

Winter 2019 • Volume 17, Number 1

et Nova Vetera

The English Edition of the International Theological Journal

CO-EDITORS

Matthew Levering, *Mundelein Seminary*

Thomas Joseph White, O.P., *Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas*

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Holly Taylor Coolman, *Providence College*

Gilles Emery, O.P., *University of Fribourg*

Paul Gondreau, *Providence College*

Scott W. Hahn, *Franciscan University of Steubenville*

Thomas S. Hibbs, *Baylor University*

Reinhard Hütter, *Catholic University of America*

Christopher Malloy, *University of Dallas*

Bruce D. Marshall, *Southern Methodist University*

Charles Morerod, O.P., *Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva, and Fribourg*

John O'Callaghan, *University of Notre Dame*

Chad C. Pecknold, *Catholic University of America*

Michael S. Sherwin, O.P., *University of Fribourg*



BOARD OF ADVISORS

- Anthony Akinwale, O.P., *Dominican Institute, Ibadan, Nigeria*
Khaled Anatolios, *University of Notre Dame*
Robert Barron, *Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, CA*
John Betz, *University of Notre Dame*
Bernhard Blankenhorn, O.P., *Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas*
Christopher O. Blum, *Augustine Institute*
Stephen Brock, *Pontifical University of the Holy Cross*
Peter Casarella, *University of Notre Dame*
Boyd Taylor Coolman, *Boston College*
Michael Dauphinais, *Ave Maria University*
Archbishop J. Augustine Di Noia, O.P., *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*
Douglas Farrow, *McGill University*
Anthony Fisher, O.P., *Archbishop of Sydney, Australia*
Simon Francis Gaine, O.P., *Blackfriars, University of Oxford*
Timothy Gray, *Augustine Institute*
Nicholas J. Healy, Jr., *Pontifical John Paul II Institute (Washington, DC)*
Russell Hittinger, *University of Tulsa*
Paige Hochschild, *Mount St. Mary's University*
Andrew Hofer, O.P., *Dominican House of Studies*
Dominic Legge, O.P., *Dominican House of Studies*
Joseph Lienhard, S.J., *Fordham University*
Steven A. Long, *Ave Maria University*
Guy Mansini, O.S.B., *Saint Meinrad School of Theology*
Francesca Aran Murphy, *University of Notre Dame*
Thomas Osborne, *University of St. Thomas (Houston)*
Michał Paluch, O.P., *Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas*
Trent Pomplun, *Loyola University Maryland*
Christopher J. Ruddy, *Catholic University of America*
Richard Schenk, O.P., *University of Freiburg*
Michele Schumacher, *University of Fribourg*
Janet Smith, *Sacred Heart Major Seminary*
Christopher Thompson, *St. Paul Seminary*
Thomas Weinandy, O.F.M. Cap., *Capuchin College*
William Wright, *Duquesne University*

Instructions for Contributors

1. Address all contributions, books for review, and related correspondence to Matthew Levering, mjlevering@yahoo.com.
2. Contributions should be prepared to accord as closely as possible with the typographical conventions of *Nova et Vetera*. The *University of Chicago Manual of Style* (16th edition) is our authority on matters of style.
3. *Nova et Vetera* practices blind review. Submissions are evaluated anonymously by members of the editorial board and other scholars with appropriate expertise. Name, affiliation, and contact information should be included on a separate page apart from the submission.
4. Galley-proofs of articles are sent to contributors to be read and corrected and should be returned to the Editors within ten days of receipt. Corrections should be confined to typographical and factual errors.
5. Submission of a manuscript entails the author's agreement (in the event his or her contribution is accepted for publication) to assign the copyright to *Nova et Vetera*.

NOVA ET VETERA
The English Edition of the International Theological Journal

ISSN 1542-7315

Winter 2019

Vol. 17, No. 1

COMMENTARY

Contemplative Homiletics: Being Carried into Reality..... JAMES KEATING 1

ARTICLES

Christ Our Ritual Sage? A Chinese Articulation
of Christ's Priesthood JOSHUA BROWN 15

Una ratio versus Diversae rationes: Three Interpretations
of *Summa theologiae* I, Q. 13, AA. 1–6 DOMENIC D'ETTORE 39

On the Separated Soul according to
St. Thomas Aquinas MELISSA EITENMILLER 57

Neo-Thomism and the Problem of
Animal Suffering B. KYLE KELTZ 93

Do Thomists Have Rights?..... DOMINIC LEGGE, O.P. 127

SYMPOSIUM: BARCLAY'S *PAUL AND THE GIFT*

Love as the Law of the Gift: Reading Paul with John
Barclay and Aquinas..... MICHAEL DAUPHINAIS 149

Divine Beneficence and Human Generosity in Second
Temple Judaism: Reflections on John Barclay's
Paul and the Gift..... BRADLEY C. GREGORY 183

The Ultimate Gift: The Transformative Indwelling
of Christ and the Christian..... DAVID VINCENT MECONI, S.J. 197

Paul and the Gift of Sonship ISAAC AUGUSTINE MORALES, O.P. 215

Paul and the Gift: A Mirror for Our
Protestant Faces MATTHEW J. THOMAS 229

A Thomist Reading of Paul?
Response and Reflections JOHN M. G. BARCLAY 235

RETRIEVING THE TRADITION

Remarks Concerning the Metaphysical Character of St.
Thomas's Moral Theology, in Particular as It Is Related
to Prudence and Conscience RÉGINALD GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, O.P. 245

(TRANSLATED ARTICLE BY MATTHEW K. MINERD)

BOOK REVIEWS

*Divine Election: A Catholic Orientation
in Dogmatic and Ecumenical Perspective*
by Eduardo J. Echeverria JORDAN J. BALLOR 271

<i>Exemplarist Moral Theory</i> by Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski	PATRICK CLARK	275
<i>Mother Teresa's Mysticism: A Christo-Ecclesio-Humano-Centric</i>		
<i>Mysticism</i> by Robert M. Garrity	MATTHEW L. LAMB	284
<i>Ethical Sex: Sexual Choices and Their Nature and</i>		
<i>Meaning</i> by Anthony McCarthy	KEVIN E. O'REILLY	287
<i>Thomas and the Thomists: The Achievement</i>		
<i>of Thomas Aquinas and His Interpreters</i> by		
Romanus Cessario, O.P., and Cajetan Cuddy, O.P.	JÖRGEN VIJGEN	290

The English edition of *Nova et Vetera* is published quarterly and provides an international forum for theological and philosophical studies from a Thomistic perspective. Founded in 1926 by future Cardinal Charles Journet in association with Jacques Maritain, *Nova et Vetera* is published in related, distinct French and English editions. The English edition of *Nova et Vetera* welcomes articles and book reviews in theology, philosophy, and biblical studies that address central contemporary debates and discussions. We seek to be “at the heart of the Church,” faithful to the Magisterium and the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and devoted to the work of true dialogue.

Nova et Vetera (ISSN 1542-7315; ISBN 978-1-949013-30-6) is published quarterly by St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology, 1468 Parkview Circle, Steubenville, OH 43952. *Nova et Vetera* is distributed to institutional subscribers for the St. Paul Center by the Catholic University of America Press. Institutional subscriptions, notifications of change of address, and inquiries concerning subscriptions, back issues, and missing copies should be sent to: JHUP Journals Division, PO Box 19966, Baltimore, MD 21211-0966. All materials published in *Nova et Vetera* are copyrighted by St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology.

© Copyright 2019 by St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology. All rights reserved.

POSTMASTER: Please send address change to *Nova et Vetera*, 1468 Parkview Circle, Steubenville, OH 43952.

Periodical Postage Paid at Steubenville, OH.

This periodical is indexed in the ATLA Catholic Periodical and Literature Index® (CPLI®), a product of the American Theological Library Association, 300 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60606, USA. Email: atla@atla.com, www.atla.com and is indexed and abstracted in the Emerging Sources Citation Index.

***Nova et Vetera* Subscription Rates:**

- **Individuals:** one-year \$40.00, two-year \$75.00
International: one-year \$60.00, two-year \$115.00
- **Students:** one-year \$30.00, two-year \$50.00
International: one-year \$40.00, two-year \$70.00
- **Colleges, Universities, Seminaries, and Institutions:**
one-year \$110.00, one-year print + electronic subscription \$150.00
International: one-year \$135.00

To subscribe online, please visit <http://www.nvjournal.net>.

For subscription inquiries, email us at novaetvetera@stpaulcenter.com or phone 740-264-9535.

Contemplative Homiletics: Being Carried into Reality¹

JAMES KEATING
Institute for Priestly Formation
Creighton University
Omaha, NE

For about seven years, I taught undergraduate Moral Theology incorrectly. For some reason, I kept putting the emphasis on the agency of the students while cloaking the agency of God in vague theological language about grace and “his help.” Then one day, a parishioner came to me to ask for prayers as she was about to begin a retreat. I assured her I would pray for her, and we even did so before she left my office. After the retreat, she sought me out to ask a moral question that arose in her conscience during her retreat: “Do I have to reverse my tubal ligation?” Now, this was not a retreat on theology of the body or any aspect of sexual ethics or marriage. It was simply a retreat on how to pray. I am concerned enough about the income and financial stability of my fellow moral theologians that I will not advocate the demise of our discipline; but certainly, I began to think, the mystical must precede the moral, as Henri de Lubac urged.² The approach I took to moral theology often elicited defensive postures on the part of students. This disposition left little room for them to receive the beauty of virtuous living as a motivating power to enter the good. Peter John Cameron, O.P., in his indispensable book on preaching, noted: “If the final concrete proposal of your preaching puts the initiative on the hearer rather than on God and grace, it is moralistic.”³

¹ 2018 Marten Lecture, University of Notre Dame.

² Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, vol. 2, *The Four Senses of Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 31.

³ Peter John Cameron, O.P., *Why Preach?* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009), 142. See also Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* (2005), §1: “Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event,

One might ask what is wrong with a moral theologian being moralistic. In light of my experience with this parishioner, I reimagined my approach to moral theology and began to qualify the emphasis I placed on human agency. Certainly the academic process of teaching the moral truths of the faith has its own ends and purposes, different from the ends and purposes of a retreat, but I began to see that the *encounter one has with Christ in prayer* can enflame persons to live the moral truths of Catholicism. A good argument about the truth of moral behavior convinces some to enter the Church, but what sustains that movement is a living relationship with the Holy Spirit. “Due to the work of the Holy Spirit it will always be possible for subsequent generations *to have the same experience of the Risen One* that was lived by the apostolic community at the origin of the church.”⁴ So I began to think that the teaching of theology should be structured in such a way that one might actually encounter Christ in its teaching, mostly by welcoming the truth of theology in periods of silence in the classroom. In this silence, we allow students to relate the content of truth and its effects upon them to Christ.⁵ I came to see the classroom as an extension of the Liturgy of the Word, similar to the way in which Eucharistic Adoration is an extension of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. As such, the teaching of theology encompasses what Pope Benedict XVI called a “more generous definition of human reason.”⁶ Such a definition is not reducible to a pedagogical method or the demands of hegemonic scientism. Rather our “studying is always with the Lord, before the Lord, and for Him.”⁷

This awakening in me overturned my data-driven classroom, which yielded to a more contemplative approach of inviting students to encounter the beauty of truth as it is communicated from within doctrine. Space was opened up, by intermittent silence, for God to initiate the integration of theological truth with the particulars of each individual student’s life. Here was a chance for faith to heal reason and for reason to more deeply

a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction.”

⁴ Joseph Ratzinger, quoted in Tracey Rowland, *Benedict XVI: Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 53.

⁵ James Keating, *Resting on the Heart of Christ: The Vocation and Spirituality of the Seminary Theologian* (Omaha, NE: IPF, 2009).

⁶ Pope Benedict XVI, “Meeting with Representatives of Science,” University of Regensburg, September 12, 2006 (w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060912_university-regensburg.html).

⁷ Benedict XVI, *A Reason Open To God* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2013), 150; Joseph Ratzinger, “The Church and Scientific Theology,” *Communio* 7 (1980): 339.

grasp the mystery of faith.

Following upon these developments, I looked at how I was approaching my preaching within the Eucharistic Liturgy and found I was perilously close to Father Cameron's definition of moralism there as well. After a period of prayer, I developed a different approach to preaching that I presented as "contemplative homiletics."⁸ The goal of contemplative homiletics was to allow the truth of the Scripture text to silence the worshippers in order to receive the healing of the Holy Spirit.⁹ Here, of course, I was furthering the movement of integrating truth and love. Such integration is essential to both theological instruction and liturgical preaching. Truth, when received contemplatively, becomes an occasion not only to "know" but to love and be loved. Theological instruction is not data, prayer, knowledge, or love. Rather, theology *is the suffering of the integration* of these realities by those who *love Him who is Truth*. Romanus Cessario has argued: "All learning is fundamentally contemplative. Study proceeds successfully within an establishment of real contact with God. . . . It is God who really does the teaching. . . . There is no theology without prayer. Prayer is the way we let God instruct us."¹⁰ I would like to expand and deepen my understanding of the contemplative homily by building on my approach to theology as truth giving birth to silence. This silence bears a divine presence allowing God to act within the hearer. Conversion is the end of receiving truth either in the contemplative silence of study or in the contemplative silence of worship. The goal has always been to connect the beauty of truth with the conversion of the whole person, whether as a result of study or as a result of worship. Encounter yields a body surrendered and eager to act.

I will look at this desire to act on what is heard within an appreciation of the Holy Spirit's own power in worship, a power mediating truth and healing. The Spirit takes the Gospel, which is Christ's, and carries it into our hearts, giving life by way of the gift of communion with the Trinity. To know and to receive truth in and from Love is to be in reality. There is no setting more enmeshed in reality than the Eucharistic Liturgy. We engage the depths of reality whenever its door is opened by a priest in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Here we begin to participate in the living Word as we progress through hearing to beholding, then

⁸ James Keating, "Contemplative Homiletics," *Seminary Journal* 16, no.2 (Fall 2010): 63–69.

⁹ Keating, "Contemplative Homiletics," 65.

¹⁰ Romanus Cessario, *Theology and Sanctity* (Naples, FL: Sapientia Press 2014), 161–62.

to communion, and then ultimately to living the inevitable fruit of such progression: witness (martyrdom).

Pragmatically, the priest or deacon always has the same goal when preaching: to invite the people into communion with God and each other as they receive the Spirit, who is life and communion. In this way, the Church is readied *from within* by the Spirit to participate in Christ's Body as His Bride, a Bride bearing spiritual and moral witness to the culture.

In a sense, members of the Church represent humanity experiencing its deepest ache—an ache that is desire, a desire that is satisfied in God, and so fulfills both affective longing and intellectual seeking. In its explicit embrace of faith, the Church longs to have this ache relieved in Holy Communion with the living Word. In such communion, all that is human finds its rest.¹¹

The Homily Stirs the Holy Spirit in Worshippers

The Spirit is not the one who acts; He *is the act, the event*. He Himself is the prayer within us.¹² The homilist invites the Church to “be open” (Mark 7:34) and let the love of God be poured into each member (Rom 5:5). The homilist invites the Church to let this “act” (this “event”) have its way with them.¹³ Only in such *a surrender to the truth* enmeshed in the words of the preacher can the Church fully become itself in public. This surrender, however, is not simply a response to discursive truths, but rather, as Pope Benedict XVI was fond of repeating,¹⁴ it is a surrender to a Person. This Divine Person emerges from within the proclamation of Scripture. It is this Person who moves, encourages, and calls the Church to reveal the fruit of liturgical listening as public witness. In a mysterious way, each homily carries the potential to ignite a suffering within us, a suffering born of our engaged listening to the Word of God. Such engagement is like Jesus poking his finger into our ears and pleading with us: be open. We resist this poking and pleading because all homilies confront our idols, our hiding places, those actions and dispositions we love more than the Lord. But if we are courageous and enter the arena of salvation week after week, the homily can bear the grace of surrender to us. The result of such surrender,

¹¹ Paul O'Callaghan, *Children of God in the World* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2016), 545.

¹² Wilfrid Stinissen, O.C.D., *The Holy Spirit, Fire of Divine Love* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2017), 18.

¹³ Jeremiah 20:7–9 (in the sense of being enticed, beguiled).

¹⁴ Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, *Called to Holiness* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2017), 34. Cameron, *Why Preach?* 87–88.

due to the pleading and poking of Jesus to be open, is clear: the proclamation is received (Mark 7:33). This proclamation bears healing with it, but it primarily carries to our hearts the man who “has done all things well” (Mark 7:37). The proclaimed Word can certainly cure and heal people, but our most common experience is to find in it a release of integrative energy yielding self-possession.¹⁵ Taken into communion with the Spirit by way of the proclaimed Word, we receive divine love and thus suffer the healing of lies, fractured emotions, and biased or ideological thinking, which heretofore may have defined our interiority. As worshippers’ silent receptivity is contextualized within the fullness of the Eucharist as salvific encounter,¹⁶ we can say that the homily is therapeutic.¹⁷

Therapeutic in this context means that Christianity counteracts humanity’s wound of sin, a wound that alienates us from God and makes it easier for us to entertain idols. Such ease invites us to open ourselves to artificial consolation. Alternately, the homily opens the ears of the heart with a stark contrast to that ease as it takes us into a true Word from the real God. In a sense, our preaching is the “spit” of Christ, carrying with it a healing power.¹⁸ For this power to reach both preacher and congregation, we need the *habitus* of prayer. With this virtue, we possess *a stable disposition of discerning* where the homily occasions us to *behold the True One in love; to be affected by He who emerges from the homily as beauty*.¹⁹

¹⁵ See Pope John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem* (1986), §62: “Through the Eucharist, the Holy Spirit accomplishes that ‘strengthening of the inner man’ spoken of in the Letter to the Ephesians [Eph 3:16]. Through the Eucharist, individuals and communities, by the action of the Paraclete-Counselor, learn to discover the divine sense of human life, as spoken of by the Council: that sense whereby Jesus Christ ‘fully reveals man to man himself,’ suggesting ‘a certain likeness between the union of the divine persons, and the union of God’s children in truth and charity’ [*Gaudium et Spes*, §24]. This union is expressed and made real especially through the Eucharist, in which man shares in the sacrifice of Christ which this celebration actualizes, and he also learns to ‘find himself . . . through a . . . gift of himself’ [*Gaudium et Spes*, §24], through communion with God and with others, his brothers and sisters.”

¹⁶ See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, §§1067–68.

¹⁷ “Healing is an essential dimension of the apostolic mission and of Christian faith in general. It can even be said that Christianity is a therapeutic religion. . . . When understood at a sufficiently deep level, this expresses the entire content of redemption” (Pope Benedict XVI as quoted in Mary Healy, *Healing* [Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2015], 30).

¹⁸ See Mary Healy, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008), 147: “In the ancient world saliva was considered to have therapeutic qualities.”

¹⁹ See Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, §12: “This is love in its most radical form. By contemplating the pierced side of Christ (cf. [John] 19:37), we can

The homilist and congregation, then, agree to enter a dialogue of prayer occasioned by the words spoken. This prayer is interior, born from the silent contemplation of the speaker, and received in the silent receptivity of the congregation. Neither the homilist nor the congregation relinquishes the drama of freedom being played out in the presence of God as they sift spoken words for hints of His voice, His call, a voice once heard that elicits both sacrifice and the communion that is “rest.” Once trust is given to God and rest received from Him, He summons with a call to action, a call as singular as is each vocation present in the congregation. This call to action is one of freedom unto sacrifice or a sacrifice bearing freedom. This paradoxical freedom that is sacrifice is attainable because it shares in the power of the One who is Love necessitating sacrifice.²⁰ Hence, to receive the living Word and the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ as one’s life commitment is to receive the power to choose love even if it kills you. It is to become, through the power of the Spirit, another Christ.²¹ To keep receiving the Word of God as proclaimed in each Eucharistic Liturgy is to regularly receive anew (deepening upon depth, and depth upon deepening) the mystical life as a personal appropriation of Him *Who is proclaimed* in the Church as the Living Word.²²

If Louis Bouyer is correct²³ that, in the Eucharist, *we are gathered to*

understand the starting-point of this Encyclical Letter: ‘God is love’ (1 John 4:8). It is there that this truth can be contemplated. It is from there that our definition of love must begin. In this contemplation the Christian discovers the path along which his life and love must move.” Of course, every celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy is a contemplation of the pierced side of Christ. Hence the Eucharist *is* the definition of love.

²⁰ See Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, §6: “Love is indeed ‘ecstasy,’ not in the sense of a moment of intoxication, but rather as a journey, an ongoing exodus out of the closed inward-looking self towards its liberation through self-giving, and thus towards authentic self-discovery and indeed the discovery of God: ‘Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it’ (Lk 17:33), as Jesus says throughout the Gospels (cf. Mt 10:39; 16:25; Mk 8:35; Lk 9:24; Jn 12:25). In these words, Jesus portrays his own path, which leads through the Cross to the Resurrection: the path of the grain of wheat that falls to the ground and dies, and in this way bears much fruit. Starting from the depths of his own sacrifice and of the love that reaches fulfilment therein, he also portrays in these words the essence of love and indeed of human life itself.”

²¹ O’Callaghan, *Children of God in the World*, 276.

²² Francis Martin, “Spiritual Understanding of Scripture,” in *Verbum Domini and the Complementarity of Exegesis and Theology*, ed. Scott Carl (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), 24–25.

²³ Louis Bouyer, *Introduction to the Spiritual Life* (Notre Dame, IN: Christian Classics, 2013), 48–49.

hear the Word, and thus invited to sacrifice our lives in response to its proclamation, then surely homilies ought not to be “syllogisms”²⁴—which convert few if any. Nor should a homily merely be data. Facts and information already fill the work day of the laity to the point of numbness. Instead, the homily is “fire,” or rather, as Francis Martin says, *a Person* bearing fire.²⁵ The homily is the integration of mystery, God’s action,²⁶ with our dynamic response in what we call liturgy. There, *in the very midst of mystery*, the homilist longs to elicit a response from the worshippers. It is a response to the very aspect of mystery carried by the Word proclaimed in the midst of the Body and Blood being offered. In other words, the homily is mystical by definition.²⁷ For this to be so, the homilist hopes to reach a level of contemplative oratory that stirs the Bride (the Church) to see and hear the Lord and offer herself to the Bridegroom. “What is deepest in the Church . . . is the spouse like responsiveness of receptivity and obedience to Christ who, as the Church’s head, ever plunges anew into His own being those whom He sends out as His disciples.”²⁸

The *voice of the homilist* must reach what is deepest in the Church so that a real response may be elicited and desire for communion be born, heralding a vulnerability to mission. Of course, *mystical* does not mean the homilist conjures subjective states of religious emotion from the congregation. Instead the preacher endeavors *to leave the members in the Presence*, and if the Holy Spirit wishes to bring about such religious emotions within the members *in relation to His Presence*, that is His affair. As the homilist moves those vulnerable members into the Presence, he possesses only one earnest hope for the homily’s effect: to leave the people in *prayer*.²⁹ If the

²⁴ John Connolly, *John Henry Newman* (Lanham, MD: Sheed, 2005), 98.

²⁵ Connolly, *John Henry Newman*, 13. See also Louis Bouyer, *The Christian Mystery: From Pagan Myth to Christian Mysticism* (Petersham, MA: St Bede’s, 1990), 84: “At the outset, and fundamentally, [the Word] is not a word which gives information, like a professor. It is an active word, a personal intervention in the lives of those whom it addresses.”

²⁶ Odo Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship* (New York: Herder, 1999), 40.

²⁷ Bouyer, *The Christian Mystery*, 181: “Whenever [Denis] produces a concrete definition of what he understands by mystical, it is always in the immediate context either of biblical interpretation or of liturgical exposition, and often both at the same time.”

²⁸ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale*, trans. Aidan Nichols (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 8.

²⁹ Pope Francis has noted that “the first task in life is prayer . . . prayer of the heart: to look at the Lord, to listen to the Lord, to ask the Lord” (Daily Mass Homily, Casa Santa Marta, October 8, 2013). In this way we see that the fundamental mission of the homily, leaving persons in prayer, is a way to serve the “first task in life.”

homilist can move the congregation into the Presence, stilling their hearts enough to receive and to remain in communion with the Spirit, he has succeeded. For, to usher the people into prayer is to bring them into reality (i.e., *into being another Christ; into taking on the mind of Christ*). Since so many Catholics abide in fantasy throughout the week by the power of popular culture, such a goal is the contemporary and urgent affair of the homilist. The homily opens up reality and endeavors to engage the people in it. Here, as the homily is proclaimed and contemplated, the people's concrete lives, their fidelities and infidelities, are taken up into *reality itself* in a Holy Communion. The word preached is the antechamber for the word embraced, and the word embraced is the purification of all fantasy, as bondage gives way to the freedom of reality. The freedom of reality liberates the congregation to no longer be governed by fantasy and idiosyncratic obsessions; rather, they are invited to delight in knowing the freedom of being governed by Christ.³⁰ Reality for the one who worships in spirit and truth (John 4:23) is very simply understood: sharing in Christ's own life of sacrificial love, which becomes gift for all.³¹ The homily, of course, assists us to live a life of sacrifice become gift out of the *power* of the one who defines reality as such. The homily makes us vulnerable; it elicits desire within us to participate in the self donation of the Christ as He is missioned by the Father and sustained by the Spirit. Christ is the one who obeys and heals. Christ is always sent from the banquet on mission (Luke 14: 15–24). Hearing a homily and obeying it with our whole body prepares us for a Holy Communion, one that sends and does not sedate. This conspiracy between Word proclaimed and gifts received at the altar orders believers toward perfect freedom, an interior life³² congruent with God's indwelling love, a life lived in harmony with the prayer being uttered by the indwelling Spirit, a life of no longer saying prayers, but of becoming one.

As a good in itself, prayer needs no practical fruit. Nevertheless, history has shown that, when personal vulnerability meets divine presence, much fruit follows by way of discernment. Such is the case when a homily born of prayer is met by the vulnerable and prayer-soaked hearts of the people. Many a saint has given testimony that mission was unleashed within them

³⁰ Elizabeth Teresa Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 90.

³¹ Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 55.

³² "Perfect liberty is neither license nor conformity to external law but what Congar called 'interiority'—the total coincidence of our own desire . . . with the love of God" (Groppe, *Yves Congar's Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 99).

as the Word was proclaimed in the midst of salvation being offered at Mass (e.g., Francis of Assisi and Elizabeth Ann Seton). Such mission was perceived because one's vulnerability to God yielded a new or deepening relationship with Him. Such a relationship always defines one, and from such an identity a mission is given. If deepening the worshippers' prayer is the goal of the Word proclaimed and preached, then the homily must always be absorbed into the depths of communal silence. Silence naturally follows a grace-filled homily, unless artificially thwarted by functionalism. Silence is natural because, for the vulnerable, the speaker just ushered the listener into reality. Reality intrinsically hushes. Reality comes upon the listener as gift, health, or salvation, as a balm to ease the "useless anxiety" we bear.

Most especially, prayer *leaves us available*³³ to being affected by God. The homilist who listens to the Spirit attempts to ready the members' hearts to be loved by God right within worship. It is for this reason that the Church gathers: to receive such love and then give, or sacrifice, themselves in return for receiving such. Here is true mysticism and the true end of homiletics.³⁴ "In the Eucharist we are caught up . . . in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. . . His self-giving is meant to become mine."³⁵ It is this mystery that the homilist is inviting the people to come into, and *once within it*, they can contemplate the beauty of its truth.³⁶ To lead the congregation into mystery is to lead them into reality, a fecund communion with God that wounds the conscience, giving birth to mission.³⁷ It is the Holy Spirit who is roused in preaching, and with our consent, He will penetrate our consciences even more deeply, for it is there that He dwells.³⁸ The Holy

³³ Wendy Wright, "Prayer in the Salesian Tradition," in *Prayer in the Catholic Tradition: A Handbook of Practical Approaches*, ed. Robert Wicks (Cincinnati, OH: Franciscan Media, 2016), 271.

³⁴ "It is implied that all true mysticism . . . is essentially the same in being rooted in the *consciousness of our reception of divine love*" (Bernard McGinn discussing the thought of Bernard Lonergan in *The Foundations of Mysticism*, vol. 1 [New York: Crossroad, 1991], 284).

³⁵ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 57–58.

³⁶ Tracey Rowland, *Catholic Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 117. See also Aidan Nichols, *The Word has Been Abroad: A Guide Through Balhassar's Aesthetics* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1998), 31: "Beauty is not light falling on the object but light breaking forth from the form's interior."

³⁷ "By real liturgy and preaching I mean those which are really capable of bearing fruit in the consciences of man . . . What God wants in his worship is no ceremony, no offering, nothing outward, but man himself, . . . the gift of the heart of man" (Yves Congar, *A Gospel Priesthood* [New York: Herder, 1967], 140–41).

³⁸ James Keating, "Evangelizing Conscience," *Pro Ecclesia* 8, no. 4 (Fall 1999):

Spirit frees us to obey the homily in its truth, not out of compulsion, but out of love. Over time and with the proper disposition, the homily can free people from illusory loves, disordered affections, and idiosyncratic judgments. In listening to the homily within sacramental worship, we can come to suffer our own birth as true agents who abide in communion with God.³⁹ All the members of the whole Church are being invited by the Spirit to abide in truth and worship, and thus to progressively become holy.⁴⁰ This invitation is given, and holiness effected, by those who respond to the Spirit at worship in freedom and with desire.

Some instruction before or after Mass is necessary to facilitate this level of receiving love, as many people do not know how to listen for God moving within their hearts. Primarily, however, the instruction is given to ready their hearts to be transported into prayer by the homily. Once within this silence-enshrouded communion, they can be ushered to the awesome sacrifice at the altar.

The faithful are invited to listen to the homily in such a way that the subject of the homilist's fascination, God, is internalized in the heart. To listen in this way is the very definition of intimacy, and intimacy is the occasion for conversion. Such listening is possible within a homily because it is the occasion for God to speak with a "degree of sacramentality," as noted by Yves Congar.⁴¹ To welcome God carried and hidden within the words preached, to respond to this Presence with *our own presence* (that is, to be engaged in receiving truth and sharing our own thoughts, feelings, and desires), is the adhesive of faith itself. In the homily, one cannot guarantee an encounter with God, so it is all the more necessary to surround the preacher with a skilled and discerning assembly, each working to hear what God is saying from within the relationship He has with him or her.

If this is to happen, the preacher must give real food,⁴² and not simply images, ideas, stories, or data. Paradoxically, he is to preach as one waiting

475–87, at 479.

³⁹ Dennis Billy and James Keating, *Conscience and Prayer: The Spirit of Catholic Moral Theology* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001), 69–84.

⁴⁰ Matthew Levering, *Engaging the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2016), 339.

⁴¹ Yves Congar, *The Word and the Spirit* (San Francisco: Harper Row, 1986), 25.

⁴² Yves Congar, *A Gospel Priesthood*, 147; Acts 6:2; Acts 8:31. See also Peter Williamson on *diakonia* and the play on words that is found in Acts 6 in relation to the Word of God being food and service (*diakonia*) being the Word of God's communication to others ("Preparing Seminarians for ministry of the Word in light of *Verbum Domini*," in *Verbum Domini and the Complementarity of Exegesis and Theology*, ed. Fr. Scott Carl [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015], 88n4).

on tables, always attentive to the real hunger of people and delivering to them what is truly needed. The preacher rushes to the Ethiopian eunuch because he senses his exasperation: “I want to be fed but cannot open the cupboard.”

The heart must be encouraged to receive the soul’s food during the homily itself, in the substantial silence afforded by the presider after it, and in the experiences and interior movements of the heart after the person leaves the church. Most crucial to all this is increasing people’s devotion to the Holy Spirit, as He is the one who makes sure the Word of God is heard in the words of the homilist.⁴³

The Spirit as Life and Communion, thus the One Who Heals

“Just as the word of God comes to us in the body of Christ, in his Eucharistic body and in the body of the Scriptures, through the working of the Holy Spirit, so too it can only be truly received and understood through that same Spirit.”⁴⁴

It is God who speaks first. In a pale way, the homilist occasions this “speaking” for the congregation by extending the proclamation, aiding them to receive and creatively integrate it within the context of their own lives. In this integration, the homily becomes personal. The liturgy is the action of God in the midst of a gathering of believers who want to be affected by divine love offered as salvation. The liturgy is not devotional prayer, but each person must welcome the movement of God toward the Church in mercy as his or her own. Hence, the corporate worship is held together by the cellular movement of each person taking seriously the Word God uttered as gift. Personal devotion⁴⁵ in the Eucharistic Liturgy (a perennial tension) is not the purpose as such, but without personal appropriation within its structures, worship becomes the occasion for an institution to order words and gestures while failing as persons to be affected by God. Thus, the Holy Spirit assists throughout the whole process of praying the homily. Most powerfully, He assists with the interior listening of people and energizes the integration noted above. The believer, in essence, conspires with the Spirit through knowledge and love to give permission to that same Spirit to “make things happen” in his or

⁴³ Yves Congar, *The Word and Spirit*, trans. David Smith (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986), 34.

⁴⁴ Pope Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini* (2010), §16

⁴⁵ Joyce Ann Zimmerman, “Liturgical Prayer,” in Wicks, *Prayer in the Catholic Tradition*, 521 and 529.

her life.⁴⁶ We *contemplate the mysteries* unfolding before us in the homily and around and within us at the Eucharistic altar *only so that action* may be born in us (so “things will happen”). When believers receive the homily in their bodies,⁴⁷ martyrs are given to the culture. As a result of ingesting the Word and sacrament, no longer do the mysteries reside in the rites, but now they reside in the citizen Catholic. Such sacred witnessing is the public humiliation of the Catholic and, as such, is resisted by the culture as a contrast to the “passing age” (Rom 12) to which it clings. The homily tutors us in being Catholic, unleashing hunger for the Spirit’s influence in our bodies with *each present moment*, and not simply within the celebration of the sacraments.⁴⁸

Obviously, the homily can leave a congregation unmoved as well, remaining lodged within the culture of distraction. In fact, it may seem that this is the norm, as we are living in a time of waning interest in and draining desire for the supernatural.⁴⁹ Can the homily within the Eucharistic Liturgy stir desire for God, or has our desire to “rest” from our labors (by going out of existence instead of into heaven) claimed a growing part of the “none” generation? Even this generation hungers within for intimacy, for some connection and communion with another. Hence, the homily may become a way to awaken a desire for intimacy with God that can be satisfied over time in the Eucharistic Lord.

“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world” (John 17:17–18). In a certain sense, the disciples become “drawn into intimacy with God by being immersed in the word of God”: “God’s word is, so to speak, the purifying bath, the creative power which changes them and makes them belong to God.”⁵⁰ The Word itself—proclaimed, expounded, and received—is the “change” agent and the occasion for an intimacy that may send others to bring the Gospel to the culture.

The homilist centers and recenters the congregation, week-to-week and month-to-month, in the Paschal Mystery. In so doing, the homilist conspires to unleash an imaginative center within the Church born of intimacy with Christ. It is not the preacher’s imagination alone that matters,

⁴⁶ See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Exploration in Theology*, vol. 3, *Creator Spirit* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 242.

⁴⁷ Balthasar, *Explorations*, 3:177.

⁴⁸ Balthasar, *Explorations*, 3:181.

⁴⁹ “America’s Changing Landscape,” Pew Research Center, May 12, 2015, pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/.

⁵⁰ Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*, §80.

but the thinking unleashed within the congregation as the preacher brings the people to the depths of mystery week after week. From such depths, imaginations might be inflamed and the Church reformed.⁵¹

But again we are cautioned by “realism,” as some might sense a drift toward the ideal in what I am saying. And yet what other gathering, except the Eucharist, is appropriate to call all into mystery to be affected by God, especially those who have lost the taste for God?

