* (order to a goal). In this respect it is similar to every friendship or community (*IV Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 1c. = *ST Suppl.* q. 44 a. 1c.). Like all friendships, it involves a *conversatio* ordered to that which is the shared ground and goal of the relationship: 'vita conjugalitatis nihil est aliud quam conversatio ad communicationem talem pertinens' (*IV Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 3 ad 3 = *ST Suppl.* q. 44 a. 3 ad 3). Matrimony, however, differs from other friendships and communities in at least three respects: (a) on account of its goals: procreation and education of offspring and 'una vita domestica' (*IV Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 1c.); (b) it requires an especially lasting bond given the nature of the goals sought after; (c) unlike other friendships it is also a sacrament, that is, a 'sign of a holy thing so far as it makes human beings holy' expressed by words (*ST* III q. 60 a. 2c.; 6c.). For this reason (but not for this reason only) marriage extends to only one person at a time.

¹⁶ Cf. *ST Suppl.* q. 64 a. 2c. on non-verbal signals of the wife which the husband may not legitimately choose to ignore.

we do not immediately believe whatever we hear about a friend, but tend to dismiss anything that contradicts what has been confirmed by the evidence accumulated along many years of experienced friendship.¹⁷

Let us turn again to ‘de quolibet praesumendum est bonum, nisi probetur contrarium’. This rule has the air of a worn adage but, in fact, it was not regularly—or even occasionally—employed in the patristic literature.¹⁸ The following three subsections focus on different aspects of this rule of presumption: (5.1.1) its justification; (5.1.2) its proper subject matter; and (5.1.3) its connection with the relation between self-love and self-assessment.

5.1.2 Why Think Well of Others?: ‘*aliud est judicare de rebus, et aliud de hominibus*’

Why think well of others? To answer this question we must look at the kinds of considerations that can be invoked to justify a rule of presumption.

When we use a rule of presumption ‘we are deliberately putting the thumb on one side of the scale to begin with’.¹⁹ What considerations lead us to tip the balance in one direction rather than the other? Ullmann-Margalit proposes three criteria: inductive-probabilistic considerations, value-related considerations, and procedural considerations.²⁰ Probability considerations may seem, for Aquinas, unlike for Ullmann-Margalit, to be the central element in the rule of presumption under consideration: ‘However one may believe that in all probability {probabiliter} there

¹⁷ *Eth.* VIII. 4 [1592]: ‘Moreover, it is only the friendship of good people that is immune to slander. For it is hard to trust anyone speaking against someone whom we ourselves have found reliable for a long time; and among good people there is trust, the belief that he would never do injustice [to a friend], and all the other things expected in a true friendship.’

¹⁸ According to the editors of the Leonine edition, Aquinas is quoting Lib. II Tit. 23, *De Praesumptionibus*, ch. 10 ‘*Dudum*’ from the Decretals of Gregorius IX. Yet one cannot find Aquinas’s words in ‘*Dudum*’ (which is actually ch. 16). There is however a reminiscent formulation, it is said of the witness that ‘*prima facie praesumitur idoneus, nisi aliud contrarium ostendatur*’. *Decretalis D. Gregorii Papae IX* (Turin: Nicolaum Beauilaquam, 1621 c.1234), 79. For the critical edition see Raymond of Peñafort, *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, ed. E. Friedberg and E. Richter (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1881), ii, 359. No formulation close to Aquinas’s appears in *PL*. Discussion of the presumption of innocence did not, however, start with Aquinas: see R. M. Franer, ‘“Ut nullus describatur reus prius quam convincatur”’: Presumption of Innocence in Medieval Canon Law?’, in S. Kuttner and K. Pennington (eds.), *Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Medieval Canon Law* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1985), 493–506.

¹⁹ Ullmann-Margalit, ‘On Presumption’, 146.

²⁰ *Ibid.* 157.

is no fraud {credi dolus non esse} unless there be evident signs thereof {signa evidētia doli appareant}.' On closer inspection, the overriding consideration which justifies presuming good things of others is not probabilistic. Note that 'probably there is no fraud' is the contents of belief that we are asked to adopt, rather than a ground for its adoption.

This becomes clear in his discussion of a close but different rule of presumption advanced in his discussion of the principles of procedural justice: 'unless we have evident indications of a person's wickedness, we ought to deem him good, by interpreting for the best whatever is doubtful about him'.²¹

In response to the objection that 'it would seem that doubts should not be interpreted for the best, because we should judge from what happens for the most part. But it happens for the most part that evil is done ...', Aquinas writes:

[H]e who interprets doubtful matters for the best, may happen to be deceived more often than not; yet it is better to err frequently through thinking well of a wicked man, than to err less frequently through having an evil opinion of a good man, because in the latter case an injury is inflicted, but not in the former.²²

Aquinas looks at the judge as a moral agent placed in a position from which he is especially capable of producing harm. One can draw on the contrast with a mineralogist, whose task is to determine when a particular rock contains a particular mineral, and to apply the most statistically successful method to determine this (allowing in the process for a percentage of mistakes). Aquinas says: 'It is one thing to judge

²¹ *ST* II-II q. 60 a. 4c.: 'Et ideo ubi non apparent manifesta indicia de malitia alicujus, debemus eum ut bonum habere, in meliorem partem interpretando quod dubium est.' The *sed contra* quotes the gloss on Rom. 14: 3: 'dubia in meliorem partem sunt interpretanda'. The text in *Biblia Latina cum Glossa Ordinaria*, ed. Adolph Rusch of Strassburg (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992 c.1480/1) iv. 302, reads a bit differently: 'Sed ea quae dubium est, quo animo fiant, in meliorem partem interpretamur' [as it appears also in Peter Lombard (*PL* 191. 1512)]. Also St Augustine, *De Sermonē Domini in Monte*, *PL* 34. 1241. Cf. Finnis, *Aquinas*, 137.

²² *ST* II-II q. 60 a. 4 ad 1: 'potest contingere quod ille qui in meliorem partem interpretatur, frequentius fallitur; sed melior est quod aliquis frequenter fallatur habens bonam opinionem de aliquo malo homine, quam quod rarius fallatur habens malam opinionem de aliquo homine bono; quia ex hoc fit iniuria alicui, non autem ex primo'. This brings to mind Ullmann-Margalit's view that value considerations may outweigh probabilistic considerations: 'Even if it turns out that most of the people in this class [either all human beings, or those accused of criminal offences] are actually guilty of the crimes attributed to them, the presumption in favour of proceeding as if the person charged is innocent may nevertheless be retained and defended; it may fly in the face of probabilistic consideration' ('On Presumption', 158).

of things and another to judge of human beings'; 'aliud est iudicare de rebus, et aliud de hominibus'.²³ The difference between the two cases is that it does not make any difference to a rock what we assert of it, while it makes a world of a difference to a human being what we think of him, 'for he is deemed worthy of honour from the very fact that he is judged to be good, and deserving of contempt if he is judged to be evil'. Since the good of a human being is affected (unlike the 'good of rocks') by the way we judge him, a misjudgement in one direction has not the same weight as a misjudgement in the other; one produces harm and the other does not. The judge's duty to avoid harming others takes precedence over his duty to discover the truth about those being judged. The mineralogist has only the latter kind of duty. The judge's duty to avoid harming people is not a direct result of his being a judge but, rather, a result of his being a moral agent placed in a position from which he can inflict more harm than most of us can.

Note further that the judge's duty not to harm others does not proceed from a general principle of avoiding allowing harm to come into existence. It could be maintained that, in failing to convict two criminals in order to set free one innocent, the judge may be allowing more harm to society than he would had he convicted the three men. A question of rights is at stake: *iniuria* connotes not just harm but harm connected to the violation of a right ('ius'). Arguably the judge is not allowed to maximize utility by infringing the rights of the suspect (although he can infringe rights in exceptional urgent cases).²⁴ To conclude, for Aquinas, the reason one should think well of others is to avoid harming them or violating their rights.

5.1.3 The Subject Matter of Presumptions: Acts or Beliefs?

Do the presumptions that 'de quolibet praesumendum est bonum, nisi probetur contrarium' and 'dubia sunt ad meliorem partem interpretanda' instruct us as to what to do or (also) about what to believe? To answer this question I will concentrate on the latter rule of presumption while making occasional references to the former.

There are at least four plausible interpretations of Aquinas's answer to this question. The rule of presumption applies to:

²³ *ST* II-II q. 60 a. 4 ad 2.

²⁴ 'No man ought to despise or in any way injure another man *without compelling reason*.' *ST* II-II q. 60 a. 4c.

- (1) beliefs, and, as a consequence, actions;
- (2) only to actions;
- (3) those beliefs that accompany only a particular kind of action (those which can produce harm);
- (4) to both beliefs and actions, inasmuch as in both ways we exercise a kind of disposition that we must have towards others.

(1) *The rule of presumption applies to beliefs, and, as a consequence, to actions.* Note that in the passage about marriage Aquinas says: 'However, one may *believe* that in all probability there is no fraud ...'. What matters in the example of marriage is not just what you do (or what a third party allows you to do) but whether you are acting rightly or wrongly.²⁵ The morality of the act is determined not only by what you do, but also by what beliefs you have when you do what you do. Therefore, in this interpretation, the rule of presumption instructs us not just about what we can legitimately do but about what we must believe in order for the act to be legitimate. Rules of presumption used by an agent interested in doing what is morally right (and not just what he is allowed to do by a third party) instruct him not only to act 'as if *q*' but also to believe that *q*. It is important to stress that one should not get oneself to believe that *q* in order that the act resulting from this belief be right (for instance, I should not presume that a bag has no owner in order to make my appropriation of it licit). One should interpret doubts to the advantage of the other, not to advance one's own project (in the example, the project of preserving the self-perceived rightness of my actions).

That the rule of presumption instructs us as to what to believe is confirmed by Aquinas's striking affirmation that 'from the very fact that a man has a bad opinion of another {habet malam opinionem de alio} without sufficient cause, he injures and despises him'.²⁶ Aquinas here does not condemn actions but condemns, simply, the *having of the opinion* (whether we express this opinion or not).

(2) *The rule of presumption applies only to acts.* Since, for Aquinas, what justifies the rule of presumption is primarily to avoid harming others,²⁷ it must be the case that this rule of presumption extends *only* to

²⁵ Compare with Ullmann-Margalit for whom rules of presumption instruct their subjects to 'proceed as if *p*' rather than to 'believe that *p*'. Ullmann-Margalit, 'On Presumption', 147.

²⁶ *ST* II-II q. 60 a. 4c.

²⁷ The secondary reason is avoidance of contempt for others.

acts for only acts can harm others, not thoughts or beliefs.²⁸ Thus when Aquinas speaks about the potential harm of 'opinions' he must mean 'publicly expressed opinions or judgements', that is, communicational acts. This interpretation is strengthened by the fact that Aquinas's discussion of presumption of innocence occurs within his treatment of justice, and justice concerns only *exterior* acts *ad alterum*.²⁹

One problem with the view extracted from this reading is that, if we have a rule about what to say and not about what to think, we may have to say things we do not believe in order not to harm others.

(3) *The rule of presumption applies to the beliefs that accompany only a particular kind of act (those which can produce harm).* This is, broadly speaking, Cajetan's interpretation. Cajetan does not say that the rule of presumption is *only* about actions. Instead, he argues that the rule of presumption becomes active only when the action of judging becomes necessary.³⁰ When this happens we must not simply judge for the best, but think for the best as well; otherwise we would be lying. But we are not required to think for the best when no judgement is necessary. It is the need to pass judgement that 'activates' my obligation to think for the best (and pass judgement for the best). It is better to have false beliefs now and then (although this is a bad thing, and—all other things being equal—should be avoided) than to harm others. We must restrict the instances of justified false belief to the minimum: only to those instances in which false belief is strictly necessary in order not to harm others. In all other cases one should think in an unbiased way: for instance, 'it is possible that John is lying and also possible that he is not'.³¹ This

²⁸ Francisco de Vitoria provides a nice argument for the case that beliefs *as such* (that is, non-expressed opinions) can harm others. He argues that *fama* (reputation, good name) is a good much more precious than money. But *fama* is nothing but the opinion that other persons have of me. If a man has a (false) bad opinion of me, that very fact takes away part of my *fama*. Since the good of being estimated by others is my good, you are harming me if you, by not estimating me in your mind, lessen that good. The same applies, according to de Vitoria, to the good of honour. *De Justitia* (2.2 qq. 57–66), ed. Vicente Beltrán de Heredia (Madrid: Publicaciones de la Asociación Francisco de Vitoria, 1934) vol. i in q. 60 a. 3 p. 38 §2.

²⁹ *ST* II–II q. 58 a. 2c.

³⁰ 'Alternatively we can understand the sense of this by supposition {ex suppositione}, that is, *if* there is judging. And so this rule teaches that doubts are to be interpreted for the best {in meliorem partem sunt interpretanda} if there is appropriate to judge, if it is necessary to judge' (IV). When there is no need to judge there is no need to expose the intellect to mistake (III), in *ST* II–II q. 60 a. 4.

³¹ And this de Vitoria endorses as legitimate but not optimal. He distinguishes between three modes of understanding the obligation to interpret 'in meliorem partem':

interpretation seems to accord with the thrust of Aquinas's argument when he discusses thoughts about other people's wills in general (for instance, thoughts about whether John wishes to eat a strawberry or a chocolate ice cream).³²

(4) *The rule of presumption is an expression of a kind of disposition that we must have towards others, whether instantiated in our beliefs or in our actions.* As Cajetan rightly points out, there is a sentence from Aquinas that opens up a different interpretative avenue. Paraphrasing Aquinas, when a person errs on the good side in judging people³³ what we have is not an imperfection in the operation of the intellect—we are not supposed to be able to know about singular contingents anyway—but rather an expression of a good disposition towards the other {bonus affectus}. Aquinas's position seems to be that to interpret doubts for the best is an instance of a general good disposition. The implied premiss of the argument is that when you can give expression to this good disposition without fault on the part of the intellect, you should. What matters is not whether the rule of presumption applies to beliefs or to actions. Rather, the point is that if we have this disposition we will tend both to believe and to act in the way the rule of presumption asks us to do.³⁴ Acting by this rule of presumption is simply what you do when you have this disposition.

(a) neutral mode (thinking neither good nor bad of the person), (b) negative mode (not thinking badly of the person), and (c) positive mode (thinking well of the person). Vitoria favours (b): 'The "neutral mode" consist in not committing a sin. Therefore does well he who, if he is not a judge, does not interpret or inclines himself for neither side, as there is not precept about this. But it is even better to interpret [doubts] negatively.' (c) is excluded. *De Justitia*, q. 60 a. 1 p. 49 §1, 3.

³² After considering the view that 'it is not derogatory to man to entertain a false opinion in such matters [matters to which his knowledge does not extend], and that provided he does not assent rashly, he is not to be blamed', Aquinas rules out the compatibility of such false beliefs with the state of innocence where 'there could be in his [Adam's] intellect the absence of some knowledge, but no false opinion'. *ST* I q. 94 a. 4c. So that (ad 5): 'If anyone had said something untrue as regards future contingencies, or as regards thoughts {cogitationibus cordium homo}, man in the state of innocence would not have believed it was so: but he might have believed that such thing was possible; which would not have been to entertain a false opinion.'

³³ Which, for Cajetan, amounts to 'judging about their heart or intentions, that is their application to their actions {applicatione personae ad hanc actionem}', in *ST* II–II q. 60 a. 4 (VIII).

³⁴ Affections and the intellect: Aquinas argues that the intellect can 'assent to something, not through being sufficiently moved to this assent by its proper object, but through an act of choice, whereby it turns voluntarily to one side rather than to the other'; *ST* II–II q. 1 a. 4c. Insofar as to assent is voluntary, to believe can be meritorious (*ST* II–II q. 2 a. 9c.).

It is debatable which of these four interpretations rightly captures Aquinas's view. The most plausible and representative views seem to be (3) (Cajetan's) and (4). Further, these two views can complement each other. A disposition is commendable if it disposes us to do something commendable. It is commendable not to harm others (and thus to apply the rule of presumption); therefore, it is good to have the kind of affection that disposes us not to harm others, whether by holding certain beliefs, making utterances, or otherwise.

5.1.4 Presumptions and Self-Assessment

What makes a person jump at the occasion provided by slight suspicions {levia indicia} to think evil of others? Aquinas gives two explanations for this objectionable behaviour:³⁵

First, from a man being evil in himself, and from this very fact, as though conscious of his own wickedness, he is prone to think evil of others [...]. Secondly, this is due to a man being ill-disposed towards another: for when a man hates or has contempt for another, or is angry with or envious of him, he is led by slight indications {ex levibus signis} to think evil of him, because everyone easily believes what he desires {unusquisque facilliter credit quod appetit}.³⁶

I will concentrate on the second explanation. Certainly contempt and enviousness have a lot to do with the way we see ourselves in relation to others, and with the way we would like to see ourselves in relation to them. We have seen in the previous chapter that contempt of others is a by-product of pride. Is it possible also to draw a connection between envy and pride? Envy is 'sorrow for another's good'³⁷ and it is sinful when 'we grieve over a man's good, in so far as his good surpasses ours [...]'. Further, envy 'manifestly arises from vainglory'³⁸ which, as we

³⁵ A non-objectionable cause of suspicion is the extended past experience {longa experientia} which gives rise to the suspicion. This past experience 'diminishes the nature of suspicion, in as much as experience leads to certainty which is contrary to the nature of suspicion'; *ST II-II q. 60 a. 3c.*

³⁶ *ST II-II q. 60 a. 3c.*: 'ex hoc quod aliquis in seipso malus est, et ex hoc ipso, quasi conscius suae malitiae, facilliter de aliis malum opinatur, secundum illud Eccle. X, *in via stultus ambulans, cum ipse sit insipiens, omnes stultos aestimat*. Alio modo provenit ex hoc quod aliquis male afficitur ad alterum. Cum enim aliquis contemnit vel odit aliquem, aut irascitur vel invidet ei, ex levibus signis opinatur mala de ipso, quia unusquisque facilliter credit quod appetit.'

³⁷ *ST II-II q. 36 a. 1c.* 'tristitia in alienis bonis'.

³⁸ *ST II-II q. 36 a. 4 ad 1.*

have seen, is intimately connected with pride.³⁹ Interestingly, the passage quoted above is reminiscent (in its ending at least) of the following:

Now pride does not observe this rule of right reason, for he [a proud man] esteems himself greater than he is: and this is the outcome of an inordinate desire for his own excellence, since a man is ready to believe what he desires very much {quod aliquis vehementer desiderat, facile credit}.⁴⁰

So one reason why we might think evil of others (in the absence of substantial evidence) is that we might want to assert our relative value by denying that the others have that which would make them stand out over us. Thus, since pride denotes a faulty mode of relationship between self-love and self-assessment, failure to think well of others, if it is a consequence of pride, involves this very same kind of fault.

But a question is left open: is Aquinas objecting to the fact that the envious person believes what he desires, or to the fact that he desires the other to lack the good of which he is envious? In the previous chapter it was argued that Aquinas objects not to the desire itself but to self-deceit, but here it seems that he also objects to the desire. By 'desire' I do not refer to the desire of excellence (the desire to stand out) as such, but to the desire that the other may not have the envied good.

In conclusion, for Aquinas, not all failure to think well of others can be traced back to pride. Yet the inverse seems for the most part true: pride often leads to thinking evil of others when we can take advantage of the occasion provided by some *indicia*. To this extent, then, to think well of others is incompatible with (some forms of) pride, and *eo ipso* with the relation between self-love and self-assessment that underlies pride.

5.1.5 Summary

To recast the argument:

- (i) The existence of friendship requires a particular operation of the friend's will.
- (ii) But we cannot know (in a strong sense) what other people will.
We must therefore presume that communicative acts manifest

³⁹ *ST* II–II q. 132 a. 4c.

⁴⁰ *ST* II–II q. 162 a. 3 ad 2: 'Hanc autem regulam rectae rationis non attendit superbia, sed de se maiora existimat quam sint. Quod contingit ex inordinato appetitu propriae excellentiae, quia quod quis vehementer desiderat, facile credit.' Cf. II *Sent.* d. 42 q. 2 a. 4 ad 1.

people's actual will ('presumption of authenticity'). We should think so because of a rule of presumption stating, broadly, that, in the absence of substantial evidence to the contrary we must think well of persons (and interpret doubts awakened by scant evidence for the best). Therefore we must think that others are not lying.

- (iii) The presumption of authenticity is grounded on the principle that one should not harm (violate the rights of) others.
- (iv) This rule of presumption instructs us not merely as to what to say, but also as to what to believe. Complying with the rule also expresses a generally good disposition towards others.
- (v) Pride can cause the opposite disposition, that is, the readiness to jump at the opportunity provided by insufficient evidence to think evil of others.

5.2 HOPE AND FUTURE FRIENDSHIP

5.2.1 Hope and the Uncertainty of Future Wills

As argued at the beginning of the chapter, the uncertainty surrounding the activity of others' wills springs, for Aquinas, from two different sources: (i) inscrutability of the will, and (ii) uncertainty regarding future singular contingents.

Section 5.1 suggested a solution to (i) by appealing to a presumption of authenticity. The objective of Section 5.2 is to examine whether Aquinas's analysis of hope provides a solution to (ii).

5.2.1.1 *Hoping and Willing*

Hope is a complex attitude towards future desired events combining both emotional and intellectual elements. For Aquinas, as Chapter 2 established, friendship requires certain operations of the will on the part of the friends in two respects: (i) there must be a common goal which produces a 'union of wills' and (ii) the friends must love each other; the love proper to friendship—*dilectio*—is elicited by the will. Consequently friendship involves two different hopes: (i) the hope that the common goal will be accomplished and (ii) the hope that the friend's feelings, affections, and intentions, which sustain the relationship, may continue in the future. These two hopes sustain each other just as the hoped-for things do: friendship makes possible the achievement of the goal, and the existence of the goal makes the friendship possible.

Hope for future things is not, however, simply an emotional side effect of our willing. Hope sustains and nurtures our willing, it helps us to strive forward in times of adversity. Hope is concomitant with the pleasure elicited by imagining our future achievement of the goal.⁴¹ This sort of pleasure makes our striving towards the goal less burdensome: our attention is diverted from present suffering when part of us is enjoying the anticipated taste of achievement of the desired goal:

Hope of its very nature is a help to action by making it more intense: and this for two reasons. First, by reason of its object, which is a good, difficult but possible. For the thought of its being difficult arouses our attention; while the thought that it is possible is not a drag on our effort. Hence it follows that by reason of hope man is intent on his action. Secondly, on account of its effect. Because hope, as stated above, causes pleasure; which is a help of action as stated above.⁴²

To will something is not enough; we would not be capable of carrying out individual enterprises of the kind that require perseverance and endurance in the face of adversity if we did not have hope. In this regard it is important to explain the difference between merely desiring something and striving towards it. To account for this difference Aquinas does not appeal to will as opposed to action, but appeals, instead, to the broad notion of *desiderium* as opposed to the 'movement of the will' (or, more broadly, the movement of the appetitive faculty).⁴³ Just as we can physically pursue something {prosecutio} or flee from it {fuga}, the same can be metaphorically true of the will. The will, i.e. the rational part of our appetite, 'switches' into what one may call the pursuit-mode only when it sees the goal as falling within its power.⁴⁴ Action requires

⁴¹ *ST* I–II q. 32 a. 3c.: '[T]he greatest pleasure is that which arises from sensation which requires the presence of the sensible object. The second place belongs to the pleasure of hope, wherein there is pleasurable conjunction, not only in respect of apprehension, but also in respect of the the faculty or power of obtaining the pleasurable object.'

⁴² *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 8c.: 'Respondeo dicendum quod spes per se habet quod adiuvat operationem, intendendo ipsam. Et hoc ex duobus. Primo quidem, ex ratione sui obiecti, quod est bonum arduum possibile. Existimatio enim ardui excitat attentionem, existimatio vero possibilis non retardat conatum. Unde sequitur quod homo intende operetur propter spem. Secundo vero, ex ratione sui effectus. Spes enim, ut supra dictum est, causat delectationem, quae adiuvat operationem, ut supra dictum est. Unde spes operationem adiuvat.' Also *III Sent.* d. 26 q. 2 a. 2 ad 2: 'hope is the starting point in all human actions directed at difficult goods'.

⁴³ Aquinas speaks of 'motus appetitivus' at *ST* II–II q. 20 a. 1c., and of 'motus interiorem' (as opposed to 'motum exteriorem') at *ST* I–II q. 37 a. 3c. Aquinas often refers to these movements of the will as 'prosecutio' (pursuit) and 'fuga' (flight).

⁴⁴ And this is true of animals too: 'For if a dog sees a hare, or a hawk sees a bird too far off, it makes no movement towards it, having no hope to catch it: whereas, if it be

this kind of 'movement of the will', rather than a mere contemplative appraisal of goodness. Hope enables us to make the leap from desire⁴⁵ to the 'pursuit-mode'.

Despair may not put an end to our desire for the goal, but it certainly puts an end to the striving. When we wish for something but despair, we experience a kind of sorrow or depression {tristitia}. The effect of this sorrow on the appetitive faculty metaphorically resembles that of a burden which drags one back and makes the movement of the will difficult and sluggish,⁴⁶ perhaps even reverting it to a contemplative wishing mode. And this, of course, can happen at the collective level as well: 'if those taking counsel, on reaching the point in the deliberative inquiry where the first operation must be done, find this impossible they give up, i.e. dismiss the whole matter as if without hope of success {quasi desperantes}'.⁴⁷

This brief look into the relation between hope and the motion of the will allows us to see that hope helps us to engage in the pursuit of enterprises both individual and collective. Friendship is one of these enterprises.

5.2.1.2 Hoping, Feasibility, and Uncertainty

What kind of objects are eligible to be hoped for? To this question Aquinas answers:

- (1) The object of hope must be perceived under its aspect of being a good;⁴⁸
- (2) It must be a future good;⁴⁹

near, it makes a movement towards it, as being in hopes of catching it.' *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 3c.