“An appetite is any tendency of a thing toward the good that fulfills it. . . . Man does not live by bread alone. . . . We also have souls whose appetite is for fellowship with God. . . . [Original sin] spoiled our appetite for God, . . . and if our appetite for God would be restored, it must be trained in a new diet, a Eucharistic diet. Christ was hungry for God and God alone, and when we eat his body, he gives us his appetite.”⁵²

Luke 14:23 thunders that God wants His house full. Inviting all into the Word of God by conversion in the Church, by prayerfully reading the Word and listening to its explanation in catechesis and its power in the homily, prepares those on the highways and in the hedgerows to regain or correctly name the purpose of the appetite that moves within them. This is Eucharistic Hospitality to be sure, but not in the sense of an open buffet. Rather, only as one correctly discerns the gift before him according to its substance and according to one’s readiness, is he or she able to receive the weight of such a sacred banquet.

N.V

⁵¹ “The homily is a means of bringing the scriptural message to life in a way that helps the faithful to realize that God’s word is present and at work in their everyday lives. It should lead to an understanding of the mystery being celebrated, serve as a summons to mission, and prepare the assembly for the profession of faith, the universal prayer and the Eucharistic liturgy. . . . The faithful should be able to perceive clearly that the preacher has a compelling desire to present Christ, who must stand at the center of every homily. For this reason preachers need to be in close and constant contact with the sacred text; they should prepare for the homily by meditation and prayer, so as to preach with conviction and passion” (Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*, §59).

⁵² David Fagerberg, *Consecrating the World: On Mundane Liturgical Theology* (Kettering, OH: Angelico, 2016), 101.

Christ Our Ritual Sage? A Chinese Articulation of Christ's Priesthood

JOSHUA BROWN
Mount St. Mary's University
Emmitsburg, MD

This article concerns developing an account of Christ's priesthood utilizing concepts and terms from Chinese philosophy. The primary problem I address is methodological: how can an intercultural reading of Christological doctrine be simultaneously culturally relevant and orthodox? In answer to this question, I seek to negotiate intellectual complications that arise in attempting to articulate a doctrine concerning Christ's historical and cultural embodied person while drawing on a cultural and ritual milieu vastly different from those of the Christian Scriptures or doctrinal tradition. Focusing on the question of Christ's priesthood, I demonstrate here that a reading that is at once both culturally relevant and orthodox is possible through cultivating a reading of two concrete programs and then using these perspectives to analyze and resolve issues in articulating Christ's priesthood in a Chinese key. Thus, I base this work here on an analysis of ritual and ritual agency in the philosophical writings of the early Confucian Xúnzǐ 荀子 (310–210 BC) and St. Thomas Aquinas's account of Christ's priesthood in question 22 of *Summa theologiae* [ST] III.¹

The framework in which I pose this reading of Christ's priesthood is,

¹ I would like to thank both Matthew Levering for his extensive comments and suggestions on this article, and the blind-peer reviewer for *Nova et Vetera* (English) for his excellent and helpful comments. Any mistakes that remain are my own. Although Xúnzǐ is not as important to the Confucian tradition as his near contemporary Mèngzǐ 孟子, he was vastly important in the early Confucian period and has a sophisticated theory of ritual that makes him especially fitting for this article's purposes.

then, the relationship between human culture and Christian doctrine. In the modern West, the difficulties of articulating Christian teaching in a Western idiom have been by and large negotiated for a long time, and thus many Western Christians do not have any trouble understanding Christian doctrine in their native intellectual categories. However, especially in the wake of postmodernism and postcolonialism, this is not true in many parts of the world. In recent decades, a number of Asian and Asian American theologians have articulated some variety of the claim that traditional Christian doctrinal categories, especially Christological doctrines, are products of and are only relevant to the dominant intellectual culture of the West and that, hence, a culturally relevant and responsive theology for Asian peoples must find a different foundation to be really “Asian.”²

Modern theology therefore faces a considerable dilemma. On the one hand, many Asian theologians are suspicious of the possibility of a truly Asian theology being founded on traditional Christian categories and discourse. On the other hand, sociologically speaking, it seems that Christianity itself is fading in the West and that the dominant Christian culture will be Chinese within a matter of decades.³ We face, then, a very imaginable situation in which the majority of Christians might be led to believe that the doctrinal content of traditional Christology is not culturally relevant to them, and thus can be replaced. What is to become of these categories, then, and the doctrines they communicate? What is to become of the theological sciences that today seek to better understand and articulate these doctrines and their categories? Will they fall away and, indeed,

² The strongest statement of this approach can be found in the works of C. S. Song, such as *Jesus, the Crucified People* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996), 6–12. A more recent work that defines “Asian” theology over and against Western theology is Hwa Yung, *Mangoes or Bananas? The Quest for an Authentic Asian Christian Theology*, 2nd ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2012). In common parlance, “banana” is a derogatory term for someone of Asian lineage whose “insides” (i.e., practices, language, conceptual framework) are “white.”

³ See Fenggang Yang, “When Will China Become the World’s Largest Christian Country,” *Slate*, December 2, 2014 (online). At the very least, the Chinese cultural umbrella would pertain to those members of the Chinese diaspora who left China during the late Qīng 清 dynasty (1644–1912) for predominantly economic reasons, or those who fled China in the republican era, particularly after the rise of Máo Zédōng 毛泽东 (r. 1949–1976). This diasporic community would include, but not be limited to, Chinese-speaking citizens of nations such as Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, the United States, Canada, and Western European countries. If we take a step further and expand the Chinese cultural imprint to cultures heavily influenced by Chinese thought, history, and language, we would also have to include at least Vietnam and Korea, and Japan to some degree.

become irrelevant, or will they find ways to speak to a changing context?

In this article, I seek to show that being responsive to the changing global context enables Christianity to accommodate the concerns for both cultural relevance and traditional Christian doctrinal categories. Yet doing so requires a difficult process of understanding how traditional Christian proclamation can inform and be relevant to the intellectual devices of historically non-Christian cultures, such as that of China. And so, instead of making an argument for method, I demonstrate what this work could look like.

In this demonstration, I focus on the challenge of articulating Christ's priesthood in a Chinese idiom, mediated by Xúnzǐ. Ultimately, the prospects for this articulation will rest heavily on the ability to consider Christ's priesthood within the category of the ritual sage, the *shèngrén* 聖人, as it functions in Xúnzǐ's philosophy. But, in order to appreciate why this move is necessary, we first require a presentation of Xúnzǐ's broader understanding of rituals and their role in moral cultivation. Then, we must understand Christ's priesthood in traditional doctrinal categories so that we may explore the relationship between this doctrine and Xúnzǐ's thought. Hence, in the second section of the present article, I will analyze Christ's priesthood as presented in *ST*, q. 22, aa. 1–3. In the concluding section of the article, I will discuss in brief some of the challenges to articulating Christ's priesthood in the conceptual idiom of Xúnzǐ's philosophy and suggest a path to resolution by forging a link between the hypostatic union and Xúnzǐ's category of the ritual sage. Consequently, at the end of this reading, we will arrive at an account of Christ's priesthood that is both culturally relevant to Chinese concepts and faithful to the traditional Christian categories informing the doctrine of Christ's priesthood.

A Chinese Account of Ritual Agency

Xunzi, a member of the Confucian school (*Rújiā* 儒家) of early China, was one of the most important Confucian thinkers, not least because of his systematic reflections on the importance of rituals and the virtue of ritual propriety, both captured in the same term, *lǐ* 禮.⁴ At the heart of

⁴ The best literature on Xúnzǐ's life and thought remains largely written in Chinese, such as the study by Chén Dàqí 陳大齊 (for Chinese names, when presented as the author of a Chinese-language work, I observe the Chinese tradition of surname before given name), *Xúnzǐ Xuéshuō* 荀子學說 (Taipei: Zhonghua Wenhua Chuban Weiyuanhua, 1954). The standard English-language introduction to Xúnzǐ's philosophy remains Paul Rakita Goldin, *Rituals of the Way: The Philosophy of Xúnzǐ* (Chicago: Open Court, 1999). As for translations of Xúnzǐ, the tradi-

Xúnzǐ's moral philosophy is his insight that rituals are essential for moral cultivation and formation. Indeed, for him, all of the rituals taught by the Confucian tradition were fundamental to the moral development of individuals and to the broader flourishing of society. While we do not have the space here to sufficiently cover his entire position on the subject, we can nonetheless sufficiently summarize the major threads of his approach.⁵

In a work entitled "Discourse on Ritual" (*Lǐlùn* 禮論), Xúnzǐ begins with a history of the *lǐ*: whence did the *lǐ* come, and what was their purpose? According to Xúnzǐ, "human beings are born and have desires, yet they do not obtain what they desire, and then they are unable to stop seeking what they desire."⁶ This observation is distinctive of Xúnzǐ, who

tional eponymous collection of his writings, there are three main texts in English. For a partial but good translation of important chapters, see Burton Watson, *Hsün Tzu: Basic Writings* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963). For an extensive translation with scholarly commentary, see John Knoblock, *Xúnzǐ: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works*, 3 vols. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988–1994). More recently, a very good and accessible translation has been published, with good scholarly references, but not overly burdensome for the reader unfamiliar with this discourse, and I would suggest this volume for those interested in reading the Xúnzǐ in English: Eric L. Hutton, *Xúnzǐ: The Complete Text* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

⁵ Much of the literature on this topic tends to fall into arguments that make Xúnzǐ into a conventionalist as regards ritual. Furthering this point, many scholars have argued that Xúnzǐ sees human beings as crafting the conventions of ritual in order to create the order of the cosmos and society. This view is difficult to justly portray and refute in a footnote, but quite simply, I find this categorization of Xúnzǐ to be indebted to a modern dialecticism between the transcendent and immanent. I find that Xúnzǐ perceives both a givenness to human life and the ability to "make" the world. Thus, I do not think his theory of ritual is completely conventional, but rather includes knowledge of the cosmic *Dào* 道 and the use of human faculties to establish ritual forms that enable humans to conform to the Dao. In my reading, the key point is anthropological: human acts such as rituals and naming are in some measure conventional due to the faculties of the human person as an intellectual creature. Yet there is always a givenness to the faculties that gives them coherence. This is something not foreign to Christianity, we might add: Adam is allowed to name the animals, but he never thinks he allows them to exist in their particular forms. The interpretation I present here resonates with Janghee Lee's presentation in *Xúnzǐ and early Chinese Naturalism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005). A good example of the type of reading I find problematic regarding Xúnzǐ, while it still has much worth consideration in its proposals, is Kurtis Hagen, *The Philosophy of Xúnzǐ: A Reconstruction* (Chicago: Open Court, 2007).

⁶ *Xúnzǐ* 19.1: "禮起於何也 曰人生而有欲欲而不得則不能無求." All citations of the *Xúnzǐ* (in which "Discourse on Ritual" [*Lǐlùn*] is a section or chap-

argues elsewhere that human moral nature (*rénxìng* 人性) is bad (*è* 惡).⁷ In this other essay, which is focused on human moral nature, Xúnzǐ argues there are three types of desires with which humans are born: a love for profit (*lì* 利; note the difference from *lǐ* 禮), a proclivity toward hatred and viciousness, and desires of the eyes and ears bringing about a love of sound and color. According to Xúnzǐ, if we nurture a love of profit, this will lead to contention and taking goods by force, and then discourse and submission will be vitiated. If we follow our desires for hatred and viciousness, oppression and thievery will rise, and loyalty and fidelity will decline. Finally, if we give in to the desires of our eyes and ears, obscenity and disorder (*luàn* 亂) will arise and *lǐ*, appropriateness, culture, and the pattern of life will disappear.⁸

For Xúnzǐ, the complication is not necessarily the fact of human desiring as such, but what human beings desire and in what degree. As a gloss on the *Lìlùn* passage, we might say that Xúnzǐ finds it problematic that human desires are not aimed at particular goods that can be obtained, but rather are open-ended and self-centered needs.⁹ In his use, the word

ter) are based on text divisions as found in the Chinese Text Project, at ctext.org, since it is a widely used resource. I have checked the quotations against existing manuscripts, including digital copies available from ctext.org. My many thanks to the editors of this free resource for their assistance in making these texts widely available. All translations from it are my own work from the Chinese manuals available at ctext.org, although note 4 above provides information on published translations for readers wishing to investigate the *Xúnzǐ* itself further.

⁷ Wáng Xiānqiān 王先谦, *Xúnzǐ Jijiě* 荀子集解, ed. Chén Xiàohuán 沈嘯寰 and Wáng Xiānqiān 王星贤 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2012), 420. The commentary on Xúnzǐ by Hǎo Yìxíng (郝懿行) defines the word often rendered as “nature” (*xìng* 性) as meaning “what is immediate to the self,” or *zìrán* 自然. This helps us see that, for Xúnzǐ, the moral quality of *xìng* is less about faculties of human nature (which he holds elsewhere are basically equal and are not in themselves bad) and more about the inherent tendencies of humans to act in particular ways. As we shall see, for Xúnzǐ, the problem is precisely that humans need something to help us learn to be moral, that we cannot just do it “naturally” (*zìrán*). Aaron Stalknaker has helpfully compared this conception of human nature and how to correct it in Xúnzǐ with that of St. Augustine (*Overcoming Our Evil: Human Nature and Spiritual Exercises in Xunzi and Augustine* [Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006].

⁸ *Xúnzǐ* 23.1.

⁹ See Winnie Sung, “Ritual in the *Xúnzǐ*: A Change of the Heart/Mind,” *Sophia* 51 (2012): 215. Sung argues that Xúnzǐ understands *lì* 利 in terms of “interests that pertain exclusively to the self.” Thus, for her, Xunzi’s conception of ritual is that it corrects or reforms the heart-mind (*xīn* 心) aimed toward self-interest. Generally,

“profit” means a rather abstract sense of more money or material wealth—but what can be enough? Hence, in the *Lilun*, after stating the problem of human desiring, Xúnzǐ shows why human desiring is problematic: “If in their seeking to fulfill their desires there is no limit to their striving, then it would be impossible for people to *not* contend with one another; contention leads to disorder, and disorder to destitution.”¹⁰

This, then, is the human condition out of which the need for *li* arises. The problem of human desire is that it is neither limited nor measured and has no guide or rule to channel it properly. Moreover, the desires we experience are innately unrestrained. Here we must call to mind Xúnzǐ’s historical context if we are to interpret his reading of human desire properly. Xunzi lived in the later stages of the Zhōu 周 dynasty, in a time called the Warring States period. This period was primarily characterized by the decay of the Zhōu ruling family, which was not only political but also cultural in scope. Indeed, by Xúnzǐ’s time, China was embroiled in various bids for power by various leaders of states who sought to gain imperial rule over all of China. For scholars like Xúnzǐ, human desires and tendencies played out on a grand scale of lords marching to war and instituting policies so as to marshal their resources for consolidating power.¹¹

Like many Confucians, Xúnzǐ seemed to take an overall dim view of the leaders of his day and saw their approaches as participating in and extending the disorder of human desiring, rather than correcting it. Hence, Xúnzǐ points to historical models for kingship that brings about true order and harmony in society, put into practice by a group of sage leaders known collectively as the *xiānwáng* 先王, the “former kings,” or more strongly, the “ancient kings.”¹² Not only were these rulers not them-

I find Sung’s position helpful and clarifying of Xunzi’s thought, but I also find that it brings a slight complication. Self-interest cannot be a categorical problem for Xúnzǐ; after all, he argues we should pursue becoming like sages precisely because it is best for us. Hence, I argue that *li* is better understood in the sense of excessive possession, or trying to get as much as one can without regard for proper order or distinctions. In other words, Xúnzǐ does not seem to me to think the desire to eat, learn, or have houseroom is problematic, but rather how I desire and move to acquire these things in excess.

¹⁰ Xúnzǐ 19.1: “求而無度量分界則不能不爭爭則亂亂則窮。”

¹¹ See, e.g., the policies championed by the legalist philosopher Shāng Yǎng 商鞅, who was an important minister in the state of Qín and advocated aligning the entire Qín society around agriculture and war, explicitly subordinating moral questions to these ends (see *The Book of Lord Shang: Apologetics of State Power in Early China*, trans. and ed. Yuri Pines [New York: Columbia University Press, 2017]).

¹² Customarily, in the Confucian tradition, the term *xiānwáng* at least implies a

selves morally disordered or chaotic; they were also able to provide moral stability and rectification to the broader society. Rather than nurturing our desires that lead to contention, the *xiānwáng* instituted ways of redirecting, guiding, and re-forming desires to prevent disorder. According to Xúnzǐ, the rituals are the primary means the *xiānwáng* used to cultivate the moral rectification of society and bring order in the place of chaos. He writes that the ancient kings hated disorder, and thus established *lǐ* in order to “distinguish things [*fēn zhī*; 分之], nourish people’s desires, and give to them what they seek.”¹³ This then caused the people to have moderate desire for things, and the things were not broken apart due to the desiring.¹⁴

Thus did the former kings establish *lǐ* as a way to guide the people toward human flourishing. In his chapter on human moral nature, Xúnzǐ compares our moral tendencies to a wooden branch, and the *lǐ* of the former kings to steam. The steam impacts the wood by reshaping it, and then it can be made straight (*zhí* 直). The ancient sage kings knew that people’s desires went astray and tended to disorder, and so they established laws and rituals in order to “straighten out” (*jiào* 矯) peoples emotional desires and help them become rectified (*zhèng* 正).¹⁵ Hence, Xúnzǐ’s famous argument is that our moral tendencies are bad and that we are made good only through “artifice” (*wěi* 偽).

Yet it is vital to see that, for Xúnzǐ, it is not simply ritual behavior or just any artifice that makes for human flourishing.¹⁶ Mark Edward Lewis

reference to the ancient ruling figures who were said to establish Chinese culture and help it prosper: the Three Sovereigns (*Sānhuáng* 三皇), who were Fúxī 伏羲, Shénnóng 神農, and Suìrén 燧人; and the Five Emperors (*wǔdì*), who were Huángdì 黃帝, Zhuānxù 顓頊, Kù 嚳, Yáo 堯, and Shùn 舜. The list for Confucians also tended to include the celebrated founders of the Zhōu dynasty. While Xúnzǐ does seem to hold these kings in high regard, he also seems to prefer the current ruler to look to models closer to his own time, rather than looking to the far reaches of the Chinese past for sage guidance. One might argue that Xúnzǐ interprets the ancient kings as establishing the true nature of virtuous kingship, such that all other virtuous kings are reiterations of this type. For this reason, we should read Xunzi’s remarks as understanding the ancient kings as only one important subset of “former kings” who are useful models of governance.

¹³ Xúnzǐ 19.1: “先王惡其亂也故制禮義以分之以養人之欲給人之求。”

¹⁴ Xúnzǐ 19.1: “使欲必不窮乎物物必不屈於欲。”

¹⁵ Xúnzǐ 23.2.

¹⁶ See *Introduction to Ritual and Religion in the Xúnzǐ*, ed. T. C. Kline III and Justin Tiwald (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2014), a response to

has argued that, for Confucians, the “dark side” of human nature was borne out in mere human convention or custom (sú 俗). The fact that human beings may ritualize behavior is not enough to make it an artifice that genuinely straightens the poor tendencies of human nature. Rather, at stake for Xúnzǐ was the Confucian program of education, whereby one learned the proper “straightening artifice” by studying the ancient texts and traditions championed in Confucianism.¹⁷ For Xúnzǐ, straightening (jiǎo 矯) human tendencies required a particular, Confucian formation (jiào 教).

But, at this point, we might pose the following question: why does Xúnzǐ postulate that it is not ritual behavior per se that constitutes the path to human flourishing, but only the *lǐ* as founded by the former kings? Is this merely a claim that the Confucian way is “better” because it is his own? Fortunately, Xúnzǐ goes on to build up the substructure of the *lǐ* with a discussion of it as founded in nature, not merely as the conventional whim of certain celebrated governors. Xúnzǐ teaches that the *lǐ* has three roots. The first is Heaven and earth (*Tiāndì* 天地), which is the root of life. Then are the forefathers and ancestors, who are the root of one’s class of existence (*lèi* 類). Third are the ruler and teacher, who are the root of order (*zhì* 治).¹⁸ These three roots make the flourishing life possible, and it is the *lǐ* that are established to properly serve all three. Hence, the *lǐ* concern the negotiation of the proper relationship between existence, history, cosmos, and present relationships all at the same time. Such negotiations cannot be merely “constructed” on the whim of whoever might want to do so, but rather require particular insight into the cosmological order and the human person.

Elsewhere, Xúnzǐ speaks of the “methods of the sage king” (*shèngwáng zhī yòng* 聖王之用) as, in part, constituted by observing Heaven (*chá Tiān* 察天), and so, as able to “ornament” (*cuò* 錯) the earth.¹⁹ The introduction

scholars who argue that Xúnzǐ is antagonistic toward religious practice: “What we find in Xunzi is not a critique of religious practice as such but rather a critique of certain forms of religious practice and interpretations of religious practice—the forms that treat rituals and supernatural beings as mere instruments of personal advantage and interpretations that fail to appreciate the proper function of ritual in moral cultivation” (3).

¹⁷ Mark Edward Lewis, “Custom and Human Nature in Early China,” *Philosophy East & West* 53, no. 3 (July 2003): 309–22.

¹⁸ Xúnzǐ 19.5: “禮有三本：天地者生之本也先祖者類之本也君師者治之本也。” Zhì 治 usually means something like “to rule,” but more basically means giving order to things.

¹⁹ Xúnzǐ 9.23. The verb *cuò* usually means to make a mistake or err, but was also used

of *Tiān* into the *shèngrén* paradigm is significant, since for many early Chinese thinkers—including Xunzi, I would argue—*Tiān* functions as a divine force similar to Aristotle's unmoved mover.²⁰ This is related to another argument from Xúnzǐ that there exists a harmonious, triadic relationship (*cān* 參) between heaven, earth, and the human being: "Heaven has its seasons, the Earth has its resources, and humanity has its ability to govern."²¹ Here, Xúnzǐ means to key in on the specific contribution of humanity within the cosmos and articulate how that contribution is essential to understanding human life and its responsibilities. The human capacity for governance, for bringing order into the world, is a response to the life and resources given by Heaven and earth.

A similar point is found in Xúnzǐ's observation that "only the sage does not seek to know Heaven [*zhī Tiān*' 知天]."²² In context, the word *zhī* (知 typically signifying intellectual comprehension, which is related to though not completely identified with wisdom, or *zhì* 智) means an intimate knowledge of Heaven's movements, as though the human being might completely understand, and then indeed mimic, the acts of Heaven himself. Xúnzǐ means to teach here that the sage recognizes the need for humanity not to mimic Heaven, but to relate to it properly by providing ways that order and govern the gift of life and resources Heaven has given

to describe inlaying items with precious metal, polishing, or sharpening objects.

²⁰ In early China, *Tiān* could mean something like the heavens or seasons, or even nature itself. Hence, the passage cited in footnote 21, Xúnzǐ speaks of *Tiān* having seasons. Yet at the same time, there are many occasions when Xúnzǐ speaks of *Tiān* as giving life to all things (but not order), which is a more divine quality. Due to these features of his thought, many modern interpreters have seen Xúnzǐ as a thoroughgoing naturalist and atheistic philosopher. There is insufficient space here to argue against this, but there is support for my view among significant scholars as well. See, for example, Edward Machle, *Nature and Heaven in the Xúnzǐ: A Study of the Tian Lun* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993), and Machle, "Xunzi as a Religious Philosopher," *Philosophy East and West* 26, no. 4 (1976): 443–61, repr. in Kline and Tiwald, *Ritual and Religion in the Xúnzǐ*, 21–42. The Kline and Tiwald volume develops a broad account sympathetic with my interpretation of Xúnzǐ on the question of *Tiān*.

²¹ Xúnzǐ 17.2: "天有其時地有其財人有其治夫是之謂能參。"

²² Xúnzǐ 17.3: "唯聖人為不求知天。" Chén, *Xúnzǐ Xuéshuō*, 144. Chén contends that, for Xúnzǐ, "the *lǐ* are not obtained from *Tian* and cannot take their model from *Tian*" "故禮義不得之於天，亦非取法於天。" He seems to imply by this that humans ought not have concern for *Tiān*, but I would argue this is not the case. It seems to me that Xúnzǐ's point is that the type of existence of *Tiān* (especially in its transcendent aspects) is different from human existence, and thus cannot be a model (*qǔfǎ* 取法) of how to flourish as a human being.

to humanity. Hence, in the “Discourse on Ritual,” we find *Xúnzǐ* claiming: “Heaven can bring things into being, but it cannot distinguish them from each other; Earth can give human beings body and movement, but it cannot govern them.”²³

The cosmological aspects of sagehood demonstrate that, for *Xúnzǐ*, while rituals are certainly conventions, they are not merely conventions. They are rather expressions of qualities within certain exemplary individuals who desire to communicate an interior moral order from themselves to broader society. Consequently, for *Xúnzǐ*, the efficacy of rituals in the moral reformation of human tendencies is rooted in the sage wisdom of the one who institutes and carries on the ritual framework at a given time. According to *Xúnzǐ*, the rituals were established by the former kings as a means of bringing order (*zhi*) and distinction (*fēn*) to the world, and they could accomplish this because they knew order and distinction within themselves.

A last word we can add about *Xúnzǐ*’s account of ritual is that, because of his emphasis on sagehood, his philosophy allows adequate space for the transformation of ritual forms that occur over time. For *Xúnzǐ*, ritual forms can be changed, but only by sages. In fact, *Xúnzǐ* argues for the historical existence of at least a hundred sages, and advocates following only those closer in time to our era: “If you wish to observe the traces of the sage-kings, then look to the most clear of them, the most recent kings [*hòu wáng*; 後王].”²⁴ This is no progressivism from *Xúnzǐ*; rather, he holds that the later kings who are sages continue the trajectory of the ancient sages, but in ways that are more fitting to the disorder of the age. *Xúnzǐ* claims that, if one desires to know the ancient ways (*shàng shì* 上世), one ought observe the *dào* of the Zhōu dynasty: “By means of the near you may know the far; by means of the one you may know the many [*yǐ jìn zhī yuǎn, yǐ yī zhī wàn*; 以近知遠, 以一知萬].”²⁵ Looking forward to our Christological ends, this idea that ritual forms are mutable and dependent on ritual sagehood is a foundational point of focus. However, before exploring it, we first must gather an account of Christ’s priesthood in traditional Christian terms so that we can properly assess and articulate Christ’s priestly work in concepts taken from *Xúnzǐ*’s thought.

St. Thomas on Christ’s Priesthood

It should be clear from the preceding analysis that, whatever value there

²³ *Xúnzǐ* 19.22: “天能生物不能辯物也地能載人不能治人。”

²⁴ *Xúnzǐ* 5.6.

²⁵ *Xúnzǐ* 5.6.

is in Xúnzǐ's philosophy for a Chinese articulation of Christ's priesthood, this intellectual program is developed in a context and with concerns very different from those of the traditional Christian teaching. Therefore, we require a theological account of Christ's priesthood in order to facilitate a fruitful and orthodox reflection on this doctrine in Xúnzǐ's concepts. I have elected to present this account by referencing Christ's priesthood as taught by St. Thomas Aquinas in question 22 of the *tertia pars* of *ST*. That this choice is particularly warranted is seen, for instance, in Jean-Pierre Torrell's note that Aquinas is unique among his contemporaries both in writing a commentary on the Book of Hebrews and in including a *quaestio* on Christ's Priesthood in his most mature work.²⁶ Moreover, Serge-Thomas Bonino has contended that, although Aquinas's conception of Christ's priesthood does not invoke a concept of a "natural" priesthood, his theology allows for the development of such an account, and thus Aquinas treats the revealed truth of Christ's priesthood in ways that prepare us well to perceive the possibilities and problems of reading Christ in light of Xúnzǐ.²⁷ Because this theme has been well-treated in Aquinas's thought, I

²⁶ Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., "The Priesthood of Christ in the *Summa Theologiae*," in *Christ and Spirituality in St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Bernhard Blankenhorn, O.P. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 126–58, at 127–28 (this article by Torrell originally appeared in French as "Le sacerdoce du Christ dans la *Somme de théologie*," *Revue thomiste* 99 [1999]: 75–100).

²⁷ Serge-Thomas Bonino, O.P., "Le sacerdoce comme institution naturelle selon saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue thomiste* 99 (1999): 33–57, at 34–36. Bonino's article develops a concept of natural priesthood out of St. Thomas's discussion of religious virtue. He points out that Thomas also neither possesses a general notion of priesthood nor seems to have thought such an account necessary: "Non seulement saint Thomas n'a jamais élaboré pour elle-même une telle notion générale du sacerdoce, mais surtout il ne semble guère en avoir éprouvé le besoin [Not only does St. Thomas never elaborate such a general notion of priesthood itself, he moreover hardly seems to have felt the need; translation mine]" (34–35). However, Thomas's consideration of human nature allows for a development of a general account of priesthood, even an interreligious account. Bonino evokes St. Thomas's description of marriage as a natural institution, by virtue of the fact that humans may incline to marriage but must act in free will to fulfill this good. Bonino suggests "priesthood" in general is this type of natural inclination of human nature: "Il est une institution naturelle dans le mesure où il est une structure sociale universelle qui découle de la nature humaine comme telle considérée dans sa dimension religieuse [It is a *natural* institution inasmuch as it is a universal social structure which follows upon human nature, when human nature as such is considered in its religious dimension; translation mine]" (36). Similarly, I argue through Xúnzǐ that "ritual sagehood" can name a type of priestly inclination of human nature, one preferable here because it allows for the union of ritual action and intellectual perfection. Regardless, as I hope to make clear, whether developing a general account of priest-

do not hope to break new ground here and will limit myself to describing the most concise presentation Aquinas makes of this doctrine.²⁸

Before treating question 22, we require a brief prolegomenon to this discussion, since, as Joseph P. Wawrykow has noted, Aquinas assumed some knowledge on the part of his readers.²⁹ In terms of the context of *ST*, Aquinas locates the *quaestio* on Christ's priesthood within the division of the *tertia pars* pertaining the person of Christ as the incarnate Word.³⁰ Thus, Aquinas interprets Christ's priesthood in light of the hypostatic union, indeed, as a consequence of this union and its salvific character (see *ST* III, prolog. and q. 1). The question is more specifically located within a discussion of the grace of the hypostatic union and its effects in bringing Christ's human nature to graced perfection. Additionally, as his assumed reader would have been studying theology in the medieval university and hearing lectures from a *magister in Sacra Pagina* or *cursus biblicus*, Aquinas can take for granted his reader will readily profess that Jesus is the incarnate Word, know Christ as the mediator of salvation, and know that Christ's body and blood is received in the Eucharist.³¹

hood or ritual sagehood, in a Christological trajectory, Christ will be the measure of these forms, which Bonino also notes (34).

²⁸ The best literature on Christ's priesthood in Aquinas is the 1999 volume of *Revue thomiste*, dedicated to this theme. In my judgment, the best English-language treatments of Christ's priesthood in Aquinas are given by Matthew Levering: "Christ the Priest: An Exploration of *Summa Theologiae* III, Question 22," *The Thomist* 71 (2007): 379–417; *Christ's Fulfillment of Torah and Temple: Salvation According to Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 2001); and *Christ and the Catholic Priesthood: Ecclesial Hierarchy and the Pattern of the Trinity* (Chicago: Hillenbrand, 2010), esp. ch. 2. Regarding Aquinas's conception of Christ's priesthood outside of the *Summa theologiae* [*ST*], consult particularly Gilles Berceville, O.P., "Le sacerdoce du Christ dans le Commentaire de l'Épître aux Hébreux de saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue thomiste* 99 (1999): 143–58, and Martin Morard, "Sacerdoce du Christ et sacerdoce des chrétiens dans le Commentaire des Psaumes de saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue thomiste* 99 (1999): 119–42.

²⁹ Joseph P. Wawrykow, "Wisdom in the Christology of Thomas Aquinas," in *Christ Among the Medieval Dominicans*, ed. Kent Emery Jr. and Joseph P. Wawrykow (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 177.

³⁰ See, e.g., John F. Boyle, "The Twofold Division of St. Thomas's Christology in the *Tertium Pars*," *The Thomist* 60 (1996): 439–47. Boyle argues contra M.-D. Chenu, who had claimed that qq.1–26 of the *tertia pars* evinced a "scientific" approach to Christology, while qq. 27–59 were "scriptural." Boyle argues instead that both divisions are scriptural and that the distinction between the parts arises out of the struggle to describe the Church's proclamation about Christ in keeping with the historical narrative of his life. Thomas approaches the problem by first discussing who Christ is (i.e., the incarnate Word) and then understanding what Christ does.

³¹ See Leonard Boyle, *The Setting of the Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas* (Toronto:

With regard to the theme of Christ's priesthood in general, St. Thomas might have assumed that his reader would also know of the traditional perspectives unique to each Gospel, specifically that Luke is said to emphasize Christ's priesthood.³² It is instructive that, in his interpretation of the location of Luke's genealogy of Jesus, Aquinas contends that Luke intends by this location to assert a link between Christ's priesthood, the sacramental economy (in baptism), and Christ's work to expiate sins.³³ In other words, there are at least three supporting themes Aquinas might assume on the part of his reader before they contemplate Christ's priesthood: (1) the doctrine of the hypostatic union, (2) the soteriological cause of the Incarnation, and (3) the link between Christ's priesthood, the fullness of grace, and his work to expiate sins.

With this background in mind, we can now focus on *ST* III, q. 22, especially articles 1–3. In article 1, Aquinas asks whether it is fitting for Christ to be a priest (*utrum conveniat Christo esse sacerdotum*). The objections unfold in two basic trajectories: the ontological dissonance between the priesthood and the *Verbum caro* (obj. 1), and the dissonance between Christ's ministry and the characteristics of the priesthood of the Old Testament (obj. 2–3). The first objection contends that, whereas priests are lower than the angels, Christ is higher, making it beneath his dignity to think him *sacerdos*.³⁴ The second objection argues that, since Christ was not from the tribe of Levi, he cannot be a priest in fulfillment of the Old Testament *typos*, and the third argues the same by pointing to the Old

Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1982). Boyle argues that *ST* was written to fill a lacuna in Dominican education for the *iuniores* of the order. If this is the case, then these observations about the assumed reader are intensified, since the reader would have at least taken the initial vow to join the Dominican order and would have at the least been taught Scripture daily in the priory, as well as engaged in other spiritual disciplines.

³² It is significant that Aquinas attributes this line of thought to Augustine's *De concordia evangelium* both in the prologue of the *Catena in Lucam* and in *Super Matt* 1, lec. 2.

³³ *Super Matt* 1, lec. 2. "Luke primarily intends to speak of the priestly personage of Christ, and to this priesthood pertains the expiation of sins. Therefore, it is fitting that Luke place Christ's generation after his baptism, in which the expiation of sins happens [Lucas autem maxime intendit commendare in Christo personam sacerdotalem, ad sacerdotem autem pertinent expiatio peccatorum, et ideo post Baptismum, in quo fit peccatorum expiatio, convenientur a Luca ponitur Christi generatio]." Unless otherwise noted, all English translation from the works of Thomas are mine, done from the Latin as found at corpusthomicum.org.

³⁴ Significantly, this objection draws its force from the comparison between Christ and the angels in Hebrews 1:7–14.

Testament distinction between the offices of lawgiver and priest.³⁵

The objections in article 1 show the basic shape of concerns Thomas will develop throughout the question, and so they are worth special attention. On the one hand, the ontological concern deals with the union of God and man and the perfections of the latter as cause of the union.³⁶ On the other, Thomas is unsurprisingly sensitive to scriptural harmony. We see in the objections an interest in maintaining the rules for interpreting Sacred Scripture, whereby the literal sense serves as a guide for the allegorical. For Aquinas, however, the proper interpretation of Christ's priesthood functions within the broader way the New Law fulfills the Old Law.³⁷

In his response, St. Thomas first defines *sacerdos* as "handing over divine things to the people" (*divina populo tradit*); hence, the priest is a "giver of sacred things" (*sacra dans*). He then identifies three divine things the priest mediates: the law to the people, the people's prayers to God, and satisfaction for sins. On the basis of these divine things, Aquinas argues that it is most fitting that Christ be a priest, for he is the mediator of the gift of partaking of the divine nature and he effects reconciliation between the people and God.³⁸

Thomas' response primarily concerns imbuing the questions of the objections with an incarnational logic, emphasizing the perfections of Christ's human nature flowing from the hypostatic union. To the first objection he argues that Christ's dignity is higher than the angels in his human nature as well as his divine nature, since he possesses the "fullness of grace and glory" (*habuit plenitudinem gratiae et gloriae*). Yet, at the same time, the fullness of grace and glory is given to the human nature assumed by the Word, and hence Jesus "was conformed to the way-faring men who are constituted in the priesthood" (*conformis fuit hominibus viatoribus in sacerdotio constitutes*). Similarly, because Christ is the perfect union

³⁵ *ST III*, q. 22, a. 1, obj. 1–3.

³⁶ Berceville, "Le sacerdoce du Christ," 145–46. Berceville, though drawing upon Thomas's commentary on Hebrews, here shows well what is at stake in the question of Christ's priesthood as regards an orthodox confession of the hypostatic union: "L'attribution du sacerdoce au Fils de Dieu, Seigneur universel, soulève cependant une difficulté théologique qui n'existe pas pour les titres de roi, de juge ou de docteur: la notion meme de sacerdoce implique en effet celle de service, et donc d'infériorité [The attribution of priesthood to the Son of God, the savior of all, raises, however, a theological difficulty that does not exist for the titles of king, judge, or teacher: the notion of priesthood itself implies in effect this is an attribution of service, and therefore inferiority]" (translation mine).

³⁷ See Levering, "Christ the Priest," 384.

³⁸ *ST III*, q. 22, a. 1 resp.

of Word and man, it does not matter that the Old Testament Levitical priesthood and distinction between priest and legislator are not present in him. Christ is not an instance of priesthood, but its norm and type: the Old Testament priesthood is a figure of Christ, and Christ contains the perfect harmony of graces as legislator, priest, and king.³⁹ We can briefly note that, in view of the larger ends of the present essay, Aquinas's insight that Christ is the true archetype of priesthood formally different from his own ritual agency will prove important to configuring a Chinese account of Christ's priesthood.

After it is established that Christ is priest, article 2 poses the question of the material over which he presides as priest, whether Christ can be both priest and victim. The objections here are built on the perfections of Christ that Aquinas emphasizes in article 1. Objection 1 notes that the priestly sacrifice requires the killing of a victim, and Jesus did not kill himself; hence, Jesus cannot be both priest and victim. Objection 2 similarly argues that, because human sacrifice is alien to the Jewish priesthood, Christ would not have exercised his priesthood in treating himself as the victim. Objection 3 is perhaps the most skillful, given its anti-Nestorian logic: since victims are consecrated to God in the act of sacrificing, Christ cannot be the victim of his priesthood because his consecration is due to his union with God and has always been a characteristic of his existence as incarnate Word.⁴⁰

It is very clear that Aquinas is not interested in simply ascribing priesthood to Christ, but specifically ascribing to Christ's priesthood the ministry of the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, in which Christ is both priest and Host. In his response to these objections, Aquinas first identifies a sacrifice as "something that is offered to God so that the human spirit is elevated to God" and then identifies three types of sacrifices. The first type is an offering for the remission of sin, according to Hebrews 5 and Leviticus 4:3. The second, taken from the peace offering in Leviticus 3, is an offering for the sake of being conserved in a state of grace. Third, echoing the holocaust of Leviticus 1:1–9, is the offering for being perfectly united with God.

Building on these three reasons for sacrifice, St. Thomas shows how Christ's human nature confers these effects on us through his crucial sacrifice. First, our sins are forever remitted (*deleta sunt*). Second, we receive the grace of salvation through him. And third, we have obtained

³⁹ *ST* III, q. 22, a. 1, ad 1–3 and obj. 1–3.

⁴⁰ *ST* III, q. 22, a. 2, obj. 1–3.

the perfection of glory through him.⁴¹ Now, it is clear that the priest cannot have these effects on his own power; he exercises these effects as a form of mediation through the offering of a victim and God's accepting it. In short, a pleasing sacrifice requires not only an empowered mediator (*sacerdos*) but also a fitting victim sacrificed in a fitting way. In Leviticus, even though a cow is required for all three sacrifices Thomas mentions, there are different stipulations: the offering for union with God requires a male without blemish, the peace offering can be a male or female without blemish with only certain parts required for sacrifice, and the sin offering requires a young, spotless bullock.⁴²

In light of this observation, Thomas's reply to the objections focus on why Christ is the most fitting victim for the sacrifice over which he is the official, or perhaps why Christ is the most ritually proper (*Xúnzì's lì*) victim.⁴³ To the first, Aquinas emphasizes that Christ exercised his free will to give himself over to death, and thus is the victim of his own priestly act. Second, however, Christ's free will is not to kill himself as a human sacrifice, but to give himself over to suffering. This is exceptionally important, for Christ's place as victim of sacrifice is not simply corporeal. Rather, Aquinas demonstrates that man's spirit can be offered to God. In the case of Jesus, his sacrifice is most essentially his surrender of himself unto suffering, in his acceptance of the mission of redemption as the God-man.⁴⁴ As to the third objection, many editions do not contain the reply, but we can construct a rough sense of what it might have been: because the Incarnation is entirely aimed toward the salvation worked out for humanity on the Cross, Jesus's humanity is, from the moment of his conception, consecrated as perfect and fitting victim.

So, having secured the proclamation that Christ is priest (a. 1) and is the perfect victim in his priestly ministry (a. 2), Aquinas next considers the question of whether Christ's priesthood has the effect of expiating sins. Clearly, he will answer affirmatively, but it is important to see what is at stake. For Aquinas, it is not simply whether Christ can expiate sins, but whether this expiation occurs in the Passion, with Christ acting as both priest and victim.

⁴¹ *ST* III, q. 22, a. 2, resp.

⁴² See Lev 1:3–4; 3:1–2; 4:3–4 (respectively).

⁴³ *ST* III, q. 22, a. 2, resp.: "And therefore Christ himself, inasmuch as he is man, was not only priest, but also the perfect victim, simultaneously being the victim on account of sin, the victim of peace-making, and the holocaust [Et ideo ipse Christus, in quantum homo, non solum fuit sacerdos, sed etiam hostia perfecta, simul existens hostia pro peccato, et hostia pacificorum, et holocaustem]."

⁴⁴ *ST* III, q. 22, a. 2, ad 1–2.

Answering this question properly requires understanding the union of the Word and man. The first objection is based on apparent limits of the *communicatio idiomatum*, arguing that, because only God can forgive sins and Christ is priest according to his human nature, his *priesthood* cannot expiate sins. Hence, the objection calls into question whether Jesus's human nature (of which is predicated his priesthood) can bring about expiation of sins, or whether this must be an act of his divine nature alone. The second and third objections point again to the relationship between the priesthood of Christ and the Old Testament. Hebrews 10:1–3 teaches that the sacrifices of the Old Testament were not able to “make participants perfect” (*non potuerunt perfectos facere*), proving this from their need to be offered again and again (*alioquin cessassent offerri*). As both in the Lord's prayer, where Jesus commends us to pray “forgive” us our sins in the present tense (*dimitte*), and in the daily sacrifice offered by the Church, the logic of Hebrews suggests his sacrifice is not efficacious to expiate sins. Similarly, the third objection argues that, because Christ is the “lamb,” he does not align with the typology of the proper victims for the sin sacrifice in the Old Testament, and thus his sacrifice does not expiate sins.

Although there is a formal distinction between the objection couched in the terms of Ephesus and the two taking a scriptural approach, the argument is basically the same: all three objections question the efficacy of Christ's *priestly* acts. The importance of these objections cannot be overlooked: if Christ's expiation of sins is not mediated through his human priesthood, then this unravels the entire reason for the Incarnation as St. Thomas has laid it out. For Aquinas, this ritual act of expiating sins is essential to the Church's testimony about who Jesus is and what he accomplishes for us, the nature and cause of the Incarnation.

Aquinas responds to the objections by arguing that expiation of sins requires cleansing in two aspects: the stain of guilt (*macula culpae*) and the debt of punishment (*reatus poenae*). The stain of guilt is forgiven through grace, which turns the sinner's heart toward God, and the debt of punishment is fully removed through man's making satisfaction to God. Aquinas then states that Christ's priesthood effects both forms of cleansing. With regard to the stain of guilt, Christ's priesthood communicates the grace to us that turns our hearts toward God, and Aquinas cites Romans 3:24–25 that it is through faith *in Christ's blood* that we are justified. Regarding the debt of punishment, Christ's priesthood satisfies for us completely, inasmuch as he “took on our diseases and bore our sorrows” (Isa 53:4). For Thomas, Jesus mediates grace to us for the redemption of sins through his blood on the Cross. His sacrifice actually communicates this grace to us and turns our hearts toward God. Also, Jesus's sacrifice fulfills the perfect

offering as priest and what is offered as victim so as to be the perfect satisfaction for our sins.⁴⁵

As we see in the reply to objection 1, Aquinas is concerned to show that the logic of the Passion as expiatory requires understanding the mystery of the Incarnation. Because the Word is united to human nature and acts through it, Jesus Christ's human nature can work out the expiation of sins. Citing Augustine, Aquinas shows that the priestly act of the incarnate Word is efficacious in four ways: Christ (1) is united with God as the one to whom the sacrifice is offered, (2) is united with sinners, for whom he offered the sacrifice, (3) offers it himself, and (4) is the sacrifice offered. Jesus's act of priesthood, then, is a product of the unique miracle of the Incarnation that allows Jesus's sacrifice to be perfect in each aspect of the sacrificial act.⁴⁶

Therefore, Christ's sacrifice is uniquely efficacious and has no need to be repeated. Aquinas clarifies that the New Law requires continual expiation for sins because of the frailty of the covenant members, not due to deficiency in the sacrifice. Unlike the Levitical priesthood, with its multiple and repeated sacrifices, the Church offers the same sacrifice daily. Similarly, just as the Old Covenant featured several types of animals used in sacrifice, Jesus gives himself as the perfect lamb who was the "consummate sacrifice of all things."⁴⁷ According to Aquinas, Jesus's sacrificial act is categorically unique because he is the incarnate Word. Hence, the sacrifices of the Old Testament are consummated in him and he is the norm for understanding the efficacy of the former rituals for communicating grace and reconciliation with God.

Before redirecting Aquinas's insights to our aim of constructing a Chinese account of Christ's priesthood, we must add a brief coda to the content of articles 1–3 in question 22. For Aquinas, the soteriological effect of Christ's priesthood, the expiation of sins, is his organizing principle, but we must understand the full scope of this effect, which includes a moral sense. According to Aquinas, sin is, in its simplest definition, an inordinate and willful departure from the eternal law.⁴⁸ However, on top of this, the divine law is God's perfect knowledge of created things and their good, and so sin is a departure from the good of one's own nature and perfection as well as a rejection of God.⁴⁹ Following this, the sacramental

⁴⁵ *ST* III, q. 22, a. 3, resp.

⁴⁶ *ST* III, q. 22, a. 3, ad 1.

⁴⁷ *ST* III, q. 22, a. 3, ad. 3.

⁴⁸ *ST* I-II, q. 71, a. 6.

⁴⁹ *ST* I-II, q. 93.

graces flowing from Christ's priesthood that expiate sin also lead human beings into human moral perfection. For example, baptism allows man to be cut off from sin and instills the virtue of faith, which perfects the cardinal virtues.⁵⁰ For Christ to expiate our sins has intrinsically to do with enabling the perfection of the human person. With this clearly in mind, we can now turn to the ultimate goal of the present essay.

A Chinese Articulation of Christ's Priesthood

Our analyses of Xúnzǐ and Aquinas have, to this point, been focused on describing their accounts of ritual sagehood and Christ's priesthood in their respective conceptual contexts in order to cultivate two concrete resources for considering Christ's priesthood in a Chinese manner. In this final section, then, we will go about the task of articulating Christ's priesthood according to the principles of Xúnzǐ's moral philosophy while remaining faithful to the interpretation of Christ's priesthood provided by Aquinas. The first necessary step in this process of articulating a Chinese account of Christ's priesthood is to carefully delineate theological challenges to cross-cultural reading of Christ's priesthood, especially in our case, those concerning Xúnzǐ's philosophy. Then, we will be able to focus on what resources from Xúnzǐ can be drawn into a Chinese-Christian account of Christ's priesthood in a way that honors both the Christian tradition and the convictions of Xúnzǐ. For convenience, then, this section will advance in two parts: the first will describe a principal problem for reading Christ's priesthood in Xúnzǐ's categories and suggest a resolution, and the second will provide an interpretation of Christ's priesthood in the idiom of Xúnzǐ's ritual sagehood, *mutatis mutandis*.

It is clear from reviewing Xúnzǐ and Aquinas that they use very different metaphors, authorities, and philosophical worldviews in considering their respective themes. This is not a shocking observation, yet if we wish to somehow conjoin these two programs as this article proposes, these facts illustrate difficulties in our method. This is not merely because the two guiding projects for this essay are themselves historically separate and linguistically and culturally disparate. It also because, as a Christian theologian, Aquinas founds his theology on a salvation history that is communicated through a concrete, historical people (Israel and then the Church), while Xúnzǐ's understanding of proper rituals and ritual propriety is ineluctably tied to an equally concrete, historical people, those of ancient China.

⁵⁰ ST III, q. 62, a. 2.

One of the more felicitous results of studying Aquinas on Christ's priesthood is that it becomes absolutely clear to what a great degree the Christian understanding of Christ as priest of the New Law is tied to a theological account of the Church as fulfilling and extending the life of Israel. As we saw, at every point in question 22, Aquinas demonstrates the importance of resolving the connections between Christ's priesthood of the New Law and the Levitical priesthood of the Old Law. Although Christ's priesthood does not fulfill the typology of the Levitical priesthood exactly, Aquinas articulates Christ's priesthood as still working within the typological trajectory of the Levitical priesthood and the sacrifices performed therein.

This continuity between Christ and Israel is important to our Chinese reading of Christ's priesthood because it means that the Christian proclamation about this doctrine is, in some ways, inseparable from the concrete Hebraic nature of Christ's priesthood. The Hebrew culture and heritage is the initial context in which Christ performs his priestly acts, and his priesthood must be interpreted in this light. Hence, if we were to attempt to merely transport Christ's priesthood completely into Xúnzǐ's context, we might find this possible, but the result would not be a *Christian* claim about Christ's priesthood.

Naturally, this raises the question of what would be missing in such an account? Theologically, there are a great many things that the Hebrew cultus provides for explaining the priesthood of Christ but for which Xúnzǐ's philosophy cannot account. Most important among these is the fact that, in the Hebrew cultus, the sacrifices of the priests are offered to God (the electing YHWH, it must be said) and are meant to mediate between the people and God. It is possible, of course, to perhaps make something like this be said through Xúnzǐ's categories, but this sort of salvific mediation is not native to his thought. Additionally, the notion of the priestly ministry as actually working to expiate sins is something for which Xúnzǐ could not account. In part, this is because there is no clear sense that Xúnzǐ understands human disorder explicitly in terms of sin against God and human nature. And finally, Xúnzǐ has no way to understand the rites as able to objectively make a change in the relationship between the people and God (i.e., from reprobation to justification). By the same token, since Xúnzǐ's ritual sages are exemplary humans rather than divine figures, this is ultimately to his credit and philosophically understandable apart from the clarifying light of revelation.

In short, then, the formal differences between the Chinese rites Xúnzǐ knew and the Hebrew rites Aquinas draws on in his theology of Christ's priesthood are not merely formal differences. The latter participate in the

revealed framework of God's election and work of redemption, and the former (by Xúnzǐ's own admission) are products of human ingenuity and genius. Consequently, "translating" Christ's priesthood into the idiom of Xúnzǐ's rituals is problematic from both sides. From the side of Christian theology, Xúnzǐ cannot speak clearly enough to the role rituals play in *divine* agency to save human beings from our disorder, which is a rejection of the divine love at its root. From the side of Xúnzǐ's philosophy, efficacious rituals are those that flow from ritual sages, and thus, if the forms are not those given and promulgated by a ritual sage like those of ancient China, the question remains of how these are efficacious to bring about moral reformation. Would not the rites of Christ's priesthood be mere *sú* 俗, or customs?

Felicitously, the Christian and Chinese challenges require a similar mode of response. What Christian theology demands of a Chinese account of Christ's priesthood in Xúnzǐ's categories is a way to allow the *lǐ* of Xúnzǐ be applied to Christ so that it becomes his person and perfection that principally define his ritual agency. With this definition present, the Christian theologian can then successfully point out the aspects of the ritual framework and forms that are fulfilled in Christ's ministry without having to equate Christ's ritual agency with the formal appearance of Xúnzǐ's *lǐ*. Just as Aquinas negotiated the formal differences between the rites of the Levitical priesthood and Christ by appealing to the logic of the Incarnation as true archetype of priesthood, so the Christian theologian can assert Christ as the archetype of all efficacious rituals across cultural boundaries.

On the other hand, Xúnzǐ's perspective demands an account of why we should follow Christ's rituals rather than those of the sages of ancient China. Xúnzǐ's philosophy requires an articulation of the sage qualities of Jesus Christ in order to plausibly say that, through his coming near to us, we may know the far away aims of the rites of ancient Chinese culture. In sum, this requires an account of Christ as a ritual sage so that there is sufficient ground to say he can alter the forms of the rituals while also instituting proper, efficacious rituals.

It is plain at this point why Aquinas's theology of Christ's priesthood is a helpful choice. Because Aquinas emphasizes the logic of the hypostatic union as a way to explain the typological and soteriological concerns of the biblical character of priesthood, his account also helpfully brings those Christological doctrines useful in considering Christ as ritual sage to the foreground. If we are to successfully articulate Christ's priesthood in the Chinese idiom of Xúnzǐ, this can be done only by laying the foundation for considering how Christ's perfections in the hypostatic union can be

considered in harmony with the categories and concepts Xúnzǐ employs.

What we require, then, is to understand Christ in the conceptual framework of the *shèngrén*, which requires harmonizing this concept with the traditional Christian understanding of the hypostatic union. Briefly, we can recall that, for Xúnzǐ, the *shèngrén* is, in a way, a historical ideal, but he also does not enumerate a complete list of sages. This is because, philosophically, Xúnzǐ wishes to leave open the possibility for new sages, and thus he is forced to articulate a basic typology of the *shèngrén*. At the heart of this typology in terms of its ritual aspects is that the *shèngrén* is one who properly understands the relationship between *Tiān*, earth, and humanity and that the rituals he institutes are meant to establish this sort of proper order and distinction in the world. This is key: the *shèngrén* perceives and understands the proper distinctions in the world himself, and the rites become ways this perception and understanding can become communicated to others, and thus practicable.

Can Christ be thought of in this way? Certainly, in the instrumental aspect of the question, the answer is yes. A Christian theologian has no issue saying that through the rituals performed by Christ in the ongoing ministry of the Church human beings are brought out of their disorder and into the proper order and proportion found in Jesus Christ. We can, without dilemma, articulate that the sacraments established by Christ's priesthood govern (*zhi*) human desires: they "straighten" (*jiào*) and "educate" (*jiào*) in the pedagogy of Christ's true and eternal priesthood. Thus, it does seem that the rituals of the Church do bring about precisely the sort of ends that Xúnzǐ imagines the rites of sages are supposed to accomplish. The question, then, is how we might say that Christ fits the description of the ritual sage of Heaven, earth, and humanity and communicates these distinctions to us.

The answer lies in the hypostatic union. Because Jesus Christ is the union of God and man, the Christian can say that Christ's priesthood not only meets the requirements of ritual sagehood in Xúnzǐ's mind but is also the most perfect form of ritual sagehood in Xúnzǐ's categories. According to Christian theology, Christ is the union of God and man but maintains the distinction between the divine and human natures. In other words, Christ does not merely perceive and understand the distinction between *Tiān*, earth, and humanity; Christ *is* this distinction in himself.⁵¹ In terms of his knowledge, Christ knows this distinction as well, and in a most

⁵¹ Here, I am allowing for an ad hoc Christian interpretation of the *Tiān* of Xúnzǐ as an adequate description of divinity of the one God, though admitting that Xúnzǐ's conception certainly falls short of the Christian doctrine of God in key aspects.

perfect fashion, since he knows it from the side of God as the creative agency that brings about the earth, but he also knows it as completely human.

We saw above in Aquinas's discussion of Christ as victim that the reason Christ is priest over himself is that he is the most perfect sacrifice. That is because Christ's sacrifice is not only a corporeal sacrifice, but the giving of his human nature to the divine salvific will in perfect obedience. This is a vitally important observation, because in this, we see that Jesus Christ lived out the proper distinction and relationship between God, man, and earth that Xúnzǐ ascribes to the sages of ancient China. Jesus Christ did not seek to "know" God in the way that Adam and Eve strove to know God, seeking to be like God and, thus, rejecting their role of being human. Rather, he sought to love and obey God in his human nature, and in this love and obedience, to demonstrate the proper order of human loves and properly distinguish human existence from the divine life.

For these reasons, we can also say that Christ understands the roots of human disorder better than any sage before. Christ knows that the root of the disordered desires of human beings is not merely the context of a material world full of limited material goods; it comes from the way humanity has conditioned itself to live in such a world. Our instincts to have immoderate desires resulting in a chaotic society stem from a chaos inside ourselves, a rejection of the proper distinction and relationship between God, humanity, and the earth we are made to inhabit as stewards.

Ultimately, this is precisely why it is essential that Christ is both the proper priest and victim of his rites. Christ must be the priest because he must be a ritual sage in Xúnzǐ's language: he is the greatest *shèngrén* to ever be, and therefore, as an exercise of this sagehood, institutes efficacious rites. But Christ must be the matter of these efficacious rites because of his sage properties. Since he knows that human disorder runs so deep, Christ knows that the only rites that can correct and straighten humanity in fullness must communicate his own love and obedience. The symbolic mediation of ritual forms is not adequate for this work. Rather, he institutes rituals that actively draw practitioners into the proper order and distinction of love and obedience that Christ himself embodies.

Therefore, we can say that, in Xúnzǐ's conception, Jesus is the perfect ritual sage who "straightens" humanity through his priesthood both by removing the debt of sin and by converting our hearts toward God.⁵² We

⁵² *ST III*, q. 22, a. 3, resp. "For by its virtue [i.e., Christ's priesthood], grace is given to us, by which our hearts are turned to God [Nam virtute ipsius gratia nobis datur, qua corda nostra convertuntur ad Deum]."

might even say the Cross is the true artifice (*wěi*) by which our true sage not only communicates to humans what propriety and moral rectification are but also makes them possible from *inside* the one who participates in the sacraments. As priest, Jesus not only removes the cause of our disorder; he also enables us to become reformed and reshaped to become functional as the carpenter's square or however else we are meant to be truly used by God in the world.

In sum, Xúnzǐ's discourse on rituals offers a fruitful way to consider Christ's priesthood in a Chinese idiom if Christian theology is successful in articulating how Christ meets the standard of the *shèngrén* of Xúnzǐ's philosophy. In this section, I have demonstrated that Christian theology can indeed make such an articulation about Christ, with the end result that it gains the ability to understand and articulate an understanding of Christ as fulfilling not only the Levitical priesthood and its ministry in service to God but also the typology of the ritual sage of ancient China. Certainly, just as with the Levitical priesthood, Christ's fulfillment goes beyond what Xúnzǐ or the sages themselves thought ritual sagehood to be. Yet Christ's fulfillment of sagehood is still continuous with the essence of the concept and brings it to its perfection.

As China and Chinese culture promises to become increasingly important to living Christians, it is an exigent need for academic Christian theology to undertake the difficult work of composing theology with an eye toward the fulfillment of Chinese culture. In this article, I have sought to demonstrate that this work need entail neither an abandonment of classical Christian categories or doctrines nor a curtailment of Chinese concepts in an attempt to hold to Christian orthodoxy. Instead, dealing with robust Chinese concepts such as those provided by Xúnzǐ and robust Christian interpretations such as those of Aquinas enables rather than attenuates theology that is both culturally relevant and profoundly faithful. N·V

Una ratio versus Diversae rationes: Three Interpretations of Summa theologiae I, Q. 13, AA. 1–6

DOMENIC D’ETTORE

*Marian University
Indianapolis, IN*

Introduction

This essay takes up a dispute pertaining to Thomas Aquinas’s doctrine that names of pure perfections are said analogously of God and creatures. Specifically, it addresses the question of whether such names as “being,” “good,” and “wise” are predicated analogously through one *ratio* (or concept) or are, instead, predicated analogously through diverse *rationes* (or concepts). George Klubertanz defended the thesis that Aquinas professed *una ratio* in some early writings but changed his mind to *diversae rationes* by the time he composed the *prima pars* of the *Summa theologiae* [ST].¹ Unlike Klubertanz, various prominent Scholastic Thomists observe

¹ See George Klubertanz, *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy: A Textual Analysis and Systematic Synthesis* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1960), 23–24. Klubertanz cites three texts from Thomas’s *Commentary on the Sentences* for *una ratio* and two texts each from the *prima pars* of the *Summa theologiae* [ST] and the *Commentary on the Metaphysics* for *diversae rationes*, concluding: “These texts show St. Thomas changing his answer to the question of the plurality of the analogous intelligibility. In three early texts he speaks of a *single* intelligibility; in all later texts he denies a single intelligibility and speaks instead of different intelligibilities attributed to the same thing or of intelligibilities which are partly the same and partly different” (24). John Wippel briefly discusses this passage from Klubertanz in a footnote, arguing that the *Commentary on the Sentences* passages need not be taken as endorsing *una ratio* at all, and consequently that they do not “necessarily have to be

no such development from *una ratio* to *diversae rationes* in Thomas's writings. Instead, they dispute among themselves over whether the *una ratio* unequally participated by the analogates is (1) identical to the *ratio* proper to one of the analogates or (2) a separate (or distinct) *ratio* from the diverse *rationes* proper to the analogates.

I find at least the following three positions on what Klubertanz called the problem of "*una ratio* versus *diversae rationes*." I will refer to them as options A, B, and C. Option A is Klubertanz's own developmental thesis, whereby Thomas changes his mind from *una ratio* to *diversae rationes*. Option B proposes that the *una ratio* is one of the *diversae rationes* proper to the analogates. Finally, option C claims that the *una ratio* is separate from the *diversae rationes* proper to the analogates.²

A full consideration of the relative merits of these three positions as interpretations of the thought of Thomas Aquinas is beyond the scope of this paper. For now, I will judge the positions' merits only against *ST I*, q. 13, aa. 1–6. I choose this text because it is considered representative of Aquinas's mature position, because Klubertanz cites it as providing strong support for his developmental thesis, and because it has always confused me. I will conclude that option B provides the overall most consistent and least problematic interpretation of the passage.

regarded as contradicting Thomas's later references to analogous *rationes* as being partly the same and partly not the same" (*The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being*, Monographs of the Society for Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy 1 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 570n238).

² The position I am calling "option B" is put forward with variations by John Capreolus (d. 1444), Dominic of Flanders (1425–1474), Thomas di vio Cajetan (1469–1534), and Francis Silvestri of Ferrara (1474–1528). I find option C with variations in the writings of Paul Soncinas (d. 1494) and Chrysostom Javelli (ca.1470/72–1538). For a direct treatment of these Renaissance Thomist authors on the number of *rationes* involved in analogous predication, see Domenic D'Ettore: "The Fifteenth-Century Thomist Dispute Over Participation in an Analogous Concept: John Capreolus, Dominic of Flanders, and Paul Soncinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 76 (2014): 241–73; "Not a Little Confusing?: Francis Silvestri of Ferrara's Hybrid Thomist Doctrine of Analogy," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 90, no. 1 (2016): 113–17; and "A Thomist Re-consideration of the Subject Matter of Metaphysics: Chrysostom Javelli on What is Included in Being as Being," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 89 (2015): 215–17. The disagreement between these Thomists (and others, including Hervaeus Natalis and Thomas Sutton) over "One or many *rationes*" is treated as "The *Rationes* Problem" in Domenic D'Ettore, *Analogy After Aquinas: Three Logical Problems and Some Thomists' Solutions* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2018).

***Summa theologiae* I, Q. 13, AA. 1–6: Summary of Principle Points**

Thomas Aquinas's discussion of analogy in articles 5 and 6 of *ST I*, q. 13, picks up on his treatment in articles 1–4 of how the human intellect can signify names about God. Article 1 establishes that a name signifies things through a “mediating concept,” which Thomas also calls a *ratio*.³ Since our intellects do not know God through his essence, but through creatures, it follows that we can name God only through creatures and that the names we use do not express the divine essence as it is in itself.⁴ Articles 2 and 3 lay out the different ways in which names of creatures are said of God.

³ See *ST I*, q. 13, a. 1, resp.: “I answer that it must be said that, according to the Philosopher, vocalizations are signs of understandings, and understandings are likenesses of things. And so it is clear that vocalizations are referred to things to be signified by a mediating conception of the intellect [Respondeo dicendum quod, secundum philosophum, voces sunt signa intellectuum, et intellectus sunt rerum similitudines. Et sic patet quod voces referuntur ad res significandas, mediante conceptione intellectus]” (all translations from the works of Thomas are my own, done from the Latin as found at corpusthomicum.org unless otherwise noted). In this passage, Thomas draws on Aristotle, *De interpretatione* 1.16a. See also Aquinas, *In I peri hermeneias*, lec. 2, in *In Aristotelis Libros Peri Hermeneias et Posteriorum Analyticorum Expositio*, ed. R. M. Spiazzi, 2nd ed. (Turin, IT: Marietti, 1964), 9–12, and *In V metaph.*, lec. 5, in *In Duodecim Libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Expositio*, ed. R. M. Spiazzi (Turin, IT: Marietti, 1950), 223b. For a discussion of signification in Thomas's work and in the period following him, see Giorgio Pini, “Species, Concept, and Thing: Theories of Signification in the Second Half of the Thirteenth Century,” *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 8 (1999): 21–52. See also E. J. Ashworth, “Signification and Modes of Signification in Thirteenth-Century Logic: A Preface to Aquinas on Analogy,” *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 1 (1991): 43–53.

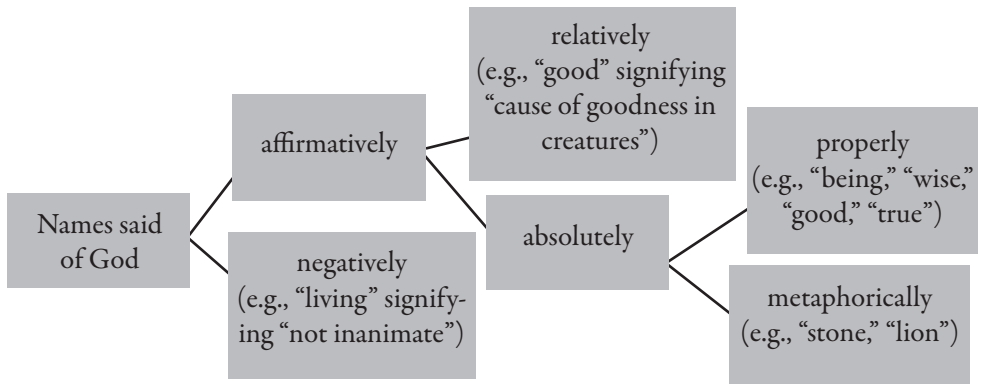
⁴ See *ST I*, q. 13, a. 1, resp.: “Therefore, something can be named by us insofar as it can be known by us in the intellect. But it was shown above that God is not able to be seen through His essence by us in this life. Rather, He is known by us from creatures, according to the relation of principle, and through the mode of excellence and removal. So therefore, He can be named by us from creatures, although that name signifying Him does not express the divine essence according to what it is in the way that the name ‘human’ expresses with its signification the essence of human according to what it is. For [‘human’] signifies its definition, declaring its essence; for the *ratio* which the name signifies is the definition [Secundum igitur quod aliquid a nobis intellectu cognosci potest, sic a nobis potest nominari. Ostensum est autem supra quod Deus in hac vita non potest a nobis videri per suam essentiam; sed cognoscitur a nobis ex creaturis, secundum habitudinem principii, et per modum excellentiae et remotiois. Sic igitur potest nominari a nobis ex creaturis, non tamen ita quod nomen significans ipsum, exprimat divinam essentiam secundum quod est, sicut hoc nomen homo exprimit sua significatione essentiam hominis secundum quod est, significat enim eius definitionem, declarantem eius essentiam; ratio enim quam significat nomen, est definitio].”

Names are said either negatively or affirmatively, and if affirmatively, then either absolutely or relatively, and if absolutely, then either metaphorically or properly. A name signifies the divine substance or essence itself (albeit very imperfectly) only if it is being said of God properly. Names of pure perfections, such as “being,” “wise,” and “good,” can be said of God properly (see Figure 1).⁵ Article 4 addresses the divine simplicity by affirming that the human intellect employs different *rationes* when predicating different names of God properly, even though there are not different perfections in God answering to the different *rationes*.⁶

⁵ See *ST I*, q. 13, a. 2, resp.: “I answer that it must be said that concerning names which are said about God negatively or which signify His relation to a creature, it is clear that they do not signify His substance in any way. Rather [they signify] a removal of something from Him, or [they signify] His relation to another, or rather [a relation] of something to Him. But concerning names which are said about God absolutely and affirmatively, such as ‘good,’ ‘wise,’ and the like, . . . it must be said that indeed names of this kind signify the divine substance, and they are predicated about God substantially, but they fall short from a representation of Him [Respondeo dicendum quod de nominibus quae de Deo dicuntur negative, vel quae relationem ipsius ad creaturam significant, manifestum est quod substantiam eius nullo modo significant; sed remotionem alicuius ab ipso, vel relationem eius ad alium, vel potius alicuius ad ipsum. Sed de nominibus quae absolute et affirmative de Deo dicuntur, sicut bonus, sapiens, et huiusmodi . . . dicendum est, quod huiusmodi quidem nomina significant substantiam divinam, et praedicantur de Deo substantialiter, sed deficiunt a repraesentatione ipsius].” See also *ST I*, q. 13, a. 3, ad 1: “To the first therefore it must be said that certain names signify perfections of this kind proceeding from God into created things. In this way, that very imperfect way by which the divine perfection is participated by a creature is included in the very thing signified by the name, just as ‘stone’ signifies something existing materially. And names of this kind can only be attributed to God metaphorically. Certain names, however, signify the very perfections absolutely, without any mode of participating being included in their signification, such as ‘being,’ ‘good,’ ‘living,’ and the like, and such names are said about God properly [Ad primum ergo dicendum quod quaedam nomina significant huiusmodi perfectiones a Deo procedentes in res creatas, hoc modo quod ipse modus imperfectus quo a creatura participatur divina perfectio, in ipso nominis significato includitur, sicut lapis significat aliquid materialiter ens, et huiusmodi nomina non possunt attribui Deo nisi metaphorice. Quaedam vero nomina significant ipsas perfectiones absolute, absque hoc quod aliquis modus participandi claudatur in eorum significatione, ut ens, bonum, vivens, et huiusmodi, et talia proprie dicuntur de Deo].”