⁴⁵ We can desire things that we regard as unfeasible, but hope is only for what is regarded as feasible. It could be argued, however, that, in order to act, you need only desire and feasibility: hope, whether present or not, is not needed (although it may help). Therefore, according to this, since hope implies a positive estimation of feasibility, it is a *sufficient*, not a *necessary*, condition for acting so as to pursue something. A conclusion close to this is expressed by Aquinas in *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 1 ad 3.

⁴⁶ *ST* I–II q. 37 a. 2c.; a. 3c.

⁴⁷ *Eth.* III. 8 [477]: 'quod postquam inquisitio consilii pervenerit ad id quod oportet primum operari, si inveniant consiliantes illud esse impossibile, discedunt, idest dimittunt totum illud negotium quasi desperantes'.

⁴⁸ *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 1c.; *Spe* q. un. a. 1c. See the analysis by S. Harent in 'Espérance', *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1924), v. 609.

⁴⁹ Glenn argues: 'Future is not to be understood here in its relation to time, for hope and confidence can have for their object present or even past objects, if the hoped-for event is not known with certainty' (quoting—without acknowledging—Harent, 'Espérance', col. 609). M. M. Glenn, 'A Comparison of the Thomistic and Scotistic

- (3) It must be a good which is difficult to achieve {arduuum};
- (4) The hoper must think that it is *possible* for him to obtain the good (i.e. that it is a feasible good).

I wish to examine the relationship between conditions (3) and (4). It is important first to see what Aquinas means by 'possible'.⁵⁰ There are two kinds of things: things which fall within our power (including what we can achieve with the help of our friends and allies of every kind)⁵¹ and things which do not. The sense of 'hope' that pertains to practical reason, deliberation, and choice concerns only things or events that fall within our power. Events of this kind are not 'possible' in the same sense that it is 'possible' that I may unexpectedly inherit a castle from a relative the existence of whom I had previously ignored. We are not talking about 'possibility' seen from the point of view of someone with no influence on the course of events. Rather, the 'possible' with which hope is concerned is that which we have the capacity by our effort to bring into existence. This meaning of 'possible' makes clear the connection between hope and 'arduousness': hope is for what I can bring about by my own effort; and effort is precisely what is implied by 'arduousness'.⁵²

Aquinas's view is not that one can hope for many things, among which only some are possible and ought to be hoped for, but rather that one can hope for things only insofar as they are perceived as falling within one's capacity (including the extended capacity possible through schemes of cooperation), just as—paraphrasing Mill—one can see only things that are visible and hear only things that are audible.

Concepts of Hope', *Thomist*, 20 (1957), 33. Yet it seems that hope of present/past things clashes with the other properties that Aquinas attributes to the objects of hope, namely their presenting a challenge. In fact, for Aquinas, the origin of the uncertainty typical of hope is precisely the challenging nature of a desired good. Such challenging nature can belong to future goods only. Future goods that do not present a challenge and yet are not immediately available can also be objects of hope.

⁵⁰ For a discussion on the meanings of 'possible' see *Pot.* q. 1 a. 3c. 'Possible' may indicate (i) that something is within the capacity of our powers or faculties {possibile secundum aliquam potentiam activam}; (ii) something can in itself exist {possibile secundum se ipsum}; (iii) that a geometrical element can be transformed into something else: as a line can be transformed into a square {possibile secundum potentiam mathematicam quae est in geometricis} (explained in *Meta.* IX. 1. n. 7 [974]). When discussing hope Aquinas clearly refers to (i). In this sense of 'possible', something becomes impossible when: (i) we lack the active faculty (as, say, we lack the faculty of reading others' minds); or (ii) the faculty is too weak; or (iii) we have the faculty but there is too much external resistance (as when we try to lift something that is just too heavy).

⁵¹ *Eth.* III. 8 [477], *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 2 ad 1, *Spe* q. un. a. 1c.

⁵² *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 1c.

We can now assess whether hope provides a solution to the problem of uncertainty surrounding desired future events. Hope can reduce uncertainty about future events if hope is, in some way, a *cause* of these events. We have seen in the previous subsection that, for Aquinas, hope is an aid to action, and it is clear that action can be the cause of events falling within our power. In the case of the builder of a wall, his hope of finishing the wall before a certain date may reduce the uncertainty about whether an early conclusion of the work is possible, not by allowing him privileged insight into the future, but rather by helping him to build faster. Hope provides some approximate or conjectural knowledge of the future in the same sense that earning a sum of money may help me to forecast the fact that I will buy the car I always wanted but never had the money to buy.

I argued at the beginning of this section that friendship involves two objects of hope: achievement of the common goal and the very subsisting of the friendship. Now it is clear that hope, by being an aid to action, reduces the uncertainty surrounding the accomplishment of the common goal. In an indirect sense hope also allows friendship to persist by keeping alive the union of wills and the cooperation on which friendship depends. Examples of the detrimental effects of despair on social cohesion are not difficult to find.⁵³

5.2.1.3 Hope as a Cause of Others' Love

Can our hopes or expectations⁵⁴ help change someone else's will? For Aquinas friendship requires not only that one love the friend, but

⁵³ Dispirited by grossly exaggerated reports by ten of the twelve spies sent to Canaan, the people of Israel broke out in secession: 'Why has God brought us to this country, for us to perish by the sword and our wives and children to be seized as booty? Should we not better go back to Egypt? And they said to one another, "Let us appoint a leader and go back to Egypt"' (Num. 14: 2–4).

⁵⁴ In an interesting passage Aquinas integrates three different meanings associated to the verb 'to expect': (i) its implication of something or someone external to us (given by the 'ex'), (ii) its relation to awaiting (*sperare*), and (iii) its relation to a spectator's contemplative observation (*expectare*): 'properly speaking, a man is said to await [*expectare*] that which he hopes to get by another's help and this is called *expectare* because it implies to keep one's eyes on another, in so far as the apprehensive power, by going ahead, not only keeps its eye on the good which man intends to get, but also on the thing by whose power he hopes to get it.' *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 2 ad 1. Cf. Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* 1112^b27–8: 'What is possible is what we could achieve through our agency [including what our friends could achieve for us]; for what our friends achieve is, in a way, achieved through our agency, since the origin is in us.' On hope for help *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 7c.; *ST* II–II q. 17 a. 4c.

also that the friend love one in return.⁵⁵ Love is an operation of the appetite, rational love is an operation of the will.⁵⁶ But others' wills are unnecessitated by external agents. Leaving aside the beatific vision, 'no object moves the will necessarily, for no matter what the object be, it is in man's power not to think of it, and consequently not to will it actually'.⁵⁷

If it is true that for Aquinas one cannot be the cause of someone else's will, then however much hope we may have, we are still incapable of causing the loved one to love one in return. It would seem then that expectations regarding others' wills have no effect at all on what their wills are likely to be. This subsection argues that a closer examination of Aquinas's position on the autonomy of the will shows this radical interpretation to be seriously unsubstantiated.

Aquinas believes that only God can in an 'efficacious' way be the extrinsic cause of our willing.⁵⁸ Yet his view that neither angels nor humans can 'move directly the will of humans'⁵⁹ in no way supports the implausible view that we cannot *in any way* 'move the wills' of other persons (or in a more congenial phrasing: 'lead them to change their mind').⁶⁰

The generic mode by which both angelic and human persons can change the will of a human being is called by Aquinas 'modum suadentis'⁶¹ or 'modum persuasionis'.⁶² Angels can do this by three means: by enlightening us {illuminatio},⁶³ by inducing dreams and visions—playing with our imagination⁶⁴—or by affecting the senses 'from the inside' (without impressing on them through real existing things).⁶⁵

Humans have fewer resources. We can make things known to others by teaching (*docere*, as opposed to angels, who impress the intellect by

⁵⁵ *ST* II–II q. 23 a. 1c.

⁵⁶ *ST* I–II q. 26 a. 3c. (on *dilectio*).

⁵⁷ *ST* I–II q. 10 a. 2c.

⁵⁸ '[as an external cause] God alone can move the will efficaciously; but an angel and man move the will by way of persuasion ...' *ST* I q. 111 a. 2c. God moves the will 'from without' *efficaciter* both by creating those goods capable of inclining the will and by Himself being a good, whom—as seen in the beatific vision, and in the beatific vision only—the will cannot but will. See also *ST* I q. 106 a. 2c.

⁵⁹ 'the devil cannot be a cause of human sins by directly moving the will of man'. *Mal.* q. 3 a. 4c. [3–4].

⁶⁰ Recall that we can have conjectural knowledge of future events insofar as we are a cause of these events. In a qualified way this extends also to those things depending on the *liberum arbitrium* of others. *Ver* q. 8 a. 12c.: 'We can conjecture about future effects depending upon free choice by considering men's habits and temperaments, which incline them to one course of action.'

⁶¹ *ST* I q. 106 a. 2c.; *ST* I q. 111 a. 2c.

⁶² *ScG* III c. 92 n. 2; *ST* I q. 111 a. 2 ad 1; *Mal.* q. 3 a. 4c.

⁶³ *ST* I q. 111 a. 1c.

⁶⁴ *ST* I q. 111 a. 3c.

⁶⁵ *ST* I q. 111 a. 4c.

illuminatio) so that, in the light of their newly acquired knowledge, they modify their wills.⁶⁶ Alternatively, we can also arouse the passions so that they come to move the will (which is possible because reason's rule over the passions or emotions is not tyrannical, but political).⁶⁷ Whether we qualify as an extrinsic cause or not when we teach or persuade others was a matter of heated discussion in Aquinas's times,⁶⁸ but whether we can succeed in changing others' wills was not.

But we need not discuss the modes of persuasion. It suffices to show that Aquinas's view that the will is unnecessitated by external causes in no way supports the implausible view that no one can change another person's mind ('move their will' in Aquinas's lexicon). So, provided that we can change others' wills by persuasion and that to achieve this goal is both possible and arduous, it is reasonable to think that having hope makes it more plausible that one may succeed in this enterprise. Similarly, if one wishes to be loved, one can achieve this by certain endeavours. These endeavours are more likely to succeed if one has hope than if one does not.⁶⁹

5.2.1.4 Hope and the Expansion of the Scope of Self-Love

Can hope lead us to love persons whom we did not love before? To this question Aquinas gives a straightforward positive answer. The structure of his explanation is as follows. Hope presupposes love of something that is hoped for; it also involves estimations about whether it is within our power to attain the goal. What is within our power includes, however, whatever help we can get from others:

What is possible is what we could achieve through our agency [including what our friends could achieve for us]; for what our friends achieve is, in a way, achieved through our agency, since the origin is in us.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ *ST* I q. 117 a. 1c. This question has a similar structure to *ST* I q. 106. Given the context of the discussion, the similar structures of both questions, and the goal set forth in the prologue of q. 106, we can deduce that Aquinas believes that teaching is the human capacity to change the wills of others parallel to the angelical capacity of *illuminatio*.

⁶⁷ *ST* I–II q. 9 a. 2c.; *ST* I q. 111 a. 3c.: 'Thus inasmuch as they are able to excite these emotions, the angels are able to induce changes in the will.' (But nothing seems to prevent human beings from doing so too.)

⁶⁸ *ST* I q. 111 a. 1c. and *Ver.* q. 11 a. 1c.

⁶⁹ Especially if one considers that, for Aquinas, knowledge is a cause of love, and knowledge is precisely what is produced by teaching. *ST* I–II q. 27 a. 2c.

⁷⁰ *Nic. Eth.* 1112^b27–28 quoted in *ST* II–II q. 17 a. 1c. The square brackets are Irwin's.

So, to the extent that others help us, we come to see their own well-being as part of ours: 'In so far as hope regards one through whom something becomes possible to us, love is caused by hope, and not vice versa. Because by the very fact that we hope that a good will accrue to us through someone, we are moved towards him as to our own good; and thus we begin to love him.'⁷¹

This interested love {*amor concupiscentiae*} sets the ground for friendship. Friendship also involves a different kind of love—love of friendship {*amor amicitiae*}.⁷² It does not, however, make the interested love proceeding from self-love redundant.

The view regarding hope as a cause of friendship is of fundamental theological importance for Aquinas's account of the relationship between the theological virtues of hope and charity (friendship with God). Because we both desire and hope for happiness, we come to love the being who can make this happiness possible. The believer loves God first with interested love {*amor concupiscentiae*}: he loves Him because His assistance is instrumental to the prosecution of his own goal.⁷³ For Aquinas, the way to the love of friendship that characterizes charity goes past interested love.⁷⁴ Not only that, but charity in the *homo viator* is always accompanied by hope, which means that the *amor amicitiae* of the *viator* is never 'pure' but always accompanied by *amor concupiscentiae*.⁷⁵

Aquinas's position regarding the 'interestedness' of all hope, including theological hope, is in keeping with Augustinian tradition⁷⁶ but was

⁷¹ *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 7c.

⁷² On love's typology see *ST* I–II q. 26 a. 4c.; *ST* II–II q. 23 a. 1c.

⁷³ *ST* II–II q. 17 a. 8c.: '[Now] there is a perfect, and an imperfect love. Perfect love is that whereby a man is loved in himself, as when someone wishes a person some good for his own sake; thus a man loves his friend. Imperfect love is that whereby a man loves something, not for its own sake, but that he may obtain that good for himself; thus a man loves what he desires. The first love of God pertains to charity, which adheres to God for his own sake; while hope pertains to the second love, since he that hopes, intends to obtain possession of something for himself.'

⁷⁴ *ST* II–II q. 17 a. 3c.: 'thus, directly at least, hope is set upon one's own good, not that of another'.

⁷⁵ For two reasons: (a) the three theological virtues are infused simultaneously, (b) *ST* II–II q. 25 a. 4c.: 'the love with which a man loves himself is the form and root of friendship'. For an explicit defence of the view that charity in *via* involves *amor concupiscentiae* see *III Sent.* d. 27 q. 2 a. 1 ad 1.

⁷⁶ W. E. Mann, 'Hope', in Eleonore Stump (ed.), *Reasoned Faith: Essays in Philosophical Theology in Honor of Norman Kretzmann* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), 255.

opposed by later religious thinkers.⁷⁷ Luther thought that self-love is incompatible with pure love of God. Moreover, achievement of true love of God requires the person to feel something similar to self-hatred.⁷⁸ As a consequence within his theory there was little place for the kind of interested hope of which Aquinas speaks. The seventeenth century was prolific in controversial Catholic thinkers who criticized or denied self-love as a valid motivating principle on the path to God. For Jansen, acts that involve self-interest are thereby deprived of moral worthiness. Fénelon—preceded by the radical ‘quietist’⁷⁹ views of Molinos—argued that, since praiseworthy acts must be disinterested, perfect hope must be disinterested hope,⁸⁰ and interested hope (and in fact any kind of self-interest) cannot coexist with charity, which involves only disinterested or ‘pure’ love.⁸¹

On the whole, Catholic tradition remained loyal to the Thomist conception of hope. There are some good reasons to do so. Attackers of interested love and hope have trouble explaining in what sense it is necessary to posit the theological virtue of hope. If interested hope is dismissed it is no longer clear what hope has to add to faith. Nor

⁷⁷ Including Duns Scotus, and—much later—Francisco Suárez who differed from Aquinas not so much on the question whether hope involves interested love (which Suárez thought of as identical to hope) but on whether some interested love is present in the act of charity. For them, charity or friendship with God excludes all traces of self-regarding love; in other words the *amor amicitiae* involved in charity excludes all traces of *amor concupiscentiae*. Charity’s object is the *bonitas Dei absoluta* (‘goodness as such’), while hope’s object is the *bonitas Deo relativa* (‘good for us’). In order to explain the distinction between hope and charity Duns Scotus and Suárez drew on the contrast between *affectio commodi* (hope) and the *affectio iustitiae* (charity) introduced by Anselm of Canterbury. This position would have trouble explaining how the theological virtue of charity can be infused simultaneously with the theological virtue of hope and exist alongside. For the Duns Scotus–Suárez view on charity and hope see P. DeLetter, ‘Hope and Charity in St. Thomas’, *Thomist*, 13 (1950), 326–9 (hope); 329–35 (charity).

⁷⁸ Mann, ‘Hope’, 258.

⁷⁹ ‘Quietism’ preached self-detachment, indifference to the destiny of the soul, passiveness, and contemplation. It defended the *via interna*: God acts in us, without any need for us to prepare for the reception of that help by doing good works and advanced the view that ‘pure love’ cannot contain any element of self-interest. Its main defenders were Miguel de Molinos (1640–96) and Pietro Matteo Petrucci (1636–1701) both of whom influenced the thought of François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon (1651–1715). For Aquinas on disinterested love see G. Stevens, ‘The Disinterested Love of God according to St. Thomas and some of his Modern Interpreters’, *Thomist*, 16 (1953), 307–33.

⁸⁰ Harent, ‘Espérance’, col. 664 and criticism in col. 665; on Molinos col. 662.

⁸¹ Harent, ‘Espérance’, col. 663.

is it clear why we need to hope. Hope is only important if we care about how well we do within the setting revealed by faith (that is, if hope is interested hope). Further, taking hope away also takes away an important aspect of the personal dimension of the relationship with God, that of being a relationship between helper and helped.

Hope (theological or otherwise) is the foundation of a kind of enlargement of the self for all those who can cooperate in achieving that which is desired and hoped for. The relation between hope and the enlarged power that we gain when we come to regard not just our own forces but those of prospective helpers is circular: the availability of cooperators makes something possible to us, and thus allows us to hope it; and, inversely, it is the fact that we hope which makes us search for prospective cooperators.

5.2.2 Hope, Self-Assessment, and Self-Love

5.2.2.1 *Hope and Self-Assessment*

Hope requires assessments about possibility. These assessments are of two kinds: (i) assessments regarding the existence of the desired goal, (ii) assessments about whether it is within our power to reach the goal (assessments of feasibility). So, in order to hope to conquer the top of Everest, I must believe that Everest exists and that climbing it is within my power (including within ‘my power’ that which is possible through the help of others: financial supporters, sherpas, etc.).

Assessments regarding the existence of the desired goal can be founded on different types of grounds. Faith can be one of these grounds: in order to hope to be saved one needs to have beliefs about the existence and nature of salvation and the means to achieve it. Faith, as vision, gives us a kind of knowledge about the ‘setting’: the opportunities and resources that are out there. But—Aquinas argues—beliefs about the setting of our enterprises are not to be confused with the beliefs that directly enable us to hope and consequently enable us to embark on these enterprises. Hope primarily concerns one’s performance within the setting, not the setting itself.⁸² Thus, the beliefs that directly intervene in enabling hope are not beliefs about the setting but about our own capacity to achieve chosen goals. Hence, for Aquinas, to have faith does not logically entail having hope: one could accept all the truths of faith and still despair

⁸² On the difference between faith and hope: *ST* II–II q. 17 a. 7c.

by disbelieving, for instance, that one's repentance will be sufficiently genuine to be accepted by God.⁸³ Inversely, to fail to hope is not (in the case of theological hope) an instance of lack of faith: it involves only a misappraisal of particulars, not of universals.⁸⁴ Columbus, in a moment of despair, may have thought, 'I will not make it to land,' without disbelieving that there was land beyond the horizon. So hope requires assessments about one's capacity in regard to a chosen goal. One valid ground for this kind of assessment is experience. Aquinas says:

hope is caused by everything that makes man think that he can obtain something: and thus both teaching and persuasion may be a cause of hope. And then again experience is a cause of hope, in so far as it makes him reckon something possible, which before his experience he looked upon as impossible.⁸⁵

In this passage Aquinas means not just that experience can be a cause of hope but that it is *good* ground for hope. Hope can be caused by many disparate kinds of inputs, not all of which need to be beliefs, and certainly not all of which need to be well-grounded beliefs.

Aquinas's text seems to contain a difficulty: experience can certainly determine that something is possible; it cannot, one might think, logically determine that something is *not* possible. But Aquinas seems to deny this. He argues:

However, in this way, experience can cause a lack of hope: because just as it makes a man think possible what he had previously thought impossible; so conversely, experience makes a man consider as impossible that which hitherto he had thought possible.⁸⁶

⁸³ *ST* II–II q. 20 a. 2c.

⁸⁴ *ST* II–II q. 20 a. 2c.: 'Unbelief {infidelitas} pertains to the intellect, but despair, to the appetite: and the intellect is about universals, while the appetite is moved in connection with particulars, since the appetitive movement is from the soul towards things, which, in themselves, are particular. Now it may happen that a man, while having a right opinion in the universal, is not rightly disposed as to his appetitive movement, his estimate being corrupted in a particular matter, because, in order to pass from the universal to the appetite for a particular thing, it is necessary to have a particular estimate.'

⁸⁵ *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 5c.: 'est causa spei omne illud quod facit alicui existimationem quod aliquid sit sibi possibile. Et hoc modo et doctrina et persuasio quaelibet potest esse causa spei. Et sic etiam experientia est causa spei: inquantum, scilicet per experientiam fit homini existimatio quod aliquid sit sibi possibile, quod impossibile ante experientiam reputabat.'

⁸⁶ *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 5c.: 'Sed per hunc modum experientia potest esse causa defectus spei; quia sicut per experientiam fit homini existimatio quod aliquid sit sibi possibile quod reputabat impossibile; ita converso per experientiam fit homini existimatio quod aliquid non sit sibi possibile, quod possibile existimabat.'

And so, he argues, experience, can cause despair.⁸⁷

Aquinas's view that experience tells us something about what is impossible need not be problematic if one recalls the kind of impossibility that Aquinas is speaking about. Something becomes impossible {impossibile in natura} when: (i) we lack the active faculty to do it (for example, our lacking the faculty of reading others' minds); (ii) we have the faculty but there is too much external resistance (as when we try to lift something that is too heavy).⁸⁸

Now experience tells us something about the kind of impossible described by (ii). What Aquinas observes is simply that experience teaches us the present (not absolute) limitations of our faculties. This does not commit Aquinas to believe that these limitations are absolutely fixed. Indeed, in the same article, he argues that experience is a cause of hope in another sense too: it improves our prospects, for inasmuch as I try something again and again (say, lifting a heavy object), my capacity may gradually improve (so that I become capable of lifting heavier objects).⁸⁹

Finally, it is important to stress that the beliefs that cause hope are beliefs about how well we think we will do. We attend to our own future (and form conjectures about it) because we care about ourselves. For Aquinas it is impossible to understand hope apart from its intimate connection to self-love. Without self-love hope would not be necessary at all (certainly not the hope of which Aquinas speaks). A purely disinterested look at the world is rejected by Aquinas; for him humans perceive themselves primarily as agents entangled in the process of the creation of their own future and justifiably apprehensive about what the future has in store for them.

5.2.2.2 Hope and the Relationship between Self-Love and Self-Assessment

This subsection explains the connection between self-love and self-assessment that is presupposed by Aquinas's hope. In the process of doing this, I will discuss two related problems: (a) the difference between hope and mere willing in terms of the relationship between self-assessment and self-love that they presuppose; (b) whether hope can be a consequence of pride.

As well as a belief, hope presupposes a desire. There must be a desire for that which we hope for.⁹⁰ In order to desire we must think that this

⁸⁷ *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 5 ad 2.

⁸⁸ *Pot.* q. 1 a. 3c.

⁸⁹ *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 5c.

⁹⁰ *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 1c.

good which we hope for we do not possess. Beliefs about what we have and do not have are self-assessments. If we desire what we desire wholly or partly because it is good for us, this desire counts as an expression of self-love.

So in order to have hope one needs both to desire something and to consider oneself to be lacking it, for we desire what we do not yet possess. To consider oneself as being in a state of privation requires a certain kind of independence between self-love and self-assessment, such that assessments of the self are not themselves a product of self-love (in the sense that one does not already attribute to oneself what one would like to have). As we have seen in the previous chapter, for Aquinas, the proud person does not display this kind of independence of self-assessment from self-love. The proud person's self-assessment is a product of his self-love: he thinks himself to be already in the state he would like to be. The person who has hope, on the other hand, must acknowledge his privation in respect of the good which is sought after.

This interpretation of Aquinas is open to two objections which may introduce a more fine-grained understanding of the peculiarity of hope and its connection to the interplay between self-love and self-assessment.

(a) How does hope differ from simple willing as far as the relation of self-love and self-assessment is concerned?

It could be argued that, given that privation is presupposed by all willing, the independence of self-assessment from self-love which I have presented as characteristic of hope is, in fact, common to all acts of will. In other words, it is difficult to see why hope would presuppose a relation between self-love and self-assessment which is not already presupposed by willing itself.

The objection is valuable in that it stresses the need to introduce further specifications regarding that which we consider to be lacking when we hope: it cannot be just the thing hoped for as such, since, then, the object of hope would be identical to the goal of the will, and hope and will would be from this point of view indistinguishable. The specification needed here is that the one who hopes not only lacks what he hopes for but also doubts his capacity (or the capacities of the potential helpers or his own worthiness to receive their help) to achieve a goal.⁹¹

⁹¹ For the difference between hoping and desiring see *Spe* q. 1 a. 1c.

Absolute confidence makes hope redundant.⁹² Confidence is a result of pride, namely, of overestimating one's capacities (or one's worthiness to receive external help). The person with excessive confidence gratuitously attributes to himself that which makes him capable of achieving the goal. This particular form of pride is called presumption.⁹³ As William E. Mann says in interpreting Aquinas, 'Despair is not a state of hoping too little, and presumption is not hoping too much. [...] [p]resumption is a rejection of hope as unnecessary, either because one presumes that salvation is within one's own power or because one presumes that God's mercy will save even those who are unrepentant.'⁹⁴

(b) *Can hope be a product of pride?*

The more proud I am, the more reasons I have to believe that I will achieve the goal (because I attribute to myself the capacity to achieve it), and therefore the more hope I have.

In this view, hope is enabled by self-assessment, and self-assessments can stand in various relations to self-love (including that which—as I have argued—is peculiar to pride). Indeed, presumption, which is a consequence of pride, consists, in some views, of exaggerated hope.⁹⁵

In reply, one may first note that hope can be taken either as the act of hope ('to hope for x') or as a general disposition or habit ('being a hopeful person').

If hope is taken as a kind of act, it can indeed be the case that a particular instance of 'hoping for x' is enabled by assessments of feasibility which are themselves a result of pride. Believing oneself capable of achieving an arduous goal without outside help (self-sufficiency) may be one example.⁹⁶

But not all beliefs concerning the feasibility of the goal enable one to hope; some of these beliefs may actually rule out hope by killing the doubts that make hope necessary in the first place. Recall that hope is for

⁹² *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 8 ad 1: security of the achievement of the goal undermines its arduous character. Hope concerns only arduous things (perceived as such). Also *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 1c.

⁹³ *ST* II–II q. 21 a. 4c. Presumption arises from *inane gloria* which is intimately connected with pride.

⁹⁴ Mann, 'Hope', 276, quoting *ST* II–II q. 21 a. 1c.

⁹⁵ Hence the objection that '*praesumptio importat superexcessum spei*'. Note, however, that this *superexcessus* is not about the intensity of hope, rather it consists in hoping from God things that one should not hope from Him. *ST* II–II q. 21 a. 2 obj. 2, ad 2.

⁹⁶ And so Aquinas argues that the written Law was given to mankind only after mankind's belief in its self-sufficiency to direct itself—which was an instance of pride—ended up in (instructive) failure. *ST* I–II q. 98 a. 6 ad 2; ad 1.

arduous things. So a belief that would render the goal too easy would deny this element and cast away hope altogether.⁹⁷ '[S]ecurity lessens the idea of difficulty: wherefore it also lessens the character of hope' {diminuit existimationem ardui, in quo etiam diminuitur ratio spei}.⁹⁸ Hope involves and requires some kind of doubt or anxiety regarding the attainment of the hoped-for thing. Our relationship to future desired things which are difficult to achieve—including the beatitude desired by the *homo viator*—is marked by what Aquinas calls *anxietas dubitationis*.⁹⁹

Thus, it is true that some beliefs of the kind that enable hope may themselves be a product of pride ('I can do this') but some other beliefs produced by pride (those which produce overconfidence) are contrary to hope. To the extent that hope always involves lack of that which is hoped for, and—in addition—also the perception that the goal is difficult to achieve, hope always involves a measure of modesty.

To recast the argument: the objection argues that some beliefs that enable us to hope can be a result of a faulty causal link between self-love and self-assessment, the faulty link that is characteristic of pride. The reply is that particular acts of hope may indeed proceed from beliefs which are produced by pride, but involve at least a measure of modesty.

5.3 CONCLUSION

For Aquinas, the lack of direct access to others' wills does not pose an insurmountable difficulty: in the absence of sufficient contrary evidence we should presume that others' communicational acts manifest their actual wills (presumption of authenticity). He also believes that although we cannot know with certainty what other people's future wills are going to be, nevertheless, to the extent that we can lead them to change their minds, we possess some conjectural knowledge about what they are likely to will.

⁹⁷ This would not happen with the Duns Scotus–Suarezian view, since they think that *arduitas* is accidental not essential to the object of hope. Glenn, 'Concepts of Hope', 59.

⁹⁸ *ST* I–II q. 40 a. 8 ad 1: 'a man does not regard as arduous a task in which there are no obstacles to be feared'.

⁹⁹ *ST* II–II q. 52 a. 3c. Quoted by P. Laín Entralgo, *La espera y la esperanza: Historia y teoría del esperar humano* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1958), 96. The necessity of anxiety, doubt, and fear for hope seems to contradict Aquinas's view that the Fathers, in limbo, despite being secure about their being taken to heaven, had hope. III *Sent.* d. 26 q. 2 a. 5 sol. 3c.: 'those who are in purgatory and the Fathers when they were in the Limbo had hope, for hope is cancelled only by the act of having of that which is hoped, just as faith is cancelled by seeing that which is believed'.

These views are important for friendship. Concord is a 'union of wills'. If wills were completely opaque to us, and if we were deprived of all insight into people's future wills, we would not be able to ascertain the existence of friendship, nor would we be able to build on its persistence.

A different formulation of the last point: friendship is—albeit not completely—of our own making; it is not something that simply happens to us. As a consequence it does not involve the kinds of uncertainties that surround things falling altogether outside our power; it involves the kinds of doubts and fears that surround those of our enterprises that aim at goals that are difficult but feasible.

Friendship and hope are also related in another sense: hope, by allowing us to 'think big', is instrumental in providing an incentive to search for people willing to cooperate with us and make our enterprises theirs too, and in so doing to become prospective friends. People who stick to small projects and easy goals which require no more resources than they have are less likely to make friends.

In yet another sense, hope is important for friendship because it keeps alive the union of wills which animates it. It does so by making the common goal appear feasible, and by keeping away the destructive social impact of despair.

Both the presumption of authenticity and the act of hoping are to an extent incompatible with the relationship between self-love and self-assessment that is characteristic of pride. Pride can lead us to take advantage of insufficient evidence in order to think evil of others, and thus to think that their communicational acts do not represent their actual wills. Hope involves a minimum of humility, in that the one who hopes avows his lack of that which he hopes for, and deems his attainment of the goal not absolutely secure.

6

Friendship and Recourse to Justice

In this chapter I turn to the connection between friendship and justice. The chapter seeks to establish, first, whether within friendship there is room for one friend's recourse to justice against another. After assessing the permissibility of recourse to justice within friendship, I turn to the impact of friendship on justice.¹ The chapter is divided, accordingly, into two sections.

In the first section I seek to establish whether Aquinas agrees with the following two claims. The first claim, which can be found for instance in Aristotle, is that friendship, at least in its highest form, gives no occasion for the intervention of justice.² The second claim, apparently supported by St Paul, concedes that the bond of friendship may give occasion for

¹ I leave out an additional alleged tension between friendship and justice: friendship inclines us to prefer friends to strangers in the allocation of goods, while justice requires us to be impartial. This problem does not directly bear on the question that occupies me here, namely, the role of justice between friends (rather than between friends and strangers). This alleged clash between the partiality of friendship and the impartiality of justice was discussed in some detail by Jean Buridan (1295?–1358?) in *Quaestiones in Decem Libros Ethicorum Aristotelis* (Oxford: H. Cripps, E. Forrest, H. Curtaeyne, and I. Wilmot, 1637), 366–7 (at the beginning of the commentary on Book V). Buridan, following previous criticism by Duns Scotus (*Reportata Parisiensa*, In III Sent. d. 33, resolutio), and—as claimed by de Vitoria—also by William of Ockham, argued against Aquinas that justice is, as fortitude and temperance, about moderating passions, primarily those passions associated with affection for persons that lead us to distribute unfairly.

² The claim is made by Aristotle in *Nic. Eth.* 1155^a27–9 in an opening section presenting claims about friendship that should motivate our interest in the subject. In the same work, however, Aristotle devotes ample room for discussion of the conflicts that are likely to occur between friends and within friendship (albeit not in the best form of it). More recently, the idea that friendship and family relationships at their best exclude conflicts, thus making justice less needed or even otiose, is proposed by M. J. Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 30–3. I discuss these claims and compare them to Aquinas's own views in my 'Friendship and the Circumstances of Justice according to Aquinas', *Review of Politics*, 66 (2004), esp. 35–47.

the intervention of friendship but holds that committed friends should avoid resorting to justice against one another; they should rather endure some harm than upset peace.

In the second section, I examine Aquinas's view that the possibility of just exchanges between unequal partners requires, as a precondition, the presence of friendship. Such a view—I argue—can be extricated from his theological discussion of charity as a precondition for merit.

6.1 JUSTICE BETWEEN FRIENDS

6.1.1 Friendship and the Occasion for Justice

There is a view that believes that within friendship, conflicts of the kind which give occasion for the intervention of justice are absent. This purist view of friendship either confines it to quite narrow and exceptional settings, or, while admitting that friendship can designate relationships in which conflict arises, regards these friendships as inferior and imperfect.

It is hard, however, to imagine a society bound by friendship bonds (as Aquinas conceived of the Church) in which conflict and disagreement would not sometimes occur, or in which some of the members would never commit injustices against others. Even the most intimate and perfect friendships that we know are not free of repressed grudges and the occasional dispute.

One solution to this tension is to distinguish between those social units governed by friendship and those governed by justice—to consider them as belonging to discrete classes. This is not Aquinas's solution. As we have seen, while the existence of a common goal is, for Aquinas, a requisite and effect of friendship, the existence of a common goal does not ensure an end to disputes. Aquinas acknowledges the presence of conflicts not only between Fathers of the Church and between Apostles, but even between angels.³ All these are friends and so have common goals, but each of them might legitimately think that the common goal is instantiated in different things. The union of wills required by friendship is formal, not material (i.e. the goal is willed under the form of its being common, but can be thought to materialize in different things).⁴ Since two or more courses

³ *II Sent.* d. 11 q. 2 a. 5; *ST* II–II q. 29 a. 3 obj. 2, ad 2; *ST* II–II q. 37 a. 1c.

⁴ For the distinction between formal and material union of wills see *Ver.* q. 23 a. 8c. and Ch. 3, above.

of action may legitimately be seen as instantiating the common goal, reference to the common goal alone is not sufficient in solving disputes.⁵

As has been shown, such conflict does not always or generally evince moral fault in one of the parts. Innocent disagreement can have different sources. One of them is lack of cognition about what the friend wishes. ‘Cognitive separateness’, to use a modern term, is not eliminated by friendship.⁶ Aquinas believes that friendship with God is both possible and desirable despite the presence of as much cognitive separateness as is possible between two persons. Angels, too, are friends of God and yet do not know what God wills. That human beings cannot scrutinize each other’s minds is conveyed by the biblical verse—often quoted by Aquinas—that ‘The heart of man is perverse and inscrutable, who can know it? I am the Lord who searches the heart, and proves the reins:⁷ who gives to everyone according to his way.’⁸ In one instance Aquinas compares the depth of the human heart to an abyss (inspired by the use of the term ‘profound’ rather than ‘perverse’ in the Septuagint).⁹ For Aquinas, the only way we can form even tentative assumptions about the thoughts and wills of others is by looking at their effects or acts (including speech acts), and their involuntary physical reactions (facial expressions,

⁵ One may speculate that Aquinas would consider the *communio sanctorum*, in patria, as a possible exception.

⁶ The term is taken from Sandel, *Liberalism*, 172.

⁷ The heart was traditionally seen as the seat of thoughts. The reins were traditionally seen as the seat of either the pleasures, the affections, and/or the intentions. Cf. Ps. 7: 10–11; 26: 2; 73: 21; Jer. 11: 20. For St Augustine, the reins are the seat of the lowly pleasures: ‘delectationes autem non bonae ad renes pertinent, quia inferiores atque terrenae sunt’. *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, CCSL, vol. 38, pp. 43–4 (in 7:11). Aquinas follows Augustine in Ps 7: 11, *Opera Omnia* (Paris: Vivès, 1876), XVIII. 262. Yet *In Hier.* 11. 4 ad v. 20 and 17. 1 ad v. 9 (*Opera Omnia*, XIX. 111, 130) he associates the reins with the affections, and *In Heb.* 4. 2 ad v. 12 [226] he does so with intentions: ‘Searches the heart and the kidneys, that is, thoughts and intentions.’

⁸ Jer. 17: 9–10. The Old Vulgate reads ‘pravum est cor omnium et inscrutabile, quis cognoscet illud? Ego, Dominus scrutans cor et probans renes.’ Aquinas typically quotes ‘cor hominis’ in place of ‘cor omnium’ (*ST* I q. 57 a. 4 sc.; *ST* III q. 59 a. 2 obj. 3; *Ver.* q. 8 a. 4 sc. 8).

⁹ He relies on the Septuagint’s use of ‘profundum’ instead of ‘pravum’ (βαθύεια reading $\beta\alpha\theta\upsilon\epsilon\iota\alpha$ for $\pi\alpha\upsilon\epsilon\iota\alpha$) to interpret a passage from the book of Psalms (Ps. 42 in *Nova Vulgata* and English bibles, Ps. 41 in old Vulgates) that runs: ‘Abyssus abyssum invocat in voce cataractarum tuarum.’ Aquinas reasons that since a man’s heart is *profundum*, a man is like an abyss. So the passage can be allegorically interpreted as saying that a man calls another man to Christ: ‘[T]he heart of man is deep and inscrutable. Hence, “abyss” stands for a man, who calls another man to Christ.’ Ps. 41. 5 [46–8] [*Opera Omnia*, XVIII. 491]. For another instance in which Aquinas reads ‘profundum’ rather than ‘pravum’ see *In Heb.* 4. 2 ad v., 12 [226].

blinking, sweating, etc.).¹⁰ There is no unmediated access to the heart, not only because what occurs in the heart is hidden by the body—the imperfect vehicle of expression of the heart—but also because of the fact that ‘the will shuts up its secrets’ {voluntas claudens sua secreta}.¹¹ Thus, even if we were bodiless (e.g. as angels) we still could not see what goes on inside another’s heart.¹² ‘Consequently all that is in the will, and all things that depend only on the will, are known by God alone.’¹³

An objection could be made that for Aquinas the ‘love of friendship’ {amor amicitiae} produces a union of the lover and the beloved¹⁴—a kind of ‘mutual indwelling’ {mutua inhaesio}¹⁵ which extends to cognition.¹⁶ Further, Aquinas cites with approval Aristotle’s view of the friend as being a man’s ‘other self’ {alter ipse} and Augustine’s depiction of a friend as ‘half of his soul’ {dimidium animae suae}.¹⁷ Such closeness between those who love each other with the love of friendship surely includes knowledge of each other’s goals, intentions, and thoughts.

¹⁰ See *In Matt.* 28 ad v. 5 [2431]: An angel says to Mary Magdalene: ‘I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified’ (Matt. 28: 5). But—Aquinas asks—how did the angel know this? And answers: ‘by no means but divine revelation or by signs, since frequently, through bodily gestures, we have indications of the will’. Cf. *Ver.* q. 8 a. 13c.; *Quodl.* VII q. 5 a. 2c.

¹¹ *ST* I q. 57 a. 4 ad 1. Also *In Heb.* 4. 2 ad v. 12 [226]: ‘In the will, there are intentions about aims which are invisible because of their very nature. That which man does or thinks is manifest through acts which carry out intentions; that which is inward is uncertain.’ Cf. *In Heb.* 4. 2 ad v. 12 [228].

¹² *ST* I q. 57 a. 4c., ad 1. This article, placed within the treatise on angelic knowledge, is Aquinas’s focal examination in *ST* of the kind of knowledge the human soul can have of another human soul. When he discusses human knowledge he does not discuss this question again, from which one can speculate that he was content with the treatment given in *ST* I q. 57 a. 4c.

¹³ *ST* I q. 57 a. 4c. This view has implications for procedural justice; it prohibits ‘judicium temerarium’: to judge on matters uncertain. ‘But God reserves hidden things for His own judgment. But some things which lie in our heart, or are done in secret are hidden from us’ ... ‘Hence a man is temeritous judge {temerarius iudex} about these things, as a delegated judge who exceeds his mandate by judging on a case not committed to him.’ *In I Cor.* 4. 1 ad v. 5 [195]. Cf. *ST* II–II q. 60 a. 2c., ad 2.

¹⁴ *ST* I–II q. 28 a. 1c.

¹⁵ *ST* I–II q. 28 a. 2c.

¹⁶ *ST* I–II q. 28 a. 2c.: ‘the lover is said to be in the beloved according to apprehension, inasmuch as the lover does not rest content with a superficial apprehension of the beloved, but strives to gain an intimate knowledge of everything pertaining to the beloved, so as to penetrate into his very soul’ (my trans. on the basis of *DF*).

¹⁷ *ST* I–II q. 28 a. 1c. *Nic. Eth.* 1166³²; *Confessions* 4, 6 (quoting Horace’s prayer asking the Gods to protect Virgil in *Carminum*, I, Ode 3, line 8 in the Loeb edition). Augustine refers to a friend he made at Thagaste whose death deeply affected him. ‘Still more, I wondered that he should die and I remain alive, for I was his second self.’ *Confessions* 4. 6. 11.

One possible response to this objection could be that, for Aquinas, the union produced by love is not accompanied by a parallel increase of knowledge about the loved one. This at least is Aquinas's argument in defence of the view that it is possible to love God perfectly without having perfect knowledge of Him. '[A] thing is loved more than it is known; since it can be loved perfectly, even without being perfectly known.'¹⁸ This is entirely in line with the passage quoted to support the objection above, for what the passage argues is that the effect of the union of love is a *desire* for cognition of everything related to the beloved, not that the effect is the actual and complete cognition of it.

6.1.2 Should Friends Resort to Justice when Occasion Arises?

According to a long-standing trend of thought, committed friends should not make recourse to justice even when occasion for such recourse arises. Unlike the view discussed in the previous section, here it is conceded that conflict can take place between friends. In this new contention, however, committed friends are expected to renounce the recourse to justice so as to avoid confrontation, harming the friend, and 'making things worse'.

Aquinas, as we shall see, explicitly argues against this contention. The restrictions that the commitment to friendship arguably imposes on the use of justice are not, for Aquinas, a matter of philosophical and theological speculation alone, but also of praxis. Aquinas's writings come from a time when Mendicants were under attack. Secular masters, particularly in the University of Paris, wanted Mendicants' rights and privileges removed (especially the right to teach).¹⁹ Mendicants often appealed to secular and ecclesiastical authorities to have their rights and privileges protected. One of the arguments advanced by the secular masters against the Mendicants was that the perfect Christian life that Mendicants claimed to live up to should prevent them from resorting to judicial courts.

The presumably unfriendly implications of recourse to justice were also of concern for the persons in charge of overseeing spiritual development in the first Christian communities. St Paul, for instance, apparently

¹⁸ *ST* I–II q. 27 a. 2 ad 2.

¹⁹ See J. P. Torrell, *St Thomas Aquinas: The Person and his Work*, trans. R. Royal (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 76–9.

condemns recourse to courts by those tied by relationships of fraternity.²⁰ He discusses the fact that fellow believers from Corinth resort to Gentile courts of justice. St Paul wonders whether it is impossible to find someone among the brethren to conduct justice and asks whether ‘this is why brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers?’ {sed frater cum fratre iudicio contendit, et hoc apud infideles?}.²¹ St Paul does not censor simply the fact that the court resorted to is Gentile, but, more fundamentally, the mere fact that fellow believers go to the law against each other. Aquinas comments:

It is said that ‘brother contends with brother in the trial {iudicio}’,²² which is not bad solely because you contend in front of gentiles, ‘but also because’, after your conversion, ‘it is completely faulty {omnino delictum est}’, that is, you ought to consider it a fault {delictum} ‘that a judicial dispute takes place between you’, between whom there should be peace: as it is said in II Tim. 2:24: ‘a servant of the Lord should not engage in quarrels {non oportet litigare}, but should be kind {mansuetum} with everyone’.²³

There are two separate elements to be considered here: the presence of conflict between friends and the recourse to courts. As I have already discussed Aquinas’s views on conflict between friends, I shall here concentrate on the second element only. Aquinas’s *Commentary* vehemently and extensively attacks wrong inferences from this passage of St Paul. Whatever the virtues of Aquinas’s reading qua interpretation, it leaves no doubt that Aquinas was keenly aware of the perils of reading St Paul too literally. Such literal reading would make Christians who are committed to charity easy prey to injustices by fellow believers.

The gist of Aquinas’s quite intricate commentary is that St Paul is not denouncing as evil recourse to courts as such. Rather St Paul is asserting

²⁰ Cor 6: 6. Cf. Matt. 5: 40: ‘if someone wishes to go to law with you to get your tunic, let him have your cloak as well’.

²¹ Cor 6: 6 and it continues (v. 7): ‘No; it is a fault in you, by itself, that one of you should go to law against another at all: why do you not prefer to suffer injustice, why not prefer to be defrauded?’ Or, as NRSV translates: ‘In fact, to have lawsuits at all with one another is already a defeat for you!’

²² For Aquinas’s use of the Roman concept of *iudicio*, see J. M. Aubert, *Le Droit romain dans l’Œuvre de Saint Thomas* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1955), 25–8.

²³ ‘Dicit ergo primo “Dictum est, quod frater cum fratre in iudicio contendit”, quod non solum malum est quod apud infideles contenditis, sed “iam quidem”, post conversionem vestram, “omnino delictum est in vobis”, id est, ad delictum vobis reputatur, “quod iudicia habetis inter vos”, inter quos scilicet debet esse pax: quia ut dicitur in II Tim. 2: 24 “Servum Domini non oportet litigare, sed mansuetum esse ad omnes.”’ *In I Cor.* 6. 1 ad v. 6 [278]; cf. *Impugn.* IV. c. 3 obj. 7 [449].

(i) that it has not been expedient *in the case of Corinth* to resort to the law, (ii) that the judicial process initiated by the Corinthians has not observed procedural justice.

Aquinas argues that both laypersons and holders of ecclesiastical status are allowed (and sometimes should) resort to courts against fellow believers. He rejects *tout court* the view that every recourse to judicial instances is a sin, noting that God Himself instituted judicial offices and appointed Moses to act as a judge.²⁴ Laypersons are no doubt allowed to claim what they think is theirs in court. The same is also true of friars. He dismisses the doctrinal authority of the interpretation of Peter Lombard of a text by St Augustine. According to Lombard *perfecti* can make demands {repetere} but cannot initiate judicial action or litigate: 'sine causa, sine iudicio, sine lite'.²⁵

This is not to say that, for Aquinas, one should rush to court, or be hasty in making public accusations. Aquinas's treatise on 'fraternal correction' carefully identifies the various instances that must be exhausted before publicly denouncing partakers in the friendship of charity for their wrongs.²⁶ The general idea is that it is not always *expedient* to resort to public instances. One should therefore employ discretion regarding such a move (for example, to consider the possible harm inflicted to the good name of the wrongdoer).²⁷ Elsewhere, Aquinas states that in certain cases temporal goods should be forgone in order to avoid the moral harm caused by scandal.²⁸

Similarly, although one should not think lightly about going to law, recourse to court as such is *licit* if certain conditions are observed.

²⁴ *In I Cor.* 6. 1 ad v. 6–7 [279]; Deut. 1: 16.

²⁵ *Impugn.* IV. c. 3 ad 1 [456]: 'It should be known that this Gloss is not authentic, but magisterial. Which is evident from the fact that it is a conclusion inferred from the words of Augustine, since a little before it is written: "the aforesaid words of Augustine, etc": in which Augustine says that the infirm are allowed to initiate judicial instances provided they are authorized. It is said however that this is not permitted to the perfect: and Peter Lombard even adds, "it is not that it is not permitted to them, but that it does not become them"'. *In I Cor.* 6. 1. ad v. 6–7 [279]: 'It seems from this, as a Gloss of Augustine says, that it is a sin to have a lawsuit against anyone; but this, as seen, is false' (in both cases Aquinas refers to, and rejects Peter Lombard's interpretation of Augustine). Peter Lombard, *in Enchiridion* c. 78, PL 191. 1578. Cf. *ST* II–II q. 43 a. 8 obj. 4; ad 4.

²⁶ *ST* II–II q. 33, esp. a. 7 and 8.

²⁷ Damaging the reputation of the wrongdoer, could, according to Aquinas, have a negative impact in his future behaviour, removing one of the incentives he has to amend his ways. Once public reputation is lost there is less to lose by committing further wrongs. *ST* II–II q. 33 a. 7c.

²⁸ *ST* II–II q. 43 a. 8c. Cf. *ST* II–II q. 68 a. 1c.

Aquinas's *Commentary* mentions four such conditions: (i) the motivation of the suitors should not be avarice or greed, (ii) the trial must not generate an atmosphere of contentiousness detrimental to public peace, (iii) procedural justice must be kept, (iv) scandal (that is moral shock harmful to society) is to be avoided.²⁹ Aquinas is confident that in most cases these requisites can in fact be observed.

The reason friars are not to go to court is quite simple: as individuals, friars do not have any property of their own (friars renounce private property upon joining the order). So friars do not have grounds to make demands *as individuals*. But—Aquinas adds—a friar can litigate in a court so as to defend common property.³⁰ This is not just allowed but is actually meritorious.³¹ Aquinas's *Commentary* on St Paul is remarkably consistent with the view expressed in his polemical tract *Contra Impugnantes* in which he addresses the arguments of the Mendicants' opponents (the *impugnantes*) that Christian charity should prevent Mendicants from resorting to the courts. After noting that St Paul himself resorted to the judiciary when he appealed to Caesar, Aquinas argues that:

- (i) It is licit for *perfecti* and holy men to receive armed protection (presumably from state authorities).³²
- (ii) It is licit for *perfecti* and holy men to defend their state of freedom³³ from those who wish to reduce religious and perfect men {*religiosi et perfecti viri*} to servitude. This is done principally by resorting to ecclesiastic judicial process {*iudicium ecclesiasticum*}.³⁴
- (iii) It is licit for *perfecti* and holy men to defend their own (communal) property rights or those of others.³⁵

²⁹ *In I Cor.* 6. 2 ad v. 8 [292].

³⁰ 'Consequently, it is not lawful for them [Mendicants] to demand in a judicial instance anything as their own {*quasi propria*}, since they are not permitted to possess anything of their own. They are permitted, however, to demand in a judicial instance that which they possess in common {*ea quae sunt communia*}.' *In I Cor.* 6. 1 ad v. 6–7 [279]. Also *Impugn.* IV. c. 3 ad 1 [456].

³¹ 'For they do not sin doing this, but rather they merit.' *In I Cor.* 6. 1 ad v. 6–7 [279]. A somewhat different (but compatible) approach can be found in *ST* II–II q. 71 a. 2c.

³² *Impugn.* IV. c. 3c. [451]. The study where Aquinas taught in Paris, in Rue Saint Jacques, received royal armed protection against university masters and students during the winter of 1255–6. Torrell, *St Thomas Aquinas*, 79 n. 22.

³³ On states of freedom and servitude see: *ST* II–II q. 183 a. 1c.

³⁴ *Impugn.* IV. c. 3c. [452]. ³⁵ *Impugn.* IV. c. 3c. [453].