⁶ See *ST I*, q. 13, a. 4, resp.: “Therefore, just as one simple principle answers to diverse perfections of creatures [and is] represented by diverse perfections of creatures variously and multiply; so too, one altogether simple thing answers to various and multiple conceptions of our intellect insofar as conceptions of this kind are understood imperfectly. And, therefore, names attributed to God are not synonymous, even though they signify one thing, because they signify it under multiple

Figure 1: Ways names are said of God in *Summa theologiae* I, q. 13, a. 1–6



Article 5 continues the previous article’s interest in the role of the mediating conception or *ratio* in names said of God. Thomas rejects the possibility of a name being said of God and creatures univocally on the grounds that the same name cannot be said of God and creatures through the same *ratio*. As Thomas argues in the first *sed contra* of article 5, when a name is predicated of many things, it is predicated of them either through the same *ratio* or through diverse *rationes*. A *ratio* that does include a particular genus cannot be identical to a *ratio* that does not include that same genus. Names of pure perfections are said about creatures through *rationes* that include a particular genus. For example, “wisdom” said of a human signifies a perfection in the category of quality. But wisdom is not a quality in God (since God is simple, and therefore outside of every genus). Hence, the *ratio* of a name must be altered for the name to be predicated of God and a name is said of God properly through a *ratio* different from the *ratio* through which the same name is said of a creature properly.⁷ Thomas

and diverse *rationes* [Sicut igitur diversis perfectionibus creaturarum respondet unum simplex principium, repraesentatum per diversas perfectiones creaturarum varie et multipliciter; ita variis et multiplicibus conceptibus intellectus nostri respondet unum omnino simplex, secundum huiusmodi conceptiones imperfecte intellectum. Et ideo nomina Deo attributa, licet significant unam rem, tamen, quia significant eam sub rationibus multis et diversis, non sunt synonyma].”

⁷ See *ST* I, q. 13, a. 5, sc 1: “On the contrary, whatever is predicated about some things according to the same name and not according to the same *ratio* is predicated about them equivocally. But no name belongs to God according to the *ratio* according to which it is said about a creature. For wisdom in creatures is a

repeats the point in the *respondeo*, and he emphasizes that, although the names of pure perfections signify complexity in creatures, they do not signify complexity when said about the divine essence.⁸

Analogy first comes up in article 5 as the alternative between pure equivocation and univocity. An alternative is necessary because, if names were said only purely equivocally about God and creatures, then the fallacy of equivocation would occur in all attempts to learn about God from creatures,⁹ while as noted above, naming God and creatures univocally is incompatible with divine simplicity. Thomas writes that analogy in names occurs in two ways. In the first way, called analogy of “many to one,” the same name is said of two things that stand in different relations to a third

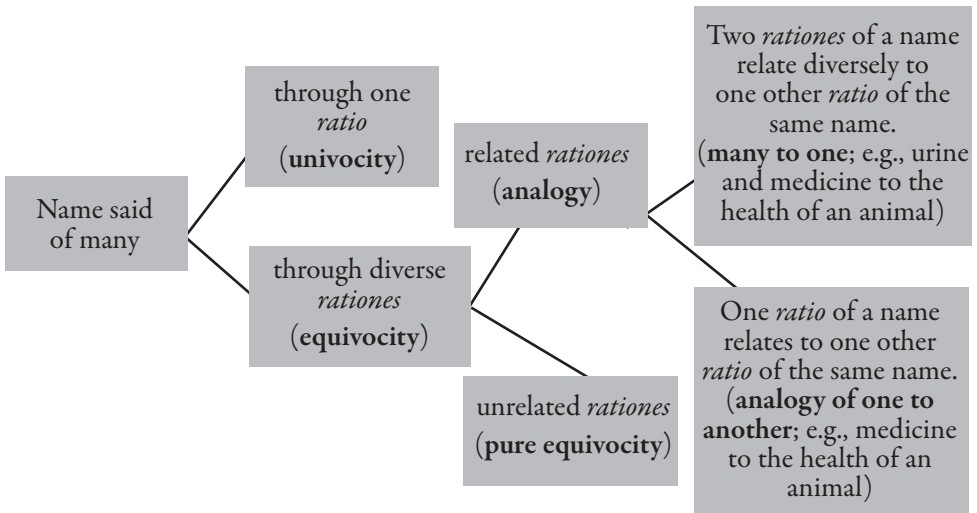
quality, but not in God; a variation in genus, however, changes the *ratio*, since it is part of the definition. And the same reasoning applies to other cases. Therefore, whatever is said about God and creatures is said equivocally [Sed contra, quidquid praedicatur de aliquibus secundum idem nomen et non secundum eandem rationem, praedicatur de eis aequivoce. Sed nullum nomen convenit Deo secundum illam rationem, secundum quam dicitur de creatura, nam sapientia in creaturis est qualitas, non autem in Deo; genus autem variatum mutat rationem, cum sit pars definitionis. Et eadem ratio est in aliis. Quidquid ergo de Deo et creaturis dicitur, aequivoce dicitur].”

⁸ See *ST I*, q. 13, a. 5, resp.: “In the same way, as was said above, all the perfections of things, which in created things exist dividedly and multiply, preexist in God unitedly. So therefore, when any name pertaining to a perfection is said about a creature, it signifies that perfection as distinct from others according to the *ratio* of the definition. For example, when the name ‘wise’ is said about a human, we signify a perfection distinct from: the essence of a human; from the power; from its existence; and from all things of this kind. But when we say this name about God, we do not intend to signify something distinct from His essence, power, or existence [Eodem modo, ut supra dictum est, omnes rerum perfectiones, quae sunt in rebus creatis divisim et multipliciter, in Deo praexistunt unite. Sic igitur, cum aliquod nomen ad perfectionem pertinens de creatura dicitur, significat illam perfectionem ut distinctam secundum rationem definitionis ab aliis, puta cum hoc nomen sapiens de homine dicitur, significamus aliquam perfectionem distinctam ab essentia hominis, et a potentia et ab esse ipsius, et ab omnibus huiusmodi. Sed cum hoc nomen de Deo dicimus, non intendimus significare aliquid distinctum ab essentia vel potentia vel esse ipsius].”

⁹ See *ST I*, q. 13, a. 5, resp.: “Consequently, no name is predicated univocally about God and creatures. But neither also [are they all predicated] purely equivocally, as some have said. Because, by this [position], nothing could be known or demonstrated about God from creatures. Rather, one would always fail by the fallacy of equivocation [Unde nullum nomen univoce de Deo et creaturis praedicatur. Sed nec etiam pure aequivoce, ut aliqui dixerunt. Quia secundum hoc, ex creaturis nihil posset cognosci de Deo, nec demonstrari; sed semper incideret fallacia aequivocationis].”

thing, such as when “healthy” is said of both urine and medicine, which relate differently to the health of an animal. In the second way, called analogy of “one to another,” the name is said of two things where one receives the name due to the relation it has to the other, such as when “healthy” is said of medicine and the animal made healthy by the medicine.¹⁰ Having divided the ways names are said by analogy in two, Thomas insists that some things (*aliqua*) are said of God and creatures in the second way (i.e., analogy of one to another).¹¹

Figure 2: Ways a single name is said of many things in *ST I*, q. 13, a. 5



¹⁰ See *ST I*, q. 13, a. 5, resp.: “Therefore, it must be said that names of this kind are said about God and creatures by analogy, that is proportion. Indeed there are two ways [analogy] occurs in names: either because many have proportion to one, as ‘healthy’ is said about medicine and urine inasmuch as both have order and proportion to the health of an animal, of which the former is the sign, but the latter is the cause; or because one has proportion to the other, as ‘healthy’ is said about medicine and an animal inasmuch as medicine is the cause of the health which is in the animal. And some things are said about God and creatures analogously in this way, and not purely equivocally, nor univocally [Dicendum est igitur quod huiusmodi nomina dicuntur de Deo et creaturis secundum analogiam, idest proportionem. Quod quidem dupliciter contingit in nominibus, vel quia multa habent proportionem ad unum, sicut sanum dicitur de medicina et urina, inquantum utrumque habet ordinem et proportionem ad sanitatem animalis, cuius hoc quidem signum est, illud vero causa; vel ex eo quod unum habet proportionem ad alterum, sicut sanum dicitur de medicina et animali, inquantum medicina est causa sanitatis quae est in animali. Et hoc modo aliqua dicuntur de Deo et creaturis analogice, et non aequivoce pure, neque univoce].”

¹¹ See *ST I*, q. 13, a. 5.

Thomas gives no reason in *ST* I, q. 13, a. 5, for analogy of *many to one* being unsuited for predicating pure perfections about God and creatures. This marks a departure in practice, if not in doctrine, from the parallel passage written a few years earlier in chapter 34 of *Summa contra gentiles* [*SCG*] I.¹² Thomas there observes that, if names were said of God and creatures by analogy of *many to one*, then “it would be necessary to assert something prior to God.”¹³ This reason refers the reader back to Thomas’s rejection of univocity for naming God and creatures in chapter 32: “What is predicated of many univocally is simpler than each of those things, at least according to understanding. But something cannot be simpler than God either according to thing or according to understanding. Therefore, nothing is predicated univocally about God and other things.”¹⁴ A variation of the line that nothing is “simpler than God [either] according to thing, or according to understanding” appears in *ST* I, q. 3, a. 5, sc (where the question concerns the divine simplicity). Substituting the word “prior” for the word “simpler,” Thomas writes: “A genus is prior according to understanding to that which is contained in it. But nothing is prior to God, neither according to thing, nor according to understanding. Therefore, God is not in any genus.”¹⁵ In the *respondeo* of *ST* I, q. 3, a. 5, Thomas argues that God has not genus, difference, or definition.¹⁶ From these passages, one can conclude that the problem that Thomas has both with univocity and with analogy of *many to one* for the divine names is that they presume complexity (at least definitional complexity) in the things signified by the name. Since God has no such complexity and no definition

¹² On the similarity of St. Thomas’s doctrine in *Summa contra gentiles* [*SCG*] I, ch. 34, to what he writes in other mature works such as *De potentia*, q. 7, a. 7, and *ST* I, q. 13, a. 5, see Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 82–83.

¹³ *SCG* I, ch. 34: “Therefore, names of this kind are not said about God and other things analogously by the first mode—for it would be necessary to assert something prior to God—but in the second mode [Huiusmodi igitur nomina de Deo et rebus aliis non dicuntur analogice secundum primum modum, oporteret enim aliquid Deo ponere prius: sed modo secundo]” (Leonine ed., 13:103a–b; translation mine).

¹⁴ See *SCG* I, ch. 32: “Quod univoce de pluribus praedicatur, utroque illorum ad minus secundum intellectum simplicius est. Deo autem neque secundum rem neque secundum intellectum potest esse aliquid simplicius. Nihil igitur univoce de Deo et rebus aliis praedicatur” (Leonine ed., 13:97b; translation mine).

¹⁵ *ST* I, q. 13, a. 5, sc: “Sed contra, genus est prius, secundum intellectum, eo quod in genere continetur. Sed nihil est prius Deo, nec secundum rem, nec secundum intellectum. Ergo Deus non est in aliquo genere.”

¹⁶ *ST* I, q. 3, a. 5, resp.

knowable to us,¹⁷ names cannot be said univocally or by analogy of *many to one* about God and creatures.

Proceeding to article 6, Thomas adds that names must be said *per prius* of God when they are said of God properly. The article's *respondeo* begins with a general rule: "In all names which are said about many analogously, it is necessary that all are said by relation to one; and therefore, it is necessary that *that one is asserted in the definition of all.*"¹⁸ Thomas connects being named *per prius* to being the "one" in the definition of the other or others:

And because the *ratio* which the name signifies is the definition, . . . it is necessary that that name is said *per prius* about that which is asserted in the definition of the others, and *per posterius* about the others according to the order by which they approach to that first, either more or less: as "healthy" which is said about an animal falls in the definition of "healthy" which is said about medicine, which is called "healthy" inasmuch as it causes health in an animal; and in the definition of "healthy" which is said about urine, which is called "healthy" inasmuch as it is the sign of the health of an animal.¹⁹

The final portion of the *respondeo* in article 6 adds a distinction between the order of the imposition of a name and the order of thing signified by a name. Speaking about names said properly about God, Thomas writes:

For when it is said "God is good, or wise," it not only is signified that He is the cause of wisdom, or goodness, but that these preexist in him eminently. Hence, according to this, it must be said that, as far as the thing signified through the name, they are said *per prius* about God as compared to creatures, because perfections of this

¹⁷ Besides his remarks in *ST I*, q. 13, a. 5, see the same point made in other words when Thomas argues that God's existence is not self-evident to us on the grounds "quia nos non scimus de Deo quid est" (*ST I*, q. 2, a. 1).

¹⁸ *ST I*, q. 13, a. 6, resp.: "Respondeo dicendum quod in omnibus nominibus quae de pluribus analogice dicuntur, necesse est quod omnia dicantur per respectum unum: et ideo illud *unum oportet quod ponatur in definitione omnium*" (emphasis added).

¹⁹ *ST I*, q. 13, a. 6, resp.: "Et quia ratio quam significat nomen, est definitio, ut dicitur in IV *Metaphys.*, necesse est quod illud nomen per prius dicatur de eo quod ponitur in definitione aliorum, et per posterius de aliis, secundum ordinem quo appropinquant ad illud primum vel magis vel minus, sicut sanum quod dicitur de animali, cadit in definitione sani quod dicitur de medicina, quae dicitur sana in quantum causat sanitatem in animali; et in definitione sani quod dicitur de urina, quae dicitur sana in quantum est signum sanitatis animalis."

kind remain in creatures from God. But as regards the imposition of the name, *per prius* they are imposed by us to creatures, which we know first.²⁰

At this point, the reader finds that St. Thomas has given a *sic et non* answer to the article's question. Yes, the names are said of God *per prius*, but only insofar as God is first in the order of thing signified by the name. God is prior to creatures in this order because the perfection signified by the name must preexist eminently in God. The name is quite specifically not said first of God in the order of imposition. That is, when signification is first attached to a name (or, more precisely at this stage, to a *vox*) such as "being," "wise," or "good," the signification relates the name to the perfection in a creature.²¹

From the above summary, I conclude that *ST I*, q. 13, aa. 1–6, requires of any adequate position on "*Una ratio versus diversae rationes*" that it be consistent with at least the following criteria. (1) One is in the definition of all analogates (article 6). (2) Pure perfections can be properly predicated about both God and creatures, and not merely negatively, relatively, or metaphorically (as per articles 2–4). (3) Names are said analogously of God and creatures by the analogy of *one to another*, rather than by that of *many to one* (article 5); Finally, (4) the fallacy of equivocation is avoided in reasoning from creatures to God (article 5).

Una ratio versus Diversae rationes

With these four criteria in mind, I return now to the three positions laid out at the beginning of the article on the number of *rationes* or mediating conceptions through which the name of a pure perfection is said about

²⁰ *ST I*, q. 13, a. 6, resp.: "Cum enim dicitur Deus est bonus, vel sapiens, non solum significatur quod ipse sit causa sapientiae vel bonitatis, sed quod haec in eo eminentius praexistunt. Unde, secundum hoc, dicendum est quod, quantum ad rem significatam per nomen, per prius dicuntur de Deo quam de creaturis, quia a Deo huiusmodi perfectiones in creaturas manant. Sed quantum ad impositionem nominis, per prius a nobis imponuntur creaturis, quas prius cognoscimus."

²¹ On the relation between imposition and signification, see Ria van der Lecq, "Logic and Theories of Meaning in the Late 13th and Early 14th Century," *Handbook of the History of Logic 2* (2008): esp. 347–48: "The basic function of language is to signify things, and imposition is the way words acquire their meanings. This is supposed to work as follows: a first *impositor* investigates things and their properties and then decides which sound (*vox*) should be used to signify the object. When this sound has been imposed to signify some thing, it becomes a sign and it has acquired signification."

God and creatures by analogy. Option A: Thomas abandons *una ratio* for *diversae rationes*. Option B: the *una ratio* is one of the *diversae rationes*. Option C: the *una ratio* is separate from the *diversae rationes*.

It seems to me that option A is incompatible with criterion 1: "In all names which are said about many analogously . . . it is necessary that that one is asserted in the definition of all." Insofar as this "one" is "asserted in the definition of all" the analogates, it functions as either the whole or an identifiable (and thereby intellectually separable) part of the definition of the name.²² As the whole or as a separable part of a definition, the "one . . . in the definition of all" is a mediating concept, a *ratio*. With this rule in mind, it is clear that there being diverse *rationes* for a name said of many by analogy does not prevent there also being one *ratio* for a name said of many by analogy. On the contrary, it is necessary that there be *una ratio* in some way contained in all the *diversae rationes*. At least insofar as option A proposes that Aquinas simply replaces *una ratio* with *diversae rationes* by the time he composes *ST*, option A fails to satisfy criterion 1, and is thereby inconsistent with and unsupported by the text.

Options B and C face the challenge of consistently meeting both criteria 1 and 2. They must be able to explain how it is that a name such as "wise" can be said properly about God and creatures (as required by criterion 2) and analogously about God and creatures, which (according to criterion 1) entails that "one is . . . in the definition of all." This is a challenge because, as presented by Thomas, when a name is properly predicated of one thing, then it is not said of that thing by reference to another. And yet, it is reference to another that occasions the presence of one *ratio* in the definition of all. The difficulty of reconciling criteria 1 and 2 is attested by the historical practice of the Thomists who propose *either* option B *or* option C. A standard move among these Thomists is to deny that criterion 1 applies to names said of God and creatures. They do this by appealing to remarks Thomas makes either in *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 11, ad 6, or in *In I sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1.²³

²² According to Klubertanz, "to be in the definition of something" either means "to be one of the constitutive intelligibilities of an essence" or means "to be part of the complete intelligibility of the creature as creature, or again, of God as Creator" (*St. Thomas on Analogy*, 34). Recalling that "intelligibility" is Klubertanz's translation of *ratio*, I think that the account I have given of what it means for one to be "asserted in the definition of all" is consistent with Klubertanz's. Klubertanz himself does not acknowledge any obstacle between what I am calling criterion 1 and his developmental solution to the problem of "*una ratio versus diversae rationes*."

²³ See the table below for a presentation of the different ways in which Renaissance

Thomas demonstrates that it is reference to another that distinguishes naming negatively, relatively, and metaphorically from naming properly by the examples he gives in *ST I*, q. 13 of the signification of negative, relative, and metaphorical names. For example, he says that: if God were called

Thomists explain away criterion 1. Specifically, these authors deny that names are said of God and creatures in the way in which “healthy” is said analogously about an animal and medicine.

Option Letter	Thomist	Preferred text(s) for explaining away criterion 1
B	Capreolus	Both <i>In I sent.</i> , d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1, and <i>De veritate</i> q. 2, a. 11, ad 6
B	Dominic of Flanders	<i>De veritate</i> q. 2, a. 11, ad 6
B	Cajetan	<i>De veritate</i> q. 2, a. 11, ad 6
C	Soncinas	<i>In I sent.</i> , d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1
C	Javelli	<i>In I sent.</i> , d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1

For the texts of these authors, see: John Capreolus, *Defensiones* 1, d. 2, q. 1, a. 2, and d. 35, q. 2, a. 2; Dominic of Flanders, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicae Aristotelis, secundum expositionem eiusdem Angelici Doctoris, lucidissimae atque utilissimae quaestiones* XII, q. 9, a. 1, ad 3; Cajetan, Thomas di Vi Cajetan, *Commentaria in summam theologiae St. Thomae* I, q. 13, a. 6, nos. 2–4 (Leonine ed., 4:151a); Paul Soncinas, *Pauli Soncinatis ordinis praedicatorum, Quaestiones metaphysicales acutissime: nunc demum summo studio, et accuratius quam antehac unquam castigatae, repurgatae, & multis in locis illustratae. Cum triplici earum indice, quorum primus, quaestionum titulos promiscuè: secundus, ad hos, iuxta librorum & alphabeti seriem simul materiam: tertius verò digna notatu circa haec omnia, demonstrat* IV, q. 4, ad 1; Chysostom Javelli, *Quaestiones, In Metaphysicam Aristotelis: Ab innumeris mendis repurgatae & in gratiam Philosophiae studiosorum denuo editae Accessit in hac editione, Tractatus de natura Metaphysices ex Epitome Metaphysica eiusdem autoris huc translatus, & duplex Index . . .* IV, q. 1.

For Klubertanz’s interpretation of this “rule,” see esp. *St. Thomas on Analogy*, 32–34. According to Klubertanz, the passages in which Thomas affirms, denies, or affirms and denies that “one is in the definition of the other” are not contradictory. Rather they are instances of a “confusing terminological shift.” Klubertanz sums up his own conclusion on the matter by stating: “It is true that its relationship to God is part of the complete intelligibility of a creature as creature; and also true that we human knowers know God naturally inasmuch as He is the cause of creatures, and so the relationship to the creature is part of the intelligibility of God *for us*” (34). Inasmuch as Klubertanz’s resolution of the (at least) apparent conflict between Thomas Aquinas’s texts relies on considering creatures and/or God relationally, rather than properly, Klubertanz’s resolution resembles the solution proposed by Francis Silvester of Ferrara (to be discussed further below).

“living” negatively, then the name “living” would signify “that God in this way is not like non-living things”;²⁴ if God is called “good” by the relation of causality, then the name “good” would signify “cause of goodness in things”;²⁵ and if God were called “lion” metaphorically, then the name “lion” would signify, “God relates similarly as He works strongly upon His works, as a lion upon its.”²⁶ In each of these cases, one thing receives a name properly and at least one other receives the name by reference to another, and the *ratio* of the name as said properly of one appears in the *ratio* of the name as said of the other. So, when the name “wise” is said properly about a creature, there is not some other *ratio* of the name contained within the definition of the name that is distinct from the proper *ratio* of the name as said of the creature, and the same is true when the names are said of God properly. But if one *ratio* does not appear in the definition of all the recipients of the common name, then the name is not being said about them by analogy.

I draw inspiration from an unusual proponent of option B to consider whether this option is able to hold together criteria 1 and 2.²⁷ It is consistent with *ST* I, q. 13, to suggest that, in those cases of analogy of *one to another* where the name can be said *properly* of both analogates, the name can also be said *relatively* of both analogates. For example, a creature can be called “wise” properly, thereby signifying an accident in the creature, and a creature can be called “wise” relatively, thereby signifying its accident *qua* effect of divine wisdom. The same name “wisdom” can be said of God properly, thereby signifying the divine essence, and said of God relatively, thereby signifying a causal relation to creatures. When the intellect compares how it signifies one of these names about God to how it signifies one of these names about creatures, it considers either the perfection in God as the cause of the creature or the creature’s perfection as an effect of God. Either way, when a name is said of one relatively to how the name

²⁴ *ST* I, q. 13, a. 2: “Cum dicimus Deum esse viventem, significamus quod Deus non hoc modo est, sicut res inanimatae.”

²⁵ *ST* I, q. 13, a. 2: “Cum dicimus Deus est bonus, sit sensus, Deus est causa bonitatis in rebus.”

²⁶ *ST* I, q. 13, a. 6: “Sic nomen leonis, dictum de Deo, nihil aliud significat quam quod Deus similiter se habet ut fortiter operetur in suis operibus, sicut leo in suis.”

²⁷ The unusual proponent is Francis Silvestri of Ferrara. For a discussion of his position, see Ralph McInerny, *The Logic of Analogy: An interpretation of St. Thomas* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1961), 23–31, 164–65. See also the comparison of Francis Silvestri with earlier Thomists in Domenic D’Ettore, “One Is in the Definition of All: The Renaissance Thomist Controversy over a ‘Rule’ for Names Said by Analogy,” *The Thomist*, 82 (2018): 89–111.

is said properly of another, the *ratio* of the name proper to one analogate appears in the *ratio* of the name as it is being said of the other. By considering how the same name can be said both relatively and properly about the same thing, it is apparent that option B can satisfy both criteria 1 and 2.

I have not yet come across a historical proponent of option C who parts from the practice of explaining away criterion 1. So, this tentative solution on behalf of option C is original. One prominent proponent of option C identifies the *una ratio* with the *ratio* of the name as first conceived. The intellect generates more determinate and diverse proper *rationes* after comparing how its first and absolute concept for a name applies in different cases.²⁸ By this account, the rule that “one is . . . in the definition of all” entails that the proper *rationes* of names as said properly of God and their *rationes* as said properly of creatures are both determinations of the *ratio* of the name as first conceived absolutely. This approach does not seem to me to be incoherent, and perhaps it even could be reconciled with *ST I*, q. 13, as a whole. But the examples Thomas uses in the question strongly suggest option B, not option C. For example, the “one health” in the *ratio* of the name “healthy” said of medicine and of an animal appears to be the health of the animal, rather than a “healthy” absolutely considered that is indeterminate to either the health proper to an animal or to medicine. So, even if option C is not incapable of satisfying both criteria 1 and 2, option B can satisfy them in a way much closer to the text of *ST I*, q. 13.

Another consideration in favor of option B over option C is that the former fits easily with criterion 3: names are said of God and creatures by the analogy of *one to another*. If the *ratio* of a name as said of God falls in the *ratio* of the name as said of a creature, or *vice versa*, then clearly the name is said of God and creature by analogy of *one to another*. By contrast, if, as required by option C, the *una ratio* is a separate *ratio* that appears in the *rationes* proper to the analogates, then it becomes difficult to explain why the name is said by analogy of *one to another* rather than by analogy of *many to one*. For reasons mentioned above, this particular line of consideration is even stronger when Thomas’s decision against analogy of *many to one* in *ST I*, q. 13, a. 5 is read in the light of the parallel passages in the *SCG*. Since I am deliberately isolating *ST I*, q. 13, I will say no more on this point.

The one consideration that I find weighing against option B in favor of option C is criterion 4, by which an adequate interpretation of the passage should be consistent with Thomas’s intention to use analogy in naming as a means of avoiding the fallacy of equivocation when reasoning from

²⁸ See Javelli, *In IV metaph.*, q. 1.

perfections first known in creatures to the existence and attributes of God. The problem for option B is that the fallacy of equivocation occurs in at least some cases in which the *ratio* proper to one analogate appears in the definition of another. Indeed, option B appears to be entirely consistent with the standard Scholastic example of the fallacy's second species: "Every healthy thing is an animal, and urine is healthy; therefore, urine is an animal."²⁹ To follow option B without qualification in this passage would be to find Aquinas saying that names of pure perfections are said by the analogy of *one to another* about God and creatures in precisely the way that "healthy" is said in the fallacious argument above. This could be a philosophical problem with Thomas's position, rather than an interpretative problem with option B. In fact, some historical proponents of option B notice this very problem and explain it away by appealing to other texts by Aquinas.³⁰ Option C does not share option B's problem of lining up exactly with a well-known fallacy, and in part, C has been developed historically to answer objections that demonstrations using terms analogously are fallacious.³¹

Conclusion

I do not propose that I have settled the overall question of which of the three positions on "*Una ratio versus diversae rationes*" agrees with the mind of St. Thomas, and I have deliberately avoided interpreting *ST I*, q. 13, in light of Thomas's other works, choosing to focus on one particular part of the wider dispute involving the range of Thomas's works. Within that range of Thomas's works, Klubertanz identified real variations in the way that Thomas Aquinas wrote about names said of many by analogy. One of those variations is whether a name is said by analogy through one *ratio* or through *diversae rationes*. Klubertanz cites *ST I*, q. 13, a. 5, as evidence that Thomas had abandoned *una ratio* for *diversae rationes* in his mature works. I have argued that this text does not provide the evidence Klubertanz claims from it. Rather, the passage requires both *diversae rationes* and one *ratio* that is in all the *diversae rationes*. I have argued further that the most internally consistent reading of the text regards the one *ratio* said of many

²⁹ See Peter of Spain, *Peter of Spain: Summaries of Logic*, ed. Brian P. Copenhaver, Calvin Normore, and Terence Parsons (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 277 (for the editors' discussion of the fallacy of equivocation, see 50–52; on this text as a standard textbook of logic, see 9–12).

³⁰ For example, see the first reference to Capreolus in footnote 23 above.

³¹ See the references to Soncinas and Javelli in footnote 23 above. Both of these authors are following the example of Capreolus.

by analogy as one of the *diversae rationes* proper to the analogates, although even this interpretation is not without difficulties.

Table 1: Evaluating the Three Positions

	Option A: Aquinas changes his mind from <i>una ratio</i> to <i>diversae rationes</i> .	Option B: The <i>una ratio</i> is one of the <i>diversae rationes</i> proper to the analogates.	Option C: The <i>una ratio</i> is separate from the <i>diversae rationes</i> proper to the analogates.
Criterion 1: In all names that are said about many analogously, . . . <i>one asserted in the definition of all.</i> " (a. 6)	Inconsistent	Consistent	Not as obviously consistent as option B.
Criterion 2: <i>Proper predication</i> of pure perfections about God and creatures (aa. 2–4)	Consistent	Consistent	Not as obviously consistent as option B.

<p>Criterion 3: Pure perfections said of God and creatures by analogy of <i>one to another</i>, not by analogy of <i>many to one</i> (a. 5)</p>	Consistent	Consistent	Problematic textually
<p>Criterion 4: Reasoning from creatures to God through an analogous name does not commit the <i>fallacy of equivocation</i>. (a. 5)</p>	Problematic philosophically	Problematic philosophically	Not as obviously problematic as options A and B.

On the Separated Soul according to St. Thomas Aquinas

MELISSA EITENMILLER
Dominican House of Studies
Washington, DC

Introduction

There is an ongoing debate between two predominantly analytic¹ groups of Thomists, those holding the “survivalist”² view of the human person after death and those maintaining the “corruptionist”³ view. Those who defend

¹ Although this debate appears to be particularly intense among analytic Thomists (see those cited below), others have also weighed in on the topic, such as: Serge-Thomas Bonino, “L’âme séparée,” *Revue thomiste* 116 (2016): 71–103; Stephen L. Brock, *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas: A Sketch* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 51–82 and 109–144; Joseph G. Trabbic, “The Human Body and Human Happiness in Aquinas’s *Summa Theologiae*,” *New Blackfriars* 92, no. 1041 (September 2011): 552–64; and Gilles Emery, “The Unity of Man, Body and Soul, in St. Thomas Aquinas,” chapter 8 in *Trinity, Church, and the Human Person: Thomistic Essays* (Naples, FL: Sapientia, 2007), 209–35.

² Examples of the “survivalist camp” include: Lynne Rudder Baker, “Why Constitution is Not Identity,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 94 (1997): 599–621; Eleonore Stump, “Resurrection and the Separated Soul,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, ed. Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 458–66; Mark Spencer, “The Personhood of the Separated Soul,” *Nova et Vetera* (English) 12, no. 3 (2014): 863–912; and Christopher M. Brown, “Souls, Ships, and Substances: A Response to Toner,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (2007): 655–68.

³ Examples of the corruptionist view are: Patrick Toner, “St. Thomas Aquinas on Death and the Separated Soul,” *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 91 (2010): 588–99; Toner, “Thomas versus Tibbles: A Critical Study of Christopher Brown’s *Aquinas and the Ship of Theseus*,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 81, no.

the survivalist view wish to claim that the human person does not cease to exist at death, and although, according to Mark Spencer, the survivalist camp does not identify the human person with the separated soul, it nevertheless “contends that, in the separated state, a person is constituted by a soul, while remaining an individual rational animal and individual substance of a rational nature.”⁴

The corruptionist view, on the other hand, will be represented in the present article by Patrick Toner⁵ in his “St. Thomas Aquinas on Death and the Separated Soul,” in which he argues that St. Thomas held that “human beings cease to exist at their deaths,”⁶ at least until the resurrection of the body. Toner presents this in the following manner: (1) “human beings” are composites of body and soul (therefore, as he quotes Aquinas, “my soul is not me”⁷); (2) death is a substantial corruption of the composite; and (3)

4 (2007): 638–53; Christina Van Dyke, “Not Properly a Person: The Rational Soul and ‘Thomistic Substance Dualism,’” *Faith and Philosophy*, 26, no. 2 (2009): 186–204; Herbert McCabe, *On Aquinas* (London: Continuum, 2008), 65, 123; B. Carlos Bazán, “The Human Soul: Form and Substance? Thomas Aquinas’s Critique of Eclectic Aristotelianism,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 64(1997): 95–126; Anthony Kenny, *Aquinas on Mind* (London: Routledge, 1993), 138–39; Brian Davies, *Aquinas* (London: Continuum, 2002), 109–14; and Turner C. Nevitt, “Aquinas on the Death of Christ: A New Argument for Corruptionism,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 90, no. 1 (2016): 77–99.

⁴ Spencer, “The Personhood of the Separated Soul,” 869.

⁵ I chose Toner not because his version is the most extreme of the corruptionist view, but because he clearly lays out the corruptionist argument in “St. Thomas Aquinas on Death and the Separated Soul.”

⁶ Toner, “St. Thomas Aquinas on Death and the Separated Soul,” 587.

⁷ Toner, “St. Thomas Aquinas on Death and the Separated Soul,” 588, quoting from Aquinas’s *Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, where Aquinas comments on 1 Cor 15:12–19 (particularly vv. 17–19), in which St. Paul exclaims: “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied.” Since the passage is obviously emphasizing the resurrection of the body, St. Thomas comments: “Therefore, if the dead do not rise, we will be confident only in this life. In another way, because it is clear that man naturally desires his own salvation; but the soul, since it is part of man’s body, is not an entire man, and *my soul is not I*; hence, although the soul obtains salvation in another life, nevertheless, not I or any man. Furthermore, since man naturally desires salvation even of the body, a natural desire would be frustrated” (dhspriority.org/thomas/SS1Cor.htm). Brian Davies explains the above quotation of Aquinas thus: “Aquinas thinks that I can be there as myself after my death. How? Because God can raise my body from the grave. But if there is only my soul, . . . [Aquinas] argues, then I do not exist” (*Aquinas*, 110).

“hence, humans stop existing at their deaths.”⁸

In this article, I would like to propose that Aquinas’s view is more nuanced than either side appears ready to acknowledge.⁹ It seems to me important to emphasize that, although death truly involves a separation of body and soul (thus constituting a corruption of the human person as such), nevertheless, the soul remains the “essential part” of the person and maintains a certain identity with that person as a subject of attribution¹⁰

⁸ Toner, “St. Thomas Aquinas on Death and the Separated Soul,” 594.

⁹ Although I have chosen in the present article to focus on the corruptionist view, one should also note the serious metaphysical difficulty involved in the survivalist position, in which a substance (i.e., the human person) once composed of body and soul (matter and form), is said to be after death “constituted by” only its form, though not identical with (see Rudder Baker’s and Stump’s respective articles above), although at the resurrection, it will again be composed. This raises the question of the type of relationship that exists between body and soul before and after the interim state, with the danger of a kind of Cartesian dualism, due to an apparently merely accidental union of body and soul, such that, at least during the interim state, the soul “constitutes” the person, as the thinking subject. For example, Spencer states, “on my revision of Thomistic principles, the human person can be said to be ‘essentially’ material in the sense that this is its natural state and is necessary for the human person’s ordinary and perfected life, but *not in the sense that actually having matter is necessary to be a human person*” (“The Personhood of the Separated Soul,” 908; emphasis added). However, Spencer believes that: “The survivalist view does not turn Thomistic hylomorphism into substance dualism. There is only one substance and one nature for each human person. . . . *In the state of separation, the one substance is constituted just by the soul.* The human person is incomplete without matter, since matter is needed for the complete explication of its nature; *matter is substantially, not accidentally, united to the soul*” (906; emphasis added).

Nevertheless, the survivalist view raises at least two questions: First, since Aquinas appears to agree that “in mere men, a person is constituted by the union of the soul to the body” (*Summa theologiae* [ST] III, q. 2, a. 5, ad 1: *in puris hominibus ex unione animae ad corpus constituitur persona*; translation mine), would he also agree that, in the interim state, one can rightly say that the *person* is constituted by only the soul, especially since he states that “the form does not constitute the species, except inasmuch as it becomes the act of matter” (ST III, q. 2, a. 5, resp.; my translation)? Secondly, is it metaphysically possible to hold *both* that matter is substantially united to the soul *and* that, in the interim state, the soul constitutes the same substance, which is the human person, *without being united to matter*? It would appear that the latter question could be resolved only by simply admitting an accidental union of body and soul (i.e., Cartesian dualism), reducing the human person to a mere *res cogitans*.

¹⁰ By “subject of attribution,” I mean that the separated soul remains a *hoc aliquid* in the first sense of being subsistent, and as such, remains the first principle of its own act of being and of its own operations.

already capable of enjoying the absolute bliss of the Beatific Vision (or the suffering of temporal or eternal punishment in purgatory or hell, respectively), even before the general resurrection.¹¹ Consequently, it would be wrong, and even spiritually dangerous, to ignore the importance of the intermediate state. It is not at all clear to me that Toner means to do this, but in emphasizing the destruction of the human person at death, he and other corruptionists do appear to leave themselves open to that sort of interpretation.

In fact, Serge-Thomas Bonino, who calls these two camps¹² the “minimalists” (i.e., corruptionists) and the “maximalists” (i.e., survivalists), points out that:

According to the minimalists, the refusal to attribute personhood to the separated soul not only means that St. Thomas calls into question the identity between the current “me” and the separated soul, but also *implies a minimal conception of the activity of the*

¹¹ See Pope Benedict XII, *Benedictus Deus*, Constitution On the Beatific Vision of God (1336), which proclaims that the souls of the just, “*already before they take up their bodies again and before the general judgment*, have been, are and will be with Christ in heaven . . . [and] have seen and see the divine essence with an intuitive vision and even face to face . . . and in this vision . . . enjoy the divine essence,” and he continues with regard to the damned: “We define that . . . the souls of those who die in actual mortal sin go down into hell immediately after death and there suffer the pain of hell” (Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum* [DH], ed. Peter Hünermann, 43rd ed., English ed. Robert Fastiggi and Anne Englund Nash [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012], no. 1000). The text also explains that those in need of purification will be “purified after death.”

¹² A third option, which proposes to mediate between the preceding two views, has recently been proposed by Jeffrey Brower in *Aquinas’s Ontology of the Material World: Change, Hylomorphism, & Material Objects* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): “Insofar as Socrates . . . retains his human soul as a proper part or constituent after death, he will also retain a natural disposition to be human. Evidently, therefore, Socrates can be said to survive his death as a human person (in my broad sense) [i.e., insofar as he retains the aforesaid disposition]” (295–96). Therefore, continues Brower, “all human beings survive their death along with their souls as human persons (in my broad sense), despite ceasing thereafter to be human beings, precisely because their souls cease to be united to their matter, and hence the substances to which they are identical cease to belong to the kind *animal*” (297). Consequently, Brower advocates a “non-human survivalism.” In other words, he says, “we can also describe non-human survivalism as the view according to which all human beings survive their death as human *persons* but not as human *beings*” (300). However, as will be seen below, I would advocate the opposite view: the soul continues to be essentially human in its nature even after death, although it would be metaphysically incorrect to call it a person as such.

separated soul, reduced to a comatose state of prolonged vigil. The separated soul would have . . . an *existence similar to that* . . . which the Ancients would concede to the *shadows which haunt Sheol*.¹³

As an example of this, Bonino cites B. Carlos Bazán, who declares, “a soul without its ontological correlate [i.e., matter] cannot operate, and consequently does not *live*.”¹⁴ This statement will be shown to be false when we speak of the operations of the separated soul. First, however, I would like to review each of Toner’s three points mentioned above.

The Composite Human Person

With regard to Toner’s first point, it is certainly true that, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, the human person, “an individual substance of a rational nature,”¹⁵ is a composite of *both* body and soul, together with a human *esse*. Gilles Emery explains that “since the person is an *individual substance*, it is a reality that possesses its proper being in a complete manner, in itself and through itself, and which exercises on its own the act of existing. . . . [Therefore,] what accounts for my uniqueness is not only my concrete individual essence (my own humanity), but my proper act of existing in the human nature common to all human beings.”¹⁶

In other words, other than in the case of Christ, the union of body and a rational soul necessarily implies the act of existence proper to a human person (since the act of being comes to the composite through the soul). Therefore, Aquinas explains in the *Summa theologiae* [ST], “the body is not of the essence of the soul; but the soul by the nature of its essence can be united to the body, so that, properly speaking, not the soul alone, but the ‘composite,’ is the species.”¹⁷ He also notes in the *Summa contra gentiles*

¹³ Bonino, “L’âme séparée,” 75: “Selon les minimalistes, le refus d’attribuer le statut de personne à l’âme séparée non seulement signifie que saint Thomas remet en cause l’identité entre le ‘moi’ actuel et l’âme séparée, mais implique aussi une conception minimale de l’activité de l’âme séparée, réduite à un état comateux de veille prolongée. L’âme séparée aurait, . . . une existence assez semblable à celle, . . . que les Anciens concédaient aux ombres qui hantent le shéol” (emphasis added ; all translations of Bonino are my own).

¹⁴ Bazán, “The Human Soul,” 125. Another example is Davies, who states that, “when it comes to our life after death, *Aquinas does not believe in the immortality of the soul*” (*Aquinas*, 114; emphasis added), although Davies does admit that Aquinas thinks the soul is incorruptible.

¹⁵ Aquinas cites this Boethian definition of person in *ST I*, q. 29, a. 1, ad 1.

¹⁶ Gilles Emery, O.P., “The Dignity of Being a Substance: Person, Subsistence, and Nature,” *Nova et Vetera* (English) 9, no. 4 (2011): 991–1001, at 995.

¹⁷ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 7, ad 3. Unless otherwise noted, quotations from *ST* are taken from

[SCG] that “body and soul are not two actually existing substances, but one actually existing substance is made from them.”¹⁸ Additionally, in asking the question of “whether the soul is man,” Aquinas affirms that “man is not a soul only, but something composed of soul and body.”¹⁹

But what sort of composite are we speaking of here? In what manner does it come about? St. Thomas explains that the human soul is the form of the body—“For that whereby primarily anything acts is a form of the thing to which the act is to be attributed”²⁰—and that by which the body lives is the soul. The soul, in fact, is the principle of all *bodily* operations. Aquinas clarifies: “For the soul is the primary principle of our nourishment, sensation, and local movement; and likewise of our understanding. Therefore this principle by which we primarily understand, whether it be called the intellect or the intellectual soul, is the form of the body.”²¹

Consequently, it is the soul that gives being to the composite. In *De principiis naturae*, Aquinas points out that there are two kinds of *esse*, essential/substantial (as in “man exists”) and accidental (“man is white”).²² What is in potency to each is a kind of matter (prime matter in the case of substantial being, and the subject in the case of accidental being.) The substantial form gives *esse* to prime matter (which has an incomplete being),²³ whereas the subject (which has complete being in itself) gives being to the accidental form, rather than vice versa. Therefore, there are two kinds of generation (with two corresponding kinds of corruption): (1) generation and corruption *simpliciter*, which “are only in the genus of substance,” and (2) generation and corruption *secundum quid*, which “are in all the other genera.”²⁴ Since death involves the separation of the

the translation of the Dominican Fathers of the English Province (New York: Benziger, 1947) as presented in the NovAntiqua Latin–English edition (Ypsilanti, MI: NovAntiqua, 2009–).

¹⁸ Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles* [SCG] II, ch. 69, n. 2. Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from SCG are taken from translation of the Dominican Fathers of the English Province (London: Aeterna, 2014).

¹⁹ ST I q. 75, a. 4, resp.

²⁰ ST I, q. 76, a.1, resp.

²¹ ST I, q. 76, a.1, resp.

²² St. Thomas Aquinas, *De principiis naturae*, no. 1: “Sed duplex est esse: scilicet esse essentialia rei, sive substantiale ut hominem esse, et hoc est esse simpliciter. Est autem aliud esse accidentale, ut hominem esse album, et hoc est esse aliquid” (trans. R. A. Kocourek, dhspriority.org/thomas/DePrincNaturae.htm; all further quotation will be from this source).

²³ Aquinas, *De principiis naturae*, no. 4: “Hence, simply speaking, the form gives existence to matter [*forma dat esse materiae*].”

²⁴ Aquinas, *De principiis naturae*, no. 7.

substantial form (i.e., the soul) from matter, the composite is corrupted *simpliciter*. Nevertheless, in the case of the human person, the soul (which has being of itself) is *not* corrupted, although it lacks the completeness due to its nature (which is to be the form of a body).²⁵

Death as a Substantial Corruption of the Composite

From what has been said, therefore, we can see that Toner's second point, that death is a substantial corruption of the composite, is undoubtedly true. So then, how can we say that the soul remains once it has separated from the body, and in what state does it remain? Is it something like Joe's old hat, which is laid aside in the corner until it is time to put it on again?

At this point, I would like to look, step by step, at Aquinas's explanations of the incorporeality, subsistence, incorruptibility, immortality, and (even when separated) individuality of the human soul. With regard to the incorporeality of the soul, St. Thomas points out:

It is indeed clear that by means of the intellect man can know the natures of all corporeal things. However, it is necessary that whatever can know some things must not have any of them in its own nature; because that which inheres in it naturally would impede the knowledge of other things. . . . Therefore, if the intellectual principle were to have in itself the nature of some body, it would be unable to know all bodies. Moreover, every body has some determinate nature. Therefore, it is impossible for the intellectual principle to be a body.²⁶

²⁵ See *ST I*, q. 76, a. 1. In the Supplement, it is stated, "For the soul, even after separation from the body, retains the being which accrues to it when in the body, and the body is made to share that being by the resurrection, since the *being of the body and the being of the soul in the body are not distinct from one another*, otherwise the union of soul and body would be accidental. Consequently there has been *no interruption in the substantial being of man*, as would make it impossible for the self-same man to return on account of an interruption in his being, as is the case with other things that are corrupted, the being of which is interrupted altogether, since their form remains not, and their matter remains under another being" (*ST Suppl.*, q. 79, a. 2, ad 1; emphasis added).

²⁶ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 2, resp.: "Manifestum est enim quod homo per intellectum cognoscere potest naturas omnium corporum. Quod autem potest cognoscere aliqua, oportet ut nihil eorum habeat in sua natura, quia illud quod inesset ei naturaliter impediret cognitionem aliorum; . . . Si igitur principium intellectuale haberet in se naturam alicuius corporis, non posset omnia corpora cognoscere. Omne autem corpus habet aliquam naturam determinatam. Impossibile est igitur quod princip-

In other words, the intellect is open to understanding many different kinds of corporeal objects and is not determined to one. It would not be able to transcend corporeal things, however, if it were itself corporeal.²⁷ Likewise, says Aquinas, it is “impossible for [the soul] to understand by means of a bodily organ; since the determinate nature of that organ would impede knowledge of all bodies,”²⁸ just as looking through colored glass determines the color of everything one sees. Consequently, the soul must be incorporeal, and because it is incorporeal and is an intellectual principle, the soul “has an operation *through itself*, in which the body does not communicate,” but “nothing . . . can operate *through itself*, except that which subsists *through itself*.”²⁹

An important aspect to this argument of subsistence *through itself* is explained by St. Thomas: “For nothing operates, except it be a *being in act*, thus, something operates, *according to the mode by which it is*.”³⁰ In this,

ium intellectuale sit corpus” (translation mine).

²⁷ It is important to note with Emery that there are *two senses of corporeity*. The first sense is that of “an accidental determination such as quantity” (“The Unity of Man,” 225), which is the sense Aquinas is denying here when he argues that the soul is not corporeal. However, Emery continues: “On a deeper level, corporeity can also be considered in terms of substantial determination of this corporeal being, that is, man: Here then, corporeity is that which makes the body to be a body, that which makes man corporeal. In this case, corporeity must be the body’s substantial form, that is, the principle of actuality of the body, from which derive the dimensions of extension” (225). Based on this explanation, therefore, Emery stresses: “It is on account of the soul that the human body is a human body, and specifically *on account of its substantial union with the soul*. . . . *Man’s corporeity is his soul*” (226). Emery explains that St. Thomas is following the Fourth Lateran Council, which teaches that “all will rise with their own bodies, which they now wear” (Constitution on the Catholic Faith [DH, no. 801]). But the only way to explain the identity of the earthly and resurrected body is by making the previously mentioned distinction of the two senses of corporeity. For Aquinas, says Emery: “At the deepest level, corporeity is the substantial form of man, since *it is from the soul that the human body has all its reality as body*. . . . Since the soul is by nature the form of the body, it is permanently ordered toward this body. The material and quantitative elements that constitute this body today constitute it only in virtue of the soul. In this way, the soul is defined in terms of its relationship to the body, and the body is defined by the soul. Thus the primary *raison d’être* of corporeal identity is found not in matter, but rather in the soul of the human person. *The identity of this subsistent soul sustains our hope in the resurrection*” (227; final emphasis added).

²⁸ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 2, resp.

²⁹ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 2, resp.: “. . . habet operationem per se, cui non communicat corpus. Nihil autem potest per se operari, nisi quod per se subsistit” (translation mine).

³⁰ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 2, resp. (translation mine). Interestingly, most English versions of the *Summa* leave the second half of the sentence untranslated. But see the Latin:

Aquinas shows that a thing operates insofar as it is in act, insofar as it has being. In other words, it can *act* only as it *is*. It is the soul that gives being to the composite,³¹ as noted above. Consequently, the fact that a soul can operate *per se* without the body indicates that it is not dependent on the body, but rather is subsistent through itself.

Someone might object at this point that the soul clearly needs the senses in order to understand, which it does by means of phantasms. It would seem, consequently, that the soul cannot act apart from the body. To this objection, Aquinas replies that, although it is true that the body is necessary for the intellect to act, this is “not as the organ by which such action is exercised, but by reason of the object; for the phantasm is compared to the intellect as color is to the sight.”³² He goes on to explain that this does not mean the soul is not subsistent, because if that were true, a *living* animal, as such, would be nonsubsistent, “since it requires external objects of the senses in order to perform its act of perception.”³³ However, the souls of *nonrational* animals are *not* subsistent: they do not continue to subsist once the animal dies. This is because of the above-mentioned principle, commonly referred to by the Scholastics as *operari sequitur esse* (“acting follows on being”), and the kind of act possible to one depends upon the kind of thing one is. The soul of a nonrational animal is not able to operate apart from the body (since the nonrational animal has only a sensitive, rather than intellectual, soul), and so is not subsistent.³⁴

This argument is also important with regard to our understanding of the condition of the separated soul, about which we will speak more later. As noted above, phantasms are necessary as objects by which the soul understands, but as Bonino points out, “cerebral activity is not the *cause* of thought.”³⁵ In other words, Aquinas believes that the soul is not dependent on the corporeal organ of the brain. Rather, the soul exercises a kind of

“Non enim est operari nisi *entis in actu*, unde eo modo aliquid operatur, *quo est*” (emphasis mine).

³¹ See *ST I*, q. 76, a. 1, ad 5: “The soul communicates that existence in which it subsists to the corporeal matter, out of which and the intellectual soul there results unity of existence; so that *the existence of the whole composite is also the existence of the soul*. . . . For this reason the human soul retains its own existence after the dissolution of the body.” See also *ST I*, q. 29, a. 2, ad 5, and q. 75, a. 5, ad 3.

³² *ST I*, q. 75, a. 2, ad 3: “. . . non sicut organum quo talis actio exerceatur, sed ratione obiecti, phantasma enim comparatur ad intellectum sicut color ad visum” (translation mine).

³³ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 2, ad 3.

³⁴ See *ST I*, q. 75, a. 3.

³⁵ Bonino, “L’âme séparée,” 73: “L’activité cérébrale n’est la cause de la pensée.”

autonomy with regard to its understanding. Therefore, Bonino notes, “this noetic autonomy of the human intellective soul at the level of acting is the sign of its ontological autonomy in virtue of which it subsists *post mortem*, despite the corruption of the composite.”³⁶

However, although the soul is subsistent, this does not mean it is a complete substance. It is still naturally part of the body–soul composite referred to as “man.” St. Thomas differentiates between a particular thing (*hoc aliquid*) that is subsistent and a particular thing (*hoc aliquid*) that is both subsistent “and is complete in a specific nature”:

The former sense excludes the inherence of an accident or of a material form; the latter excludes also the imperfection of a part, so that a hand can be called “this particular thing” [*hoc aliquid*] in the first sense, but not in the second. Therefore, as the human soul is a part of human nature, it can indeed be called “this particular thing” [*hoc aliquid*] in the first sense, as being something subsistent; but not in the second, for in this sense, what is composed of body and soul is said to be “this particular thing” [*hoc aliquid*].³⁷

From the fact that Aquinas lumps together the human soul and the hand as both subsisting in the first sense, it is evident that, although they are very different in other ways, the human soul and the hand have in common that they are *parts*. Yet the hand is obviously not incorruptible. Consequently, something more than simple subsistence in the first sense is required in order to be able to claim that the soul is in fact incorruptible.

A few articles later, St. Thomas notes that a thing can be corrupted in two ways: *per se* (i.e., through itself) or *per accidens* (accidentally, i.e., through something else). However, no substance can be generated or corrupted *per accidens* (through something else), because a thing is generated or corrupted in accordance with its *esse*. (Recall our discussion of substantial being above.) “Therefore, whatever has *esse per se* can only be generated or corrupted *per se*, whereas those things which do not subsist, such as accidents or material forms, are said to become and be corrupted through the generation and corruption of the composite things.”³⁸ On the

³⁶ Bonino, “L’âme séparée,” 73: “Cette autonomie noétique de l’âme intellectuelle humaine au plan de l’agir est le signe de son autonomie ontologique en vertu de laquelle elle subsiste *post mortem*, malgré la corruption du composé.”

³⁷ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 2, ad 1.

³⁸ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 6, resp.: “Unde quod per se habet esse, non potest generari vel corrumpi nisi per se, quae vero non subsistunt, ut accidentia et formae materiales,

contrary, from the fact that the human soul subsists *through itself* (i.e., *per se*), it could not be corrupted except through itself, which is impossible, since the soul is a form only, without any matter.

For it is clear that what belongs to a thing by virtue of itself is inseparable from it; but existence belongs to a form which is an act, by virtue of itself. Wherefore matter acquires actual existence as it acquires the form; while it is corrupted so far as the form is separated from it. But it is impossible for a form to be separated from itself; and therefore it is impossible for a subsistent form to cease to exist.³⁹

In other words, being (*esse*) belongs to the form (which is act) and comes to the composite through the form. Therefore, matter receives its being through the form, and so is corrupted when separated from the form. But the form that is subsistent cannot naturally be separated from its own act of being, and so is not corruptible.

In the *Disputed questions on the soul*, St. Thomas points out two additional reasons for saying that the soul is incorruptible. One is the fact that the intellect can understand things (which are corruptible in themselves) in a universal way, with the result that those things become incorruptible insofar as they are understood by the intellect. The second argument for the incorruptibility of the soul comes from the natural appetite:

Natural appetite [desire springing from the nature of man] cannot be frustrated. Now we observe in men the desire for perpetual existence. This desire is grounded in reason. For to exist [*esse*] being desirable in itself, an intelligent being who apprehends existence in the absolute sense, and not merely the here and now, must desire existence in the absolute sense and for all time. Hence it is clear that this desire is not vain, but that man, in virtue of his intellective soul, is incorruptible.⁴⁰

dicuntur fieri et corrumpi per generationem et corruptionem compositorum^p (translation mine).

³⁹ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 6, resp.

⁴⁰ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de anima* [*QDA*], a. 14, resp., trans. Patrick Rowan (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1949; and at dhspriori.org/thomas/QDde-Anima.htm). St. Thomas also states: "The thing that is properly corrupted is neither the form nor the matter nor the act of existing itself but the composite. Moreover, the body's act of existing is said to be corruptible inasmuch as the body by corrupting is deprived of the act of existing which it possessed in common with the soul; which act of existing remains in the subsisting soul" (*QDA*, a. 1, ad 14).

For Aquinas, since the soul is incorruptible, it simply follows that it is immortal. For example, he notes in *SCG*, “Now the corruption of the body does not cause the soul to cease to exist, for the latter is immortal, as we have proved above.”⁴¹ However, elsewhere, St. Thomas also explains that “a thing ordained to an eternal end must be capable of enduring forever. That is why the soul’s immortality can be proved from the eternity of intelligible truth.”⁴² Earlier in *SCG*, he offered another proof for the immortality of the soul:

The Philosopher thereupon adds: That alone is separate which truly is. This remark cannot apply to the agent intellect, since it alone is not separate, for he had already spoken of the possible intellect as being separate. Nor can that statement be understood to refer to the possible intellect, since Aristotle had already said the same thing concerning the agent intellect. It remains that the above remark applies to that which includes both intellects, namely, to the intellect in act, of which he was speaking; because that alone in our soul which belongs to the intellect in act is separate and uses no organ; I mean that part of the soul whereby we understand actually and which includes the possible and agent intellect. And that is why Aristotle goes on to say that this part of the soul alone is immortal and everlasting, as being independent of the body in virtue of its separateness.⁴³

In saying that “this part of the soul alone is immortal,” St. Thomas does not mean that the soul can be divided, which is impossible, since it is a form, but rather that it is the rational soul that is immortal, whereas the vegetative and sensitive powers do not actually remain in the soul, but only virtually,⁴⁴ or “in root,” and cannot be activated without the senses, which require corporeal organs.

Yet, one might ask how it is that, if the soul was created to be part of a

⁴¹ *SCG* II, ch. 86, no. 9 (referring to ch. 79, which is on the incorruptibility of the soul).

⁴² *SCG* II, ch. 84, no. 4.

⁴³ *SCG* II, ch. 78, no. 12.

⁴⁴ What Aquinas means by “in root” can be seen in the Supplement of *ST*: “The sensitive and other like powers do not remain in the separated soul except in a restricted sense, namely radically, in the same way as a result is in its principle: because there remains in the separated soul the ability to produce these powers if it should be reunited to the body; nor is it necessary for this ability to be anything in addition to the essence of the soul” (q. 70, a. 1, resp.)

composite as the form of the body, it does not lose its individuation once it has separated from the body. It would in fact appear that, if the soul, as form, is individuated by matter (i.e., the body), once it leaves the body, it would lose its individuation, and therefore would no longer subsist as this particular thing. On the other hand, if it were individuated in itself, either it would need to be a simple form, which is its own species, as in the case of the angels, or it would itself have to be composed of matter and form.

Aquinas answers this objection by explaining that, even though the soul has a relationship to the body, its act of being comes not from the body, but from God. For this reason, “the soul’s act of existing does not cease when the body corrupts, nor does the soul’s individuation cease when the body corrupts.”⁴⁵ He notes that this is because: “The act[s] of existing [*esse*] and individuation [*individuatō*] of a thing are always found together. For universals do not exist in reality inasmuch as they are universals, but only inasmuch as they are individuated.”⁴⁶ Consequently, since the soul has its own act of being, it also retains its individuation. In summary, then, we can say that the soul, which is the substantial form of the body, is incorporeal, subsistent, and incorruptible, and thereby immortal and individual, even when separated.

What It Means to Say That a Human Person Ceases to Exist at Death

This brings us to Toner’s third point. Is it true that human beings stop existing when they die? Yes, if you mean existing as composites of body and soul, but no, if you mean there is nothing *personal* left after death. The soul remains “personal” in the sense of retaining the individuality of the person (even to the point of being judged in place of the person), and as a subject of attribution, it continues to be the first principle of the act of existence and of the operations of the person. Toner stresses that “the soul which survives my death, is not me,”⁴⁷ reiterating Aquinas. Yet there is a danger that one may stop at this point and fail to clarify what it is that remains between death and the final resurrection and that the soul is not like the old hat we mentioned earlier.

Avoiding the danger of stopping there, St. Thomas calls the soul the “chief part” of man,⁴⁸ and Cardinal Cajetan does not hesitate to call the separated soul a “*semi-persona*, and not only a *semi-natura*,”⁴⁹ when

⁴⁵ *QDA*, a. 1, ad 2.

⁴⁶ *QDA*, a. 1, ad 2.

⁴⁷ Toner, “St. Thomas Aquinas on Death and the Separated Soul,” 593.

⁴⁸ *ST* III, q. 50, a. 4, ad 2.

⁴⁹ Thomas de Vio Cajetan, *Commentaria summa theologiae* III, q. 6, a. 3: “Imagin-

commenting on Aquinas's article regarding whether the soul of Christ was assumed to the Divine Person before his flesh. After noting St. Thomas' reply that it would not be fitting for Christ's soul to be created from the beginning and assumed later by the Word (which would either result in the corruption of its subsistence or mean that it was not united according to its subsistence), Cajetan goes on to say that "the Author is speaking here concerning the subsisting thing [i.e., the soul] just as if he were speaking of personhood [*personalitate*]:⁵⁰ because the separated soul differs from a person only by the fact that it is incomplete in its species; because it is not the species, but a part of the species."⁵¹

Cajetan then explains in a second note that, if the soul of Christ preexisted its being assumed by the Word, it would be corrupted, which could be understood in two ways: "First, as to the act of subsisting. . . . In another way, not only as to the act of subsisting, but as to that which underlies the act of subsisting."⁵² The subject of the act of subsisting would also be corrupted:

And thus it seems that this text should be understood in keeping with what has already been determined with respect to personhood [*personalitate*]. Indeed, it should be imagined that the separated soul is a semi-person, and not merely a semi-nature. For united to flesh it is a semi-nature, since it is the essential part of human nature. But it does not subsist through itself as such, but through the hypostasis, to which as soul, as the defining principle [*ratio*] of subsisting according to its proper genus, namely, the immaterial order, it conveys the act of being and subsisting. But as soon as it is separated

dum est enim quod anima separata est semi-persona, et non solum semi-natura" (Leonine ed. 11 [Rome: S. C. de Propaganda Fidei, 1903]). All the translations here of Cajetan are mine, with the help of Sr. Tamsin Geach, O.P., and Fr. Timothy Bellamah, O.P., a collaborator of the Leonine Commission.

- ⁵⁰ As Fr. Bellamah pointed out to me, the term that best expresses the concept "person" in an abstract form is "personhood," rather than "personality," which is really a concrete term used in the modern age "to designate the external (visible and audible) aspect of a person's being." However, it is clear from the context that Cajetan wants to speak of "person" in an abstract, universal way, for which the word "personhood" is a better fit.
- ⁵¹ Cajetan, *Commentaria* III, q. 6, a. 3. "Auctor loquitur hic de subsistentia tanquam si loqueretur de personalitate: quia anima separata differt a persona solum per hoc quod est incompletae speciei; quia non est species, sed pars speciei."
- ⁵² Cajetan, *Commentaria* III, q. 6, a. 3: "Primo, quoad actum subsistendi. . . . Alio modo, non solum quoad actum subsistendi, sed quoad id quod subiicitur actui subsistendi."

from the body, from this very fact by which it is constituted in separate being, it is constituted *in a certain totality and completeness*, so that it be that which subsists (inadequately, however, with respect to its being, in which even the body has been born, and [in which] the whole man subsists). For it has already been said that the separation gives a certain totality and completeness. And therefore, once separated, the soul is a semi-person, and as such is delimited by its own limit—though, while existing in the body, it was delimited by the limit of the whole man.⁵³

Cajetan seems to be saying that St. Thomas's point is that, just as the Word assuming a preexisting angel would corrupt the personhood of that angel, so also the Word assuming a preexisting soul would corrupt the terminus of that soul, "by which it is constituted in being that which it is: both of a semi-person and of a subsisting thing."⁵⁴ However, if the Word assumed a soul that was not pre-existing, "only then would it be assumed and united as a semi-nature."⁵⁵ This view of the soul as a semi-person would seem to accord well with Aquinas's answer to an objection that states that "each man is his intellect,"⁵⁶ to which St. Thomas replies: "Man is said to be his own intellect, not because the intellect is the entire man, but because the intellect is the chief part of man, in which man's whole disposition lies virtually; just as the ruler of the city may be called the whole city, since its entire disposal is vested in him."⁵⁷

⁵³ Cajetan, *Commentaria* III, q. 6, a. 3: "Et hoc modo intelligendus videtur hic textus, conformiter ad praedeterminata de personalitate. Imaginandum est enim quod anima separata est semi-persona, et non solum semi-natura. Nam unita carni est semi-natura, cum sit pars essentialis humanae naturae: sed non subsistit per seipsam ut quod, sed per hypostasim, cui ut anima, ut ratio subsistendi ex proprio genere, scilicet immateriali ordine, defert actum essendi et subsistendi. Sed statim ut separata est a corpore, ex hoc ipso quo constituitur in esse separato, constituitur in *quadam totalitate et completionem*, ut scilicet sit quod subsistit (inadequate tamen ad suum esse, in quo natum est etiam corpus, et totus homo subsistere): iam enim dictum est quod separatio dat quandam totalitatem et completionem. Et ideo statim separata anima est semi-persona, ac per hoc proprio termino terminatur: quae, in corpore existens, terminabatur termino totius hominis" (emphasis added).

⁵⁴ Cajetan, *Commentaria* III, q. 6, a. 3: "... qua constituitur in esse quod est, et semi-personae et subsistentis."

⁵⁵ Cajetan, *Commentaria* III, q. 6, a. 3: "... tunc solum ut semi-natura assumitur et unitur."

⁵⁶ *ST* III, q. 50, a. 4, obj. 2.

⁵⁷ *ST* III, q. 50, a. 4, ad 2.

In other words, as Steven A. Long points out, even though the soul is not the person as such, it “is the noblest and most formal subsistent principle, root of the noblest operations of the ‘I.’”⁵⁸ In addition, as shall be explained below, the soul continues to understand, continues to remember (with its intellectual memory), and continues to love (as a simple act of willing), even after it is separated from the body. While it can no longer perform the operations proper to its sensitive powers (which, although originating in the soul, belong to the composite as such), it is still able to perform other operations that do not require the body:

The proposition advanced, . . . namely, that no operation can remain in the soul when separated from the body, we declare to be false, in view of the fact that those operations do remain which are not exercised through organs. Such are the operations of understanding and willing. Those operations, however, do not endure which are carried out by means of bodily organs, and of such a kind are the operations of the nutritive and sensitive powers.⁵⁹

In other words, the separated soul continues to act, though in a way much different from the way it did when it was in the body. We will now discuss more in detail some of its operations.

The Understanding of the Separated Soul

In speaking of the knowledge of the separated soul, Aquinas presents the difficulty in the following way. In the Platonist understanding of the soul as being only accidentally tied to the body (which would mean that death would be a release for the soul from the impediment of the body, such that it would, as Aquinas states in *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, resp., “at once return to its own nature, and would understand intelligible things simply, without turning to the phantasms”), it would appear that there is no real difficulty with explaining how the separated soul understands: it would understand in a way similar to the angels. However, that view of the soul would seem to require all who held it to also hold that “the union of soul and body would not be for the soul’s good, for evidently it would understand worse in the body than out of it; but for the good of the body, which would be unreasonable, since matter exists on account of the form, and not the form for the sake of the matter.”⁶⁰

⁵⁸ I thank Steven A. Long, of Ave Maria University, for his comments.

⁵⁹ *SCG II*, ch. 81, no. 11.

⁶⁰ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, resp.

St. Thomas continues with the dilemma: “But if we admit that the nature of the soul requires it to understand by turning to phantasms, it will seem, since death does not change its nature, that it can then naturally understand nothing; as the phantasms are wanting to which it may turn.”⁶¹ In short, then, if we do not wish to hold that the soul is only accidentally tied to the body, it would appear that, once the composite is corrupted, the soul is no longer able to understand anything, since the senses and imagination, which belong to the sensitive part of the soul, make use of corporeal organs to produce the phantasms the soul uses to understand. Nevertheless, Aquinas resolves this problem by returning once again to the axiom of *operari sequitur esse*:

To solve this difficulty, we must consider that nothing acts except so far as it is actual, *the mode of action in every agent follows from its mode of existence* [*modus operandi uniuscuiusque rei sequitur modum essendi ipsius*]. Now the soul has one mode of being when in the body, and another when apart from it, its nature remaining always the same; but this does not mean its union with the body is an accidental thing, for, on the contrary, such union belongs to its very nature. . . . The soul, therefore, when united to the body, consistently with that mode of existence, has a mode of understanding, by turning to corporeal phantasms, which are in corporeal organs; but when it is separated from the body, it has a mode of understanding, by turning to simply intelligible objects, as is proper to other separate substances.⁶²

One might ask here why it is not better, then, for the soul to simply remain separated from the body, as the Platonists would have it, rather than be reunited to the body in the final resurrection. Aquinas explains that this mode of understanding (i.e., turning directly to intelligible objects, rather than to corporeal phantasms) is not really suited to the nature of the soul: “While it is true that it is nobler in itself to understand by turning to something higher than to understand by turning to phantasms, nevertheless such a mode of understanding was not so perfect as regards what was possible to the soul.”⁶³ The reason for this, he says, is that every separated intellectual substance understands by means of the divine light, and the further away one is from the First Principle, “the

⁶¹ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, resp.

⁶² *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, resp. (emphasis added).

⁶³ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, resp.

more this light is divided and diversified,⁶⁴ and so the greater the number and the less universal are the species that can be possessed by the intellect. The result is that the degree of comprehension is also less. “If, therefore,” he adds, “the inferior substances received species in the same degree of universality as the superior substances, since they are not so strong in understanding, the knowledge which they would derive through them would be imperfect, and of a general and confused nature.”⁶⁵

Aquinas likens this to human understanding in this life, where more universal concepts are less easily understood by those of a “weaker intellect,” who need these things explained to them in greater detail. The same is true of the human soul, which is the lowest of the intellectual substances. If it were meant to understand in the same way as the angels, it could possess only a more confused and general knowledge, rather than perfect. St. Thomas continues:

Therefore to make it possible for human souls to possess perfect and proper knowledge, they were so made that their nature required them to be joined to bodies, and thus to receive the proper and adequate knowledge of sensible things from the sensible things themselves; thus we see in the case of uneducated men that they have to be taught by sensible examples.

It is clear then that it was for the soul’s good that it was united to a body, and that it understands by turning to the phantasms. Nevertheless it is possible for it to exist apart from the body, and also to understand in another way.⁶⁶

Consequently, it is through a certain participation in the species given by means of the divine light that the separated soul is able to understand, although not in a perfect way, but in a way that is rather “confused and general,” since the soul was created to naturally turn to phantasms for its understanding. Yet Aquinas insists that this way of knowledge (i.e., turning directly to the species given through the divine light) is not in itself unnatural, “for God is the author of the influx both of the light of grace and of the light of nature [i.e., the light of reason].”⁶⁷ These new real-

⁶⁴ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, resp.

⁶⁵ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, resp.

⁶⁶ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, resp.

⁶⁷ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, ad 3. Without getting into the debate of whether or not the state itself of the separated soul can properly be called unnatural, I will simply cite two authors on this point. First, Emery states: “In a certain way, the immortality of the

ities, however, although they have God for their cause, are known by the separated soul “directly through its essence.”⁶⁸ In other words, as Bonino explains, “the separated substance knows other realities by way of introspection, that is to say, in knowing itself.”⁶⁹ The separated soul knows in a similar way, although more imperfectly than the angel.