- (iv) It is not merely licit but is a work of charity {ad officium caritatis pertinet} to use courts to free the oppressed from the oppressors, especially when we are closely related to the oppressed (as a friar is related to a fellow friar). It is not only allowed but is praiseworthy to resist the violence and deceit of evil people (by appealing to courts).³⁶

In his *Commentary* on St Paul, Aquinas adds that it is a work of charity to defend and restore the property of the poor if it is under threat or stolen.³⁷

6.1.3 Litigation and the Protection of Peace

Should we not prefer the preservation of peace over the regaining of material goods through litigation? Aquinas's reply is twofold. On the one hand he rejects crudely reducing the suitor's motivations to selfish worldly greed. As we have seen, many times suitors are, according to Aquinas, doing a work of charity by defending the interests of the most disadvantaged and the oppressed. On the other hand, what properly motivated suitors disturb by resorting to judicial litigation is not (at least not perceivedly) the kind of peace that warrants being left undisturbed.

The *impugnantes* argue that Christians going to court against each other destroys the fraternal peace that should reign between them. It would be against charity because the love of worldly goods would be placed above the love of neighbour.³⁸ Aquinas replies:

It is not always the case that when someone claims what is his own in court, he repels in his heart the peace that he should have with his neighbour. Therefore, given that the peace of the heart by no means should be lost for the sake of recuperating worldly goods, it does not follow that someone cannot claim worldly things in court.³⁹

³⁶ *Impugn.* IV. c. 3c. [454]: 'The adversaries of the religious may impugn the religious status either as to spiritual matters or as to temporal matters. Regarding spiritual matters one ought to resist. Regarding temporal matters one should be ready to sustain some personal harm {proprium detrimentum} but should nevertheless resist harm aimed at the community. Not defending the community from harm does not belong to perfection but rather to negligence and pusillanimity.' *Impugn.* IV. c. 3c. [455].

³⁷ *In I Cor.* 6. 1 ad v. 6–7 [279]: 'Est enim opus charitatis defendere vel recuperare res pauperum.'

³⁸ *Impugn.* IV. c. 3 obj. 7 [449].

³⁹ '[N]on semper quando aliquis rem suam repetit in iudicio, pacem quam cum proximo debet habere, a corde suo repellit. Unde quamvis pax cordis nullo modo sit

He then draws a parallel between the situation of a person surrounded by the agitation of judicial trial and that of a soldier in the turmoil of war. Just as the morally upright soldier should be able to harbour the desire for peace with his enemy even in the heat of war (which if impossible would render all wars illicit), so should the person taking part in a trial.⁴⁰

Aquinas's argument is reminiscent of his view about the relation between just wars and peace (peace being a requisite component of friendship). What is destroyed by a just war has only the appearance of peace but in truth it is an 'evil', 'fraudulent', 'simulated', 'apparent', 'transitory', or 'false' peace.⁴¹ Pseudo-peace shares with real peace only the fact that there is no combat. An unjust situation maintained by coercion can be combat-free. We have not many duties towards the non-disturbance of pseudo-peace and the duties we do have seem mostly to be concerned with avoiding producing even more suffering (say, by taking part in a botched or too costly uprising). We should recall in this regard the cautiously sympathetic attitude of Aquinas towards just rebellion: while in principle it is permissible to rise up against a tyrant, the rebels should only act if they have good reason to believe that they can effectively achieve their goal without causing more harm to society than that caused by the tyrant himself.⁴²

To sum up, for Aquinas, judicial action is not opposed to social peace as such, but only to that which merely retains the appearance of social peace. The properly motivated litigator is not, as charged, consenting to the upsetting of social peace since the peace that is being upset is not, in fact, genuine.

perdenda pro terrena re recuperanda, non sequitur quod aliquis non possit in iudicio terrenam rem repetere. In ipso enim tumultu iudicii plerumque est salva pax pectoris, cum etiam a bonis viris in bellorum tumultibus non amittatur: alias omnia bella essent illicita.' *Impugn.* IV. c. 3 ad 7 [462].

⁴⁰ Given the context, I read 'pax pectoris' not as 'peace of heart' but as harbouring a desire of peace with the neighbour which, however, is not manifest in external actions.

⁴¹ *ST II-II* q. 29 a. 1c.; ad 1: 'if one man concord with another, not of his own accord {spontanea voluntate}, but through being forced, as it were, by the fear of some evil that besets him, such concord is not really peace'. Terms that Aquinas uses to describe combat-free unjust situations: *pax mala*, *ST II-II* q. 40 a. 1 ad 3, *In Matt.* 10. 2, ad v. 34 [884]; *pax malorum*, *pax apparens*, *ST II-II* q. 29 a. 2 ad 3; *pax falsa*, *pax fraudulenta*, *In Hier.* 14. 4 ad v. 19; *pax simulata*, *In II Cor.* 13. 3 ad v. 12 [542]. Peace and concord is preserved by justice: *autographi deleta* of ScG, III, in *Opera Omnia*, xiv (Roma: Riccardi Garroni, 1926), 47*, *Pol.* II. 9 [271]; peace as enabled by justice: *ST II-II* q. 29 a. 3 ad 3; peace as caused by justice: *ST II-II* q. 180 a. 2 ad 2; peace as an effect of justice: *In Rom.* 14.2 (ad v. 2:17) [1128] [318–21].

⁴² *ST II-II* q. 52 a. 2 ad 3, *Ep. Reg.* 1. 7.

6.2 FRIENDSHIP AS A CONDITION OF JUST EXCHANGE

Here I shall argue that analysis of the theological view that there is no merit outside charity shows that, for Aquinas, there is a sense in which friendship is not opposed to, but rather is a necessary feature of, the circumstances in which it makes sense to invoke justice.

The text below discusses (1) the rewards for *actions* rather than other types of attributes, and (2) cases in which the person who rewards is in a position of superiority to the recipient (i.e. father–son or God–human beings).

To merit something from someone is to acquire a just claim on him. One question that arises in theology is: what are the conditions that allow someone to have, in some sense, a just claim on God? *Status merendi* is the status in which your actions towards another can make you the possessor of a just claim on that person. For Aquinas, not everyone is in *statu merendi*.⁴³ Merit involves the notion of debt (*debitum*).⁴⁴ This debt consists of what is owed to us but which we do not yet have: a person does not merit what he already has.⁴⁵ Consequently, Aquinas says that a son is not in *statu merendi* in relation to his father since what belongs to the father belongs in some sense to the son as well.⁴⁶ The son does not need to perform any actions to be rewarded by the father if he is already the lawful inheritor of his father's possessions.⁴⁷

Aquinas consistently supports the view that there is no merit without charity or, as he sometimes puts it, there is no merit for actions performed 'outside' charity.⁴⁸ By 'merit' he means merit *ex condigno*—the kind of

⁴³ 'For meriting, an agent must possess dominion over his acts and be able to apply himself to his act; where his dominion is lacking, so too is merit.' J. Wawrykow, *God's Grace & Human Action: 'Merit' in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, Ind. and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 108. See II *Sent.* d. 35 q. 1 a. 4 sol.: 'While an action receives the species of good from its *terminus*, it is because it proceeds from the will that it falls within the rationale of merit'; also d. 39 q. 1 a. 2 ad 2; III *Sent.* d. 30 q. un. a. 3 sol. un. c.

⁴⁴ II *Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 3 obj. 3; obj. 4; III *Sent.* d. 18 q. un. a. 2 ad 4; a. 4 sol. 1c. ad 1; sol. 4c.; a. 5 sol. un. c.

⁴⁵ ST I q. 62 a. 4c.; *Ver.* q. 29 a. 6c.

⁴⁶ III *Sent.* d. 18 q. un. a. 2 obj. 6.

⁴⁷ III *Sent.* d. 18 q. un. a. 2 obj. 6.

⁴⁸ Charity as *radix merendi*: II *Sent.* d. 11 q. 2 a. 1 obj. 1; III *Sent.* d. 18 q. un. a. 5 ad 2; d. 30 q. un. a. 5 sc. 1; sc. 2; sc. 3; IV *Sent.* d. 12 q. 3 a. 2 sol. 3c. ST II–II q. 23 a. 2c.; q. 182 a. 2c.; ST III q. 48 a. 1 obj. 3; *Pot.* q. 6 a. 9 obj. 3, c.; *dilectio* as *radix merendi*: *Car.* q. un. a. 1c.; no merit for *opera extra caritatem facta*: II *Sent.* d. 40 q. 1 a.

merit that involves debt based on some attribute of the human agent, as opposed to the 'debt' that God 'owes to himself' by virtue of his own attributes (*ex congruo*).⁴⁹ Only merit *ex condigno* entitles us to just deserts. But why does Aquinas insist that you need charity to merit?

6.2.1 Friendship and the Equivalence of Actions

A segment of the *Sentences* (IV *Sent.* d. 15 a. 3 sol. 4c) throws light on this question. Selecting this passage for discussion needs some justification given that in the *Summa Theologiae* Aquinas takes a different route to explain the need for grace-infused charity in order to merit.⁵⁰ While in IV *Sent.* d. 15 a. 3 sol. 4c. the explanation relies on the Aristotelian theory of friendship, in *ST* I–II Aquinas explains the need for charity by pointing out that certain goods (e.g. eternal life) exceed our unaided natural powers.⁵¹ The accounts of merit in IV *Sent.* and *ST* I–II are not incompatible, but examine different dimensions of the same process.⁵² If the point in question here were the theology of merit, the relevant texts in *ST* I–II could not be justifiably excluded. Since, however, my interest here is merit in its connection to friendship, however, I will focus only on the text from IV *Sent.*⁵³ The central passage to be discussed reads:

5 ad 2, IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 3c.; sol. 4c., ad 1; *Pot.* q. 6 a. 9c.; *nullum meritum sit sine caritate*: *Virt.* q. 1 a. 10 ad 4, a. 11c. (end); q. 2 a. 7 obj. 4.

⁴⁹ For some instances where the distinction between merit *ex congruo* and *ex condigno* is used, see II *Sent.* d. 27 q. 1 a. 3 sol. un. c., a. 6c. *Pot.* q. 6 a. 9c.; *In Heb.* 6. 3 ad v. 9–10 [305]; *ST* I–II q. 114 a. 3c., 5c., 6c. For the theoretical grounds for this distinction see *ST* I q. 21 a. 1c. For the Anselmian background to Aquinas's position see *Proslogium*, ch. 10.

⁵⁰ *ST* I–II q. 114 aa. 1–3.

⁵¹ *ST* I–II q. 114 a. 2c.

⁵² In comparing Aquinas's *ex professo* treatments of merit, Wawrykow (*God's Grace* 266–8) identifies as the main novel elements in *ST*, (i) divine ordination (or divine plan) as the source of 'debt' owed to creatures, and (ii) the focus on the actual objects or rewards of meritorious acts and especially the focus on what can *not* be merited. Wawrykow, following Henri Bouillard's clue (*Conversion et grâce chez S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Aubier, 1944)), attributes these changes to Aquinas's reading of later Augustine's anti-Pelagian works in the 1260s. Note however that friendship is not entirely absent from the main discussion of merit, since in *ST* I–II q. 114 prol. merit is announced as *the* effect of cooperative grace. Habitual grace is called cooperative insofar as it is the origin or principle of meritorious works. (*ST* I–II q. 111 a. 2c.) Certainly co-operation is not friendship, but it is part of what goes on in friendship.

⁵³ It must be noted that IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 4c. is not found in Aquinas's *ex professo* treatment of merit, but rather is placed in his discussion of satisfaction. It is not clear why Aquinas inserts an article about the requirements of merit in what appears not to be the most suitable context.

Now since in all gratuitous givings the primary reason of the giving is love, it is impossible for anyone, properly speaking, to lay claim to a gift, if he lack friendship. Wherefore, as all things, whether temporal or eternal, are bestowed on us by the bounty of God, no one can acquire a claim to any of them, save through charity towards God: so that works done without charity are not condignly meritorious of any good from God, either eternal or temporal.⁵⁴

The main argument can be formalized as follows:

- (i) For everything given gratis the first reason for giving is love (friendship);
- (ii) Thus it is impossible for someone to become a creditor if he lacks friendship (love);
- (iii) In the same way, every good—temporal and eternal—is given to us out of divine liberality (love/ friendship);
- (iv) Thus we cannot become entitled to anything unless we have charity (love, friendship) towards God.

The structure of the argument is as follows: Aquinas postulates a general truth (i) and a consequence (ii); then reiterates the argument as it applies to the theological case [(iii) and (iv)]. So (iii) is established by (i), and (iv) by (ii).

(i) indicates that for all acts of giving there is a reason (love), and those who conform to that reason have claim to those things that are being distributed (thus it is an application of the principle of ‘formal justice’). From this the argument jumps to (ii): only those who have friendship fall within this criterion of distribution. It is not clear whether this friendship is God’s friendship with us, or our friendship with Him. In (iii) ‘divine liberality’ substitutes for ‘love’, and in (iv) ‘charity’ substitutes for ‘friendship’. This indicates that in (i) ‘love’ refers to the giver’s love. So what matters is to be a recipient of the giver’s love. This is intended to explain why only friends are valid claimants to benefits: only they are loved. But the problem of the connection between (i) and (ii) remains. (iv) is of some help in this regard: it uses the expression ‘*per caritatem ad Deum*’, that charity which reaches, intends, or aims at

⁵⁴ ‘[C]um autem in omnibus illis quae gratis dantur prima ratio dandi sit amor; impossibile est quod aliquis tale sibi debitum faciat, qui amicitia caret, et ideo cum omnia bona et temporalia et aeterna ex divina liberalitate nobis donentur, nullus acquirere potest debitum recipiendi aliquid illorum, nisi per caritatem ad Deum; et ideo opera extra caritate facta, non sunt meritoria ex condigno neque aeterni neque temporalis alicujus boni apud Deum.’ IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 4c.= *Suppl.* q. 14 a. 4c.

God. It is one's reaching out to the giver with a friendly will that entitles one to the benefits.

The view that emerges from this passage is that for your actions to generate a just claim on the giver you must be a recipient of the giver's love, which you are if you are a friend of the giver. However, this raises serious objections. One would think that the worth of the action should not be determined by the agent's position with regard to the person who determines the worth. It seems unreasonable to make the agent's friendship the rule to appraise his entitlement to rewards.

Some light is shed on the issue by Aquinas's reply to an objection that argues that, just as punishing does not require any status on the part of the object of justice, nor should rewarding require such status.⁵⁵ Aquinas argues that:

- (i) the son cannot by any possible act return to his father what he has received from him;
- (ii) therefore the father never becomes a debtor of his son;
- (iii) much less can human beings through some kind of equivalence make God their debtor;
- (iv) so none of our actions can be a cause of merit in their own right;
- (v) yet, out of the power of charity, which makes common that which belongs to the friends, human actions can stand in equivalence to God's rewarding acts;
- (vi) from which it follows that acts done without charity do not lay just claims unto God.

The structure of the argument again singles out a generally true premiss (i) and a consequence (ii), which is then applied to the God–human relationship. However, the Aristotelian argument undergoes modifications: what matters now is not the fact that sons/human beings cannot return the full amount of what they have received from their parents/God, but that our actions, considered as ours, cannot stand in any equivalence to divine actions (for instance to divine rewards such as eternal life). Confronted with this problem, which would seem to deny room for any kind of just divine reward, Aquinas resorts (v) to a further principle: *ea quae sunt amicorum, esse communia*.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 4 obj. 1.

⁵⁶ Proverb quoted by Aristotle in *Nic. Eth.* 1159^b31, quoted by Aquinas in *Eth.* VIII. 9 [1660] [the Marietti text reads slightly differently: 'amicorum omnia sunt communia'] and *Pol.* II. 4 [200 (end)].

The thought here is that if a human being is a friend of God (has charity), her action is no longer simply a human action but an action which is common both to God and to her. When this happens God rewards human actions in recognition of the goodness of an action that is common to both friends. Friendship introduces proportional equivalence among the actions of unequals by making the actions of the partners common to both friends.

Let me flesh this out by providing a political example that picks out some of the features of what Aquinas has in mind. Take a country, poor and powerless in the extreme (Terrapovera), and a distant, extremely affluent, and powerful one (Opulenta). Terrapovera has nothing that Opulenta does not already have in enormous quantities but many of the goods Opulenta has Terrapovera lacks. In addition, Terrapovera is so poor and remote that it cannot even cause harm to Opulenta in any way.

In a case like this, the inequality between the countries is so extreme that no just exchange can take place. In fact, the value of the actions of Terrapovera and Opulenta belongs to different orders altogether: the value of Terrapovera's acts from Opulenta's point of view approaches zero, but the value of Opulenta's acts from Terrapovera's point of view is enormous. The values of the acts of the two countries cannot stand in proportional equivalence to one another.

One day Terrapovera freely decides to join one of Opulenta's projects, and Opulenta makes some of its power, riches, and other assets available to be shared with Terrapovera. In this manner Opulenta lifts Terrapovera to its—Opulenta's—level, at least in the restricted sense that Terrapovera's actions are now on the same scale as Opulenta's—that is, they are capable of proportional equivalence. Now both countries can engage in exchange of a kind that we can call just or unjust; they are now also in a situation in which they can engage in cooperation and friendship.⁵⁷

In assessing Aquinas's explanation it is important to contrast common action with its alternatives. We can first think of a person acting as a tool of another: a slave acting on his master's orders. In this case we would not be able to talk about friendship or common action. The contrast between slavery and friendship is emphasized in the biblical verse in which Jesus tells his Apostles, 'I shall not call you servants, because

⁵⁷ This example is not remote from 'real-world' politics. Consider the position of a small country which joins a powerful alliance. On its own right the country had little leverage, but as an alliance-member its claims bear more strongly on the countries that compose the alliance.

a servant does not know the master's business; I call you my friends' (John 15: 15). Aquinas comments that 'the servant that is moved only by another, and not by himself, is related to the mover as a craftsman to his tool. The tool communicates (shares) with the craftsman in the work but not in the reason or point of the work.'⁵⁸ Aquinas then argues that when the master allows the servants access to the reasons behind his acts, and the servants act on those reasons, they have less of the character of servants and more of the character of rational self-movers, and, concomitantly, they become friends.

We can also think about the actions of a part (for instance, for Aristotle, the actions of a child before reaching the age of reason).⁵⁹ Here there is also no common action, just as the action of my hand is *my* action, not an action of both my hand and me. For there to be common action you need at least two distinct free beings who cooperate.

Let us restate Aquinas's view. Imagine a situation comprised by someone (A) who distributes rewards, and two persons who perform a similar action. One (B) is a friend of (A) but the other (C) is not. (B) and (C) are on the same level and separated by a wide gap from (A).

The question is, why would B's action give occasion for A's reward while C's action would not? Aquinas says that while C's action is just his, B's action is really (B+A)'s action. This makes possible a proportional equivalence between A's rewards and B's action. Friendship establishes relations of justice between unequal partners by introducing proportional equivalence in their actions, and thus introducing some kind of equality.⁶⁰

6.2.2 What Makes the Friend's Action Common?

The friend's action (by which he lays just claim on the superior) is not merely declared common; it is common.

⁵⁸ *In Ioann.* 15. 3 ad v. 15 [2015]: 'ille servus qui movetur solum ab alio, et non a se, habet se ad moventem sicut instrumentum ad artificem. Instrumentum autem communicat cum artifice in opere, sed non in operis ratione. Sic ergo tales servi participant solum in opere.'

⁵⁹ *Nic. Eth.* 1161^b22–4.

⁶⁰ This solution of Aquinas stirs up some troubling questions which I will not discuss here: Is not God rewarding himself when he rewards actions done within the bond of charity? Does not Aquinas fall back on merit *ex congruo* by which God acts not in response to the merits of creatures but rather in consonance with His own attributes?

The typical activity of friends is to engage in communication {communication}. According to Aquinas's interpretation of John 15: 15 a friend's action is common in the sense that the friend is 'moved' both by himself and by his friend. A friend is moved by his friend in the sense that he is moved by reasons that result from communication with the friend. The action of the friend is common because it is the action of a free being who acts on reasons resulting from engaging in communication.

Acting 'outside friendship'⁶¹ thus means acting on reasons that are not available within friendship and the communication that it entails. But since actions should be described 'internally'⁶²—that is, understood by reference to their point or goal (the reason why)—actions performed outside the boundaries of friendship are different from the actions performed within friendship even if they look the same. Hence it is misleading to talk about the same action now performed within the boundaries of friendship and now outside.

Aquinas's view is that the transition from being merely a tool, or a part, to being a rational self-mover who is a subject of justice is concomitant with the emergence of friendship. Inversely, becoming a friend is likewise concomitant with the emergence of autonomy that makes us subjects of justice. It would be a mistake to take the presence of 'community' or 'friendship' as fixed data that can be identified prior to the exercise of justice. In the case examined there is not community between master and servant before the circumstances of justice show up. If things are seen in this way, to say that the field of justice is the community does not set any boundaries to such a field (or at least none that can be identified prior to the exercise of justice).

6.3 SUMMARY

Aquinas would reject the view that friendship affords no occasion for recourse to justice. Innocent conflict, partly caused by the parties'

⁶¹ 'Reasons not available within friendship ...': a reason is available in a particular context if the resources conducive to grasping that reason are present (these resources can be intellectual stimuli, conversation, accumulated experiences, the presence of a person who has knowledge).

⁶² See Finnis, *Aquinas*, 37–40.

insurmountable lack of knowledge about each other, is likely to take place between broadly conceived friends. Aquinas also vehemently and eloquently opposes the view that a committed friend should invariably endure injustice rather than resort to justice against his friend. He resists the depiction of the suitor as greedy, acquisitive, and petty-minded, and refuses to identify all litigation-free situations as those of peace that should be left undisturbed at all costs.

Although we cannot say that Aquinas contests these views by deploying sophisticated philosophical armoury, he does employ a great deal of hermeneutic dexterity. More than that, he shows considerable perspicacity in correctly spotting some contestable political uses of those texts from the Christian tradition that advocate meekness and patience in the face of injustice and the forsaking of justice for the maintenance of peace. The political relevance of these texts is not, of course, restricted to the historic circumstances which prompted Aquinas to write on these matters. The tension between the concern for peace and the pursuit of legitimate rights has divided Christians often enough. Sympathizers of Liberation Theology, who professed to undertake the defence of the rights of the poor, were often accused of promoting class-war inimical to the spirit of Christianity. A similar dividing tension was faced by Christians living in national struggle scenarios such as Northern Ireland and the Basque Country.

The chapter also shows that Aquinas's theological view that there is no merit without (or 'outside') charity can also be expressed non-theologically: when two persons are separated by a wide gap, the actions of the inferior do not lay just claims on the superior unless the inferior is a friend. The inferior's actions become effective in entitling him to just deserts only when proportional equivalence between the superior's and the inferior's actions becomes possible. Proportional equivalence obtains only when the inferior's actions are seen as the common actions of both friends. An action is common to two persons when neither of the persons is merely a part or tool of the other, both cooperate freely, and both share reasons. Friends' actions are common actions.

It must be stressed that this reading of Aquinas's view does not lend support to the notion that friendship takes precedence over

justice ('you only have justice if you have friendship first'). In this reading, Aquinas believes that, in the transition from a superior–inferior relationship to a relationship between partners, friendship and the possibility of just interaction arise concomitantly.

Justice, Satisfaction, and Restoration of Friendship

When approaching corrective justice, one can take a narrower or a wider approach. The narrow, perhaps more traditional approach to corrective justice focuses on re-establishing the balance that prevailed between victim and offender previous to the offence. This balance is usually brought about by making reparation to the victim, normally through restitution and punishment.

However, when one approaches acts of injustice with an awareness of the way such acts upset and damage fellowship bonds, additional features of the situation acquire saliency. This wider approach focuses on the possible means of re-establishing the bonds of fellowship that were in place before the wrongful act. These means may go beyond the conventional restitution/punishment response. Aquinas maintains awareness of both perspectives. His keen interest in reconciliation relates to his more overarching theological concerns. God is both the first victim of every wrong and the friend of the offender, inasmuch as she is a potential recipient of His grace and love. Every wrong damages the friendship with God that, for Aquinas, constitutes the ultimate end of rational beings.

This chapter examines Aquinas's understanding of the way in which the aim of reconciliation affects the operation of corrective justice. The discussion centres on 'satisfaction', a term that Aquinas uses to denote the sequence of acts and attitudes necessary for the offender to atone for his wrongs in the eyes of the victim. It is important to keep in mind that Aquinas's writing of a treatise on penance (of which satisfaction is an integral part), in the *Summa Theologiae*, was left interrupted. As a consequence, many of the materials needed to establish Aquinas's position on satisfaction come from the *Scriptum super Libros Sententiarum*. We cannot be sure that the views found there entirely reflect his later understanding of penance and satisfaction.

7.1 SATISFACTION AND FRIENDSHIP

Justice demands satisfaction for offences. Catholic theologians have traditionally examined two different sorts of satisfaction. There is, first, the satisfaction that is a part of the sacrament of penance, through which we redress victims of our own individual wrongs (i.e. personal, or 'actual', sins as opposed to Original Sin). There is, in addition, that satisfaction which Christ, through his Passion, made on behalf of humankind to remit for Original Sin.¹ This chapter concentrates on sacramental satisfaction, although some reference will be made to humankind's satisfaction for Original Sin.

Penance designates a series of steps one should go through to amend for one's act of offence against either God and/or a fellow human being. Sacramental satisfaction is one of the three parts of the sacrament of penance (the other two being contrition and confession). Penance is a sacrament, but, for Aquinas, it is also a moral (not theological) virtue, included under, or identical with, the virtue of justice.² This satisfaction is performed through penitential acts, typically by fasting, almsgiving, and praying.