The Intellectual Memory

But will the soul continue to remember the things it knew in this life? Yes. Aquinas states that the habit of knowledge acquired in this life remains in the separated soul, not with regard to the sensitive powers, but with regard to the intellect itself:

Because, as it is said in the book, *On the Length and Shortness of Life* [Aristotle], some form may be corrupted in two ways; in one way, *per se*, when it is corrupted by its contrary, as heat, by cold; and another way, *per accidens*, namely, through the corruption of its subject. Now it is clear that knowledge which is in the human intellect cannot be corrupted through corruption of the subject, since the intellect is incorruptible. . . . Similarly, neither can the intelligible species which are in the passive intellect be corrupted by their contrary, because nothing is contrary to intelligible *intentions*,

soul implies its union with the body, since a perpetual existence in a state ‘contrary to nature’ is hardly thinkable. The immortality of the soul must be considered in terms of its relation to the resurrection” (“The Unity of Man,” 231). However, Bonino argues that, although Aquinas speaks of the state of the separated soul as unnatural when emphasizing the resurrection of the body, “the expression *praeter naturam* [preternatural] applied to the state of the separated soul and its knowledge is found in St. Thomas [L’expression *praeter naturam* appliquée au statut de l’âme séparée et de sa connaissance se trouve chez Thomas]” (“L’âme séparée,” 79n23, citing *ST I*, q. 89, a. 1, and q. 104, a. 6–7, and *In II sent.*, d. 18, q. 1, a. 3). The use of “preternatural,” for Aquinas, would indicate a state that is neither strictly speaking against nature nor completely natural, but rather something above its nature, “modes of being and knowing which transcend its connatural mode of being and of knowing” (“L’âme séparée,” 87: “des modes d’être et de connaître qui transcendent son mode connatural d’être et de connaître”). Bonino explains that, “from this perspective, human nature, without ever losing its essence or formal identity, enjoys a certain plasticity” (87: “Dans cette perspective, la nature humaine, sans jamais perdre son essence ou identité formelle, jouit d’une certaine plasticité”).

⁶⁸ Bonino, “L’âme séparée,” 84. “. . . directement par son essence.”

⁶⁹ Bonino, “L’âme séparée,” 84: “La substance séparée connaît les autres réalités par manière d’introspection, c’est-à-dire en se connaissant elle-même.”

and especially with regard to the simple intelligence by which is understood *that which is*.⁷⁰

St. Thomas goes on to explain that, although knowledge can be corrupted directly by forgetfulness or deception, neither of these can take place in the separated soul.⁷¹ Therefore, the soul retains its habit of knowledge insofar as this habit of knowledge is in the intellect. But this applies only to the intelligible species the soul knew in this life, not to sensitive memory, which relies on phantasms. Therefore, as Bonino puts it, “the separated soul continues to know by means of the ideas acquired during the course of this life and conserved in the intellectual memory,”⁷² whereas new knowledge, as noted above, is received by the soul in a way analogous to the angels, by means of intelligible species infused by God.

The Will in the Soul

As has been mentioned, although all the powers have the soul as their principle, some powers inhere in the soul alone⁷³ (as the intellect and will), whereas others have the whole composite for their subject (the sensitive and nutritive powers). Once the composite is corrupted, only the intellect and will remain (the intellectual memory also remains in the mind, but not

⁷⁰ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 5, resp.: “Quia, ut dicitur in libro de longitudine et brevitate vitae, dupliciter corrumpitur aliqua forma, uno modo, per se, quando corrumpitur a suo contrario, ut calidum a frigido; alio modo, per accidens, scilicet per corruptionem subiecti. Manifestum est autem quod per corruptionem subiecti, scientia quae est in intellectu humano, corrumpi non potest, cum intellectus sit incorruptibilis. . . . Similiter etiam nec per contrarium corrumpi possunt species intelligibiles quae sunt in intellectu possibili, quia intentioni intelligibili nihil est contrarium; et praecipue quantum ad simplicem intelligentiam, qua intelligitur quod quid est” (translation mine; emphasis mine).

⁷¹ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 5, resp. Cf. *SCG II*, ch. 81, no. 14: “Now, recollection, being an act performed through a bodily organ, . . . cannot remain in the soul after the body, unless recollection be taken equivocally for the understanding of things which one knew before. For there must be present in the separate soul even the things that it knew in this life, since the intelligible species are received into the possible intellect inexpugnably.”

⁷² Bonino, “L’âme séparée,” 83 : “L’âme séparée continue de connaître au moyen des idées acquises au cours de cette vie et conservées dans la mémoire intellectuelle.”

⁷³ Although Aquinas points out that “we may therefore say that the soul understands, as the eye sees; but it is more correct to say that man understands through the soul” (*ST I*, q. 75, a. 2, ad 2). When the soul is united to the body, it is really the composite that understands or wills. However, these acts are performed without a direct dependence on the body, as shown above.

the sensitive memory, as we have said⁷⁴):

All the powers of the soul belong to the soul alone as their *principle*. But some powers belong to the soul alone as their *subject*; as the intelligence and the will. These powers must remain in the soul, after the destruction of the body. But other powers are subjected in the composite; as all the powers of the sensitive and nutritive parts. Now accidents cannot remain after the destruction of the subject. Wherefore, the composite being destroyed, such powers do not remain actually; but they remain virtually in the soul, as in their principle or root.⁷⁵

One of the objections in the article then asks how it is that, *without the body*, the blessed soul can experience joy and the condemned soul suffer sorrow? Interestingly enough, Aquinas replies, “in the separate soul, sorrow and joy are not in the sensitive, but in the intellectual appetite, as in the angels.”⁷⁶ He explains further in *SCG* that, with regard to operations of the soul such as loving and rejoicing, a distinction must be made between passions of the soul (which are acts of the sensitive appetite) and the simple act of willing:

Sometimes [these types of operations] are taken for passions of the soul: and thus they are acts of the sensible appetite in respect of the irascible and the concupiscible faculties, together with a certain bodily transmutation. And thus they cannot remain in the soul after death. . . . But sometimes they are taken for a simple act of the will, that is without any passion. Wherefore Aristotle says in the seventh book of *Ethics* that God rejoices by one simple operation; and in the tenth book that in the contemplation of wisdom there is wonderful pleasure; and in the eighth book, he distinguishes the love of friendship from the love that is a passion. Now since the will is a power that uses no organ, as neither does the intellect, it is clear that these things in so far as they are acts of the will, remain in the separated soul.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ See *ST I*, q. 77, a. 8, ad 4: “The recollection spoken of there is to be taken in the same way as Augustine (*De Trin.* x, 11; xiv, 7) places memory in the mind; not as a part of the sensitive soul.”

⁷⁵ *ST I*, q. 77, a. 8, resp. (emphasis mine).

⁷⁶ *ST I*, q. 77, a. 8, ad 5.

⁷⁷ *SCG II*, ch. 81, no. 15.

It is important to note, however, that the soul, upon being separated from the body, immediately has its will fixed either in good or in evil. Unlike in this life, where the will is changeable, upon death, the will can no longer change from good to evil or from evil to good:

So long as the soul is united to the body, it is in a changeable state; but not after its separation from the body. For a disposition of the soul is accidentally [*per accidens*] subject to change in accordance with some change in the body: because, since the body serves the soul in the soul's proper operations, it is natural that while the soul is in the body, it should be perfected by being moved to perfection. Hence, when it departs from the body, it will no longer be in a state of mobility towards the end, but of quiescence in the end. Consequently the will, as regards the desire for the ultimate end, will be immovable.⁷⁸

In other words, whatever ultimate end the soul had chosen at the moment of death, whether it be God or something else, is the ultimate end upon which the will of the soul is fixed for all eternity, just as the angels, "as soon as they adhere to an end, due or undue, . . . abide therein immovably."⁷⁹ Aquinas also warns that the adherence of the will to the object chosen as its ultimate end does not alter even once the soul has been reunited to the body at the resurrection. "On the contrary," he states, "it will remain thus, because . . . at the resurrection, the body will be disposed according to the exigencies of the soul, and the soul will not be influenced by the body, but will remain unchangeable."⁸⁰ That is, it will remain unchangeable with regard to the ultimate end, although, according to Aquinas, there will still be a kind of changeability in the soul with regard to the desire of lesser things that are ordered to whichever ultimate end the soul had previously chosen. "Therefore," he notes, "the will of the separated soul is not changeable from good to evil, although it is changeable from the desire for one thing to the desire for another, provided the order to the [same] ultimate end be observed."⁸¹

Consequently, adds St. Thomas, the will of the separated soul remains free. He declares, "it is now apparent that such immutability is not in

⁷⁸ SCG IV, ch. 95, no. 5.

⁷⁹ SCG IV, ch. 95, no. 8.

⁸⁰ SCG IV, ch. 95, no. 9.

⁸¹ SCG IV, ch. 95, no. 6.

conflict with the power of free will whose act it is to choose, for choice is of the things for the end; choice is not of the ultimate end.”⁸²

On the Particular Judgment of the Soul

According to Aquinas (and the teaching of the Catholic Church), the soul, upon its separation from the body, will be immediately judged by God and will receive “the recompense he has deserved.”⁸³ In other words, it does not have to wait until it is rejoined to the body to be judged. Rather, as noted above, the souls of the just “immediately after death and, in the case of those who need purification, after the purification . . . already before they take up their bodies again and before the general judgment, have been, are, and will be with Christ in heaven . . . [and] enjoy the divine essence [by means of the Beatific Vision].”⁸⁴ On the other hand, the souls of the wicked “go down into hell immediately after death and there suffer the pain of hell.”⁸⁵

One might think it strange, however, that the separated soul is immediately judged, since one would normally think of judgment as being a judgment of the *person*.⁸⁶ Therefore, it is evident that the soul is so personal that it “stands in” or “takes the place of” the person who is judged in the particular judgment. Nevertheless, there is a certain fittingness to the fact that the soul is judged even before the resurrection, as Aquinas explains:

As soon as the soul is separated from the body, it is made capable of the divine vision, which it could not arrive at while it was united to a corruptible body. And moreover, man’s ultimate happiness, which is the reward of virtue, . . . consists in the vision of God. Now there is

⁸² SCG IV, ch. 95, no. 7.

⁸³ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium of Theology* I [Faith], ch. 242: “. . . retribuitur quantum ad animam secundum quod meruit” (trans. Cyril Vollert [St. Louis: B. Herder, 1947; dhspriority.org/thomas/Compendium.htm]).

⁸⁴ Benedict XII, *Benedictus Deus* (DH, no. 1000).

⁸⁵ Benedict XII, *Benedictus Deus* (DH, no. 1002).

⁸⁶ The two judgments are explained in this way: “Each man is both an individual person and a part of the whole human race: wherefore a twofold judgment is due to him. One, the particular judgment, is that to which he will be subjected after death, when he will receive according as he hath done in the body [see 2 Cor. 5:10], not indeed entirely but only in part since he will receive not in the body but only in the soul. The other judgment will be passed on him as a part of the human race: thus a man is said to be judged according to human justice, even when judgment is pronounced on the community of which he is a part. Hence at the general judgment of the whole human race by the general separation of the good from the wicked, it follows that each one will be judged” (*ST* Suppl., q. 88, a. 1, ad 1).

no reason why a punishment or reward should be deferred, after the moment in which the soul can be a participant [in these]. Therefore, as soon as the soul is separated from the body, it receives its punishment or reward, for those things which it did in the body.⁸⁷

St. Thomas goes on to clarify further why it is appropriate for the soul to be judged first:

The order in punishment and reward should correspond to the order in fault and merit. Now merit and fault are not ascribed to the body except through the soul: since nothing is deserving of praise or blame, except in so far as it is voluntary. Consequently both reward and punishment are awarded to the body through the soul: but it does not belong to souls on account of the body. Hence there is no reason why the punishment or reward of souls should await the resumption of their bodies: indeed it would seem more fitting that souls, in which there was first fault or merit, should also be first in being punished or rewarded.⁸⁸

However, with regard to the souls of the just who are not yet completely purified in this life, Aquinas notes that they will not immediately receive their reward, which consists in the Beatific Vision (the vision of God himself), until after their purification is complete:

The rational creature cannot be raised to that vision, unless it be wholly purified. . . . Now the soul is defiled by sin, whereby it adheres inordinately to things beneath it: and in this life it is cleansed from this defilement by Penance and the other sacraments. . . . Sometimes, however, it happens that this cleansing is not entirely completed in this life, but the soul still owes a debt of punishment, through either neglect, or occupations, or because it has been surprised by death. Nevertheless, it does not for this reason deserve to be wholly deprived of its reward, since these things may happen

⁸⁷ SCG IV, ch. 91, no. 2: “Ex hoc enim quod anima separatur a corpore, fit capax visionis divinae, ad quam, dum esset coniuncta corruptibili corpori, pervenire non poterat. In visione autem Dei ultima hominis beatitudo consistit, quae est *virtutis praemium*.... Nulla autem ratio esset quare differretur poena et praemium, ex quo utriusque anima particeps esse potest. Statim igitur cum anima separatur a corpore, praemium vel poenam recipit *pro his quae in corpore gessit* [cf. II Cor. V, 10]” (translation mine; Latin from the Leonine edition).

⁸⁸ SCG IV, ch. 91, no. 4 (translation modified).

without mortal sin, which alone takes away charity, to which the reward of eternal life is due. . . . Consequently, after this life, the soul will need to be cleansed before it can receive its final reward. Now this cleansing [*purgatio*] is effected by means of punishment. . . . Therefore, the souls of the just, who have something that could have been cleansed in this world, are debarred from receiving their reward, until they have suffered a purgatorial punishment: and this is why we hold that there is a Purgatory.⁸⁹

It is clear, then, that the separated soul is so *personal* that it is even held accountable for the sins of the *person*, and made to atone for whatever it did not atone for while still in the body before it is allowed to participate in the Beatific Vision.

The Separated Souls of the Damned

The greatest suffering of the souls of the wicked is, of course, the loss of the Beatific Vision, the forfeiting of their enjoyment of God forever. This is known as the pain of loss. However, the souls of the wicked will also receive the punishment known as the pain of sense. With regard to this, it is interesting to note that, according to Aquinas, the condemned separated soul, even before being reunited to its body, already suffers the corporeal fire of hell (which the devils also suffer). In explaining how this is possible, St. Thomas points out that there are two kinds of suffering in an intellectual being. The first is by being directly acted upon in a way that effects change and corruption. This, however, is impossible for the soul (as well as for the evil spirits), and so it does not suffer sensible pain from the fire in this manner. Aquinas continues:

However, the soul can suffer by corporeal fire according to the second kind of suffering, *inasmuch as it is hindered from its incli-*

⁸⁹ SCG IV, ch. 91, no. 6. The Supplement of *ST* offers an interesting explanation of the separate purgation of the body versus the soul: "The soul is compared to the body, not only as a worker to the instrument with which he works, but also as form to matter: wherefore the work belongs to the composite and not to the soul alone, as the Philosopher shows (*De anima* i, 4). And since to the worker is due the reward of the work, it behooves man himself, who is composed of soul and body, to receive the reward of his work. Now as venial offenses are called sins as being dispositions to sin, and not as having simply and perfectly the character of sin, so the punishment which is awarded to them in purgatory is not a retribution simply, but rather a cleansing, which is *wrought separately in the body, by death and by its being reduced to ashes, and in the soul by the fire of purgatory*" (*ST* Suppl., q. 75, a. 1, ad 3).

nation or volition by fire of this kind. . . . For the soul and any incorporeal substance, inasmuch as this belongs to it by nature, is not physically confined in any place, but transcends the whole corporeal order. Consequently it is contrary to its nature and to its natural appetite for it to be fettered to anything and be confined in a place by some necessity; and I maintain that this is the case except inasmuch as the soul is united to the body whose natural form it is, and in which there follows some perfection.⁹⁰

Therefore, the separated soul suffers from the pain of sense, as well as from the pain of loss, inasmuch as it is weighed down by the corporeal fire. And, in case anyone should scoff at the possibility of a spiritual substance being hindered by a corporeal one, Aquinas quotes St. Augustine:

If men's souls, having been created incorporeal, are now in this life incarnate in bodily members, and shall one day be bound thereto forever, then why cannot we truly say, though you may marvel at it, that even incorporeal spirits may be afflicted by corporeal fire? Therefore these spirits, even though incorporeal, shall dwell in tormenting corporeal fires . . . and, instead of giving life to these fires, they shall receive punishment from them.⁹¹

Aquinas notes that this corporeal fire acts on the soul as an instrument of divine justice, by means of divine power. The fire afflicts the condemned soul with great interior sadness. St. Thomas explains that this sadness is "because the soul, which was born to be united to God through possession, meditates on the fact that it occupies a place below the lowest things in existence."⁹² In summary, then, "the greatest affliction of the damned will be caused by the fact that they are separated from God; secondly, by the fact that they are situated below corporeal things, and in the lowest and meanest place."⁹³

The Happiness of the Souls of the Just

In speaking of the invisible mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit to all those who are in grace, Aquinas points out that this mission continues to

⁹⁰ Aquinas, *QDA*, a. 21, resp. (emphasis mine).

⁹¹ St. Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 21.10, as found in Aquinas, *QDA*, a. 21, resp.

⁹² *QDA*, a. 21, resp.

⁹³ *QDA*, a. 21, resp.

be directed toward the blessed “at the very beginning of their beatitude.”⁹⁴ He adds: “The invisible mission is made to them subsequently, not by ‘intensity’ of grace, but by the *further revelation of mysteries*; which goes on till the day of judgment. Such an increase is by the ‘extension’ of grace, because it extends to a greater number of objects.”⁹⁵

In this we see that the separated soul is able to understand and enjoy further revelation even before being united again to the body up until the final judgment. In fact, Aquinas explains elsewhere that the separated soul already enjoys the perfect happiness of the Beatific Vision even before the resurrection of the body:

But as to perfect Happiness, which consists in the vision of God, some have maintained that it is not possible to the soul separated from the body; and have said that the souls of saints, when separated from their bodies, do not attain to that Happiness until the Day of Judgment, when they will receive their bodies back again. And this is shown to be false, both by *authority* and by *reason*.⁹⁶

With regard to the argument from authority, St. Thomas points to St. Paul’s statement that, “while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord, for we walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Cor 5:6), and he explains that “the souls of the saints, separated from their bodies, are in God’s presence . . . whence it is evident that the souls of the saints, separated from their bodies, ‘walk by sight,’ seeing the Essence of God, wherein is true Happiness.”⁹⁷

As for the argument from reason that he mentions, St. Thomas again points out the fact that the intellect is not dependent on the body for its operation, except with regard to the forming of phantasms, which are unnecessary for the Beatific Vision, in which the soul contemplates the divine essence. “Consequently,” he says, “without the body the soul can be happy.”⁹⁸ However, the question remains as to whether the separated soul’s happiness constitutes *human* happiness. Joseph Trabbic thinks we can designate it only *loosely* as human happiness: “Indeed, the intellect is perfected in such a state and human happiness consists primarily in the perfection of the intellect. But if, as Aquinas believes, neither the body by

⁹⁴ ST I, q. 43, a. 6, ad 3.

⁹⁵ ST I, q. 43, a. 6, ad 3.

⁹⁶ ST I-II, q. 4, a. 5, resp. (emphasis mine).

⁹⁷ ST I-II, q. 4, a. 5, resp.

⁹⁸ ST I-II, q. 4, a. 5, resp.

itself nor the soul by itself is a human person, then *true happiness* cannot be had by a disembodied but perfected human intellect.⁹⁹

Two points must be made in reply to this objection. First, although the mode of being of the soul has changed, as mentioned above, from a mode of being united to the body to the mode of being separated from the body, the soul nevertheless remains “human” in its *nature* (as it is the *soul* that causes the composite to *be human*, since the form gives the species, according to Aquinas),¹⁰⁰ although it is not a *person* in the metaphysical sense mentioned above. (That is, it is not a *complete, individual, rational substance*, a composite of body and rational soul with its own act of being.) In fact, if the soul were no longer “human” in its nature, it would have to have been changed into some other species at death, which is absurd.¹⁰¹ Therefore, one can and should say that the happiness of the separated soul *is human happiness*.

The second point regards the meaning of “true happiness.” If “true happiness” means “essential” happiness, then the soul already experiences it even prior to the resurrection of the body. St. Thomas explains

⁹⁹ Trabbic, “The Human Body and Human Happiness in Aquinas’s *Summa Theologiae*,” 560 (emphasis added).

¹⁰⁰ See *ST I*, q. 76, a. 1, resp. In this article, Aquinas explains: “The nature of each thing is shown by its operation. Now the proper operation of man as man is to understand; . . . Whence Aristotle concludes (*Ethic. x, 7*) that the ultimate happiness of man must consist in this operation as properly belonging to him. Man must therefore derive his species from that which is the principle of this operation. But the species of anything is derived from its form. It follows therefore that the intellectual principle is the proper form of man.” But the intellectual principle to which St. Thomas refers is the rational soul. Therefore, it is the soul that makes the composite human in its nature. However, by saying that the soul remains human at death, I do *not* mean to imply that *only* the soul belongs to the human species, something that Aquinas clearly denies: “Some held that the form alone belongs to the species; while matter is part of the individual, and not the species. This cannot be true; for to the nature of the species belongs what the definition signifies; and in natural things the definition does not signify the form only, but the form and the matter” (*ST I*, q. 75, a. 4, resp.) However, just as the soul, although individuated by matter, retains its individuality at death, together with its act of being, I contend that the soul also retains its humanity, although it is not a complete substance, since the soul is meant to be the form of a body, and therefore is a part. For this reason, although Aquinas declares that “whatever subsists in human nature is a person” (*ST III*, q. 16, a. 12, resp. and ad 1), one could still argue that the soul is not a person, since it is not complete in its nature.

¹⁰¹ Bonino points out that, “with death, the human soul does not change [its] nature, but it changes [its] state, [its] mode of being” (“L’âme séparée,” 76: “Avec la mort, l’âme humaine ne change pas de nature mais elle change d’état, de mode d’être”).

that “something may belong to a thing’s perfection in two ways”: first, as constituting its essence; second, as “necessary to the perfection of the thing which *pertains to the good of its being*.”¹⁰² The Angelic Doctor continues:

Wherefore though the body does not belong in the first way to the perfection of *human* happiness [*ad perfectionem beatitudinis humanae*; to the *essence* of human happiness], yet it does in the second way. For since operation depends on a thing’s nature, the more perfect is the soul in its nature, the more perfectly it has its proper operation, wherein its happiness consists.¹⁰³

Notice that Aquinas says here that the body does not belong to the essence of the perfection of *human* happiness (*beatitudinis humanae*). Therefore, although the *essence* of the soul’s happiness does not require the body, the fact that the soul is not yet complete in its nature (as the form of the composite) indicates that it still lacks some degree of perfection, and therefore lacks happiness *secundum quid*. Aquinas further expounds on how the happiness of the soul is affected by the absence of the body in his reply to the fourth objection:

One thing is hindered by another in two ways. First, by way of opposition; thus cold hinders the action of heat: and such a hindrance to operation is repugnant to Happiness. Secondly, by way of some kind of defect, because, to wit, that which is hindered has not all that is necessary to make it perfect in every way: and such a hindrance to operation is not incompatible with Happiness, but *prevents it from being perfect in every way*. And thus it is that separation from the body is said to hold the soul back from tending with all its might to the vision of the Divine Essence. For the soul desires to enjoy God in such a way that the enjoyment also may overflow into the body, as far as possible. And therefore, as long as it enjoys God, without the fellowship of the body, its appetite is at rest in that which it has, in such a way, that it would still wish the body to attain to its share.¹⁰⁴

However, Aquinas is quick to add that “the desire of the separated soul is entirely at rest, as regards *the thing desired* [i.e., it is completely satisfied

¹⁰² *ST* I-II, q. 4, a. 5, resp.: “. . . requiritur ad perfectionem rei quod pertinet ad bene esse eius” (translation mine).

¹⁰³ *ST* I-II, q. 4, a. 5, resp. (emphasis added).

¹⁰⁴ *ST* I-II, q. 4, a. 5, ad 4 (emphasis added).

by God himself], . . . but it is not wholly at rest, as regards the *desirer*, since it does not possess that good in every way that it would wish to possess it [i.e., it does not yet possess the fullness of its nature until it is reunited to the body].¹⁰⁵ For this reason, says Aquinas, “after the body has been resumed, Happiness increases *not in intensity, but in extent*.”¹⁰⁶ Consequently, although there seems to be little doubt that the soul can be truly happy *simpliciter* even apart from the body, it is still apparent, from what we have said, that the soul without the body is incomplete in its specific nature (which is to be the form of a body), and so, lacking this perfection, thereby lacks some happiness *secundum quid*.

What Is a Person?

It would appear from the debate regarding whether or not the soul is a person that there are at least two equivocal notions of “person” at play here. The first notion is the objective, metaphysical view, the one that is clearly indicated by Aquinas in citing Boethius’s well-known definition of person as an “individual substance of a rational nature.”¹⁰⁷ The second view, however, is one of the modern notions of person¹⁰⁸ as a sort of reified center of consciousness, which I would like to call the subjective, “existential” view. St. Thomas’s understanding of “person” is obviously that of the objective, metaphysical sense, which presumes that the individual substance be complete, and not only a part.

Emery points out that Aquinas makes a distinction “between the *common* notion of person, and the *special* notion that applies distinctly to God and to humans.”¹⁰⁹ With respect to the common notion, there is the Boethian definition of person mentioned above, which, Emery notes, “is applied by analogy to the divine Three, to angels, and to human beings.”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ *ST I-II*, q. 4, a. 5, ad 5 (emphasis added).

¹⁰⁶ *ST I-II*, q. 4, a. 5, ad 5: “. . . corpore resumpto, beatitudo crescit non intensive, sed extensive” (emphasis mine).

¹⁰⁷ *ST I*, q. 29, a. 1, ad 1.

¹⁰⁸ Emery points out that there are “various conceptions that put the principal accent on the subjective aspects of the person, either in terms of thought (a person is a subject who thinks and who has self-consciousness), or in terms of moral autonomy and freedom (to be a person is to be able to dispose freely of oneself and to be autonomous in one’s action), or in terms of relations (to be a person is then defined by his or her insertion into the network of social relationships, or the person is understood as being constituted by the otherness of other persons), . . . or in terms of forming projects, or again in terms of the capacity to enjoy something, and so on” (“The Dignity of Being a Substance,” 993).

¹⁰⁹ Emery, “The Dignity of Being a Substance,” 998.

¹¹⁰ Emery, “The Dignity of Being a Substance,” 998.

With regard to human beings, Aquinas explains that:

The “individual substance,” which is included in the definition of a person, implies a complete substance subsisting of itself and separate from all else; otherwise, a man’s hand might be called a person, since it is an individual substance; nevertheless, because it is an individual substance existing in something else, it cannot be called a person; nor, for the same reason, can the human nature in Christ, although it may be called something individual and singular.¹¹¹

However, unlike Christ’s human nature or a hand, the separated soul does subsist of itself. Nevertheless, it is not a complete substance in itself, but as noted above, is a part of a greater whole. This brings us to what Emery regards as the *special* notion of person, which “is applied distinctly either to human beings, or to God the Trinity.”¹¹² With regard to the Trinity, it signifies a subsistent relation, but with respect to the human person, Aquinas explains that “formally a term signifies that which it was chiefly intended to signify and this is the definition of the term: thus man signifies something composed of a body and a rational soul.”¹¹³

One should also note here, with regard to Boethius’s definition of person, an important *objection* Aquinas addresses: “The separated soul is an individual substance of the rational nature; but it is not a person. Therefore person is not properly defined as above.”¹¹⁴ To this, St. Thomas replies: “The soul is a part of the human species; and so, although it may exist in a separate state, yet since it ever retains its nature of unibility, it cannot be called an individual substance, which is the hypostasis or first substance, as neither can the hand nor any other part of man; *thus neither the definition nor the name of person belongs to it.*”¹¹⁵ Clearly, then, Aquinas

¹¹¹ *ST* III, q. 16, a. 12, ad 2. Emery also points out, with regard to the second half of Boethius’s definition (i.e., “of a rational nature”): “This is the ultimate determination that makes of an individual substance a person: a nature endowed with a power of understanding the truth and of loving the good” (“The Dignity of Being a Substance,” 996).

¹¹² Emery, “The Dignity of Being a Substance,” 998.

¹¹³ Aquinas, *De potentia*, q. 9, a. 4, corp. St. Thomas goes on here to say: “Materially a term signifies that which is requisite for that definition: thus man signifies something that has a heart, brain and such parts as are required in order that the body be animated with a rational soul” (trans. Dominican Fathers, at dhsprpriory.org/thomas/QDdePotentia9.htm).

¹¹⁴ *ST* I, q. 29, a. 1, obj. 5.

¹¹⁵ *ST* I, q. 29, a. 1, ad 5 (emphasis added).

does *not* consider the separated soul to be a person.

Nevertheless, he clearly believes that the soul has a continued act of existence and operations, even once separated from the body. In fact, in speaking of the knowledge of the separated soul, St. Thomas declares that, “when, however, it is separated from the body, it understands no longer by turning to phantasms, but by turning to simply intelligible objects; hence in that state *it understands itself through itself*,”¹¹⁶ an obvious reference to a kind of self-consciousness in the soul. In the same place, Aquinas cites Augustine as saying, “our mind acquires the knowledge of incorporeal things by itself,” to which St. Thomas immediately adds that it does so by knowing itself: “Therefore from the knowledge that the separated soul has of itself, we can judge how it knows other separate things.”¹¹⁷

How, then, is the self-consciousness of the soul to be understood? In speaking of the Trinity, St. Thomas also utilizes Richard of St. Victor’s definition of person as an “incommunicable existence of the divine nature.”¹¹⁸ Generally, corruptionists point to the argument of incommunicability as a reason why the separated soul cannot be a human person, since as an essential part, it is communicated to the whole, and so cannot be termed “incommunicable,” and therefore is not a person.¹¹⁹ This is absolutely true, metaphysically. But might it not also be true that the self-consciousness of the person can be said to be incommunicable? My consciousness is mine, and no one else’s. Even if others experience similar events, their consciousness of the same happenings will be somehow different from mine.

One may reply, however, with Edouard Hugon, that “consciousness and freedom, although they do not essentially constitute the person, are, however, properties of the person.”¹²⁰ They are not entities in themselves, but properties. So, my soul is conscious and performs incommunicable acts but is not itself incommunicable, since it remains a part. Therefore, as Hugon also points out, although the soul does retain a degree of individuality: “It lacks that complete individuality which is the totality, autonomy [and] *absolute* incommunicability. It is not a definitive whole; it demands to be united to another [i.e., to the body.]”¹²¹

¹¹⁶ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 2, resp.

¹¹⁷ *ST I*, q. 89, a. 2, resp., citing *De Trinitate* 9.3. Cf. *ST I*, q. 88, ad 1.

¹¹⁸ *ST I*, q. 29, a. 3, ad 4.

¹¹⁹ See Spencer, “The Personhood of the Separated Soul,” 895–96.

¹²⁰ Edouard Hugon, O.P., “Si l’âme séparée est une personne,” *Revue thomiste* 17 (1909): 590–96, at 593. “La conscience et la liberté, bien qu’elles ne constituent pas essentiellement la personne, sont cependant des propriétés de la personne” (translation mine).

¹²¹ Hugon, “Si l’âme séparée est une personne,” 594: “Il lui manque cette individualité

Consequently, in order to balance Aquinas's metaphysical understanding of "person," on the one hand, with the self-consciousness of the separated soul, on the other, it seems helpful to follow Bonino's view:

One *should not exaggerate* the consequences of the thesis of the non-personhood of the separated soul. Saint Thomas gives here a very precise, and so, limited, *metaphysical sense* of "person": the person is a complete, subsisting whole, of a rational nature, a definition which does not effectively apply to the separated soul, since it is only a subsisting part of a whole, which no longer exists as such. But that does not at all imply that Saint Thomas refuses to the separated soul the properties which define what we today call personhood, that is to say, the cognitive activity, the movements of affectivity, the consciousness of oneself.¹²²

In other words, on the one hand, it is clear that Aquinas is *not* an anachronized Cartesian, let alone a Platonist. He clearly is *not* a dualist, and he places a great deal of emphasis on the fact that the soul is the form of the body, *not* a separate, complete substance. On the other hand, the soul is also *not* a mere shadow of existence. In some way, it remains a conscious subject of attribution, capable of acting. This is not to say, however, that the continuation of consciousness is sufficient for one's existence, as Descartes might have it. Rather, it is because the separated soul retains its act of existence, with its own proper operations even apart from the body (although less perfectly performed without the body), that it also retains a certain consciousness of itself, of God, and of others, and is still able to experience sorrow or joy.

That is, as Emery notes, unlike in the case of Cartesian anthropology, here the soul is not to be *identified* with thought (or consciousness). It

achevée qui est la totalité, l'autonomie, l'incommunicabilité absolue. Elle n'est pas un tout définitif, elle demande à s'unir à un autre" (translation mine).

¹²² Bonino, "L'âme séparée," 75–76: "Qu'il ne faut pas majorer les conséquences de la thèse de la non-personnalité de l'âme séparée. Saint Thomas donne ici à 'personne' un sens métaphysique très précis et donc limité: la personne est un tout complet subsistant de nature rationnelle, définition qui ne s'applique effectivement pas à l'âme séparée puisqu'elle n'est qu'une partie subsistante d'un tout qui n'existe plus comme tel. Mais cela n'implique aucunement que saint Thomas refuse à l'âme séparée les propriétés qui définissent ce que nous appelons aujourd'hui la personnalité, c'est-à-dire l'activité cognitive, les mouvements de l'affectivité, la conscience de soi" (emphasis added).

is not simply a *res cogitans*, first because it is not a complete substance¹²³ as Descartes proposes, and secondly, because there is a “real difference between the soul and its powers.”¹²⁴ As stated above, the soul is a substantial form. Emery explains:

Since the soul is a form, it is in act, not in potency. To identify the soul and thought would signify that we are always engaged in the act of thinking, which experience clearly disproves. Thus St. Thomas holds that the soul is act and form (first act) as regards its essence. The soul’s operations (second act: to know, to will), for their part, are really distinct from the soul’s essence.¹²⁵

In other words, the separated soul should not be reduced to its act of understanding or its act of willing. It is more than the operations it performs and is really distinct from these. Consequently, it seems that this modern, more subjective account of “person” (i.e., the individuality and incommunicability of one’s self-consciousness, act of existence, and continued operations, particularly that of understanding) is incomplete. The separated soul should not be thought of as simply a “center of consciousness” in the Cartesian sense, but as a “conscious quasi-substance”¹²⁶ that is perhaps better called a “semi-person,” to use Cajetan’s term. Any modern, existential sense of “person” must be subordinate to and ordered to the metaphysical notion of the human person found in Aquinas. As Hugon also notes, “The separated soul exists a bit in the manner of a person—it is what lives, that which acts with consciousness and freedom—but it is not the person in the strict sense, because it remains essentially the form of the human body, the essential part of the human composite, and because it necessarily aspires to this reunion, from which will result, once again, the human personhood.”¹²⁷

¹²³ This is my addition, although Emery makes it clear earlier in his article that the soul is not a complete substance, because “the complete substance is the human individual, not the soul; thus we can speak of the soul as a substance only in a derivative sense (*per reductionem*)” (“The Unity of Man,” 222).

¹²⁴ Emery, “The Unity of Man,” 223.

¹²⁵ Emery, “The Unity of Man,” 223.

¹²⁶ As a form, the soul is in reality a substantial principle, not a complete substance of itself, or as mentioned above, it is a *hoc aliquid*, only in the first sense. I thank Fr. Raphael Mary Salzillo, O.P., for all his helpful comments.