Aquinas insists that satisfaction is both forward and backward looking. It is backward looking in that it seeks to restore, as much as possible, the situation that preceded the offence. It is forward looking in that it aims to achieve reconciliation between victim and offender and to reform the offender's future behaviour. If satisfaction looks forward to re-establishing friendship, should we not regard it, as Aquinas himself asks, as an act of charity rather than of justice?³ In his reply Aquinas

¹ In writing this chapter I have benefited from the following works: J. Patout Burns, 'The Concept of Satisfaction in Medieval Redemption Theory', *Theological Studies*, 36 (1975), 285–304; A. Patfoort, 'Le Vrai Visage de la satisfaction du Christ selon saint Thomas', in C.-J. Pinto de Oliveira (ed.), *Ordo Sapientiae et Amoris: Hommage au Professeur Jean-Pierre Torrell* (Fribourg: Éditions universitaires Fribourg, 1993), 247–63; J. Bracken, 'Thomas Aquinas and Anselm's Satisfaction Theory', *Angelicum*, 62 (1985), 502–30; D. P. Jamros, 'Satisfaction for Sin: Aquinas on the Passion of Christ', *Theological Quarterly*, 56 (1990), 307–27; E. Luijten, *Sacramental Forgiveness as a Gift of God: Thomas Aquinas on the Sacrament of Penance* (Leuven: Peeters, 2003); and R. Cessario, *Christian Satisfaction in Aquinas: Towards a Personalist Understanding* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1982).

² IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 1. sol. 2c.

³ As objected in IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 1. sol. 2 obj. 1; cf. ST III q. 85 a. 2 ad 1; Cessario, *Christian Satisfaction*, 56 n. 13.

distinguishes between two ways in which an act pertains to a virtue.⁴ An act is connected 'elicitively' to a virtue when that virtue produces immediately that sort of act.⁵ By contrast, an act is connected 'imperatively' to a virtue when a virtue uses or directs the act to achieve the end of that virtue (but this does not mean that the act belongs to the virtue). In this sense one virtue can rule over another: by directing the acts proper to the other virtue to its own end. Accordingly, an act of justice such as repayment can be used to contribute to the end of charity. Thus, for Aquinas, satisfaction is properly and directly (i.e. elicitively) an act of justice that can also be directed (imperatively) towards the goal of charity: reconciliation.

Although satisfaction is, as said, an act of corrective justice, it differs in many respects from conventional corrective punishment. Some of these peculiarities—I argue—have to do with the fact that satisfaction is conceived of by Aquinas as a means of reconciliation.

Aquinas's account of satisfaction draws from two main sources: St Anselm of Canterbury's extremely influential *Cur Deus Homo?*, and the definition of satisfaction in Gennadius of Marseille's *Liber ecclesiasticis dogmatibus*, which Aquinas thought authored by St Augustine. Anselm's treatment of satisfaction makes no mention of friendship and gives only a marginal place to the theme of reconciliation with God. Anselm is almost exclusively concerned with corrective justice, that is, with the restoration to God, through satisfaction, of the honour of which we unjustly deprive Him when we sin. He bases the need for God's incarnation and Christ's Passion on humanity's incapacity to satisfy alone for an infinitely grave sin. This satisfaction is required by the justice of a God which cannot be renounced, lest God act in contradiction with His very attributes. Gennadius takes, instead, what we may call a 'therapeutic approach'. For him 'satisfaction aims at cutting out the

⁴ The distinction is also used by Aquinas in IV *Sent.* d. 17 q. 3 a. 2 sol. 3 c., *ST* II–II q. 51 a. 2 ad 1, q. 81 a. 1 ad 1; *Car.* q. un. a. 5 ad 3. The function of the distinction is to set apart the immediate relation between an act and the corresponding virtue from connections that are purely contextual and contingent. See IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2 ad 1.

⁵ For another instance of this distinction formulated along similar lines see *ST* II–II q. 81 a. 1 ad 1: 'Religion has two kinds of acts. Some are its proper and immediate acts, which it elicits and by which man is directed to God alone, for instance, sacrifice, adoration and the like. But it has other acts, which it produces through the medium of the virtues which it commands, directing them to the honour of God, because the virtue which is concerned with the end, commands the virtues which are concerned with the means.'

root causes of sin and strengthening one against its enticements in the future'.⁶ Neither Anselm's nor Gennadius' accounts of satisfaction devote a central role to friendship. It seems then that the emphasis on friendship is Aquinas's original contribution to the understanding of satisfaction. For Aquinas, sacramental satisfaction is primarily an exercise of justice between friends, or between former friends who want to be friends again.

The importance of friendship to Aquinas's understanding of satisfaction is reflected in his contentions that (1) satisfaction, unlike conventional punishment, is of no value if performed for only *some* of the previous offences, (2) satisfaction must come freely of the offender's own accord, (3) satisfaction is especially interested in the restoration of honour to the victim, rather than of other unlawfully taken goods, (4) the offender's satisfaction need not be quantitatively equivalent to the gravity of his fault. Let me expand on each of these points.

7.1.1 Comprehensiveness

Aquinas argues that satisfaction looks beyond the removal of single offences; instead, comprehensively approaching the accrued record of interactions between the two persons. He asks 'Can a man satisfy for one sin without satisfying for another?':

Some have held that it is possible to make satisfaction for one sin and not for another, as Peter Lombard states. But this cannot be. For since the previous offence has to be removed by satisfaction, the mode of satisfaction must needs be consistent with the removal of the offence. Now removal of offence is renewal of friendship: wherefore if there be anything to hinder the renewal of friendship there can be no satisfaction [...] even as neither would a man make satisfaction to another for a blow, if while throwing himself at his feet he were to give him another.⁷

⁶ Gennadius of Marseilles (Massiliensis), *Liber ecclesiasticis dogmatibus* (PL 58. 994): 'Satisfactio poenitentia est, causas peccatorum excidere, nec earum suggestionibus aditum indulgere.'

⁷ *ST Suppl.* q. 14 a. 1c. = *IV Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 1c.: 'quidam dixerunt quod "potest de uno peccato satisfieri sine alio", ut magister in littera dixit; sed hoc non potest esse. Cum enim per satisfactionem tolli debeat offensa praecedens, oportet quod talis sit modus satisfactionis qui competat ad tollendam offensam, offensae autem ablatio est amicitiae restitutio; et ideo si aliquid sit quod amicitiae restitutionem impediatur, etiam apud homines satisfactio esse non potest [...] impossibile est ut homo de uno peccato satisfaciatur alio retento; sicut nec homo satisfaceret, qui pro alapa sibi data, se ei prosterneret, et aliam sibi daret.'

The goal of satisfaction is the restoration of fellowship between victim and offender. Partial removal of offence, even if it were possible, would be incapable of securing this goal.

In answering the related question, whether by penance one sin can be pardoned without another, Aquinas suggests that it is not just that piecemeal penance is ineffective in restoring friendship, but also that it reveals that the person attempting to satisfy is not properly motivated:

[M]ortal sin cannot be forgiven without true penance, to which it belongs to renounce sin, by reason of its being against God which is common to all mortal sins: and where the same reason applies, the result will be the same. Consequently a man cannot be truly penitent if he repent of one sin and not of another. For if one particular sin were displeasing to him, because it is against the love of God above all things (which motive is necessary for true repentance), it follows that he would repent of all.⁸

As satisfaction, penance cannot be performed in piecemeal fashion. The reason for this is that the penitent should feel remorse at having 'done something against' the victim. This rationale logically extends remorse at all such acts. Doing penance for one offence and not for another indicates that the penitent has not fully understood or fully endorsed the rationale that should guide his penance.

Just as the offender seeking satisfaction cannot, under the rationale of satisfaction, satisfy for just some of the offences he is aware of, the penitent cannot, under the rationale of penance, do penance for just some of his sinful actions he is aware of. The point of satisfaction is restoration of fellowship, the point of repentance is remorse out of love for the victim.

As Romanus Cessario observes, for Aquinas, '[t]he acts of satisfaction which a man makes to God are not isolated, mercantile exchanges that have an intrinsic value all their own. These acts of satisfaction find their worth within a broader context; they are part of the relationship that exists between God and man which is the love of friendship or charity.'⁹

⁸ *ST* III q. 86 a. 3c.: 'peccatum mortale non potest sine vera poenitentia remitti, ad quam pertinet deserere peccatum inquantum est contra Deum. Quod quidem est commune omnibus peccatis mortalibus. Ubi autem eadem ratio est et idem effectus. Unde non potest esse vere poenitens qui de uno peccato poenitet et non de alio. Si enim displiceret ei illud peccatum quia est contra Deum super omnia dilectum, quod requiritur ad rationem verae poenitentiae, sequeretur quod de omnibus peccatis poeniteret. Unde sequitur quod impossibile sit unum peccatum remitti sine alio.'

⁹ Cessario, *Christian Satisfaction*, 64.

To the objection that, just as each debt can be treated separately, so can every offence, Aquinas responds:

When a man is in obligation to another by reason of a debt, the only inequality between them is that which is opposed to justice, so that for restitution nothing further is required than that the equality of justice should be reinstated, and this can be done in respect of one debt without another. But here there is an offence {*offensa*}, which is opposed not so much to the inequality of justice but mainly to the *equality of friendship*, so that for the offence to be removed by satisfaction, not only must the equality of justice be restored by the payment of punishment equal to the offence, but also the equality of friendship must be reinstated, which is impossible so long as an obstacle to friendship remains.¹⁰

The distinction between the 'equality of justice' and the 'equality of friendship' here might introduce the suspicion that for Aquinas 'the equality of friendship' is other than, and perhaps requires more than, the equality strictly required by justice.¹¹

Aquinas's chosen labelling of these two equalities is unhappy, for all he really wants to say is that the 'equality of friendship', and its corresponding inequality, designate a property of a *extended temporal range* of interactions. This is not to say that the evaluation done of the events covered by this range, and the recommendations done for the re-establishment of the 'equality of friendship', are not dictated by justice. The 'equality of friendship' does not designate a state of affairs recommended by a virtue other than justice. What friendship determines, and expands, is the *scope* of events to be examined by people who have to make decisions regarding the possible readmission of someone into friendship.

¹⁰ *ST Suppl.* q. 14 a. 1 ad 2 = *IV Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 1 ad 2.: '[I]n obligatione debiti non est nisi inaequalitas iustitiae opposita, quia unus rem alterius habet; et ideo ad restitutionem non exigitur nisi quod restituatur aequalitas iustitiae: quod quidem potest fieri de uno debito, non de alio. Sed ubi est offensio, ibi est inaequalitas non tantum iustitiae opposita, sed etiam amicitiae; et ideo ad hoc quod per satisfactionem offensio tollatur, non solum oportet quod aequalitas iustitiae restituatur per recompensationem aequalis poenae, sed etiam quod restituatur amicitiae aequalitas; quod non potest fieri, dum aliquid est quod amicitiam impedit.' Also *ST III* q. 86 a. 3 ad 4: 'Debt as regards external things, e.g. money, is not opposed to friendship through which the debt is pardoned; hence one debt can be condoned without another. On the other hand, the debt of sin {debitum culpae} is opposed to friendship and so the guilt for one sin or offence {culpa vel offensio} is not remitted without another; for it would seem absurd for anyone to ask even a man to forgive him one offence and not another.'

¹¹ Luijten (*Sacramental Forgiveness*, 60–1) understands the text in this way.

7.1.2 Voluntariness

If a just state of affairs is disrupted, corrective justice requires restoring misappropriated items to their original possessor. Corrective justice, at least in its narrow sense, is silent about who is supposed to bring this restoration about (either the judge by punishing the tortfeasor, or the tortfeasor by punishing himself).

Reconciliation, on the other hand, requires that the offender exhibit certain characteristics: being contrite, feeling remorse, having the genuine intention not to perform again the sort of acts that caused the disruption of the relationship. If justice is reinstated by someone other than the offender, he would fail to acquire the attributes that would allow him to hope for reconciliation.

Self-enforcement distinguishes merely corrective justice from satisfactory punishment (*poena satisfactoria*). Aquinas argues that only those punishments that are voluntarily undertaken can be called 'satisfactory'.¹² He seems, therefore, to disagree with Anselm, who argues that God will exact satisfaction by force if the offender refuses to do so voluntarily.¹³ Voluntary self-punishment demonstrates the offender's repudiation of the wrongful act, and the will to restore as much as possible to the victim. In order to readmit the offender to friendship the victim needs to establish the presence of this will in the offender. The victim's focus is not so much on the items restored, but on what such restoration says about the person of the offender. Acts of restoration are indicators of the possession of characteristics in the offender that make her eligible for readmission.

It will be noticed, finally, that penance presents the paradox of self-punishment. If, as Aquinas sensibly believes, punishment must be inflicted against one's will, how can one voluntarily punish oneself? The paradox is acknowledged, although perhaps not solved, by Aquinas.¹⁴

¹² *ST* I–II q. 87 a. 7c., 8c., *Ver.* q. 26 a. 9 ad sc. 2. *ST* III q. 90 a. 2c.: '[C]ompensation for offences is otherwise in penance than in vindicative justice. Because, in vindicative justice the compensation is made according to the judge's decision, not according to the discretion of the offender or of the person offended; whereas, in penance, compensation for the offence is made according to the will of the sinner, and the judgement of God against whom the sin was committed, *because* in the latter case we seek not only the reinstatement of the equality of justice, as in vindicative justice, but also and still more, the reconciliation of friendship, which is accomplished by the offender making compensation according to the will of the person offended' (*DF* with modifications).

¹³ Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur deus homo?*, c. 14, p. 205.

¹⁴ The paradox is acknowledged by Aquinas, who admits that punishment that is undergone voluntarily has less of the character of punishment. Yet it does maintain some

7.1.3 The Currency of Redress

As we have seen, Aquinas ascribes both satisfaction and penance to the virtue of justice,¹⁵ and to commutative justice in particular.¹⁶ Despite the fact that the equality brought about by satisfaction is not concerned 'with external goods but with actions and attitudes wherewith one perpetrates an injustice',¹⁷ it is still aimed at the restitution of a sort of equality: that between what has been done to us and what we do to others.¹⁸ Aquinas believes that it is honour or dignity, rather than the material loss caused by the wrong, that the victim sees restored through the punishment, whether it is self-inflicted, as in satisfaction, or other-inflicted, as in conventional corrective justice.¹⁹ Penitence restores the honour unduly taken from the victim of the offence.²⁰ Satisfaction is a form of showing the honour fitting to the victim out of recognition of the previous unjust disregard for that very honour. The offender does this by voluntarily displaying humility in the victim's presence.

of that character of punishment because such punishment is not undertaken entirely voluntarily (in the same sense that the sailor who throws merchandise overboard to save himself is not acting entirely voluntarily): *ST* I–II q. 87 a. 6c.

¹⁵ Cessario, *Christian Satisfaction*, 56; cf. *IV Sent.* d. 15. q. 1. a. 1 sol. 1c.: 'satisfactio formaliter iustitiae actus est'.

¹⁶ *ST* III q. 85 a. 3 ad 3: 'As there is a kind of commutation in favors, when, to wit, a man gives thanks for a favor received, so also is there commutation in the matter of offenses, when, on account of an offense committed against another, a man is either punished against his will, which pertains to vindictive justice, or makes amends of his own accord, which belongs to penance, which regards the person of the sinner, just as vindictive justice regards the person of the judge.'

¹⁷ Cessario, *Christian Satisfaction*, 60; *IV Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1c.: 'reparation of the inequality existing between things is called "restitution". Reparation, however, of the inequality that exists in actions performed and undergone is called "satisfaction". Hence sometimes there is satisfaction without any restitution.'

¹⁸ 'There are two modes of inequality opposed to justice. One mode concerns exterior things, as when a person retains a thing not of his own. A different mode concerns actions done and undergone, as when someone beats someone else violently. And these two modes can sometimes take place separately, and this is evident. Sometimes, however, they appear in conjunction, as when someone receives something [i.e. a punch] by violence, in which case he from whom the thing is received inflicts injury and affront to the person who received [the punch].' *IV Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1c.

¹⁹ *ST* II–II q. 67 a. 4 ad 3, responding to the objection (obj. 3) that argues that absolving the offender [reus] from punishment does not harm anyone, Aquinas argues that such absolution harms the victim who fails to see his honour restituted through the punishment of the offender.

²⁰ *IV Sent.* d. 14 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 4 ad 4, d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2 sc. 1 (quoting Anselm), d. 15 q. 1 a. 2, d. 15 q. 1 a. 4 sol. 1 c., sol. 2 ad 3.

Aquinas's identification of honour as the currency of satisfaction is partly a result of Anselm's influence, and perhaps also of the fact that, theologically speaking, it is God who is the ultimate subject of the offence. (The question naturally arises as to how an invulnerable God can be a victim of injustice.)²¹

For Aquinas, however, honour is not merely one of a set of unlawfully taken goods; rather, it is a particularly important requirement of reconciliation. When Aquinas defends the view that restitution is not a part of, but rather a preamble to, satisfaction, he points out that reconciliation is not, as such, effected by restitution of goods, but rather by the display of humility on the part of the offender.²² It is partly this psychological insight that leads Aquinas to agree with the received view that satisfaction is about honour.

Anselm focuses only on what justice requires. For Aquinas, however, reconciliation functions as a horizon that allows us to discern those deviations from justice which should be satisfied for. Satisfaction is not directly concerned with the restoration of all unjustly taken goods, but only with the restoration of those unjustly taken goods that are most necessary to effect reconciliation.

Perhaps a discussion of satisfaction as it relates to interhuman relationships alone would accord a less central place to honour and dignity (Aquinas normally treats honour and dignity as synonyms).²³ Having said this, it remains a pertinent insight that an important part of the resentment caused by the offence stems from the disrespect suffered by the victim. The victim typically conditions reconciliation on gaining a sense that the offender respects her, and exhibits an understanding that he should not again act in ways that violate her dignity.

It remains unclear whether a display on humility on the part of the offender infallibly or generally restores dignity to the victim. In some instances it certainly does. If the corner vandal, out of remorse, decides to carry out the unpleasant job of cleaning the draining of the victim's house, then, conceivably, the victim would see her sense

²¹ This is answered by St Anselm on aesthetic grounds: '[The offender] disturbs the order and beauty of the universe, as relates to himself, although he cannot injure nor tarnish the power and majesty of God.' *Cur deus Homo?*, c. 15 p. 209.

²² *IV Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1 ad 1.

²³ Aquinas often mentions honour and dignity in one breath, as though they are synonyms (*honor vel dignitas, honor seu dignitas, honor sive dignitas*). See *II Sent.* d. 5 q. 1 a. 3c.; *ScG IV* c. 55 n. 14; *ST II-II* q. 95 a. 8c.; *Impugn.* II. c. 3 ad 29 [165]; *Sort.* c. 2.

of being respected restored. Modes of satisfaction need to be devised carefully in order to produce the effects that Aquinas ascribes them. Medieval practice was rich with rituals of penitence, each fashioned to fit an individual offence. Often penance was performed publicly.²⁴ Public penance may seem alien—perhaps even offensive—to the modern sensibility. This practice is nonetheless telling in at least the following sense: the disrespect one suffers in being the victim of an offence is not lost on the bystanders. When the public sees unlawful acts perpetrated against a person they may come to perceive that this person is not due the respect that disallows these offensive acts. The victim may rightfully demand satisfaction not so much to get the offender to acknowledge and respect her dignity, but rather, to restore her honour and status in the eyes of her fellow community members.

7.2 FRIENDSHIP AND QUANTITATIVE SATISFACTION

Satisfaction presented medieval theologians with a serious problem. If offences against God (which include offences against persons) are, as they thought them to be, of infinite gravity, how can human beings, collectively or individually, make satisfaction? This problem is similar to the problem of merit, discussed in the previous chapter. There we asked: ‘How can one earn God’s reward given that a person’s actions possess infinitesimal value compared to those of God?’ Here the question is, ‘How can one pay one’s infinite debt, given the comparatively infinitesimal value of one’s available satisfactory actions?’

Friendship plays a central role in Aquinas’s solution to the problem of merit. Does it play a similar role in his treatment of satisfaction? This question is best examined first as regards sacramental satisfaction, then as regards Christ’s satisfaction for humanity. The discussion reveals that the answer to this question is not straightforward: while friendship allows sacramental satisfaction to effect reconciliation, God’s friendship with humankind cannot be said to play a significant role in Aquinas’s account of Christ’s satisfaction on behalf of humanity.

²⁴ I have found instructive in this regard chs. 3 and 8 of M. C. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1995).

7.2.1 Sacramental Satisfaction

For Aquinas, as for Anselm, sin, both personal and original, is, inasmuch as it involves violation of God's commands (canonically, 'aversion of God'), of infinite gravity. The infinite gravity of sin poses the question whether man, regarded individually or collectively, can in fact satisfy. Aquinas finds Aristotelian friendship helpful in his discussion of that satisfaction that is a part of penance:

Man becomes God's debtor in two ways; first, by reason of favors received, secondly, by reason of sin committed: and just as thanksgiving or worship or the like regard the debt for favors received, so satisfaction regards the debt for sin committed. Now in giving honor to one's parents or to the gods, as indeed as Aristotle says (*Nic. Eth.* VIII. 14), it is impossible to repay them measure for measure, but it suffices that man repay as much as he can, for friendship does not demand measure for measure, but what is possible. Yet even this is equal somewhat, viz. according to proportion, for as the debt due to God is, in comparison with God, so is what man can do, in comparison with himself, so that in another way the form of justice is preserved. It is the same as regards satisfaction. Consequently man cannot make satisfaction to God if 'satis' [enough] denotes quantitative equality; but he can, if it denote proportionate equality, as explained above, and as this suffices for justice, so does it suffice for satisfaction.²⁵

This passage supports the view that once we consider a relationship to be one of friendship, quantitative satisfaction is no longer required. If the friend (the human being) repays to God to the extent that he can, satisfaction is achieved. However, Aquinas seems to contradict this view in his reply to an objection in the same article. He argues that the problem posed by the infinity of the fault is surmounted by God's

²⁵ IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 2c.: '[D]upliciter homo Deo debitor efficitur. Uno modo ratione beneficii accepti; alio modo ratione peccati commissi. Et sicut gratiarum actio vel latria, vel si quid est huiusmodi, respicit debitum accepti beneficii, ita satisfactio respicit debitum peccati commissi. In his autem honoribus qui sunt ad parentes et deos, etiam secundum philosophum, impossibile est aequivalens reddere secundum quantitatem; sed sufficit ut homo reddat quod potest; quia amicitia non exigit aequivalens nisi secundum quod possibile est; et hoc etiam aequale est aliquid, scilicet secundum proportionalitatem: quia sicut se habet quod Deo est debitum ad ipsum Deum, ita hoc quod iste potest reddere, ad eum; et sic aliquo modo forma iustitiae conservatur; et similiter est ex parte satisfactionis. Unde non potest homo satisfacere, si ly satis aequalitatem quantitatis importet. Contingit autem, si importet aequalitatem proportionis, ut dictum est, est hoc sicut, sufficit ad rationem iustitiae, ita sufficit ad rationem satisfactionis.'

mercifully bestowing grace on our satisfaction to the extent necessary to make it acceptable in His eyes.²⁶ This grace is provided through the medium of Christ the mediator, qua Head of the Church, on the faithful, through His Passion.

Two different, perhaps even conflicting, solutions are proposed to resolve the problem posed by the infinity of fault. In the first solution, we are released from the need to make payment in full because of the mitigating intervention of friendship. In one reading of the second solution, full satisfaction is still required, but it is God's grace that enables us to pay the debt by augmenting the value of our satisfaction. These two solutions are actually identical if one takes grace as God's readiness to accept what the friend can give. Grace, however, seems here to be conceived somewhat differently, as an attribute of our satisfaction (the satisfaction is *gratia informata*). God accepts our satisfactory works by responding to the presence of an attribute—grace—that He instills in them. Grace, in this second solution, augments the limited satisfactory value of our otherwise insufficient action.

It seems therefore difficult to reconcile these two solutions to the problem of the infinity of fault. A closer reading may, however, dissolve the contradiction by dismissing the second solution. The fact that our satisfactory acts become acceptable by being informed of God's grace does not imply that grace makes their value equal to the infinite disvalue of fault. On the contrary, Aquinas's use of the term 'acceptance' suggests that, even informed by grace, our actions fall short of full quantitative satisfaction (if they were quantitatively sufficient, their efficacy would

²⁶ IV *Sent* d. 15 q. 1 a. 2 ad 1 (= ST *Suppl.* q. 13 a. 1 ad 1) : 'Just as the offense derived a certain infinity from the infinity of the Divine majesty, so does satisfaction derive a certain infinity from the infinity of Divine mercy, in so far as it is quickened by grace, whereby whatever man is able to repay becomes acceptable. Others, however, say that the offense is infinite as regards the aversion, and in this respect it is pardoned gratuitously, but that it is finite as turning to a mutable good, in which respect it is possible to make satisfaction for it. But this is not to the point, since satisfaction does not answer to sin, except as this is an offense against God, which is a matter, not of turning to a creature but of turning away from God. Others again say that even as regards the aversion it is possible to make satisfaction for sin in virtue of Christ's merit, which was, in a way, infinite. And this comes to the same as what we said before, since grace is given to believers through faith in the Mediator. If, however, He were to give grace otherwise, satisfaction would suffice in the way explained above.'

not depend on God's acceptance).²⁷ Grace-informed satisfactory actions only effect reconciliation if they are accepted by God.²⁸

In other words, we need not think of Aquinas's grace as a complement to the value of our satisfactory actions. Rather, it would seem that grace is a quality attached to the satisfaction, which, without making it more valuable, makes it more acceptable. Let me explain. Consider a debtor who repays through maximum effort on his part only 10 per cent of his debt. The creditor, in view of the debtor's good motivations, computes the limited payment as sufficient to cancel the debt. We would not say in this case that the motivations can be valued at 90 per cent of the debt. Neither would we say that the creditor, while receiving full repayment, is paid in two commensurate currencies, money and motivations. Rather, we should understand Aquinas along the lines of his argument, elsewhere, that satisfaction is accepted to the extent that it proceeds from charity—that is, from a true wish to restore the damaged friendship.²⁹ The effect of friendship and charity is not to augment the value of our satisfaction, but rather, to invest it of the quality that makes it acceptable. Such satisfaction can somewhat improperly be said to be infinite, not by virtue of its objective characteristics, but by virtue of the infinite mercy God shows by accepting it *in lieu* of full quantitative satisfaction.