¹²⁷ Hugon, “Si l’âme séparée est une personne,” 594 : “L’âme séparée existe un peu à la manière d’une personne, elle est ce qui vit, ce qui agit avec conscience et liberté; mais elle n’est pas la personne au sens strict, parce qu’elle reste essentiellement

Conclusion

From all that we have seen, therefore, it should be evident that, while it is true that the human person is a composite that is corrupted at death, nevertheless, one should not downplay the fact that the soul that remains is not only incorporeal, subsistent, incorruptible, and immortal but also—even when separated—individual, *personal*, and a free and conscious subject of attribution, the principle of its own act of being¹²⁸ (caused by God) and its own operations. It is the “essential part” of the human person, the noblest principle of the composite, whose being *is* the being in which the composite subsists.

The separated soul is not something thrown aside until the resurrection of the body. It continues to understand, remember, and love, although in a manner different from the way it did in the body. It is something so personal that, even before the general resurrection, the soul will be judged for the deeds the *person* did in this life and will immediately either begin its purification (if still necessary for a just soul) or receive its eternal reward or punishment, for which it will experience either great joy or sorrow, respectively. In fact, the separated soul retains a kind of consciousness, and so can perhaps be termed a “semi-person” or a “person” in a wider, existential sense, although it is not a person in the objective, metaphysical sense.

However, it is most fitting for the soul to be reunited with its body again in the final resurrection, since it will only then be complete in its specific nature (as the form of the body), and its then-incorruptible body will also be able to participate in the overflowing joy (or sorrow, in the case of the wicked) experienced by the soul. In this way, the composite will now be perfected in both body and soul, adding to the happiness (or unhappiness) of the human person in *extension*, although not in *intensity*. N·V

forme du corps humain, partie essentielle du composé humain et qu'elle aspire nécessairement à cette réunion d'où résultera, une nouvelle fois, la personnalité humaine” (translation mine).

¹²⁸ Aquinas explains that “being is consequent upon form through itself; for by through itself we mean according as that thing is such; and each and every thing has being according as it has form” (*SCG* II, ch. 55, no. 3).

Neo-Thomism and the Problem of Animal Suffering¹

B. KYLE KELTZ
South Plains College
Levelland, TX

A moral being is one who is capable of reflecting on his past actions and their motives—of approving of some and disapproving of others; and the fact that man is the one being who certainly deserves this designation, is the greatest of all distinctions between him and the lower animals.

Charles Darwin²

It has been over ten years since Michael Murray and Glenn Ross published their article “Neo-Cartesianism and the Problem of Animal Suffering.”³ The arguments in that article later served as a major aspect of Murray’s defense of theism in his work on the problem of animal suffering titled *Nature Red in Tooth and Claw: Theism and the Problem of Animal Suffering*.⁴ Murray’s book was especially significant at the time because few, if any, monographs had been published covering the problem of animal suffering.⁵

¹ I am grateful to Michael J. Murray, J. Thomas Bridges, and an anonymous reviewer for their helpful comments on previous versions of this essay.

² Charles Darwin, *Descent of Man*, 2nd ed. (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1998 [originally 1874]), 633.

³ Michael J. Murray and Glenn Ross, “Neo-Cartesianism and the Problem of Animal Suffering,” *Faith and Philosophy* 23 (2006): 169–90.

⁴ Michael J. Murray, *Nature Red in Tooth and Claw: Theism and the Problem of Animal Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁵ Christopher Southgate’s work was published the same year: *The Groaning of*

The argument in “Neo-Cartesianism and the Problem of Animal Suffering,” inspired by René Descartes, emphasizes that there is no evidence proving that nonhuman animals phenomenologically experience pain. Murray and Ross argue that, although some nonhuman animals have physiological systems that are analogous to the systems in humans that make the phenomenological experience of pain possible, there is no evidence necessitating the conclusion that nonhuman animals do phenomenologically experience pain.⁶

They suggest it is possible that nonhuman animals exhibit pain-averse behaviors even though they might not phenomenologically experience pain. Murray and Ross mention that it does not seem that the actual awareness of pain would add to the evolutionary advantage of pain-avoiding behaviors.⁷ Thus, if one has good reasons to believe that theism is true, then there is room to believe that nonhuman animals do not phenomenologically experience pain, since it would seem that God would not allow them to do so.⁸

Murray’s and Ross’s article is significant regarding the problem of animal suffering in that, if nonhuman animals do not phenomenologically experience pain, then there *is no* problem of animal suffering. However, few scholars have found the neo-Cartesian position compelling. Many, including theists, have argued that neo-Cartesian arguments fail and that the problem of animal suffering still stands.⁹

Indeed, some theists have even argued that the problem is probably worse than many have thought.¹⁰ So, although there have been a few other major attempts at defending theism from the problem of animal suffering (involving evolutionary and soul-making theodicies), it seems that theists

Creation: God, Evolution, and the Problem of Evil (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008).

⁶ Murray and Ross emphasize that they do not necessarily believe that neo-Cartesianism is true, but rather that the possibility of its truth is significant for the problem of animal suffering (“Neo-Cartesianism,” 186).

⁷ Murray and Ross, “Neo-Cartesianism,” 177.

⁸ Murray and Ross, “Neo-Cartesianism,” 171–72, 186.

⁹ For examples, see: Nicola Hoggard Creegan, *Animal Suffering and the Problem of Evil* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 31–32, 51–53; Robert Franciscotti, “The Problem of Animal Pain and Suffering,” in *The Blackwell Companion to the Problem of Evil*, ed. Justin P. McBrayer and Daniel Howard-Snyder (Somerset, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2013), 114–21; and Trent Dougherty, *The Problem of Animal Pain: A Theodicy for All Creatures Great and Small* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 56–95.

¹⁰ See Dustin Crummett, “The Problem of Evil and the Suffering of Creeping Things,” *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 82, no. 1 (2017): 171–88.

have not been successful at providing compelling arguments against the problem of animal suffering.¹¹

With this situation in mind, the present article attempts to provide a solution to the problem of animal suffering similar to Murray and Ross's neo-Cartesian arguments. Particularly, I will discuss a solution to the problem of animal suffering involving concepts taken from the medieval philosopher/theologian Thomas Aquinas. First, I will briefly discuss the problem of animal suffering and how the possible neo-Cartesian positions regarding nonhuman animal minds avoid the problem. These positions will help provide a contrast when I next describe Aquinas's positions regarding animal souls and human self-awareness. After describing the neo-Cartesian and Thomistic positions, I will discuss contemporary philosophical and scientific viewpoints regarding animal rationality, metacognition, and episodic memory. The contemporary evidence will help me to propose a neo-Thomistic view of animal minds in relation to the problem of animal suffering. After considering an objection, I will conclude that the neo-Thomistic view provides a more compelling alternative to the neo-Cartesian solution to the problem of animal suffering.

Animal Minds and the Problem of Animal Suffering

The problem of animal suffering slowly emerged over the years as modern science made discoveries regarding the age of the earth and the number of creatures that lived prior to the arrival of anatomically modern humans. Traditional answers to the problem of evil did not cover these new discoveries. For example, fossil remains indicating that animals lived and died much earlier than humans suggest that animals were dying and suffering before Adam and Eve could have sinned. This not only sheds doubt on

¹¹ Creegan and Dougherty both reject neo-Cartesianism, but neither provides compelling alternatives. Creegan does not offer a theodicy because she thinks we may never fully understand why evil exists in creation (*Animal Suffering*, 55). Dougherty offers an animal soul-making theodicy in *The Problem of Animal Pain* that seems to contradict the very *raison d'être* of soul-making theodicies. For example, although Dougherty provides plenty of argumentation as to why God should resurrect animals in the eschaton, he does not explain how the earthly lives of animals can give rise to personality traits that cannot surface without the existence of actual or possible suffering (Michael J. Murray, review of *The Problem of Animal Pain: A Theodicy for All Creatures Great and Small*, by Trent Dougherty, *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 78 [2015]: 138). Elsewhere, Southgate makes little progress with arguments that he mentions are not necessarily meant to solve the problem of animal suffering, but merely to explain why God cannot prevent/eliminate animal suffering (*The Groaning of Creation*, 15–17).

traditional Fall theodicies but also causes problems for free-will and soul-making theodicies. Indeed, before Darwin, theodicies seemed to be solely concerned with solving the problem of human suffering. In light of this, proponents of the problem of animal suffering emphasize that an all-good, all-knowing, and all-powerful God would most likely not include millions of years of animal suffering in the process by which he decided to create humanity. Thus, given the amount of animal suffering found in the earth's natural history, an all-good, all-knowing, and all-powerful God most likely does not exist.

Neo-Cartesianism

As mentioned, the neo-Cartesian answer to this problem is to deny that nonhuman animals are aware of any pain. If nonhuman animals lack phenomenological awareness of pain and suffering, then there can be no problem of animal suffering. Murray and Ross discuss four similar but different options from which neo-Cartesians can choose regarding animals and pain. (1) "Many non-human creatures are conscious inasmuch as they are alive, awake and have sensations. . . . Yet, unlike the sensory states possessed by humans, the mechanisms whereby these organisms have access to the world lack any phenomenal character whatsoever."¹² (2) "For a mental state to be a conscious state (phenomenally) requires an accompanying higher-order mental state (a HOT) that has that state as its intentional object. . . . Only humans have the cognitive faculties required to form the conception of themselves being in a first-order state that one must have in order to have a HOT."¹³ (3) "Some non-human creatures have states that have intrinsic phenomenal qualities analogous to those possessed by humans when they are in states of pain. These creatures lack, however, any higher-order states of being aware of themselves as being in first-order states."¹⁴ and (4) "Most creatures lack the cognitive faculties required to be in a higher-order state of recognizing themselves to be in a first-order state of pain. Those [non-human creatures] that can on occasion achieve a second-order access to their first-order states of pain, nonetheless do not have the capacity to regard that second-order state as undesirable."¹⁵

So, more briefly, according to Murray and Ross, neo-Cartesianism entails that animals either (1) lack phenomenal consciousness, (2) lack the higher-order mental states required for phenomenal consciousness, (3) are

¹² Murray and Ross, "Neo-Cartesianism," 175.

¹³ Murray and Ross, "Neo-Cartesianism," 176.

¹⁴ Murray and Ross, "Neo-Cartesianism," 176.

¹⁵ Murray and Ross, "Neo-Cartesianism," 177.

phenomenally conscious of pain but lack higher-order mental states, or (4) are phenomenally aware of pain, with some having higher-order mental states regarding the pain but lacking the capacity to regard such higher states as undesirable. If any one of these four options were true, then the apparent suffering found in nature would be illusory and the problem of animal suffering would dissolve.

These four possible options are called neo-Cartesian because they draw inspiration from Descartes famous position regarding animal minds. Descartes's philosophy entails that the immaterial mind/soul provides human beings with the capacity for conscious mental states.¹⁶ Thus, if animals do not demonstrate the capacity for rational thought, then it seems they would lack both minds/souls and phenomenal consciousness.¹⁷ These four neo-Cartesian positions emphasize that there is no evidence necessitating the conclusion that animals possess phenomenal consciousness. Thus, they conclude that God's non-existence does not necessarily follow from the appearance of animal suffering.

Thomism

Thomas Aquinas is also famous for his position regarding animal minds. Following Aristotle, Aquinas believed that human beings possess rational souls while animals possess only sensitive souls.¹⁸ Humans are capable of consciousness and movement, as are other animals, but humans are the only animals with the abilities of the intellect and will. This crucial difference entails that nonhuman animals lack the ability to understand what they experience and are unable to act rationally:

In the souls of brute animals . . . there is no operation superior to those of the sensitive part, since they neither understand nor reason. This is evident from the fact that all animals of the same species

¹⁶ René Descartes, *Discourse on Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason, and Seeking the Truth in the Sciences*, part IV.

¹⁷ Some of Descartes's writings indicate that his mature view regarding animals was closer to the Aristotelian/Thomistic view than to the view that many attribute to him (see Gary Steiner, "Descartes, Christianity, and Contemporary Speciesism," in *A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics*, ed. Paul Waldau and Kimberly Patton [New York: Columbia University Press, 2006], 118–23, and John Cottingham, "Descartes' Treatment of Animals," in *Descartes*, ed. John Cottingham [New York: Oxford University Press, 1998], 225–33). However, much of his philosophy entails that animals lack phenomenal consciousness.

¹⁸ For example, see Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles* [SCG] II, ch. 60.

operate in the same way, as though moved by nature and not as operating by art; every swallow builds its nest and every spider spins its web, in the same manner. The souls of brutes, then, are incapable of any operation that does not involve the body.¹⁹

As will be discussed below, the nonhuman-animal lack of intellect and will entails that they are not moral agents and that their suffering is not morally significant.

This might seem to be almost identical with the Cartesian position.²⁰ Indeed, Cartesianism and Thomism are similar in that rationality serves in both as a criterion for moral agency and personhood. However, there are significant differences between the two positions. Cartesianism believes that the mind/soul is what gives humans the ability to possess consciousness and rationality. Nonhuman animals are thought to be alive, but irrational and nonconscious. This, of course, is why neo-Cartesianism is concerned mainly with determining to what degree nonhuman animals possess phenomenal consciousness. Thomism holds that the soul is the principle of life in biological organisms and is that which distinguishes life from nonlife. There are different types of souls (vegetative, sensitive, and rational), and they possess different types of abilities (reproduction, movement, and rationality, respectively).

For Cartesianism, testing for rationality in nonhuman animals is only one way for trying to determine if they are conscious. If they possess rationality, then they necessarily possess a mind/soul and are conscious. So, neo-Cartesianism is mainly concerned with whether animals have any degree of phenomenal consciousness, not necessarily whether they exhibit human levels of rationality. For Thomism, testing for rationality and self-consciousness is the main ways to determine if animals are persons capable of moral agency. This is because, according to Aquinas, consciousness is necessary to explain many animal behaviors:

For the type of every act or operation is determined by an object.
Every operation of the soul is the act of a potentiality—either active

¹⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* [ST] II-II, q. 25, a. 3. All quotes from the ST are from Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1947).

²⁰ Regardless of the debate regarding Descartes's position on animals, for sake of ease, I will use the terms "Cartesian position" and "Cartesianism" to refer to the view often attributed to Descartes entailing that animals lack phenomenal consciousness because they lack immaterial minds/souls.

or passive. Now the objects of passive potentialities stand to these as the causal agents which bring each potentiality into its proper activity; and it is thus that visible objects, and indeed all sensible things, are related to sight and to the other senses.²¹

Here he is mentioning that objects in nature act on the passive senses of organisms. If an organism reacts to sights, sounds, smells, and so on, it is inferred that such an organism possesses the sense or senses that explain such behavior. Aquinas was not concerned with “what it is like” to be an organism, but only whether an organism possesses the ability to sense its environment. John Haldane helps to explain this further:

There is an old Aristotelian principle according to which acts are distinguished by their respective objects, powers are known by their acts, and substances are defined by their powers. . . . What is of prime importance in determining if an individual is sensate is not the question of what it is like to be it, or even whether that Nagelian question arises; but rather the issue of how the individual is related to its environment. We do not need telepathy in order to attribute sensory awareness, for perception shows itself in the eye of the perceiver—*vultus est index animi*. On this basis there can be no serious doubt that dogs see other dogs.²²

So, as Haldane suggests, Thomism does not entail a skepticism toward animal consciousness, while neo-Cartesianism does. If an organism reacts to its environment, it is assumed that the organism is conscious of that to which it reacts.

Aquinas on Reasoning and Self-Knowledge

In Thomism, rationality and self-awareness are the main criteria for moral agency and personhood for two major reasons. One is that the intellect and will are thought to be immaterial, making it possible for rational animals to possess free will. The other is that Aquinas’s theory of self-knowledge entails that animals without intellects cannot be self-aware. To better understand these concepts, it will be good to discuss them further and

²¹ Thomas Aquinas, *In II de anima*, lec. 6, no. 305, found in *Aristotle’s De Anima, in the version of William of Moerbeke and the Commentary of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Kenelm Foster and Sylvester Humphries (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1951).

²² John Haldane, *Reasonable Faith* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 122–23.

draw out their implications for personhood.

Reasoning

The Aristotelian/Thomistic concept of reasoning sometimes gets confused in the contemporary discussion regarding animal minds. Indeed, the term “rational” can mean many different things, depending on the discipline of the person using it. For example, Alex Kacelnik has emphasized that there are at least three different meanings of “rational” used across the disciplines of philosophy, psychology, economics, and biology.²³ Thus, it is crucial to be clear on the meaning of this term as understood in Thomism.

Following the Islamic philosopher Avicenna, Aquinas believes that nonhuman animals possess an “estimative power” that allows them to recognize intentions that are not directly perceived by their senses.²⁴ The estimative power is similar to animal survival instincts and, among other things, recognizes whether something is useful or harmful to the animal perceiving.²⁵ This power involves nonhuman animals processing and reacting to sense data they perceive and resembles empirical induction.

While nonhuman animals only appear to use logical reasoning (as they really use their estimative power), rational animals (humans) are able to reason because they possess immaterial intellects. For example, in a simple syllogism, there are both universal and particular concepts involved. The intellect is necessary to know and understand the universal statement that “all men are mortal.” The senses are necessary to observe the particular statement that “Socrates is a man.” The intellect concludes that “Socrates is mortal” based on the relation between the particular Socrates (who is judged to be a man) and the universal concept of humanity (which is known to always include mortality). Without the intellect, it would be impossible to know universal concepts, because universal concepts are immaterial.²⁶ When universal concepts (forms) are conjoined with matter, they become particular instances of themselves. But observing a particular human will never give full knowledge of humanity. It is only when the universal and immaterial concept of humanity is abstracted from a particular human and stored in the immaterial intellect that knowledge of humanity is possible.

Thus, Aquinas believes that nonhuman animals are not capable of

²³ Alex Kacelnik, “Meanings of Rationality,” in *Rational Animals?* ed. Susan Hurley and Matthew Nudds (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 87–106.

²⁴ *ST I*, q. 78, a. 4; Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de anima* [*Q.D. de anima*], a. 13.

²⁵ Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 258.

²⁶ See *ST I*, q. 75, a. 5, and *De veritate*, q. 10, a. 8.

complex abstract reasoning. Nonhuman animals are completely physical and do not possess immaterial intellects.²⁷ Thus, they are unable to “know” universal forms and make judgments based on these forms and their relations. All they are able to do is observe particulars and react to their observations through their estimative powers.²⁸

Self-Knowledge

Besides reasoning, Aquinas believes that the immaterial intellect makes it possible for rational animals to possess self-knowledge. The intellect makes this possible in two distinct ways: the self can be known through philosophical argumentation and also through the act of understanding.²⁹ The latter way is the most important for the current discussion.

The intellect, according to Aquinas, is composed of two distinct powers: the passive intellect and the active intellect.³⁰ Aquinas believes that, when the active intellect abstracts a form and deposits it into the passive intellect, the knower not only knows the form but also knows that they are knowing.³¹ So, in the act of knowing, the mind perceives itself. This is intuitive self-knowledge, since it is gained through direct cognition, as opposed to the discursive reasoning involved in philosophical argumentation.³²

Aquinas says that, in the act of knowing, the intellect judges that there is an “I” that is distinct from the object that is known.³³ This is because, as it gains knowledge, the intellect not only knows but also knows that it knows. The knower cognizes objects as objects that are known by a knower, an “I,” and this creates an intuitive subject–object relation between knower and thing known.³⁴

When the “I” is perceived in the act of knowing, the intellect judges that the “I” exists.³⁵ Aquinas believes that, when the intellect cognizes

²⁷ *SCG* II, ch. 82.

²⁸ This would not qualify as rationality for Aquinas, but it is similar to the understanding of “rationality” in biology, which understands it as performing actions that are conducive to fitness. See Kacelnik, “Meanings of Rationality,” 87–106.

²⁹ Therese Scarpelli Cory, *Aquinas on Human Self-Knowledge* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 63–64. See *ST* I, q. 87, a. 1, and *De veritate*, q. 10, a. 8.

³⁰ *ST* I, q. 79, aa. 2–3; *Q.D. de anima*, a. 4.

³¹ *ST* I, q. 87, a. 3; q. 93, a. 7, ad 4; *SCG* III, ch. 46.

³² For an in-depth treatment of this process of intuitive self-awareness see Cory, *Aquinas on Human Self-Knowledge*, 69–133.

³³ Cory, *Aquinas on Human Self-Knowledge*, 84.

³⁴ Cory, *Aquinas on Human Self-Knowledge*, 204.

³⁵ Cory, *Aquinas on Human Self-Knowledge*, 84.

something, it judges that the thing exists.³⁶ Thus, if the intellect cognizes an “I” in the process of knowing, it also judges that the “I” exists.³⁷ Over time, this awareness of an “I” produces a diachronic unity of consciousness in that it is known that the same “I” remains throughout all experiences.³⁸

Nonhuman animals are thought to lack self-awareness because they are unable to perform acts of the mind such as simple apprehension and reasoning. They can sense and remember things, but this happens only on the level of particulars. Their lack of an immaterial intellect renders them incapable of storing universal concepts. Accordingly, they do not experience the act of knowing like rational animals do.

Contemporary Theories Regarding Rationality and Self-Consciousness

Now that Aquinas’s position has been discussed, it will be good to review contemporary research regarding nonhuman animal minds. Since Thomism doubts the existence of abstract reasoning and self-awareness in nonhuman animals, I will discuss only contemporary research regarding these concepts. So, in what follows, I will focus on contemporary findings regarding animal rationality, metacognition, and episodic memory.

Abstract Reasoning

As mentioned, research into nonhuman animal rationality can be confusing because of the many different uses of the term “rationality.” However, there has been plenty of contemporary research conducted on the specific type of abstract reasoning that Thomism entails. The literature on nonhuman animal rationality is massive, and space precludes a proper review. Thus, I will emphasize only the most relevant theories and their objections.

There are many researchers who believe there is evidence suggesting that some animals are capable of various types of logical inferences, including exclusionary inferences (great apes and dogs³⁹), transitive inferences (monkeys, baboons, and sea lions⁴⁰), and causal inferences (apes, monkeys,

³⁶ *De veritate*, q. 10, a. 8.

³⁷ Cory, *Aquinas on Human Self-Knowledge*, 84.

³⁸ Cory, *Aquinas on Human Self-Knowledge*, 207.

³⁹ For examples, see: Josep Call, “Descartes’ Two Errors: Reason and Reflection in the Great Apes,” in Hurley and Nudds, *Rational Animals?* 219–34; Call, “Inferences by Exclusion in the Great Apes: The Effect of Age and Species,” *Animal Cognition* 9 (2006): 393–403; and Ágnes Erdőhegyi, József Topál, Zsófia Virányi, and Ádám Miklósi, “Dog-Logic: Inferential Reasoning in a Two-Way Choice Task and Its Restricted Use,” *Animal Behaviour* 74 (2007): 725–37.

⁴⁰ For examples, see: Brendan O. McGonigle and Margaret Chalmers, “Are Monkeys Logical?” *Nature* 267 (1977): 694–96; McGonigle and Chalmers, “Monkeys

and rats⁴¹).⁴² For example, in an experiment involving several different breeds, researchers tested for the existence of the ability for exclusionary inference in dogs.⁴³ The tests involved a ball and two containers. In the tests, an experimenter would call the dog, show the dog a ball, and place the ball under one of the identical containers in a way so that the dog could not see the location of the ball. Afterward, the experimenter would provide the dog with information regarding the location of the ball by either lifting both containers, the empty container, or the container with the ball. The dog was then allowed to attempt to find the ball for a reward. A second version of the tests involved the lifting of the containers by strings without an experimenter present. The tests revealed that the dogs performed significantly higher than chance results and led the researchers to conclude that dogs are able to perform exclusionary inferences.⁴⁴

However, there is no consensus on the issue of abstract rationality in animals, as its existence is doubted by other researchers.⁴⁵ For example,

Are Rational!" *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology* 45B (1992): 198–228; Ronald J. Schusterman, Colleen Reichmuth Kastak, and David Kastak, "The Cognitive Sea Lion: Meaning and Memory in the Laboratory and in Nature," in *The Cognitive Animal: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives on Animal Cognition*, ed. Marc Bekoff, Colin Allen, and Gordon M. Burghardt (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 217–28; and Robert M. Seyfarth and Dorothy L. Cheney, "The Structure of Social Knowledge in Monkeys," in Bekoff, Allan, and Burghardt, *The Cognitive Animal*, 379–84.

⁴¹ For examples, see: Anthony Dickinson and David Shanks, "Instrumental Action and Causal Representation," in *Causal Cognition: A Multidisciplinary Debate*, ed. Dan Sperber, David Premack, and Ann James Premack (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 5–25; Call, "Descartes' Two Errors," 219, 234; Aaron P. Blaisdell, Kosuke Sawa, Kenneth J. Leising, and Michael R. Waldmann, "Causal Reasoning in Rats," *Science* 311 (2006): 1020–22; and Marc D. Hauser and Laurie R. Santos, "The Evolutionary Ancestry of Our Knowledge of Tools: From Percepts to Concepts," in *Creations of the Mind: Theories of Artifacts and Their Representation*, ed. Eric Margolis and Stephen Laurence (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 267–88.

⁴² Jacob Beck, "Do Animals Engage in Conceptual Thought?" *Philosophy Compass* 7 (2012): 225–26.

⁴³ Erdőhegyi, Topál, Virányi, and Miklósi, "Dog-Logic," 725–37.

⁴⁴ Erdőhegyi, Topál, Virányi, and Miklósi, "Dog-Logic," 734–35.

⁴⁵ For examples, see: José Luis Bermúdez, *Thinking Without Words* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 109–32; Derek C. Penn and Daniel J. Povinelli, "Causal Cognition in Human and Nonhuman Animals: A Comparative, Critical Review," *Annual Review of Psychology* 58 (2007): 97–118; and Derek C. Penn, Keith J. Holyoak, and Daniel J. Povinelli, "Darwin's Mistake: Explaining the Discontinuity Between Human and Nonhuman Minds," *Behavioral and Brain*

José Bermúdez argues that it is possible that animals are not using the same kind of abstract logic as humans use, but are instead using a type of proto-logic.⁴⁶ Bermúdez believes that nonhuman animals are unable to perform abstract reasoning without language. Since nonhuman animals can think only nonlinguistically, they are unable to make truth judgments regarding their thoughts, since they lack the means to label their thoughts as true or false.

This would entail that the dogs were not performing an exclusionary inference such as:

1. Either the ball is in container A or the ball is in container B.
2. It is not true that the ball is in container A.
3. Therefore, it is true that the ball is in container B.

Instead, they would perform a proto-logical process similar to:

1. The ball is absent from container A.
2. The ball is in container B.

Without the ability to form thoughts about thoughts, such as “either A or B,” the dogs would be unable to formulate the proposition that establishes a disjunctive syllogism. Furthermore, even if they were able to establish the first proposition, they would be unable to formulate a truth-conditional thought such as “it is not true that A” so as to guarantee the truth of the conclusion. Instead, utilizing a type of proto-logic, the dogs would be able to quickly learn to associate two subcontraries: “The ball is absent from container A” is associated with “The ball is in container B.”

Thus, it could appear that the dogs use exclusionary inferences, when in fact they are simply associating subcontraries. They may not consider abstract logical relations, but merely perform the action that usually leads to a reward upon observing the absence of the ball in one of two containers. Their actions appear logical, but the process that determines their actions is not based on logic and does not produce necessarily valid conclusions.

Regarding the other types of reasoning, researchers have proposed ways in which it is possible that animals appear to use abstract reasoning but do not.⁴⁷ For example, in addition to Bermúdez’s proposal, Michael Rescorla

Sciences 31 (2008): 109–30.

⁴⁶ José Luis Bermúdez, “Animal Reasoning and Proto-Logic,” in Hurley and Nudds, *Rational Animals?* 127–38.

⁴⁷ Beck, “Do Animals Engage in Conceptual Thought?” 226.

suggests it is possible that the appearance of exclusionary inferences can be explained by a process of Bayesian updating (named for Thomas Bayes) over cognitive maps.⁴⁸ Associative learning and/or innate biases are also thought to provide an explanation for the appearance of transitive and causal inferences.⁴⁹

Alongside this debate, there is a major position in the field of psychology called “dual-system theory” that is pertinent to the current discussion. Dual-system theorists hold that there are two distinct reasoning systems involved in human cognition.⁵⁰ System 1 involves associative and intuitive processes, while system 2 involves rule-based and analytical processes. System-1 processes are thought to be automatic and non-conscious, while system-2 processes are thought to be controlled and conscious.⁵¹ Table 1 illustrates the two types of systems involved in dual-systems theory.

⁴⁸ Michael Rescorla, “Cognitive Maps and the Language of Thought,” *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 60 (2009): 377–407.

⁴⁹ See: Thomas R. Zentall, “The Case for a Cognitive Approach to Animal Learning and Behavior,” *Behavioural Processes* 54 (2001): 65–78; C. De Lillo, D. Floreano, and F. Antinucci, “Transitive Choices by a Simple, Fully Connected, Backpropagation Neural Network: Implications for the Comparative Study of Transitive Inference,” *Animal Cognition* 4 (2001): 61–68; Collin Allen, “Transitive Inference in Animals: Reasoning or Conditioned Associations?” in Hurley and Nudds, *Rational Animals?* 175–86; and Penn and Povinelli, “Causal Cognition.”

⁵⁰ For a somewhat recent explanation and review of dual-system theories, see Keith Frankish, “Dual-Process and Dual-System Theories of Reasoning,” *Philosophy Compass* 5 (2010): 914–26.

⁵¹ Frankish, “Dual-Process and Dual-System Theories,” 914.

Table 1: Features Attributed to Aspects of the Dual-Systems

	System 1	System 2
<i>Process</i>	Automatic	Controlled
	Nonconscious or preconscious	Conscious
	Heuristic	Analytic
	Associative	Rule-based
<i>Content</i>	Actual	Hypothetical
	Concrete	Abstract
	Contextualized	Decontextualized
<i>Evolution</i>	Evolutionarily old	Evolutionarily recent
	Shared with animals	Unique to humans
	Nonverbal	Language-involving
	Serves genetic goals (“short-leash” control)	Serves individual goals (“long-leash” control)

Source: Condensed from Frankish, “Dual-Process and Dual-System Theories of Reasoning” (see note 50), 992.

Dual-process and dual-system theories have been prominent in the field of psychology for decades, starting in the late 1970s.⁵² Researchers argue for these theories mainly based on findings from studies performed on human reasoning processes.⁵³ But there are dual-system theorists who believe that processes in system 2 are evolutionarily late and uniquely human.⁵⁴ For example, Jonathan Evans explains:

⁵² Frankish, “Dual-Process and Dual-System Theories,” 916; Jonathan St. B. T. Evans and Keith E. Stanovich, “Dual-Process Theories of Higher Cognition: Advancing the Debate,” *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 8, no. 3 (2013): 223–41, at 223.

⁵³ See: Seymour Epstein, “Integration of the Cognitive and the Psychodynamic Unconscious,” *American Psychologist* 49 (1994): 709–24; Eliot R. Smith and Jamie DeCoster, “Dual-Process Models in Social and Cognitive Psychology: Conceptual Integration and Links to Underlying Memory Systems,” *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 4 (2000): 108–31; Arie W. Kruglanski and Edward Orehek, “Partitioning the Domain of Social Inference: Dual Mode and Systems Models and Their Alternatives,” *Annual Review of Psychology* 58 (2007): 291–316; and Frankish, “Dual-Process and Dual-System Theories.”

⁵⁴ For examples, see: Jonathan St. B. T. Evans and David E. Over, *Rationality and Reasoning* (Hove, UK: Psychology Press, 1996); Jonathan St. B. T. Evans, *Thinking Twice: Two Minds in One Brain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); and Keith E. Stanovich, *Rationality and the Reflective Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

It is evident that humans resemble other animals in some respects but are very different in others. Quite obviously, no other animal can engage in the forms of abstract hypothetical thought that underlie science, engineering, literature, and many other human activities. More basically, we propose that other animals are much more limited in their metarepresentational and simulation abilities, thus leading to limitations (compared with humans) in their ability to carry out forms of behavior that depend on prior appraisal of possible consequences. Thus, a key defining feature of Type 2 processing—the feature that makes humans unique—is cognitive decoupling: the ability to distinguish supposition from belief and to aid rational choices by running thought experiments.⁵⁵

There are many critics of dual-system theories, despite their major influence in psychology. Opponents have argued that dual-system theories are often formulated using vague terms, contain unreliably aligned attributes (i.e., supposed attributes of systems 1 and 2 are not consistently observed together), view different processes as types when they should view them as styles, and are supported by ambiguous or unconvincing evidence.⁵⁶ These critics often suggest that the evidence put forward for dual-system theories can just as easily support single-process theories.⁵⁷

However, Evans and Keith Stanovich emphasize that these critics often overgeneralize and make attacks that are aimed at all dual-system theories but do not apply to many of the nuanced dual-system positions.⁵⁸ They argue that there is plenty of evidence to be found that supports a carefully

⁵⁵ Evans and Stanovich, “Dual-Process Theories of Higher Cognition,” 236.

⁵⁶ Evans and Stanovich, “Dual-Process Theories of Higher Cognition,” 227.

⁵⁷ For examples, see: Arie W. Kruglanski, Woo Young Chun, Hans Peter Erb, Antonio Pierro, Lucia Mannetti, and Scott Spiegel, “A Parametric Unimodel of Human Judgment: Integrating Dual-Process Frameworks in Social Cognition from a Single-Mode Perspective,” in *Social Judgments: Implicit and Explicit Processes*, ed. Joseph P. Forgas, Kipling D. Williams, and William von Hippel (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 137–61; Magda Osman, “An Evaluation of Dual-Process Theories of Reasoning,” *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* 11 (2004): 988–1010; Gideon Keren and Yaacov Schul, “Two Is Not Always Better Than One: A Critical Evaluation of Two-System Theories,” *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 4 (2009): 533–50; Arie W. Kruglanski and Gerd Gigerenzer, “Intuitive and Deliberate Judgments Are Based on Common Principles,” *Psychological Review* 118 (2011): 97–109; and Peter Carruthers, “Animal Minds Are Real, (Distinctively) Human Minds Are Not,” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 50 (2013): 233–48.

⁵⁸ Evans and Stanovich, “Dual-Process Theories of Higher Cognition,” 223–35.

defined dual-process theory: “The evidence [for dual-process theories] is compelling and . . . a very clear theoretical basis for the two-process distinction has now emerged. Such theories can account for a wide range of phenomena in the reasoning, judgment, and decision-making literatures that have been the subject of several recent books.”⁵⁹

Although the debate continues regarding whether animals are capable of abstract reasoning, there is plenty of evidence to support the conclusion that animals most likely are not capable of such reasoning. Although it might appear that they are able to perform what could be labeled as logical reasoning, there is often an explanation for their behavior that does not necessitate invoking abstract logic. At a minimum, it is reasonable to conclude that nonhuman animals do not act rationally, but rather are guided by system-1 processes.

Self-Awareness

There are several theories regarding which attributes would provide evidence of self-awareness if found in nonhuman animals. The most widely researched include whether nonhuman animals possess mind-reading capabilities (i.e., theory of mind), mirror self-recognition, metacognition, and episodic memory.⁶⁰ In what follows, due to space constraints, I will mainly discuss the debates regarding nonhuman animal metacognition and episodic memory.⁶¹

Metacognition

An area of research that is extremely pertinent to this essay is the scientific and philosophical study of human and nonhuman metacognition. As with rationality, there is more than one understanding of “metacognition” in

⁵⁹ Evans and Stanovich, “Dual-Process Theories of Higher Cognition,” 237.

⁶⁰ For a good discussion of contemporary research into animal self-consciousness, see Kristin Andrews, *The Animal Mind: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Animal Cognition* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 70–77.