Therefore it remains that, for Aquinas, our satisfaction, even if informed by grace, falls short of accomplishing full quantitative satisfaction. But—you may ask—is it grace or friendship that exonerates us from full payment? The answer is 'both'. For Aquinas grace transforms the condition of its recipient. Every nature has a set of connatural inclinations to go with it. In Aristotelian physics a stone's tendency to move downwards follows from the very nature of the stone. Similarly, grace by raising our nature instils certain new dispositions, or virtues, among which we find charity.³⁰ So charity, loosely speaking, is a kind of

²⁷ IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 2c.: 'Equality in satisfaction to God is not according to equality, but rather according to its acceptance, as has been said; and so it is necessary that if an offence has already been dismissed by previous contrition, the satisfactory works have been accepted by God, who endows them with charity; thus without charity already performed deeds are not satisfactory.'

²⁸ IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 2 ad 1; *ScG* III c.158 n. 7; *In Rom.* 5. 2 ad v. 10 [187–190] [403].

²⁹ IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 3 ad 2, a. 3 qu. 2 sc. 2, sol.: 'sine caritate opera facta non sunt satisfactoria', IV *Sent.* d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 qu. 3 sc. 2, *ST* III q. 14 a. 1 ad 1: 'non enim esset satisfactio efficax nisi ex caritate procederet'.

³⁰ In this paragraph I summarize Aquinas's account on the relation between grace {gratia gratum faciens} and charity in *Ver.* q. 27 a. 2c.

‘consequence’ of grace. Hence, we need not say that it is only grace or only charity (friendship) which makes our satisfactory acts acceptable. Rather it is grace *and* charity. It may be replicated: ‘but which does the actual job of securing debt exoneration?’ Without giving this question here the detailed consideration that it deserves, the answer that seems more plausible is ‘charity’. The match lights a fire, and the fire burns the wood. Both the match and the fire are causes of the burning, but the burning itself is done by the fire. Similarly, grace instils charity, but it is charity which is directly responsible for the performance of satisfactory works. Having said this, we would not be able to have this inclination were we deprived of grace.

7.2.2 Christ’s Satisfaction for Humankind

Adolph von Harnack observed, perhaps correctly, that Aquinas’s treatment of redemption fails to present us with a unified and neatly structured account.³¹ I shall not attempt to give a comprehensive account of Aquinas’s understanding of Christ’s redemptive work. Instead I concentrate on one of its aspects, namely, on Christ’s satisfaction on behalf of the human race.

While on at least one occasion Aquinas states that friendship exonerates *individuals* from the need to make full quantitative satisfaction, friendship is never said to exonerate *humanity* from having to make full quantitative satisfaction. This subsection attempts to explain the divergence between the various alleged impacts of friendship on the quantity of satisfaction.

Before deploying such explanation I would like to mention two ways, other than reducing the quantity of satisfaction, in which friendship explicitly relates to Christ’s satisfaction. First, Aquinas believes that a friend can satisfy for his friend’s sin, because (i) friendship motivates a person to make satisfaction out of identification with his friend, the offender, and (ii) because of the friends’ closeness, the satisfaction of the friend of the offender becomes valid and acceptable in the eyes of the victim. The theological inferences from these two views are that, in line with (i), Christ voluntarily suffered the Passion out of charity (i.e. friendship) for humankind, and, in line with (ii), this satisfaction

³¹ On the basis of the *Summa*, Harnack comments that while ‘Thomas was the first to furnish a full, strictly-thought-out doctrine of redemption’, he ‘alternates between the points of view, which is always a sign that *the* point of view is not firmly got hold of; for, where sufficient reason is wanting, reasons tend to accumulate. But the sufficient reason is really wanting to Thomas.’ A. Harnack, *History of Dogma* (Dover: New York, 1961), vi. 190 (his italics).

qualifies as satisfaction undertaken on behalf of humankind (or at least on behalf of those who are friends of Christ).³²

Second, friendship is the channel that enables the grace that Christ merits through his satisfaction to be communicated to the members of the Church. As Christ's friends, Christians can avail themselves of Christ's grace, principally through the sacraments. Partly because of this communicative quality, Aquinas considers 'mediator' and 'reconciliator' to be appropriate titles for Christ. (Note that Christ's capacity for satisfaction is only *one* of the reasons why Aquinas thinks that God had good reason to incarnate and Christ had reason to suffer the Passion.)³³ One of these many reasons for incarnation is that Christ enables friendship with God by bridging the abyss between human beings and God, thus diminishing the vast inequality that prevents friendship.³⁴

I shall now turn to the question of friendship and quantitative satisfaction. While friendship releases us from the need to make quantitative satisfaction in the case of sacramental satisfaction, it is not seen to function in this way in Aquinas's discussion of the satisfaction of humankind for Original Sin. Aquinas seems to align himself with Anselm's quantitative approach that holds that the infinity of the fault incurred by our disobedience cannot be satisfied by any finite creature, nor even by the whole of creation.³⁵ As a consequence, satisfaction can only be possible through Christ's Passion. The grace that Christ merits in this way is communicated by Him qua Head of the Church to the body of believers.³⁶ Believers receive this grace mainly by means of the

³² Christ freely decided to undergo the Passion out of charity for humankind: III *Sent.* d. 19 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1 ad 3, d. 20 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1 c., sol. 2 sc. 2. The believer's charity avails her of Christ's merited grace: III *Sent.* d. 19 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 2c.: 'Because the passion of the Head redounds in the members, and even the more so, in so far as through charity they are more connected.' Also *Comp.* I c. 226: 'Because truly through our friends we perform and undergo action, just as we ourselves seem to perform or undergo action. Since love is a mutual virtue proceeding from two persons who love each other in some way becoming one, it does not disagree with the order of justice if someone is freed [because his] friend satisfies for him.' And *ScG* III c. 158 n. 7.

³³ *ScG* IV c. 54 lists eight reasons in support of the fittingness of incarnation and *ST* III q. 1 a. 2c. cites eleven. *ST* III q. 46 a. 3c. lists five reasons for the fittingness of the Passion.

³⁴ *ScG* IV c. 54 n. 5.

³⁵ For Anselm, to give one look against the will of God has more disvalue than the annihilation of the whole universe: *Cur deus homo?*, c. 21 pp. 208–9. Although Aquinas is not as vehement on this subject, he does agree that no creature (however devised by God) could satisfy alone for Original Sin. III *Sent.* d. 20 q. 1 a. 2c.

³⁶ III *Sent.* d. 13 q. 2 a. 1c., d. 19 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 1 ad 4; *ST* III q. 8 a. 1c., a. 5c., q. 49 a. 3 ad 3; *Ver.* q. 29 a. 4c.

sacrament of Baptism.³⁷ God *chose* to have grace delivered to humanity through Christ, despite the fact that, in principle, He could bestow such grace directly and save humankind without recourse to Christ.³⁸ In the case of satisfaction for Original Sin there is no mention of friendship intervening by making human satisfaction acceptable in God's eyes.

Interestingly, Aquinas has an imagined objector propose the view that, just as quantitative satisfaction need not be demanded in relationships between siblings and parents, nor should it be required between humankind and God (and therefore, according to the objector, incarnation would be otiose). Just as, when incapable, we are not expected to return in full out of a debt of gratitude, says the objector, so we should not be expected to return debts in full, when incapable of doing so.³⁹

While Aquinas agrees that, as far as gratitude is concerned, it is enough to return as much as one is capable of, he observes that, 'it is possible for man to be in that dignity he possessed in the State of Innocence'. Thus, 'to achieve perfect reparation, by which all that is capable of reparation has been repaired, it is required that satisfaction be equivalent to fault'.⁴⁰ Aquinas seems to suggest that, for satisfaction for personal sins to be acceptable, human beings need first to be restored to the dignity they had before Original Sin. The idea here is that the value of the satisfaction one is capable of making depends on one's dignity. An act of humility such as going around barefoot possesses more satisfactory efficiency when performed by a king than when performed by a pauper.⁴¹ Satisfaction for Original Sin is not only aimed at making reparation to God, but also, perhaps even principally, to restore humankind to a lost state of dignity. It is in that state of recovered dignity that our imperfect and incomplete acts of satisfaction achieve sufficient value to qualify for God's acceptance—even though they fall short of effecting full quantitative satisfaction.

In other words, the 'reparation of human nature' achieved through Christ is assumed to put us back in a position in which human beings can make valuable gestures towards restoring justice. According to the reading presented here, only at this second stage, when the lost dignity has been recovered, can friendship release the offender from the need to

³⁷ *ST* III q. 69 a. 2c., a. 4c.

³⁸ *III Sent.* d. 20 q. 1 a. 4 sol. 1c.: Satisfaction through the Passion was not necessary for liberation from the debt of Original Sin. Neither the Passion (*ST* III q. 46 a. 1c.) nor incarnation (*ST* III q. 1 a. 2c.) were strictly necessary for human salvation.

³⁹ *III Sent.* d. 20 q. 1 a. 2 obj. 1.

⁴⁰ *III Sent.* d. 20 q. 1 a. 2 ad 1.

⁴¹ *Rat. c.* 7 [lines 223–8]. See also *III Sent.* d. 20 q. 1 a. 2c.; *ST* III q. 1 a. 2 ad 2.

make full quantitative satisfaction for his sins. This explains why Aquinas lays emphasis on mercy, rather than on friendship, when discussing satisfaction for Original Sin.⁴² When the person to be repaid responds to the dignity of the offender, he is acting not out of mercy, but out of justice. When there is nothing to respond to—where dignity is absent—only mercy can be exercised. God did not release humanity from the need to make quantitative satisfaction for Original Sin. He did, however, supply it with the resources for effecting such satisfaction. The resource is Christ *qua man*, conceived of by Aquinas as a redemptive divine instrument.⁴³

According to Aquinas, the benefits secured for humanity through Christ's Passion go far beyond the cancellation of the debt generated by Original Sin. The means by which God chose to have the debt eliminated attests to his concern for humankind. He could simply have forgiven us and condoned the debt. God's reasons to supply, instead, the resources for satisfaction, cannot, according to Aquinas, be explained only by reference to His wanting to be consistent with His justice. Aquinas holds that it is better for the debtor (humanity) to have its debt cancelled via satisfaction than via the erasing of the debt.

What is difference between condoning a debt and helping the debtor to repay? One difference, according to Aquinas, lies in the fact that eliminating the debt through satisfaction is more in keeping with God's attributes. With this method both justice (demanding repayment) and mercy (providing resources for repayment) are displayed. Debt condonation exhibits only mercy.⁴⁴ But, Aquinas argues, the method God has provided for the debt to be cancelled is also more advantageous to the debtor herself. Just as merited goods confer more glory on those who earn them than unmerited ones, the cancellation of the debt of sin confers more glory when earned through our efforts than when achieved merely through condonation of the debt.⁴⁵ Aquinas is careful to stress that the human being can by himself only in *some way* {quodammodo}

⁴² III *Sent.* d. 1 q. 1 a. 2c., ad 4, d. 20 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2 ad 2; *ST* III q. 46 a. 1 ad 3.

⁴³ *ScG* IV c. 41 n. 12; *ST* III q. 62 a. 5c.; *Ver.* q. 29 a. 5c.; *Unio.* q. 5 ad 1.

⁴⁴ III *Sent.* d. 1 q. 1 a. 2 ad 4.

⁴⁵ 'Ad secundam quaestionem dicendum, quod congruum etiam fuit quod natura humana per satisfactionem repararetur. Primo ex parte Dei, quia in hoc divina iustitia manifestatur, quod culpa per poenam diluitur. Secundo ex parte hominis, qui satisfaciens, perfectius integratur: non enim tantae gloriae esset post peccatum, quanta erat in statu innocentiae, si non plenarie satisfacisset: quia magis est homini gloriosum ut peccatum commissum satisfaciendo plenarie expurget, quam si sine satisfactione dimitteretur; sicut etiam magis homini gloriosum est quod vitam aeternam ex meritis habeat, quam si sine meritis ad eam perveniret: quia quod quis meretur, quodammodo ex se habet, inquantum illud meruit. Similiter satisfactio facit ut satisfaciens sit quodammodo causa

be the cause of the purgation of debt, for, as we have seen, satisfaction for Original Sin is really made by Christ and communicated to us.

We may quibble with Aquinas on the working-out of his assertion. Merit and satisfaction is made by voluntary actions. Yet, individual participation in Christ's Passion is not always voluntary—infant baptism being a point in case (baptism being the main channel of participation in Christ's satisfying Passion).⁴⁶ It is the underlying principle that is important here, however. Goods that are earned through our effort reflect on us better than goods that are mere gifts. It is better for debtors to earn their release from debt than to be released from the burden of debt through a purely supererogatory act of the creditor.

An additional benefit of aided payment over condonation relates to the aforementioned view that satisfaction for Original Sin is aimed at the 'reparation of human nature'.⁴⁷ This reparation provides human beings with the ability to make efficient (if imperfect) satisfaction for their individual sins. Aquinas believes that this reparation would not have been achieved merely by condonation of the debt. Christ's satisfaction does not simply put the human being out of trouble. It positively implants in the human being the dignity necessary for upholding with his own powers the order of justice.⁴⁸

Aquinas does not explicitly claim that God chose to provide the resources for satisfaction over debt exoneration out of considerations of friendship. However, inasmuch as His chosen method is more advantageous to the debtor than its alternative, God can be said to be acting in consistency with, if not in the spirit of, friendship—friendship requires seeking the advantage of one's friends.

A comparison forces itself between the role of friendship in meriting and in satisfying. The theological problem posed by the extreme

suae purgationis. Tertio etiam ex parte universi, ut scilicet culpa per poenam satisfactionis ordinetur; et sic nihil inordinatum in universo remaneat.' III *Sent.* d. 20 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2c.

⁴⁶ *ST* III q. 69 a. 2c.: 'by Baptism a man is incorporated in the Passion and death of Christ'.

⁴⁷ III *Sent.* d. 20 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2c.; *ScG* IV c. 55 n. 23.

⁴⁸ III *Sent.* d. 20 q. 1 a. 1 qu. 2 sc. 2. Principally III *Sent.* d. 1 q. 1 a. 2c.: 'Because, given that God is most good and merciful, it is inappropriate that he deny nothing of which he was capable. So, as human nature had lapsed, and there was nothing reparable, it was appropriate that He should repair it. Since however His justice is immutable, the law of which is that never a sin be pardoned without satisfaction, it was appropriate to institute in human nature that by which he could satisfy (because a man lacking in grace {purus homo} cannot by himself do this, as said). But as He is unsurpassably wise, a most convenient mode of reparation had to be devised. The most convenient mode is however [for man] to be completely repaired as to his nature.'

inequality between God and human beings presents itself in both cases. In the case of merit the question is: how can I earn a reward from God, given the relatively insignificant value of my actions? In the case of satisfaction the question is: how can I pay my debt to God, given—again—the relatively insignificant value of my satisfactory actions? In both cases, friendship (charity) plays a part in the solution to the problem, but these parts differ. In the case of merit, friendship makes our actions common both to God and to us. This augments the value of our actions to a level sufficient to create reasons for God's rewards. In the case of satisfaction, the answer is twofold.

If we mean (a) satisfaction for our personal sins, friendship operates either by (i) releasing the debtor from the need to make full satisfaction or (ii) providing resources to the debtor that can help to make his satisfactory actions acceptable in God's eyes. These solutions are not mutually exclusive: an action can be both short of quantitative satisfaction and acceptable by virtue of God's informing it with grace.

If we mean (b) satisfaction for Original Sin, Aquinas argues that (i) friendship with Christ allows us to participate in his satisfactory act—the Passion; (ii) Christ, in his human nature, voluntarily underwent the Passion out of charity, or friendship, for the human race; (iii) by incarnating, God provides the human race with the means to satisfy for Original Sin and to restore humankind to the dignity that allows us to produce imperfect, but acceptable, satisfactory acts.

Aquinas does not explicitly mention friendship as the motivation behind God's choice, however. Aquinas understands Christ's Passion not as God's way to help out friends, but rather, as a way of bringing human beings to a state in which they have the necessary qualifications *to become friends*. This understanding agrees with the Aristotelian view that persons are capable of friendship only if they are capable of justice (and vice versa). As shown in the previous chapter, a person who has suffered a significant loss of dignity or worth cannot enter such a relationship. This person may be a prospective friend, but cannot yet benefit from the prerogatives of a friend.

7.3 SUMMARY

If the previous paragraphs correctly reflect Aquinas's views, when corrective justice operates within the context of friendship, friendship affects the currency of repayment (honour as opposed to tangible goods),

the temporal scope of the offences that need to be amended (the past history of the friends as opposed to punctual offences), and the identity of the person who should enforce repayment (the offender as opposed to the judge). Friendship also determines the quantity of required satisfaction, by making acceptable what satisfaction the friend is capable of, rather than demanding of him the full repayment of the debt. If, however, the friend has debased himself to such an extent that he cannot make *any* valuable satisfaction, then it is more advantageous for the ex-friend to be helped to repay the debt than merely to be released from payment.

Aquinas's theory of satisfaction is explained by a theology that considers God not to be a self-concerned being, but one who aims to bring His creatures, and especially rational creatures, into a particular bond with Him—one that is or resembles friendship. God is not content simply to be redressed for the injustices committed against Him. His aims look beyond redress to the establishment of a relationship. Rational beings have to make themselves deserving partners of such friendship through the reformation of their attitudes and habits and the performance of certain acts. Conformity with the demands of corrective justice as effected by satisfaction brings about some of these changes.

It is reasonable to doubt that Aquinas's theory of satisfaction can function in isolation from its original theological context. It is not clear, for example, that human beings, when made victims of injustice, conceive of satisfaction as a means of restoring the relationship lost through the offence. Many of the injustices and offences of which we are victims are perpetrated by people of whom we had particular expectations because of their relationship to us. Unlike God, however, we do not unflinchingly embrace the aim of restoring these relationships once they are upset by offences. An act of injustice often destroys the desire to re-establish the relationship, leaving behind it only the obligation to compensate for all the harms caused.

This fact notwithstanding, we do in fact seek to restore some relationships disrupted by acts of injustice. Parents often forgive their children in order to regain what is an irreplaceable relationship. We can think about other examples, too. Usually, however, for the victim to hope for restoration of friendship, either the offence must be slight or the relationship of great value, or both. Feeble relationships may not be deemed valuable enough to warrant the pursuit of restoration.

8

Concluding Remarks

Aquinas does not present us, properly speaking, with a ‘theory of friendship’, at least not one that is given a separate, sustained, and focused treatment. Such a theory must be assembled from his responses to objections against his use of the concept of friendship (objections that he often raised himself). The objector usually favours a narrow version of friendship, one that would render Aquinas’s own use unwarranted. The objector is assisted in his task by a number of excerpts from the philosophical, patristic, and biblical canon. Aquinas consistently takes upon himself the task of persuading the objector that friendship need not be conceived narrowly. He does so by introducing new distinctions and qualifications and by offering new, often refreshing, interpretations of the philosophical, patristic, and biblical passages. There are few, if any, instances in which Aquinas tries to show the opposite, that is, that a certain relationship is *not* one of friendship.

It is clear that the motivation for Aquinas’s broadening of friendship is the unsuitability of Aristotelian friendship to accommodate successfully the Christian ideal of friendship with God. While Aquinas accepts the principle that friends will and reject the same things, he promotes (or demotes) this principle to an ideal. Perfect concord can be fulfilled only by individuals equipped with similar idiosyncrasies and information, placed in identical circumstances, and therefore capable of appreciating the same reasons and having similar attitudes. This scenario is a utopia.

The principle of union of wills is kept, but receives a more relaxed interpretation: wills are now required to coincide only at the level of general ends. The emphasis is laid not so much on willing the same things as on willing in the same fashion, that is, willing as reason would guide us to. Friendship does not require from us more than we can rationally and sensibly give, nor does it require us to put our individual interests aside or to relinquish the protection that justice can afford us.

Love is not, however, deprived of its influence. There is a degree of freedom to our rational wills. Within this discretionary space love is likely

to direct us to make choices similar to those of our friends. As it emerges from the discussion of Aquinas's notion of pride, the requirements posed by concord are perhaps best understood negatively. Friendship requires that the possibility of concord may not be eliminated by the interposition of blameworthy obstacles. Pride is one of these obstacles; it inclines one to use the capacity to disagree with others so as to mark one's perceived self-sufficiency.

Alasdair MacIntyre has asserted that, from an Aristotelian point of view, 'a modern liberal political society can appear only as a collection of citizens of nowhere who have banded together for their common protection. [...] That they lack the bond of friendship is of course bound up with the self-avowed moral pluralism of such societies. They have abandoned the moral unity of Aristotelianism, whether in its ancient or medieval forms.'¹ Writing from a different political quarter, Anthony W. Price persuasively notes that if we find Plato's and Aristotle's friendship unattractive we need not do away with the relevance of friendship altogether. Speaking about civic friendship, he says: 'If we *do* find our sympathies more liberal and less communitarian, where should we focus our disagreement? Some may object to the very notion of "civic friendship" as importing expectations of consensus and congeniality unapt to a pluralist society. However, I would suggest that a liberal should contest not the relevance of friendship, but a conception of friendship that rests it upon an evaluative consensus.'²

It is not obvious that Aquinas offers a conception of friendship of the kind Price (rather vaguely) advocates. Such terms as 'pluralism' and 'liberalism' are alien to Aquinas.³ However, if what is at stake is the question, to what extent friendship can withstand disagreement, misunderstanding, and lack of knowledge, it seems fairly plain, I think, that Aquinas's friendship should appeal far more to Price's liberal concerns than Plato's and Aristotle's friendship (at least in MacIntyre's version). Aquinas's treatment of the consensus and congeniality required by friendship is subtle, refined, and versatile in a way that allows him to accommodate within friendship relationships which would not qualify as

¹ A. MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (London: Duckworth, 1985), 156.

² A. W. Price, 'Friendship and Politics', *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie*, 61 (1999), 543.

³ Note, however, that Aquinas's political ideas have been occasionally associated with liberalism and with Whig views in the past. See T. Gilby, *Principality and Polity: Aquinas and the Rise of State Theory in the West* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1958), 99, 198, 287, and J. E. D. Acton, 'The History of Freedom in Christianity', in *Selected Writings of Lord Acton*, ed. J. Rufus (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985), 41–2.

such for MacIntyre's Aristotle. It would be seriously mistaken to suggest that, in forming his views, Aquinas was reacting to the same concerns as Price. Aquinas was not striving to make friendship compatible with features of liberal society. Yet he is, at points, self-consciously engaged in making friendship suitable to describe the relationship between members of a different kind of society—the Church, a society within which disagreement (such as that between St Jerome and St Augustine) was far from absent.

Is not Aquinas watering down friendship to the point of vacuity? Is he not, in his effort to save friendship from narrow views, making it contentless? For one thing we have focused mostly on one of friendship's requirements—union of wills. Aquinas never dilutes or relaxes other equally (if not more important) requirements of friendship such as good-willing mutual love. This good-willing love which includes mutual concern, and the disposition to help others, is central to any notion of friendship and in most cases is enough to tell friendship from indifference or enmity.

It is precisely because Aquinas's friendship allows for conflict and misunderstanding that justice considerations remain necessary and useful between friends. In fact, friendship, rather than expelling or making unfitting considerations of justice, adds such new considerations. In addition when friendship replaces a relationship between master and slave or parent and child, it introduces the proportional equivalence necessary for the former slave/child to lay just claims on the former master/parent. This proportional equivalence is made possible both by the dissolution of domination and by the empowerment of the friend's action consequent on the commonality of friends' actions. Lastly, corrective and punitive justice, when suitably adapted to this purpose, is the means through which we can restore a friendship that has been damaged by the perpetration of wrongful acts.

APPENDIX

The Duality of the Rational Volition in Christ's Human Nature and Friendship with God

Aquinas, following John Damascene (*De Fide Orthodoxa*, II, c. 22 in PG 94. 943), distinguishes between two types of rational will in human nature:

[T]he act of the will, inasmuch as it is drawn to anything desired of itself, as health, which act is called by Damascene thesis—i.e. simple will {*simplex voluntas*}, and by the teachers 'will as nature' {*voluntas ut natura*}, is different from the act of the will as it is drawn to anything that is desired only in order to something else, as to take medicine; and this act of the will Damascene calls boulesis—i.e. counseling will {*consiliativa voluntas*}, and the teachers, 'will as reason' {*voluntas ut ratio*}.¹

Hugh of St Victor,² and Bonaventure³ after him, distinguished between four wills in Christ: *voluntas Deitatis*, *voluntas rationis*, *voluntas pietatis*, and *voluntas carnis*. Aquinas equates the 'will of nature' {*voluntas quae consideratur ut natura*} with Hugh of St Victor's 'will of piety' {*voluntas pietatis*}.⁴

The distinction between these two kinds of acts of the rational will is important for friendship. Consider the objection, in *Summa Theologiae*, III q. 18 a. 5 obj. 2, that:

Christ's soul had most perfect charity, which, indeed, surpasses the comprehension of all our knowledge [...] Now charity makes men will what God wills; hence Aristotle says (*Nic. Eth.* IX. 4) that one mark of friendship is 'to will and choose the same.' Therefore the human will in Christ willed nothing else than was willed by His Divine will.

Aquinas draws on the distinction between the will of sensuality (which is a 'will' only by participation), the will of nature, and the rational will to reply, in the *corpus*, that:

[I]t is plain that in His will of sensuality {*voluntas sensualitatis*} and in His rational will considered as nature {*voluntas rationis qua consideratur per modum naturae*}, Christ could will what God did not; but in His will as reason {*voluntas quae est per modum*

¹ *ST* III q. 18 a. 3 obj. 1. For a critical edition of the text that Aquinas is likely to have consulted see *De Fide Orthodoxa, Versions of Burgundio and Cerbanus*, ed. E. M. Buytaert (New York: Franciscan Institute St Bonaventure; Louvain: Nauwelaerts; Paderborn: Schöningh, 1951) pp. 135–6.

² Hugh of Saint Victor, *De quatuor voluntatibus in Christo libellus*, PL 176. 846.

³ Bonaventure, *In I Sent.* d. 48 q. 2c., p. 858.

⁴ In *ST* III q. 18 a. 3 ad 3.

rationis} He always willed the same as God, which appears from what He says (Matt. 26:39): 'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.' For He willed in His reason that the Divine will should be fulfilled although He said that He willed something else by another will.

In direct reply to the objection, he says that:

The conformity of the human will to the Divine regards the will of reason {voluntas rationis}: according to which the wills even of friends agree, inasmuch as reason considers something willed in its relation to the will of a friend.

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Index Locorum

References are to chapter and footnote number.

<i>Car.</i>		VIII. 13 [1743]	ch. 1 n. 76, n. 79
q. un. a. 1c.	ch. 6 n. 48	IX. 1 [1757]	ch. 1 n. 19
q. un. a. 13 ad 6	ch. 2 n. 64, ch. 4 n. 58	IX. 1 [1767]	ch. 1 n. 76, n. 79
<i>Cat. Aur.</i>		IX. 4 [1797]	ch. 1 n. 19
VI. 9 [116–18]	ch. 1 n. 12	IX. 4 [1798]	ch. 1 n. 18, n. 19
<i>Comp.</i>		IX. 6 [1830–1]	ch. 1 n. 26
I c. 226	ch. 7 n. 32	IX. 6 [1831–2]	ch. 1 n. 25
<i>Dec.</i>		IX. 4 [1800]	ch. 1 n. 26, n. 31
proem.	ch. 1 n. 50	IX. 4 [1816]	ch. 1 n. 19, n. 31, n. 42
<i>Div.</i>		IX. 4 [1817]	ch. 1 n. 41
IV. 1 [285]	ch. 4 n. 5	IX. 5 [1820]	ch. 1 n. 19
IV. 9 [402]	ch. 1 n. 9	IX. 5 [1821]	ch. 1 n. 22
IV. 9 [408]	ch. 2 n. 9	IX. 5 [1823]	ch. 1 n. 22
XI. 1 [885]	ch. 1 n. 31	IX. 6 [1830]	ch. 1 n. 24, n. 26
<i>Ep. Reg.</i>		IX. 6 [1831]	ch. 2 n. 29, n. 30
1. 7.		IX. 6 [1839]	ch. 2 n. 43
<i>Eth.</i>		IX. 10 [1893]	ch. 1 n. 11
Prol. [1]	ch. 4 n. 5	IX. 10 [1896]	ch. 1 n. 8, n. 10
I. 1 [8]	ch. 1 n. 34	IX. 10 [1897]	ch. 1 n. 9
III. 5 [60]	ch. 1 n. 34	<i>Hebd.</i>	
III. 6 [456]	ch. 2 n. 27	II [299–309]	ch. 2 n. 17
III. 8 [474]	ch. 2 n. 73	II [370–5]	ch. 2 n. 17
III. 8 [477]	ch. 5 n. 47	<i>Impugn.</i>	
III. 9 [486]	ch. 1 n. 34	II. c. 3 ad 29 [165]	ch. 7 n. 23
V. 12 [1023]	ch. 1 n. 67	II. c. 6 ad 27 [344]	ch. 1 n. 66
V. 16 [1084–5]	ch. 1 n. 64	IV. c. 3 obj. 7 [449]	ch. 6 n. 23, n. 388
V. 16 [1081]	ch. 1 n. 67		
V. 16 [1086]	ch. 1 n. 63	IV. c. 3c. [451]	ch. 6 n. 32
VIII. 1 [1538]	ch. 1 n. 28	IV. c. 3c. [452]	ch. 6 n. 34
VIII. 2 [1560]	ch. 1 n. 21	IV. c. 3c. [453]	ch. 6 n. 35
VIII. 3 [1562]	ch. 1 n. 19	IV. c. 3c. [454]	ch. 6 n. 36
VIII. 3 [1564]	ch. 1 n. 21	IV. c. 3c. [455]	ch. 6 n. 36
VIII. 3 [1583]	ch. 1 n. 19	IV. c. 3 ad 1 [456]	ch. 6 n. 25, n. 30
VIII. 4 [1592]	ch. 5 n. 17	IV. c. 3 ad 7 [462]	ch. 6 n. 39
VIII. 5 [1596]	ch. 1 n. 19	IV. c. 3 ad 8 [463]	ch. 1 n. 54
VIII. 5 [1597]	ch. 1 n. 19	<i>In Eph.</i>	
VIII. 5 [1600]	ch. 1 n. 19	5. 1 ad v. 1 [267]	ch. 2 n. 25
VIII. 5 [1602–4]	ch. 1 n. 27	<i>In Heb.</i>	
VIII. 5 [1603]	ch. 1 n. 32, n. 33	4. 2 ad v. 12 [226]	ch. 5 n. 7, n. 9, n. 11
VIII. 6 [1607]	ch. 1 n. 19		
VIII. 8 [1651]	ch. 1 n. 40	4. 2 ad v. 12 [228]	ch. 5 n. 11
VIII. 9 [1660]	ch. 6 n. 56	6. 3 ad v. 9–10 [305]	ch. 6 n. 49
VIII. 13 [1733]	ch. 1 n. 67	12. 4 ad v. 22 [706]	ch. 1 n. 12

d. 10 q. 1 a. 5 ex. ch. 1 n. 33, n. 35
d. 33 q. 1 a. 5c. ch. 2 n. 3

- d. 45 q. 1 a. 2 ad 1 ch. 3 n. 39, n. 41
d. 45 q. 1 a. 2 ad 4 ch. 3 n. 48
d. 48 q. un. a. 2 obj. 3 ch. 3 n. 49
d. 48 q. un. a. 2c. ch. 2 n. 44,
ch. 3 n. 11, n. 19, n. 21, n. 48
d. 48 q. un. a. 2 ad 5 ch. 3 n. 24
d. 48 q. un. a. 4 sc. 2 ch. 3 n. 10
d. 48 q. un. a. 4c. ch. 3 n. 68, n. 70
II *Sent.*
d. 5 q. 1 a. 3c. ch. 7 n. 23
d. 7 q. 1 a. 1 ad 1 ch. 1 n. 34
d. 11 q. 2 a. 1 obj. 1 ch. 6 n. 48
d. 11 q. 2 a. 5 ch. 2 n. 33, ch. 6 n. 3
d. 11 q. 2 a. 5 ad 1 ch. 2 n. 1
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 ad 3 ch. 1 n. 34
d. 22 q. 1 a. 1c. ch. 4 n. 20
d. 24 q. 1 a. 2 ad 4 ch. 1 n. 34
d. 24 q. 1 a. 3 ad 5 ch. 1 n. 34
d. 27 q. 1 a. 3 obj. 3 ch. 6 n. 44
d. 27 q. 1 a. 3 obj. 4 ch. 6 n. 44
d. 27 q. 1 a. 3 sol.un. c. ch. 6 n. 49
d. 35 q. 1 a. 4 sol. ch. 6 n. 43
d. 40 q. 1 a. 5 ad 2 ch. 6 n. 48
d. 42 q. 2 a. 4c. ch. 4 n. 29
d. 42 q. 2 a. 4 ad 1 ch. 4 n. 33,
ch. 5 n. 40
III *Sent.*
d. 1 q. 1 a. 1 sc. 2 ch. 2 n. 16
d. 1 q. 1 a. 2c. ch. 7 n. 42, n. 48
d. 1 q. 1 a. 2 ad 4 ch. 7 n. 44, n. 45
d. 5 q. 1 a. 1c. ch. 2 n. 16
d. 13 q. 2 a. 1c. ch. 7 n. 36
d. 18 q. un. a. 2 obj. 6 ch. 6 n. 46,
n. 47
d. 18 q. un. a. 2 ad 4 ch. 6 n. 44
d. 18 q. un. a. 4 sol. 1c. ch. 6 n. 44
d. 18 q. un. a. 4 sol. 1 ad 1 ch. 6 n. 44
d. 18 q. un. a. 4 sol. 4c. ch. 6 n. 44
d. 18 q. un. a. 5 sol.un. c. ch. 6 n. 44
d. 18 q. un. a. 5 ad 2 ch. 6 n. 48
d. 19 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 1 ad 4 ch. 7 n. 36
d. 19 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 2c. ch. 7 n. 32
d. 19 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1 ad 3 ch. 7 n. 32
d. 20 q. 1 a. 1 qu. 2 sc. 2 ch. 7 n. 48
d. 20 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2c. ch. 7 n. 47
d. 20 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2 ad 2 ch. 7 n. 42
d. 20 q. 1 a. 2 obj. 1 ch. 7 n. 39,
n. 40
d. 20 q. 1 a. 2c. ch. 7 n. 35,
n. 41
d. 20 q. 1 a. 4 sol. 1c. ch. 7 n. 38
d. 20 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1 c. ch. 7 n. 32
d. 20 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 2 sc. 2 ch. 7 n. 32
d. 23 q. 3 a. 3 qu. 2. obj. 2
ch. 2 n. 45, n. 64
d. 23 q. 3 a. 3 qu. 2. sol. 2 ad 2
ch. 2 n. 45, n. 64
d. 26 q. 2 a. 2 ad 2 ch. 5 n. 42
d. 26 q. 2 a. 5 sol. 3c. ch. 5 n. 99
d. 27 q. 1 a. 1c. ch. 2 n. 21, n. 22
d. 27 q. 1 a. 1 ad 4 ch. 2 n. 22
d. 27 q. 1 a. 2c. ch. 1 n. 25
d. 27 q. 2 a. 1 obj. 9 ch. 1 n. 21
d. 27 q. 2 a. 1c. ch. 1 n. 20,
ch. 2 n. 1, n. 27, n. 30, n. 31
d. 27 q. 2 a. 1 ad 1
ch. 1 n. 15, ch. 5 n. 75
d. 27 q. 2 a. 1 ad 9 ch. 2 n. 21
d. 27 q. 2 a. 1 ad 10 ch. 1 n. 21
d. 28 q. 1 a. 3 sc. 2 ch. 3 n. 10
d. 29 q. un. a. 4c. ch. 5 n. 75
d. 29 q. un. a. 5 ad 3 ch. 1 n. 51
d. 29 q. un. a. 6c. ch. 2 n. 18
d. 30 q. un. a. 3 sol.un. c. ch. 6 n. 43
d. 30 q. un. a. 5 sc. 1 ch. 6 n. 48
d. 30 q. un. a. 5 sc. 2 ch. 6 n. 48
d. 30 q. un. a. 5 sc. 3 ch. 6 n. 48
d. 32 q. 1 a. 3 sc. 1 ch. 1 n. 35
d. 32 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1 s.c. 1 ch. 1 n. 35
IV *Sent.*
d. 12 q. 3 a. 2 sol. 3c. ch. 6 n. 48
d. 13 q. 2 a. 2 obj. 4 ch. 4 n. 9
d. 13 q. 2 a. 3 obj. 1 ch. 2 n. 1, n. 48
d. 13 q. 2 a. 3 ad 1 ch. 2 n. 1
d. 14 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 4 ad 4 ch. 7 n. 20
d. 14 q. 2 a. 1 sol. 2c. ch. 1 n. 75
d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 1c. ch. 7 n. 15
d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2 obj. 1 ch. 7 n. 3
d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2 sc. 1 ch. 7 n. 20
d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2c. ch. 7 n. 2
d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 2 ad 1
ch. 1 n. 75, ch. 7 n. 4
d. 15 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 3 ad 2 ch. 7 n. 29
d. 15 q. 1 a. 2c. ch. 7 n. 20, n. 25
d. 15 q. 1 a. 2 ad 1 ch. 7 n. 26, n. 28
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 1c. ch. 7 n. 7
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 1 ad 2 ch. 7 n. 10
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 qu. 2 sc. 2 ch. 7 n. 29
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 qu. 2 sol. ch. 7 n. 29
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 2c. ch. 7 n. 27
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 3c. ch. 6 n. 48
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 4 obj. 1 ch. 6 n. 55
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. 4c.
ch. 6, n. 48, n. 53, n. 54
d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 sol. ad 1 ch. 6 n. 48
d. 15 q. 1 a. 4 sol. 1c. ch. 7 n. 20

- d. 15 q. 1 a. 4 sol. 2 ad 3 ch. 7 n. 20
d. 15 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1c. ch. 7 n. 17,
n. 18
d. 15 q. 1 a. 5 sol. 1 ad 1 ch. 7 n. 22
d. 15 q. 2 a. 5 sol. 3 obj. 1 ch. 5 n. 13
d. 15 q. 2 a. 5 sol. 3 ad 1 ch. 5 n. 13
d. 17 q. 3 a. 2 sol. 3c. ch. 7 n. 4
d. 27 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 1c. ch. 5 n. 15
d. 27 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 3 ad 3 ch. 5 n. 15
d. 27 q. 1 a. 2 sol. 3 ad 2 ch. 5 n. 13
d. 27 q. 1 a. 2 qu. 4 obj. 2 ch. 5 n. 9
d. 38 q. 2 a. 4 sol. 3c. ch. 1 n. 53
d. 38 q. 2 a. 4 sol. 3 sc. 1 ch. 1 n. 54
Sort.
c. 2 ch. 7 n. 23
Spe
q. un. a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 4, n. 48,
n. 51, n. 91
Spir.
q. un. a. 6 sc. 3 ch. 1 n. 12
ST I
q. 2 a. 2c. ch. 1 n. 33
q. 19 a. 12c. ch. 3 n. 34
q. 21 a. 1c. ch. 6 n. 49
q. 26 a. 1c. ch. 1 n. 38
q. 28 a. 2c. ch. 3 n. 37
q. 57 a. 4 sc. ch. 5 n. 1, ch. 6 n. 8
q. 57 a. 4c. ch. 6 n. 12, n. 13
q. 57 a. 4 ad 1 ch. 6 n. 11, n. 12
q. 60 a. 2 ad 1 ch. 1 n. 38
q. 62 a. 4c. ch. 6 n. 45
q. 63 a. 2 ad 2 ch. 4 n. 32
q. 63 a. 3c. ch. 4 n. 36
q. 83 a. 3c. ch. 1 n. 34
q. 86 a. 4c. ch. 5 n. 2
q. 94 a. 3c. ch. 5 n. 2
q. 94 a. 4 obj. 5 ch. 5 n. 2
q. 94 a. 4c. ch. 3 n. 74, ch. 5 n. 32
q. 94 a. 4 ad 5 ch. 5 n. 2, n. 32
q. 96 a. 3c. ch. 3 n. 74
q. 106 a. 2c. ch. 5 n. 58, n. 61
q. 111 a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 63, n. 68
q. 111 a. 2c. ch. 5 n. 58, n. 61
q. 111 a. 2 ad 1 ch. 5 n. 62
q. 111 a. 3c. ch. 5 n. 64, n. 67
q. 111 a. 4c. ch. 5 n. 65
q. 117 a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 66
ST I–II
q. 4 a. 1c. ch. 1 n. 4
q. 4 a. 8c. ch. 1 n. 5
q. 4 a. 8 ad 3 ch. 1 n. 13
q. 8 a. 1c. ch. 3 n. 36
q. 9 a. 2c. ch. 5 n. 67
q. 10 a. 2c. ch. 3 n. 36, n. 39,
ch. 5 n. 57
q. 13 a. 2c. ch. 1 n. 37
q. 13 a. 6 sc. ch. 1 n. 34
q. 13 a. 6 obj. 1 ch. 2 n. 29
q. 13 a. 6 obj. 2 ch. 2 n. 29
q. 13 a. 6 ad 1 ch. 2 n. 29
q. 13 a. 6 ad 2 ch. 2 n. 29
q. 18 a. 3c. ch. 3 n. 44
q. 19 a. 9 ad 1 ch. 2 n. 23
q. 19 a. 10c. ch. 2 n. 37, ch. 3 n. 11,
n. 23, n. 46, n. 47, n. 50, n. 51
q. 19 a. 10 ad 1 ch. 3 n. 14
q. 26 a. 1c. ch. 1 n. 38
q. 26 a. 3c. ch. 1 n. 36, ch. 5 n. 56
q. 26 a. 4c. ch. 5 n. 72
q. 27 a. 2c. ch. 5 n. 69
q. 27 a. 2 ad 2 ch. 6 n. 18
q. 27 a. 3c. ch. 2 n. 16, n. 17, n. 18
q. 28 a. 1 obj. 2 ch. 2 n. 16
q. 28 a. 1c. ch. 6 n. 14, n. 17
q. 28 a. 1 ad 2 ch. 2 n. 14, n. 16
q. 28 a. 2c. ch. 3 n. 10,
ch. 6 n. 15, n. 16
q. 28 a. 6c. ch. 2 n. 9
q. 29 a. 3 obj. 2 ch. 2 n. 32
q. 29 a. 3 ad 2 ch. 2 n. 32
q. 30 a. 2 obj. 2 ch. 1 n. 50
q. 32 a. 3c. ch. 5 n. 41
q. 32 a. 5c. ch. 2 n. 22
q. 37 a. 2c. ch. 5 n. 46
q. 37 a. 3c. ch. 5 n. 43, n. 46
q. 40 a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 4, n. 48,
n. 52, n. 90, n. 92
q. 40 a. 1 ad 3 ch. 5 n. 45
q. 40 a. 2 ad 1 ch. 5 n. 51, n. 54
q. 40 a. 3c. ch. 5 n. 44
q. 40 a. 5c. ch. 5 n. 85, n. 86, n. 89
q. 40 a. 5 ad 2 ch. 5 n. 87
q. 40 a. 7c. ch. 1 n. 55,
ch. 5 n. 54, n. 71
q. 40 a. 8c. ch. 5 n. 42
q. 40 a. 8 ad 1 ch. 5 n. 92, n. 98
q. 58 a. 1 obj. 2 ch. 1 n. 30
q. 58 a. 1 ad 2 ch. 1 n. 30
q. 58 a. 2 obj. 4 ch. 1 n. 30
q. 58 a. 4c. ch. 1 n. 30
q. 59 a. 1c. ch. 1 n. 30
q. 59 a. 2c. ch. 3 n. 58
q. 60 a. 2 ad 1 ch. 1 n. 38
q. 62 a. 4c. ch. 1 n. 58
q. 64 a. 1 sc. ch. 1 n. 30
q. 65 a. 1c. ch. 1 n. 30

- q. 84 a. 2c. ch. 4 n. 23,
n. 24, n. 28, n. 53
- q. 87 a. 6c. ch. 7 n. 14
- q. 87 a. 7c. ch. 7 n. 12
- q. 87 a. 8c. ch. 7 n. 12
- q. 90 a. 3 ad 2 ch. 4 n. 69
- q. 90 a. 4c. ch. 4 n. 68
- q. 96 a. 5c. ch. 4 n. 69
- q. 98 a. 6c. ch. 4 n. 66, n. 71
- q. 98 a. 6 ad 1 ch. 5 n. 96
- q. 98 a. 6 ad 2 ch. 4 n. 70, ch. 5 n. 96
- q. 99 a. 5c. ch. 1 n. 67
- q. 99 a. 6 ad 1 ch. 1 n. 49
- q. 111 a. 2c. ch. 6 n. 52
- q. 114 prol. ch. 6 n. 52
- q. 114 aa. 1–3 ch. 6 n. 50
- q. 114 a. 2c. ch. 6 n. 51
- q. 114 a. 3c. ch. 6 n. 49
- q. 114 a. 5c. ch. 6 n. 49
- q. 114 a. 6c. ch. 6 n. 49
- ST II–II
- q. 1 a. 4c. ch. 5 n. 34
- q. 2 a. 2c. ch. 2 n. 50
- q. 2 a. 9 obj. 2 ch. 2 n. 2
- q. 2 a. 9c. ch. 2 n. 55, ch. 5 n. 34
- q. 2 a. 9 ad 2 ch. 2 n. 2
- q. 2 a. 10c. ch. 2 n. 63
- q. 4 a. 1c. ch. 2 n. 53
- q. 4 a. 2 ad 2 ch. 2 n. 54, n. 62
- q. 5 a. 3c. ch. 2 n. 50, n. 64,
ch. 4 n. 58
- q. 11 a. 1c. ch. 2 n. 58, n. 59.
- q. 11 a. 1 ad 2 ch. 2 n. 65
- q. 11 a. 1 ad 3 ch. 2 n. 40, n. 42,
n. 49, n. 65
- q. 11 a. 2c. ch. 2 n. 3, n. 52
- q. 17 a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 70
- q. 17 a. 3c. ch. 5 n. 74
- q. 17 a. 4c. ch. 5 n. 54
- q. 17 a. 7c. ch. 5 n. 82
- q. 17 a. 8c. ch. 5 n. 73
- q. 19 a. 3c. ch. 1 n. 50
- q. 20 a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 43, n. 83
- q. 20 a. 2c. ch. 5 n. 84
- q. 21 a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 94
- q. 21 a. 2 obj. 2 ch. 5 n. 95
- q. 21 a. 2 ad 2 ch. 5 n. 95
- q. 21 a. 4c. ch. 5 n. 93
- q. 23 a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 55, ch. 5 n. 72
- q. 23 a. 1 ad 1 ch. 1 n. 12
- q. 23 a. 2c. ch. 6 n. 48
- q. 23 a. 3 ad 1 ch. 1 n. 60
- q. 25 a. 3c. ch. 3 n. 44, n. 65
- q. 25 a. 4c. ch. 5 n. 75
- q. 25 a. 6 ad 2 ch. 3 n. 53
- q. 25 a. 6 ad 4 ch. 3 n. 10
- q. 26 a. 3c. ch. 5 n. 56
- q. 26 a. 4c. ch. 3 n. 45
- q. 26 a. 4 ad 2 ch. 1 n. 51
- q. 26 a. 6 obj. 3 ch. 3 n. 45
- q. 26 a. 7 ch. 1 n. 17
- q. 26 a. 8 ad 1 ch. 1 n. 32, ch. 2 n. 30
- q. 27 a. 2 obj. 1 ch. 3 n. 45
- q. 27 a. 2c. ch. 1 n. 22
- q. 29 a. 1 obj. 2 ch. 2 n. 1
- q. 29 a. 1c. ch. 2 n. 41, ch. 6 n. 41
- q. 29 a. 1 ad 1 ch. 6 n. 41
- q. 29 a. 1 ad 2 ch. 2 n. 1
- q. 29 a. 2 ad 3 ch. 6 n. 41
- q. 29 a. 3 obj. 2 ch. 2 n. 39, ch. 6 n. 3
- q. 29 a. 3c. ch. 2 n. 27, ch. 3 n. 10
- q. 29 a. 3 ad 2 ch. 6 n. 3
- q. 29 a. 3 ad 3 ch. 6 n. 41
- q. 31 a. 1sc. ch. 1 n. 19
- q. 31 a. 1c. ch. 1 n. 19, n. 23
- q. 31 a. 4 sc. ch. 1 n. 23
- q. 33 a. 7c. ch. 6 n. 27
- q. 34 prol. ch. 4 n. 1
- q. 36 a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 37
- q. 36 a. 4 ad 1 ch. 5 n. 38
- q. 37 a. 1c. ch. 2 n. 1, n. 32,
n. 56, ch. 4 n. 12, ch. 6 n. 3
- q. 37 a. 1 ad 1 ch. 3 n. 17
- q. 37 a. 2c. ch. 2 n. 66, ch. 4 n. 13
- q. 39 prol. ch. 4 n. 1
- q. 39 a. 1c. ch. 4 n. 3, n. 5, n. 7
- q. 39 a. 2 obj. 1 ch. 4 n. 9
- q. 39 a. 2 ad 3 ch. 4 n. 8
- q. 39 a. 4c. ch. 4 n. 7
- q. 40 a. 1 ad 3 ch. 6 n. 41
- q. 42 a. 1 ad 2 ch. 4 n. 2, n. 7
- q. 42 a. 2c. ch. 4 n. 4
- q. 42 a. 2 ad 3 ch. 4 n. 11
- q. 43 a. 8 sc. ch. 1 n. 54
- q. 43 a. 8 obj. 4 ch. 6 n. 25
- q. 43 a. 8c. ch. 1 n. 53, ch. 6 n. 28
- q. 43 a. 8 ad 4 ch. 6 n. 25
- q. 51 a. 2 ad 1 ch. 7 n. 4
- q. 52 a. 2 ad 3 ch. 6 n. 42
- q. 52 a. 3c. ch. 5 n. 99
- q. 58 a. 2c. ch. 5 n. 29
- q. 60 a. 2c. ch. 5 n. 35, n. 36,
ch. 6 n. 13
- q. 60 a. 2 ad 2 ch. 6 n. 13
- q. 60 a. 4c. ch. 5 n. 21, n. 24, n. 25
- q. 60 a. 4 ad 1 ch. 5 n. 22

- q. 60 a. 4 ad 2 ch. 5 n. 23 q. 182 a. 2c. ch. 6 n. 48
 q. 67 a. 1c. ch. 4 n. 57 q. 183 a. 1c. ch. 6 n. 33
 q. 67 a. 4 obj. 3 ch. 7 n. 19 q. 184 a. 2c. ch. 1 n. 49
 q. 67 a. 4 ad 3 ch. 7 n. 19 q. 186 a. 5 ad 5 ch. 3 n. 34
 q. 68 a. 1c. ch. 6 n. 28 *ST* III
 q. 70 a. 3 obj. 2 ch. 5 n. 13 q. 1 a. 2c. ch. 7 n. 33, n. 38
 q. 70 a. 3 ad 2 ch. 5 n. 13, q. 1 a. 2 ad 2 ch. 7 n. 41
 ch. 5 n. 14 q. 2 a. 1c. ch. 2 n. 10
 q. 71 a. 2c. ch. 6 n. 31 q. 8 a. 1c. ch. 7 n. 36
 q. 78 a. 2 ad 2 ch. 1 n. 66 q. 8 a. 5c. ch. 7 n. 36
 q. 80 a. un. c. ch. 1 n. 61, q. 14 a. 1 ad 1 ch. 7 n. 29
 n. 65, n. 67 q. 18 a. 2c. ch. 2 n. 69
 q. 80 a. un. ad 2 ch. 1 n. 18 q. 18 a. 3 obj. 1 ch. 2 n. 69, ch. 8 n. 1
 q. 81 a. 1 ad 1 ch. 7 n. 4, n. 5 q. 18 a. 3 c. ch. 2 n. 69
 q. 95 a. 8c. ch. 7 n. 23 q. 18 a. 3 ad 3 ch. 8 n. 4
 q. 104 a. 3c. ch. 3 n. 10 q. 18 a. 4c. ch. 1 n. 34
 q. 104 a. 4 ad 3 ch. 3 n. 34 q. 18 a. 5 obj. 2 ch. 2 n. 69
 q. 106 a. 1 ad 2 ch. 1 n. 66 q. 18 a. 5 c. ch. 2 n. 69
 q. 106 a. 1 ad 3 ch. 1 n. 59 q. 18 a. 5 ad 2 ch. 2 n. 69
 q. 106 a. 5c. ch. 1 n. 60, n. 71, q. 18 a. 6c. ch. 2 n. 69
 n. 78, n. 79 q. 46 a. 1c. ch. 7 n. 38
 q. 106 a. 5 ad 1 ch. 1 n. 71 q. 46 a. 1 ad 3 ch. 7 n. 42
 q. 106 a. 6 obj. 3 ch. 1 n. 77 q. 46 a. 3c. ch. 7 n. 33
 q. 106 a. 6c. ch. 1 n. 73 q. 48 a. 1 obj. 3 ch. 6 n. 48
 q. 106 a. 6 ad 3 ch. 1 n. 77 q. 49 a. 3 ad 3 ch. 7 n. 36
 q. 114 a. 2c. ch. 1 n. 62 q. 59 a. 2 obj. 3 ch. 5 n. 1, ch. 6 n. 8
 q. 117 a. 5 ad 3 ch. 1 n. 52 q. 60 a. 2c. ch. 5 n. 15
 q. 118 a. 5 obj. 2 ad 2 ch. 1 n. 49 q. 60 a. 6c. ch. 5 n. 15
 q. 129 a. 2c. ch. 1 n. 50 q. 62 a. 5c. ch. 7 n. 43
 q. 132 a. 1c. ch. 4 n. 17 q. 69 a. 2c. ch. 7 n. 37, n. 46
 q. 132 a. 4c. ch. 4 n. 18, ch. 5 n. 39 q. 69 a. 4c. ch. 7 n. 37
 q. 132 a. 5c. ch. 4 n. 13, n. 14, n. 15 q. 79 a. 6 ad 3 ch. 1 n. 49
 q. 161 a. 1 ad 1 ch. 4 n. 65 q. 85 a. 2 ad 1 ch. 7 n. 3
 q. 161 a. 2c. ch. 4 n. 34, n. 64 q. 85 a. 3 ad 3 ch. 7 n. 16
 q. 161 a. 3 ad 2 ch. 4 n. 64 q. 86 a. 3c. ch. 7 n. 8
 q. 161 a. 5 ad 2 ch. 4 n. 63 q. 86 a. 3 ad 4 ch. 7 n. 10
 q. 161 a. 6c. ch. 4 n. 35 q. 90 a. 2c. ch. 7 n. 12
 q. 162 a. 1c. ch. 4 n. 22 *Unit.*
 q. 162 a. 2c. ch. 4 n. 23, n. 24 III § 82 ch. 2 n. 13
 q. 162 a. 3 obj. 1 ch. 4 n. 44 IV § 89 ch. 2 n. 13
 q. 162 a. 3c. ch. 4 n. 30, n. 31, n. 32 *Unio.*
 q. 162 a. 3 ad 1 ch. 4 n. 45, q. 5 ad 1 ch. 7 n. 43
 n. 46, n. 48 *Ver.*
 q. 162 a. 3 ad 2 ch. 4 n. 33, q. 5 a. 3c. ch. 4 n. 5
 n. 41, ch. 5 n. 40 q. 6 a. 1c. ch. 1 n. 35
 q. 162 a. 4 obj. 1 ch. 4 n. 37 q. 8 a. 4 sc. 8 ch. 5 n. 1, ch. 6 n. 8
 q. 162 a. 4c. ch. 4 n. 25, n. 35, n. 38 q. 8 a. 13c. ch. 6 n. 10
 q. 162 a. 5c. ch. 4 n. 50 q. 11 a. 1c. ch. 5 n. 68
 q. 162 a. 5 ad 2 ch. 4 n. 54 q. 14 a. 1c. ch. 2 n. 53, n. 63
 q. 162 a. 6c. ch. 4 n. 51, n. 56 q. 14 a. 8c. ch. 2 n. 50
 q. 162 a. 6 ad 1 ch. 4 n. 61, n. 62 q. 14 a. 9c. ch. 2 n. 51
 q. 163 a. 1c. ch. 4 n. 20 q. 14 a. 10 ad 10 ch. 2 n. 64,
 q. 180 a. 2 ad 2 ch. 6 n. 41 ch. 4 n. 58

q. 22 a. 6 ad 2	ch. 2 n. 20	q. 26 a. 9 ad sc. 2	ch. 7 n. 12
q. 23 a. 7 obj. 11	ch. 2 n. 26	q. 27 a. 2c.	ch. 7 n. 30
q. 23 a. 7c.	ch. 2 n. 17, n. 25, n. 44, ch. 3 n. 13, n. 18, n. 39	q. 29 a. 1 obj. 2	ch. 2 n. 16
q. 23 a. 7 ad 1	ch. 3 n. 14	q. 29 a. 1 ad 2	ch. 2 n. 16
q. 23 a. 7 ad 11	ch. 2 n. 26	q. 29 a. 4c.	ch. 7 n. 36
q. 23 a. 8 obj. 2	ch. 3 n. 15	q. 29 a. 5c.	ch. 7 n. 43
q. 23 a. 8 sc. 2	ch. 3 n. 10, n. 22	q. 29 a. 6c.	ch. 6 n. 45
q. 23 a. 8c.	ch. 3 n. 12, n. 20, n. 21, n. 22, n. 25, n. 27, n. 35, n. 42, ch. 6 n. 4,	<i>Virt.</i>	
q. 23 a. 8 ad 2	ch. 3 n. 16, n. 57, n. 67	q. 1 a. 5 obj. 5	ch. 1 n. 32
q. 23 ad sc. 2	ch. 3 n. 33	q. 1 a. 9c.	ch. 1 n. 12
		q. 1 a. 10 ad 4	ch. 6 n. 48
		q. 1 a. 11c. (end)	ch. 6 n. 48
		q. 2 a. 2c.	ch. 1 n. 12
		q. 2 a. 7 obj. 4	ch. 6 n. 48
		q. 5 a. 4 ad 13	ch. 1 n. 34

Index of Subjects

- acceptance 54
actions
 common 137–40, 160, 164
acts
 supererogatory 159
agape 5, 6
amicitia 2–3
analogy 1–2, 61, 67, 68
angels 1, 5, 22, 31–2, 34–5, 77, 112,
 113n, 124–6, 143
anger 13
anxiety 36n, 121
Apostles 12, 22, 124, 137
appetite 10, 33, 78n, 112, 117n
Aristotelianism 163
authenticity, presumption of 21, 95–6,
 107, 121–2
authority 68n, 71, 74, 84–7, 90, 93
aversion 52n, 63–4, 84, 86, 152,
 153n

baptism 157, 159
beatitude 4, 5, 14, 36, 121
beneficence 7, 11, 13, 16–17, 19, 152n
benevolence 6, 7, 11, 13
body 3, 13, 77, 126

calamities 45
charity viii, 1, 5–6, 12–14, 16, 22,
 27n, 31, 34, 35n, 38n, 40–1, 60n,
 70, 114–15, 124, 128–31, 133,
 138n, 140, 143–4, 146, 154–5,
 156n, 160, 165
choice, *electio* 1, 8–10, 19–20, 25n,
 29–30, 32n, 36n, 37–41, 81,
 104n, 110, 112n, 163
Christ
 as Head of the Church 153, 156
 as mediator 153, 156
 grace 153, 156–7
 incarnation 144, 156, 157
 merit 153n, 156
 nature 160, 165
 Passion 143–4, 153, 155–6, 157n,
 158–60
 types of wills 165–6

Church 1, 14, 22, 34n, 35–6, 38–40,
 61n, 70–1, 124, 153, 156, 164
circumstances
 disparity of ix, 10, 42, 44–5,
 57–60
commands
 divine 51, 84, 152
communicatio 9, 71, 139
Communitarianism ix, 163
community 2, 14, 35, 71, 91, 98n,
 131n, 139, 151
concord 6–11, 22–4, 27, 29–33, 34n,
 35n, 40–1, 53, 56, 122, 132n,
 162–3
confidence 109n, 120–1
conformity of wills 42–3, 45–6, 48,
 50, 53, 55–60, 65–7, 69–70,
 87–8, 93
 in voluto 44, 46–7, 48n, 49–50,
 52–3, 55, 58, 65
contempt 84–6, 101, 102n, 105
contrition 143, 154n
courage 10, 63
courts, recourse to 127–31
cupiditas 12, 13

death 60n, 126n, 159n
debts 16–18, 133–4, 136, 147,
 151–4, 158–61
 condonation of 147, 158–9
 of friendship 16, 18–19
 of gratitude 157
 of honesty 16
 legal 16–17, 19
 moral 16–17, 19
desire 26n, 53, 55n, 64, 77, 109
 and beliefs 105–6
 inordinate 74, 78–9
despair 14, 61n, 109, 111, 116–18,
 120, 122
dignity 149–51, 157–60
dilectio 8–10, 107, 112n
disagreement 31, 33–4, 36n, 41,
 124–5, 163–4
discord 11, 21, 33, 37–9, 58, 70,
 72–3, 88n, 93

dismissiveness 79–82, 90
 dispositions 102, 104–5, 107, 120,
 154
 disputes 22, 31, 33, 124–5, 128

 enjoyment 3, 4, 5n
 equality 1, 19, 28n, 43–4, 68n,
 137–8, 149, 154n, 156, 160
 ‘of friendship’ 19, 147
 ‘of justice’ 19, 147
 proportional 152
 equivalence 136–8, 140, 145, 152n,
 157, 164
 excellence 73–4, 76–81, 83–8, 90,
 93, 106
 exclusivity, desire of 81

 faith 14, 23, 35–8, 40, 115–17, 121n
 Fall 68
 feelings 1, 8, 19n, 20, 95, 107
 form 9, 26–8, 29n, 34, 38n (of faith),
 41, 47–9, 53, 114n, 124
 friendship
 acts of 6–8
 and *amicitia* 1, 2
 and beatitude 5
 and *eros* 6
 and habit 8
 and justice 123–31
 Aristotelian viii, ix, 2, 5, 134, 152,
 160, 162
 between Christ and the
 Father 165–6
 between unequals 43–4, 66, 137,
 140
 Christian vii–iii 162
 fights 11, 17, 135, 159
 Greek vii
 importance of 3
 in heaven 4, 6
 marital 98n
 modern 2, 3
 of companions 30n
 of pleasure 2, 15
 of utility 2, 15
 of virtue 15, 16, 19, 99n
 political relevance viii
 Stoic 6, 60n
 with God viii, 1, 4, 15, 16, 27n, 42,
 45, 46, 49, 51, 53, 59, 66, 67,
 114, 115n, 125, 142,
 with parents 43, 136, 152, 157, 161

God
 acceptance of human acts 153–4,
 157
 acts 51, 136
 as benefactor 14–15, 116
 as victim of sin 142, 150
 attributes 138, 144
 commands *see* commands
 compared to judge 61n
 contempt of 84, 85, 86
 friendship with *see* friendship
 goodness 28, 47, 59, 65
 intellect 28
 justice *see* justice
 knowledge *see* knowledge
 law 85, 91–2
 love of *see* love
 mercy 120, 153–4
 ordination 134n
 plan 134n
 power 1, 79n
 precepts 54n, 85–6
 resemblance to 28n, 57
 rewards 136
 rule 84–6
 will *see* will
 goods
 arduous 14, 77, 108n, 110, 113,
 120, 121
 spiritual 14, 16, 77, 131
 transient 12
 grace 5n, 26, 27n, 134, 142, 153–7,
 159n, 160
 gratitude 16–19, 157
 greed 130–1, 140

 habits 8, 10, 26n, 27n, 37, 95, 112n,
 120, 161
 happiness 3–5, 36, 114
 heaven, *patria* 4, 6, 121n, 125
 heresy 22, 23, 35–41
 honour 12, 43, 90, 101, 103n, 144–5,
 149–51, 160
 hope 14–16, 94–6, 107–22
 and action 108–9
 and feasibility 14, 95, 109–10, 116,
 120–2
 interested 114–16, 118
 humility 78n, 84, 89–91, 122,
 149–50, 157

 identification 155

- imitation 28n, 29n, 30, 57, 59, 79, 82
 incarnation 144, 156–7
 incontinence, weak will 10, 86, 91
iniuria (unlawful harm) 98, 100n, 101
 Innocence, State of 68, 77, 104n, 157
 intellect 25, 27, 28n, 29, 30, 33, 36,
 37n, 64n, 77, 82, 103n, 104,
 112–13, 117n
- Jews 31, 38n
 judges 58–61, 87n, 91, 100–1, 148,
 149n, 161
 justice ix, 3, 13, 17, 19, 45, 65, 68n,
 103, 123–4, 127–8, 136,
 139–41, 143, 147–8, 150, 152,
 157, 162, 164
 and charity 144
 and equality 19, 43, 138, 147, 149n
 and mercy 158
 and peace 132n, 140
 and satisfaction 143–5, 149, 152
 circumstances of 133, 139, 140,
 160
 commutative 149
 corrective x, 142, 144, 148, 149,
 160, 161
 divine 144, 158, 159n
 formal 135
 general 19
 legal 16
 natural 16, 17n, 19
 order of 156, 159
 procedural 21, 100, 126n, 129,
 130
 punitive 169
 vindictive 148n, 149n
- knowledge 64, 68, 104, 126, 163
 and conflict 33, 41
 and faith 116
 and law 91
 and love 113
 and pride 78n, 82–3, 92
 divine 28
 inequality about 68n, 71, 74, 84–7,
 90, 93
 of the future 94, 111, 121
 of God 28, 45–6, 54, 127
 of oneself 89, 91
 of the friend viii, 95, 98, 126, 127,
 139
 transmission of 112–13
- law 16–17, 68n, 70, 74, 84–8, 90–3,
 120, 128–9
 of reason 78
 Liberalism 163
 liberality 13, 135
 litigation 128–32, 140
 love viii, 5, 7–10, 12, 15–16, 24,
 26–33, 38n, 41, 58, 60, 107,
 111–15, 127, 135–6, 142, 146,
 156n, 162, 164
 erotic 2, 5, 6, 26–7
 evils of 20
 intellectual 10
 interested 14–16, 114–15
 of friendship 18, 26, 27n, 114, 126,
 146
 of God 61, 85, 115, 127, 146
 of neighbour 85, 131
 of oneself 11–13, 95, 99, 106,
 113–15, 118, 120–2
 pure 115
 sensual 9
- marriage 2, 96–8n, 102
 matter
 of acts of will 47
 Mendicant Orders 127, 130
 merit 19, 124, 130, 133–4, 136, 138n,
 140, 151, 159, 160
 Christ's 153n
 condign 133–5
 congruous 134, 138n
 status merendi 133
- Neo-Platonism viii, 124
- obedience 54, 152
 opinions ix, 22–4, 29–33, 35, 36n,
 38, 41, 103, 104n, 117n
 Original Sin 74, 143, 157–8
- pagans viii, 38
 partiality 6, 123n
 participation 5, 25, 28, 40, 65n, 159,
 165
 passions 9, 27n, 113, 123n
 patience 12, 50–2n, 140
 peace 20, 32–3, 65, 70, 124, 128, 130,
 131–2, 140
 penance 142–3, 146, 148–9, 151–2
 public 151

- penitence 20, 143, 146, 149, 151
philia 2, 3, 43
 physicians 52–3, 67–8
 pluralism 163
 possibility 110, 113–14, 116–18
 precepts
 ceremonial 91n
 judicial 91
 presumption(s) 20–1, 95–105, 107,
 121–2
 of authenticity 95, 96, 107, 121–2
 of innocence 99n, 103
 rules of 96–105, 107
 pride (*superbia*)
 and envy 105–6
 and hope 118, 120–2
 and law 84–7, 90
 and self-deceit 11, 78, 82–3, 106
 and self-rejection 79
 and standing out 75–81
 censure of 11, 78n, 84
 disagreement 74–5
 effects of 3, 11, 39, 72, 105, 107
 knowledge 82–4, 90
 nature of 75–7
 punishment 58, 60n, 136, 142,
 144–5, 147–9
 self-punishment 148

 Quietism 115

 reason 16, 30, 37n, 51–3, 57–8, 61n,
 64–5, 70, 75, 77–8, 83, 89, 92,
 106, 110, 165–6
 rebellion 71, 86n, 132
 reconciliation 142–4, 148, 150–1,
 154, 156
 redemption 155, 158
 redress 143, 161
 relations 8n
 remorse 146, 148, 150
 reparation 142, 149n, 157, 158n
 of human nature 159
 restitution 142, 145n, 147, 149, 150
 revelation 126
 rights 13, 14, 98, 101, 107, 127, 130
 rulers 5, 43, 66–8

 sacraments 98n, 143, 156
 satisfaction
 and quality 154
 comprehensiveness 145–8

 for Original Sin 157–9, 160
 for personal sins 143, 151, 157–8,
 160
 on behalf of others 143, 151, 156
 quantitative 151–4, 155–8, 160
 sacramental 143, 145, 152–5, 156
 scandal 13–14, 129–30
 schism 70–2
 sedition 70–2
 self-assessment 74, 76, 78, 82, 89, 92,
 95, 99, 105, 106, 116, 118–22
 selflessness 11–13
 self-sufficiency 40, 79, 120, 163
 similitude 26–8n, 29n, 57
 sincerity ix
 slaves 92n, 137, 169
 soul 9, 10, 15, 61n, 68n, 75, 78n, 81n,
 115n, 117n, 126
 Stoics and Stoicism vii, 6, 60n, 61–2,
 64n
 subordination 86–7

 temperance 10, 123n
 trust 36, 38, 94, 99n

 unanimity (*homonoia*) ix, 23
 uniformity 26
 union 5n, 9, 10n, 27, 126–7
 affective 26
 material 34, 41, 124n
 of opinions 22, 24, 29, 31–3, 41
 of wills ix, 8, 22, 24, 30, 31, 35–7,
 39–41, 72, 107, 111–12, 126,
 162
 of wills, formal 35, 35, 37–41
 of wills, material 34, 41, 124
 per similitudinem 26n, 53, 55n, 64,
 77, 109
 real 26
 with God 29, 31

 vainglory 39, 69, 72–4, 80, 93, 105
 vice 8, 11, 12, 43, 70, 72, 75
 victims 142–6, 148, 149–51, 155,
 161
vindicatio 17
 virtue 3, 4, 8, 11–13, 15–17, 34n, 43,
 57, 61, 63, 64, 74, 81–2, 87, 89
 as origin of acts 144
 moral 143
 theological 1, 5, 31–2, 115
 visualizing 56

- war 20, 65, 67, 87, 132, 140
will(s)
 conformity of *see* conformity
 deliberated 65, 165
 divine 28–9, 44–7, 50–1, 57n, 59,
 62, 156n, 165–6
 natural 65–6, 165
 rational 52, 58, 59
 subjection of 54
 uncertainty about 16, 94–6, 107,
 126n
 union of *see* union

Index of Names and Places

- Abiram 71
 Abraham 91–2
 Acton, John Emerich Edward Dalberg,
 Lord 163
 Adam 104
 Anselm of Canterbury, St. 115n, 134n,
 144, 145, 148, 150, 152, 156
 Apostles 12, 124, 137
 Aquinas, Thomas, St.
 in Paris 127, 130n
 interruption of the writing of
 ST 142
 reading of Augustine's later
 works 135n
 Aristophanes 25
 Aristotle 1, 2n, 3, 6–8, 10, 12–15, 17,
 23–24, 23n, 25n, 31, 34n, 35n,
 40n, 43–4, 66, 82, 82n, 98, 111,
 123, 126, 134, 136n, 138, 152,
 154, 160, 162–5
 Aubert, Jean-Marie 128
 Augustine of Hippo, Aurelian, St. 12n,
 20, 31, 33, 35, 39, 51n, 61n, 68n,
 75, 89, 100n, 114, 125n, 126,
 129, 144
 Averröes (Ibn Rushd) 28n

 Baasten, Matthew 21n
 Barnabas 33, 35
 Basil of Caesarea, St. 5n
 Basque Country 140
 Becket, Thomas, St. 14
 Belmans, Theo G. 42n
 Ben Levi, Joshua 89n
 Bobik, Joseph vin, 6n
 Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, St. 51, 165
 Bond, Leo M. 71n
 Bouillard, Henri 134n
 Bracken, Jerry 143n
 Brower, Jeffrey 8n
 Buridan, Jean 123n

 Caesar 130
 Cajetan, Thomas de Vio 103–5
 Cassian, John 5n, 6n
 Catilina, Lucius Sergius 44n

 Ceașescu, Nicolae 87
 Cessario, Romanus 143n, 146, 149n,
 Christ 40, 87n, 125n, 126n, 137, 144,
 151, 153, 155, 156–60, 165
 Chrysippus of Soli 18n
 Chrysostom, John, St. 5n
 Cicero, Marcus Tullius 24n, 42, 44, 52
 Cizewski, Wanda vii n
 Columbus, Christopher 117
 Congar, Yves Marie Joseph 35n
 Cooper, John M. 2n, 15
 Corinth 128–9

 Damascene, John 165
 Damico, Anthony xviii
 Daniel 31
 Dathan 71
 DeLetter, P. 115n
 Dionysius the Aeropagite 75

 Egypt 111n
 Eliphaz 51
 Eschmann, Ignatius Theodore 25n
 Everest 116
 Evragius of Pontus 5n

 Fathers of the Church 22, 124
 Fathers of the English Dominican
 Province xvii, xviii
 Fenelón, François de Salignac de la
 Mothe 115
 Finnis, John M. xv, 37n, 44n, 46n,
 60n, 68n, 71n, 91n, 95n, 100n,
 139n
 Fiske, Adele M. 5n, 6n
 Franer, R. M. 99n

 Gabriel (angel) 31
 Gauthier, René-Antoine 23n
 Gennadius of Marseille 144, 145
 Gilby, Thomas 163
 Gillon, Louis Bertrand 71n
 Gils, Pierre-Marie 8n, 22n
 Glenn, Mary Michael 109n, 121n
 Gregorius IX, Pope 99n

- Gregory I (the Great), St. Pope 31, 75,
79–80, 82–3
- Harent, Stéphane 109n, 115n
Harnack, Adolph von 155n
Henle, Robert John 25n
Horace (Quintus Horatius
Flaccus) 126n
- Irwin, Terence xv
Isidore of Seville, St. 75
Israel (people) 31–2, 111n
- James, William 37n
Jamros, Daniel P. 143n
Jansen, Cornelius 115
Jerome (Eusebius Sophronius
Hieronymus), St. 31, 35, 39,
164
Jerusalem (celestial) 4, 5n
Job 51–2, 61–4
John Mark 33, 35
Jolif, Jean-Yves 23n
Jones, Gregory L. vii n
- Keaty, Anthony W. vii n
Keller, J. 71n
Kerr, Fergus vii n
Klonoski, Richard, J. 23n
Konstan, David 5n
Korach 71
Krempel, A. 25n, 71n
- Lafn Entralgo, Pedro 121n
Limbo 121n
Litzinger, C. I. xvii
Lombard, Peter 100n, 129, 145
Luijten, Eric 143n, 147n
Luther, Martin 115
- Macarius the Elder 5n
MacIntyre, Alasdair 2n, 163, 164
Mann, William E. 114n, 115n, 120
Manrique, Jorge 50n
Mansfield, Mary C. 151n
Markus, Robert Austin 68n
Mary Magdalene 126n
McEvoy, James vii n
McInerny, Ralph M. xvii, 2n, 25n, 55n
Mill, John Stuart 110
Miller, Fred D. 23n
- Molinos, Miguel de 115
Moses 71
- Nazianzus, Gregory 5n
Newton, Natika 56n
Northern Ireland 140
Nygren, Anders 6n
- Ockham, William 123n
Oesterle, John xviii
On 71
Osborne, Catherine vii n, 6n
- Paris 130n
Paris, University of 127
Patfoort, Albert 143n
Patout Burns, James 143n
Paul, St. 12, 89n, 123, 127, 128, 130
Peñafort, Raymond de 99n
Peripatetics 58
Persians 31
Petrucchi, Pietro Matteo 115n
Phipps, William E. 6n
Pilsner, Joseph 42n
Pizzolato, Luigi 5n
Plato 25n, 68n
Porro, Pasquale xviii
Porter, Jean vii n
Price, Anthony W. 163
Principe, Walter H. vii n
Procter, John xviii
- Quevedo, Francisco de 88
- Rausch, Jerome W. 71n
Rowan, John P. xviii
Rowe, William 61n
- Saint Victor, Hugh of 165
Sallust (Gaius Sallustius Crispus) 44n
Sandel, Michael J. 123n, 125n
Saranyana, Ignasi L. 61n, 64n
Savagnone, Giuseppe 71n
Schmidt, Robert W. xvii
Schwartz, Daniel (also Schwartz
Porzecanski, Daniel) 2n, 123n
Scotus, John Duns 57, 115n, 121n
Seneca, Lucius Annaeus 17–19
Smith Pangle, Lorraine 6
Steel, Carlos vii n
Stevens, Gregory 115n

- Stump, Eleonore 60, 61n
Suárez, Francisco 115n, 121n
- Te Velde, Rudi 25n
Terence (Publius Terentius Afer) 20
Thagaste 126n
Torrell, Jean-Pierre 2n, 28n, 29n,
127n, 130n
- Ullmann-Margalit, Edna 96–7, 99,
100n, 102n,
- Unamuno, Miguel de 36n
- Virgil (Publius Vergilius Maro)
126n
Vitoria, Francisco de 104n, 123n
- Wadell, Paul J. vii n
Wawrykow, Joseph 133n
Weithman, Paul. J. 68n, 76n, 78n
Williams, Bernard 37n
Wilms, Jerome 71n