⁶¹ I will not discuss mirror self-recognition because I do not think it provides compelling evidence for self-awareness. Skeptical researchers have argued that nonhuman animals might simply recognize their own bodies, not their own selves (e.g., Cecilia M. Heyes, “Reflections on Self-Recognition in Primates,” *Animal Behaviour* 47 [1994]: 909–19, esp. 915), or recognize that their body and the body in the mirror are similar (for example, see Thomas Suddendorf and David L. Butler, “The Nature of Visual Self-Recognition,” *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 17 [2013]: 121–27). Similarly, as will be shown below, it seems that self-recognition can be explained through anoetic awareness instead of auto-noetic awareness. Also, I will not discuss nonhuman animal mind-reading for space reasons and because metacognition and episodic memory are more pertinent to Aquinas’s concepts.

the literature. Metacognition is often narrowly defined as “thinking about one’s own thoughts.” More broadly, Joëlle Proust defines it as “the kinds of processes involved, and the self-knowledge gained, in thinking about, and in controlling, one’s own thinking.”⁶²

However, it is highly debated as to what qualifies as metacognition. Some researchers believe that metacognition necessarily involves representing one’s own mental state *as* a mental state.⁶³ This is known as the “self-attributive” view. A self-attributive thought would be a self-referential second-order representation of a first-order representation (e.g., “I believe that I know/perceive/believe/feel/etc. that it is raining”).⁶⁴ Other researchers believe that metacognition merely requires controlling and monitoring one’s own cognitive processes.⁶⁵ This is thought to possibly involve nonconceptual, representational processes and is known as the “self-evaluative” view.

The main debate regarding nonhuman animals and metacognition is not whether they are capable of self-attributive metacognition, but whether they are capable of self-evaluative metacognition. Accordingly, many researchers argue that nonhuman animals are capable of self-evaluative metacognition.⁶⁶ For example, in one study conducted by Kazuo Fujita, two tufted capuchin monkeys were tested for the ability to recognize their own memories.⁶⁷ In the study, they were presented with a sample

⁶² Joëlle Proust, “Metacognition,” *Philosophy Compass* 5, no. 11 (November 2010): 989–98, at 989.

⁶³ Proust, “Metacognition,” 989.

⁶⁴ Santiago Arango-Muñoz, “Two Levels of Metacognition,” *Philosophia* 39, no. 1 (2011): 71–82, at 73.

⁶⁵ Proust, “Metacognition,” 989.

⁶⁶ For examples, see: Wendy E. Shields, J. David Smith, and David A. Washburn, “Uncertain Responses by Humans and Rhesus Monkeys (*Macaca mulatta*) in a Psychophysical Same-Different Task,” *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 126 (1997): 147–64; Robert R. Hampton, “Rhesus Monkeys Know When They Remember,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 98 (2001): 5359–62; David A. Washburn, J. David Smith, and Wendy E. Shields, “Rhesus Monkeys (*Macaca mulatta*) Immediately Generalize the Uncertain Response,” *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Animal Behavior Processes* 32 (2006): 185–89; J. David Smith, Michael J. Beran, Joshua S. Redford, and David A. Washburn, “Dissociating Uncertainty Responses and Reinforcement Signals in the Comparative Study of Uncertainty Monitoring,” *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 135 (2006): 282–97; and Nate Kornell, Lisa K. Son, and Herbert S. Terrace, “Transfer of Metacognitive Skill and Hint Seeking in Monkeys,” *Psychological Science* 18 (2007): 64–71.

⁶⁷ Kazuo Fujita, “Metamemory in Tufted Capuchin Monkeys (*Cebus apella*),” *Animal Cognition* 12 (2009): 575–85.

shape on a computer screen. After a delayed period of time, they were given the choice to bring up a screen that would present them with nine shapes (one of which matched the initial shape) or bring up a screen that had an escape button. If they chose the matching task and then correctly chose the matching shape, they were rewarded with food 100 percent of the time. If they chose the wrong shape, they received nothing and a buzzer sounded for half a second. If they chose the escape screen, they were rewarded with food 50–75 percent of the time. One of the monkeys was found to reliably opt out of the matching task when there was a significant enough delay between the initial shape and the choice screen. If the delay between the screens was short enough, the same monkey regularly chose the matching task and its accompanied guaranteed reward for a correct answer. This suggests that capuchins are capable of monitoring and/or recognizing their own memory traces.⁶⁸ However, Fujita noted that the capuchins seemed to have access only to the strength of their memories and not the contents. So, although they seemed to possess metacognitive abilities regarding their memories, these were limited.

Other researchers believe that apparently self-evaluative behaviors in nonhuman animals are explainable through associative processes alone, without metacognition.⁶⁹ For example, David Smith notes that it is possible that the rewards coinciding with the escape option in experiments like Fujita's become more attractive as the monkeys associate them with an easier reward.⁷⁰ Likewise, Mike Le Pelley argues that the behavior of the monkeys can be explained as learning to associate harder trials with unpleasant stimuli, such as the buzzer sound.⁷¹ Thus, instead of monitoring the strength of their own memories, it is possible that the monkeys are simply learning to associate longer waiting periods with unpleasant buzzer noises.

⁶⁸ Fujita, "Metamemory," 583–84.

⁶⁹ For examples, see: Peter Carruthers, "Meta-Cognition in Animals: A Skeptical Look," *Mind and Language* 23 (2008): 58–89; Robert R. Hampton, "Multiple Demonstrations of Metacognition in Nonhumans: Converging Evidence or Multiple Mechanisms?" *Comparative Cognition and Behavior Reviews* 4 (2009): 17–28; J. Jozefowicz, J. E. R. Staddon, and D. T. Cerutti, "Metacognition in Animals: How Do We Know that They Know?" *Comparative Cognition and Behavior Reviews* 4 (2009): 29–39; M. E. Le Pelley, "Metacognitive Monkeys or Associative Animals? Simple Reinforcement Learning Explains Uncertainty in Nonhuman Animals," *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 38 (2012): 686–708.

⁷⁰ J. David Smith, "The Study of Animal Metacognition," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 13 (2009): 389–96, at 390.

⁷¹ Le Pelley, "Metacognitive Monkeys or Associative Animals?" 686.

Regardless, there are many researchers who believe that nonhuman animals lack the physiological capacity for metacognition.⁷² Indeed, the evidence has led some to formulate bold hypotheses in regard to human uniqueness. For example, philosopher Derek Penn, psychologist Keith Holyoak, and psychologist Daniel Povinelli have proposed what they call the “relational reinterpretation hypothesis.”⁷³ The hypothesis entails that “the discontinuity between human and nonhuman minds extends . . . to any cognitive capability that requires reinterpreting perceptual relations in terms of higher-order, structural, role-governed relations.”⁷⁴ In particular the hypothesis suggests that:

Animals of many taxa employ functionally compositional, particular-involving, syntactically structured mental representations about observable features, entities, and relations in the world around them. Furthermore, they form abstract representations about statistical regularities they perceive in the behavior of certain classes of physical objects (e.g., observable causal relations) and other animate agents (e.g., affiliative interactions) and are capable of using these representations off-line to make decisions in a flexible, reliable, and ecologically rational (i.e., adaptive) fashion. Human animals alone, however, possess the additional capability of reinterpreting these perceptually grounded representations in terms of higher-order, role-governed, inferentially systematic, explicitly structural relations—or, to be more precise, of approximating these higher-order features of a PSS [physical symbol system], subject to the evolved, content-specific biases and processing capacity limitations of the human brain.⁷⁵

Santiago Arango-Muñoz believes that, in addition to the hypothesis

⁷² For examples, see: Daniel J. Povinelli and Jennifer Vonk, “Chimpanzee Minds: Suspiciously Human?” *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 7 (2003): 157–60; Povinelli and Vonk, “We Don’t Need a Microscope to Explore the Chimpanzee’s Mind,” in Hurley and Nudds, *Rational Animals?* 385–412; Carruthers, “Meta-Cognition in Animals,” 58–89; Joseph Call and Michael Tomasello, “Does the Chimpanzee Have a Theory of Mind? 30 Years Later,” *Trends in Cognitive Science* 12 (2008): 187–92; and José Luis Bermúdez, “Mindreading in the Animal Kingdom,” in *The Philosophy of Animal Minds*, ed. Robert W. Lurz (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 145–64.

⁷³ Penn, Holyoak, and Povinelli, “Darwin’s Mistake,” 127–29.

⁷⁴ Penn, Holyoak, and Povinelli, “Darwin’s Mistake,” 127.

⁷⁵ Penn, Holyoak, and Povinelli, “Darwin’s Mistake,” 127.

of Penn, Holyoak, and Povinelli, the evidence supports a two-level view of metacognition that is compatible with dual-process theories.⁷⁶ He believes the self-attributive–self-evaluative debate is the result of both sides arguing that only one view is correct, when both views are correct in that each describes a distinct level of metacognition. Similarly to dual-process theories, Arango-Muñoz proposes that the self-attributive view is describing a high-level (system 2) form of metacognition in which subjects use concepts and theories to interpret their behavior.⁷⁷ The self-evaluative view describes a low-level (system 1) form of metacognition in which feelings guide their subjects to adjust cognitive activities without engaging in second-order thought.⁷⁸ He believes that nonhuman animals are capable of only low-level metacognition, while humans are capable of both low- and high-level metacognition.

Similarly, Janet Metcalfe and Lisa Son believe the evidence suggests a distinction between anoetic, noetic, and autoanoetic metacognition.⁷⁹ Anoetic metacognition involves judgments that are stimulus-bound, spatially and temporally bound to the current time.⁸⁰ In other words, it is an animal making judgments about what it is currently experiencing. Noetic metacognition involves making judgments about representations of objects and events that are not physically present.⁸¹ Finally, autoanoetic metacognition involves self-referential judgments (similar to self-attributive metacognition). Metcalfe and Son discuss there not being sufficient evidence to conclude nonhuman animals are capable of autoanoetic metacognition and the fact that it is even debated whether nonhuman animals possess anoetic and noetic metacognitive abilities.

The existence of hypotheses such as these indicates the amount and compelling nature of the evidence against higher forms of nonhuman animal metacognition. Also, it is striking that some researchers believe the evidence points to dual types of metacognition in humans and nonhuman animals. This adds to the strength of dual-process theories regarding rationality. As it stands, nonhuman animals are not viewed as serious candidates for self-attributive or autoanoetic metacognition.

⁷⁶ Arango-Muñoz, “Two Levels of Metacognition,” 71–82.

⁷⁷ Arango-Muñoz, “Two Levels of Metacognition,” 77.

⁷⁸ Arango-Muñoz, “Two Levels of Metacognition.”

⁷⁹ Janet Metcalfe and Lisa K. Son, “Anoetic, Noetic, and Autoanoetic Metacognition,” in *Foundations of Metacognition*, ed. Michael J. Beran, Johannes L. Brandl, Josef Perner, and Joëlle Proust (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 289–301.

⁸⁰ Metcalfe and Son, “Anoetic, Noetic, and Autoanoetic Metacognition,” 291.

⁸¹ Metcalfe and Son, “Anoetic, Noetic, and Autoanoetic Metacognition,” 292.

Episodic Memory

Besides self-attributive metacognition, episodic memory is probably one of the most promising attributes that indicates self-awareness. Episodic memory is a type of memory in which the subject remembering an event remembers the event from the subject's perspective. This is distinguished from semantic memory, which is simply remembering facts about the world apart from personal experience. Episodic memory is associated with self-awareness for reasons already mentioned. When people remember that events have happened to them, they develop a diachronic unity of consciousness over time.

Many researchers have argued there is evidence of episodic (or episodic-like) memory in nonhuman animals.⁸² For example, one study involved testing for episodic memory in scrub jays, which are known for their food caching abilities.⁸³ The scrub jays were allowed to cache differing types of food that were either perishable (mealworms and crickets) or nonperishable (peanuts). The study showed that, if the scrub jays were released before their preferred food became inedible, they would return to the locations of their preferred food. If they were released after their preferred food became inedible, they would return only to their nonpreferred food caches. These findings suggested that the scrub jays remembered at least the where, what, and when aspects of their food caching.⁸⁴ This is evidence of episodic-like memory, and possibly episodic memory.

However, as with metacognition, some researchers believe it is possible to explain episodic-like behavior in simpler terms.⁸⁵ For example, it is

⁸² For examples, see: Nicola S. Clayton and Anthony Dickinson, "Episodic-Like Memory During Cache Recovery by Scrub Jays," *Nature* 395 (1998): 272–74; Stephanie J. Babb and Jonathan D. Crystal, "Episodic-Like Memory in the Rat," *Current Biology* 16 (2006): 1317–21; Gema Martin-Ordas, Daniel Haun, Fernando Colmenares, and Joseph Call, "Keeping Track of Time: Evidence for Episodic-Like Memory in Great Apes," *Animal Cognition* 13 (2010): 331–40; Miranda C. Feeney, William A. Roberts, and David F. Sherry, "Mechanisms of What-Where-When Memory in Black-Capped Chickadees (*Parus atricapillus*): Do Chickadees Remember 'When?'" *Journal of Comparative Psychology* 125 (2011): 308–16; and Jonathan D. Crystal, Wesley T. Alford, Wenyi Zhou, and Andrea G. Hohmann, "Source Memory in the Rat," *Current Biology* 23 (2013): 387–91.

⁸³ N. S. Clayton, D. P. Griffiths, N. J. Emery, and A. Dickinson, "Elements of Episodic-Like Memory in Animals," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society: London B* 356 (2001): 1483–91.

⁸⁴ Clayton, Griffiths, Emery, and Dickinson, "Elements of Episodic-Like Memory in Animals," 1490.

⁸⁵ For examples, see: Howard Eichenbaum and Norbert Fortin, "Episodic Memory

possible the scrub jays simply possess real-time semantic (nonpersonal) knowledge of the locations and ages of their food caches.⁸⁶ Recalling the possibilities involving the capuchins and their memories, it is possible that the scrub jays learned to associate longer time intervals with rotten food. Thus, they could simply return to food caches of which they possess stronger memories or perishable-food caches only when shorter intervals have lapsed.⁸⁷

One of the most interesting aspects of episodic memory, and also relevant to this essay, is that episodic memory has been found to coincide with the ability to mentally “time-travel.” Mental time-travel is the ability to remember or to imagine oneself in the past or the future. Psychologists believe that the two coincide due in part to studies involving damage to the human brain.

For example, in 1981, a man known as K.C. was involved in a motorcycle accident in which he suffered brain damage.⁸⁸ K.C. exhibited a rare type of retrograde amnesia in which he cannot remember anything that happened to him from a personal perspective (episodic memory), although he retained knowledge of facts about the world and himself (semantic memory). For example, K.C. knew the address and appearance of the house in which he spent his first nine years of life, but he did not remember a single event that took place there. Moreover, K.C. had a similar problem regarding thinking about his future. Endel Tulving explains that:

K.C. cannot think about his own personal future. Thus, when asked, he cannot tell the questioner what he is going to do later on that day, or the day after, or at any time in the rest of his life, any more than he can say what he did the day before or what events have happened in his life. When he is asked to describe the state of his mind when he thinks about his future, whether the next 15 minutes

and the Hippocampus,” *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 12 (2003): 53–57; Thomas Suddendorf and Janie Busby, “Mental Time Travel in Animals?” *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 7 (2003): 391–96; and Robert R. Hampton and Bennett L. Schwartz, “Episodic Memory in Nonhumans: What, and Where, is When?” *Current Opinion in Neurobiology* 14 (2004): 192–97.

⁸⁶ Hampton and Schwartz, “Episodic Memory in Nonhumans,” 194.

⁸⁷ Eichenbaum and Fortin, “Episodic Memory and the Hippocampus,” 55.

⁸⁸ See R. Shayna Rosenbaum, Stefan Köhler, Daniel L. Schacter, Morris Moscovitch, Robyn Westmacott, Sandra E. Black, Fuqiang Gao, and Endel Tulving, “The Case of K.C.: Contributions of a Memory-Impaired Person to Memory Theory,” *Neuropsychologia* 43 (2005): 989–1021.

or the next year, he again says that it is “blank.”⁸⁹

Studies of K.C. have led researchers to conclude that episodic and semantic memory are based in different sets of neural mechanisms.⁹⁰ Thus, if a human or nonhuman animal possesses semantic memory, this does not necessarily entail that they will possess episodic memory. Also, as mentioned, K.C.’s case has led to the conclusion that episodic memory is necessary for mental time-travel. This is striking because it entails that, if nonhuman animals do not possess the ability for episodic memory, then not only can they not remember the past from a personal perspective, but they also cannot think of or anticipate future personal events. As will be explained below, this has major implications for the problem of animal suffering and the status of nonhuman animals regarding moral agency.

Additionally, Tulving emphasizes that the capacity for episodic memory does not just enable personal mental time-travel; it also enables a present sense of self:

To describe auto-noetic consciousness with regards to episodic memory, there is a natural bias to cast the discussion in terms of awareness of the past. Auto-noetic consciousness is not limited to the past, however; it encompasses the capacity to represent the self’s experiences in the past, present, and future. When one is auto-noetically aware of one’s experiences in the past, one recollects the past and, therefore, retrieves information from episodic memory. But also dependent on auto-noetic consciousness and, we argue, closely related to episodic memory is the ability to be aware of the self’s present.⁹¹

Thus, the absence of episodic memory in nonhuman animals suggests that they are not only unable to personally experience the past and future but also unable to personally experience the present.

As with rationality and metacognition, some researchers believe that episodic memory and the ability for personal mental time-travel are

⁸⁹ Endel Tulving, “Episodic Memory and Auto-noesis: Uniquely Human?” in *The Missing Link in Cognition: Origins of Self-Reflective Consciousness*, ed. Herbert S. Terrace and Janet Metcalfe (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4–56, at 26.

⁹⁰ Tulving, “Episodic Memory and Auto-noesis,” 24.

⁹¹ Mark A. Wheeler, Donald T. Stuss, and Endel Tulving, “Toward a Theory of Episodic Memory: The Frontal Lobes and Auto-noetic Consciousness,” *Psychological Bulletin* 121, no. 3 (1997): 331–54, 335.

unique to humans.⁹² This is another area where the evidence points to dual processes in humans and nonhuman animals. Regarding memory, it seems that some nonhuman animals have episodic-like memory (knowing the impersonal where, what, and when of events), while humans uniquely possess both episodic-like and episodic memory. For example, Tulving explains that:

Many kinds of complex behaviors of many kinds of animals can be, and have been, interpreted as manifesting episodic memory, and in many cases these behaviors do have many features in common with behaviors that are grounded in episodic memory. Practically invariably, however, the same behaviors can also be interpreted more parsimoniously, as manifestations of semantic or declarative memory, which do not provide for, and do not require postulation of, the apprehension of subjective past or subjective future time.⁹³

Thus, to date, it seems that most, if not all, nonhuman animals do not have the capability for self-awareness that is found in humans. For one, the evidence suggests that humans uniquely possess the ability for higher-order metacognition. Nonhuman animals are not able to think about their thoughts, and thus are unaware of themselves as the possessors of such thoughts. Additionally, episodic memory is believed to be unique to humans. This entails that nonhuman animals cannot remember the past as it happened to them personally or personally experience the present. This also means nonhuman animals are unable to anticipate or think about their personal futures.

Implications of Neo-Thomism for the Problem of Animal Suffering

So, the Thomistic view of nonhuman animals needs updating. It certainly is outdated to explain animal cognition and behavior solely through the broad term “estimative power.” However, the crucial aspects of the Thomistic view of nonhuman animals are in no danger of replacement.

In light of the Thomistic view of nonhuman animal minds, it was

⁹² For examples, see: William A. Roberts, “Are Animals Stuck in Time?” *Psychological Bulletin* 128, no. 3 (2002): 473–89; Suddendorf and Busby, “Mental Time Travel in Animals?” 391–96; Tulving, “Episodic Memory and Autonoesis,” 3–56; Thomas Suddendorf and Michael C. Corballis, “The Evolution of Foresight: What Is Mental Time Travel, and Is It Unique to Humans?” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 30 (2007): 299–313.

⁹³ Tulving, “Episodic Memory and Autonoesis,” 48.

shown that there is no conclusive evidence that nonhuman animals possess either higher-order (system 2) rationality or higher-order abilities associated with self-awareness, such as self-attributive or auto-noetic metacognition and episodic memory. Thus, nonhuman animals are not rational, do not have higher-order access to their mental states, and cannot remember or imagine themselves in the past, present, or future. This is similar to the neo-Cartesian option 3: "Some non-human creatures have states that have intrinsic phenomenal qualities analogous to those possessed by humans when they are in states of pain. These creatures lack, however, any higher-order states of being aware of themselves as being in first-order states."

Thus, the evidence suggests that there is no problem of animal suffering. If nonhuman animals are neither rational nor self-aware, then they are not suffering as persons. For one, nonhuman animals most likely lack higher-order access to their suffering regardless of whether it is experienced phenomenally or not. If nonhuman animals are incapable of higher-order thoughts regarding their lower-order experiences, this means that nonhuman animals are incapable of higher-order thoughts such as "I believe that I feel pain" or "I believe that I wish to avoid pain." As humans, we have higher-order access to our lower-order mental states throughout our entire lives. So it is hard to imagine what this would be like. However, the nonhuman animal's lack of self-attributive or auto-noetic metacognition sheds light on the nonpersonal nature of their experiences. As Aquinas argues, nonhuman animals do not know that they know or make judgments in a self-referential manner. As hard as it is to imagine, there are experiences of pain and suffering in nonhuman animals but there are no personal thoughts/experiences/awarenesses of these experiences.

Also, nonhuman animals are most likely incapable of abstract rationality. This is relevant to the problem of animal suffering because nonlinguistic creatures could never form abstract concepts regarding their suffering. For instance, arational animals cannot reach the understanding that they ought not to be in a state of pain or suffering. Moreover, it is important to remember that their lack of rationality entails that they do not act for logical reasons. Thus, arational animals cannot be said to have any logical reasons for acting in ways that avoid future experiences of pain. Pain behaviors are simply explainable through associative learning and, at most, auto-noetic and noetic metacognition.

In addition to the Thomistic distinctives of metacognition and rationality, it was found that nonhuman animals most likely lack episodic memory, and thus any sense of a personal past, present, and future. So, if they experience pain and suffering, these are experienced only in a nonpersonal present. Nonhuman animals neither self-referentially remember suffering

they have experienced, nor self-referentially experience current suffering, nor self-referentially anticipate future suffering they may encounter. This is evidence for Aquinas's notion that nonhuman animals lack a sense of self, diachronic or otherwise, because they are not aware of a personal process of abstracting and storing knowledge of universals.⁹⁴

These considerations provide an answer to the problem of animal suffering not only as it relates to animal pain but also as it relates to any other type of suffering that animals might experience, such as fear and sorrow. If nonhuman animals are not self-aware, then they lack higher-order access to any of these unpleasant states. Thus, there is no person, *qua* person, that experiences pain or suffering in the nonhuman animal kingdom.

An Objection to the Neo-Thomistic Solution

A major objection at this point could be that the neo-Thomistic concept of arational and nonpersonal animals does not avoid the problem. For example, when arguing against neo-Cartesian option 3 (which was noted as being similar to the neo-Thomistic position), Robert Francescotti states:

It is not clear that position 3 is even coherent. We are to imagine that some other animals have mental states with “intrinsic phenomenal qualities analogous to those possessed by humans,” but they are not aware of being in those states, and so, Murray explains, “there is simply no victim or subject for whom it can be said that there is a way it is like for it to be in such a state of pain” (Murray 2008, 56). However, if these states are phenomenally similar to those we have, as 3 claims, then there would be a “what it is like” character to these states, and in particular they would have something similar to the distressful feel of our pain states. So there would be a clear sense in which some other animals suffer.⁹⁵

Regardless of whether animals are persons, if they are experiencing unpleasant mental and physical states, then the evils remain. This objec-

⁹⁴ For further evidence along these lines, see Hans J. Markowitsch and Angelica Staniloiu, “Memory, Autooetic Consciousness, and the Self,” *Consciousness and Cognition* 20 (2011): 16–39. Markowitsch and Staniloiu argue that autooetic consciousness and episodic memory are required for “episodic-autobiographical memory,” or EAM (a diachronic sense of self), and that EAM is probably unique to humans.

⁹⁵ Francescotti, “The Problem of Animal Pain and Suffering,” 115–16 (citing Murray, *Nature Red in Tooth and Claw*).

tion, however, seems to be avoidable through noting important distinctions and reemphasizing the Thomistic concept of consciousness.

First, it will be helpful to discuss a distinction that has been emphasized by Tulving. Tulving and his associates make a careful distinction between consciousness and awareness. He says that “consciousness” is “a general capacity that an individual possesses for particular kinds of mental representations and subjective experiences.”⁹⁶ “Awareness” is “a particular manifestation or expression of this general capacity.”⁹⁷ Tulving explains that:

Consciousness, like other capacities of living systems, has no object; it is not directed at anything. It is like a stage that allows some actions, but not others, to take place on it, but it does not prescribe action. Awareness always has an object; it is always of something. Thus, awareness presumes consciousness, but consciousness does not imply awareness: Consciousness is a necessary but not sufficient condition of awareness.⁹⁸

Accordingly, I have been careful throughout this essay to use the terms “consciousness” and “self-awareness” when referring to humans and nonhuman animals.

Regardless, Francescotti says that pain states having a “what it is like” character are “clear” cases of nonhuman animal suffering. But it is not clear that these are “clear” cases of suffering. This is because, as concluded above, it is likely that nonhuman animals are *conscious* of pain, but not that they are self-referentially *aware* of their pain. If nonhuman animals lack metacognitive abilities, then they can only be conscious of pain and suffering. Pain and suffering would be just one part of the kaleidoscope of their conscious experience. They would react to it according to their instincts and associatively learned behavior. If they possess lower-order metacognitive abilities, then they can be aware, yet not self-referentially aware, of pain and suffering. They would experience, focus upon, and make judgments regarding pain and suffering, yet they would not do this on a personal level.

Tulving’s three levels of consciousness and awareness (anoetic, noetic, and auto-noetic) are helpful here as well. Of anoetic consciousness, he explains: “[It] is temporally and spatially bound to the current situation. Organisms possessing only anoetic consciousness are conscious in the

⁹⁶ Wheeler, Stuss, and Tulving, “Toward a Theory of Episodic Memory,” 335.

⁹⁷ Wheeler, Stuss, and Tulving, “Toward a Theory of Episodic Memory,” 335.

⁹⁸ Wheeler, Stuss, and Tulving, “Toward a Theory of Episodic Memory,” 335.

sense that they are capable of perceptually registering, internally representing, and behaviourally responding to aspects of the present environment, both external and internal.”⁹⁹ Concerning noetic consciousness, he further states in the same place: “[It] allows an organism to be aware of, and to cognitively operate on, objects and events, and relations among objects and events, in the absence of these objects and events. The organism can flexibly act upon such symbolic knowledge of the world.” As explained, nonhuman animals possess anoetic consciousness and possibly noetic consciousness, but not auto-noetic consciousness.

If neo-Cartesian option 3 is necessarily tied to the “intrinsic phenomenal qualities” of states possessed by nonhuman animals, then perhaps Franciscotti’s objection holds here. But as explained above, neo-Thomism does not necessarily focus on “what it is like” for animals to experience the world, but only that they are conscious. Thus, regardless of whether auto-noetic consciousness is the only type of consciousness accompanied with qualia, noetic, or anoetic consciousness is all that is needed to meet the Thomistic standard for consciousness.

However, even if there is “something it is like” for animals to experience pain and suffering, this does not mean that the experience is necessarily intrinsically evil. Getting back to Franciscotti’s objection, as mentioned, it is not clear that the anoetic and noetic experiences of pain and suffering constitute suffering. This can be shown by emphasizing two Thomistic concepts.

Evil as Privation Theory

First, it is important to remember that Thomism entails what is known as the “evil as privation theory.” Aquinas discusses evil in many places in his writings, but he probably defines it most clearly in his discussion in the *Summa theologiae* [ST]: “Evil is the absence of the good, which is natural and due to a thing.”¹⁰⁰ It is important to note that, according to Aquinas, not all absences of good are evil, although all evils are absences of some good. In this regard, he is careful to make a distinction between “negative” and “privative” absences of good.¹⁰¹ Aquinas explains:

Absence of good, taken negatively, is not evil; otherwise, it would follow that what does not exist is evil, and also that everything

⁹⁹ Endel Tulving, “Memory and Consciousness,” *Canadian Psychology* 26 (1985): 1–12, at 3.

¹⁰⁰ ST I, q. 49, a. 1.

¹⁰¹ ST I, q. 48, a. 3. See also Aquinas, *De malo*, q. 1, a. 2.

would be evil, through not having the good belonging to something else. . . . For instance, a man would be evil who had not the swiftness of the roe, or the strength of a lion. But the absence of good, taken in a privative sense, is an evil; as, for instance, the privation of sight is called blindness.¹⁰²

As can be seen in Aquinas's definition of evil, an absence of a good is evil only if the good is "natural and due" to a particular subject. For example, it would be an evil for a human to be blind because sight is something humans should possess according to their natures. But it would not be an evil for a rock to be blind, as rocks do not naturally possess the ability to see.¹⁰³ The absence of sight in a human is a privation of a natural good, while the lack of sight in a rock is merely an absence of a good.

With this definition of evil in mind, it is clear that pain and suffering cannot be evils according to the Thomistic concept of "evil." The sensation of pain is thought to be a homeostatic emotion, similar to itching, hunger, and thirst.¹⁰⁴ Without pain, the lifespan of humans and most nonhuman animals would be significantly shorter.¹⁰⁵ It is no secret that the ability to feel pain is crucial for nonhuman animal flourishing. Additionally, researchers believe that other types of suffering, such as sadness, fear, and even depression, are likewise homeostatic emotional responses that are conducive to physical and social survival.¹⁰⁶

It is easy to conclude that God, as the creator of all human and nonhuman life, intended for animals to possess the abilities to anoetically and noetically experience pain and suffering. He endowed his creatures with

¹⁰² *ST I*, q. 48, a. 3.

¹⁰³ *ST I*, q. 48, a. 5, ad 1.

¹⁰⁴ See A. D. Craig, "A New View of Pain as a Homeostatic Emotion," *Trends in Neurosciences* 26 (2003): 303–7.

¹⁰⁵ For example, see Elna M. Nagasako, Anne Louise Oaklander, and Robert H. Dworkin, "Congenital Insensitivity to Pain: An Update," *Pain* 101 (2003): 213–19.

¹⁰⁶ For examples, see: Norbert Schwarz, "Warmer and More Social: Recent Developments in Cognitive Social Psychology," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 239–64, at 245; Dacher Keltner and Ann M. Kring, "Emotion, Social Function, and Psychopathology," *Review of General Psychology* 2 (1998): 320–342, at 324; Arne Öhman and Susan Mineka, "Fears, Phobias, and Preparedness: Toward an Evolved Module of Fear and Fear Learning," *Psychological Review* 108, no. 3 (2001): 483–522, at 483; and Nicholas B. Allen and Paul B. T. Badcock, "Darwinian Models of Depression: A Review of Evolutionary Accounts of Mood and Mood Disorders," *Progress in Neuro-Psychopharmacology & Biological Psychiatry* 30 (2006): 815–26, at 819.

these homeostatic emotions so that they would flourish in their natural environments.¹⁰⁷ In this way, pain and other forms of suffering are not evil, since God wills creatures to possess these metaphysically and instrumentally good abilities. Both humans and nonhuman animals experience pain and suffering, although nonhuman animals do not self-referentially experience pain and suffering.

Suffering as the Privation of the Willed Good

However, there is a particular sense in which Aquinas thought pain and suffering could be viewed as evils. For example in *ST*, he mentions that evils are rightly divided into two categories: evils of punishment and evils of fault. In describing evils of punishment, Aquinas says:

Intellectual creatures also suffer evil when they are deprived of forms or dispositions or anything else potentially necessary for good activity, whether the things belong to the soul or the body or external things. And such evil, in the judgment of the Catholic faith, needs to be called punishment.

For three things belong to the nature of a punishment. . . . The second characteristic of the nature of punishment is that it is contrary to the will of the one suffering punishment. For everyone's will inclines to seek the person's own good, and so it is contrary to one's will to be deprived of one's own good.¹⁰⁸

Aquinas is here explaining that natural evils are rightly called punishments in humans because the deprivation of the form or disposition of a human is against the will. In other words, no human wants to experience natural evils in his own body. This would include the experience of pain and suffering because such things are unwanted and unpleasant and entail a loss of user control.

However, if nonhuman animals do not possess immaterial intellects and if all of their actions are determined by the laws of nature, then they cannot possess free will. Pain and suffering cannot be evils for them in the subjective sense, since they can neither understand that they are in pain

¹⁰⁷ To be clear, I am not saying that pain and suffering are good in the sense that they ought to be sought for their own sakes. Instead, they are instrumental goods that help creatures flourish.

¹⁰⁸ *De malo*, q. 1, a. 4, in Aquinas, *On Evil*, trans. Richard Regan, ed. Brian Davies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 77.

nor freely will to stop experiencing it. Of course, it may appear that they will to avoid pain as humans do, but they are not willing in a morally relevant sense, as their pain-avoidance behavior is due to lower-order processes and not the higher-order wish to avoid the lower-order suffering.

Thus, from a Thomistic perspective, animal pain and suffering are not evil. They are not intrinsically evil states because they are good physiological processes that are natural to nonhuman animals and necessary for flourishing. Also, they are not evil in that they are not experienced self-referentially by nonhuman animals and cannot be against the will of nonhuman animals, since nonhuman animals do not possess free will.

Before concluding, it will be good to note an interesting aspect of the neo-Thomistic answer to the problem of animal suffering. As the evidence suggests, it is most likely that nonhuman animals are neither rational nor self-aware. While there are a few promising candidates, such as dolphins, elephants, and great apes, the majority of nonhuman animals are not considered to be possibly self-conscious.

Yet if it were conclusively determined that one of these candidates were in fact self-aware, this would not overturn the neo-Thomistic answer to the problem of animal suffering. This is because, if it were determined that an animal is rational and self-aware, this would entail that the animal would possess a rational soul along with an immaterial intellect. The reason that it would not be problematic is that Aquinas believed that rational animals can survive the death of their bodies due to the immateriality of the intellect.¹⁰⁹

Thus, if an animal were found to be rational and self-aware, it would follow that the animal could participate in the resurrection of the dead at the end of days. Since nonlinguistic animals do not know the difference between right and wrong and also could never understand the Gospel message, it is possible that they could live in the new heavens and new earth with human saints at the end of days. Thus, a relatively short life involving suffering would ultimately result in eternal life in the presence of God. The suffering of rational nonhuman animals (if such creatures were found to exist) would be allowed by God for the purpose of communicating his goodness. Perhaps God decided that the hierarchy of beings he creates to achieve his purpose should include rational nonhuman animals.¹¹⁰ So, even if a theist is in doubt as to the personhood of any

¹⁰⁹ *ST I*, q. 75, a. 6; *SCG II*, ch. 79–81; *Q.D. de anima*, a. 14.

¹¹⁰ For a discussion of the Thomistic concepts of God's purpose for the universe, the necessity of a hierarchy of beings, what it means for God to "communicate his goodness," and what these entail for the problem of animal suffering, see B. Kyle

particular animal, they can conclude that, if the animal is self-aware, the animal will ultimately experience a fate similar to that of humans who join God in eternity.

Conclusion

So it seems that the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, along with contemporary philosophical and scientific evidence, provides a solution to the problem of animal suffering. Aquinas believed that the difference between human and nonhuman animals is that the former possess rational souls and the latter possess merely sensitive souls. As rational animals, humans possess immaterial intellects, which give them the abilities of rationality and self-awareness. The lack of an immaterial intellect makes it such that nonhuman animals are neither rational nor self-aware, and therefore lack moral agency and personhood.

Contemporary philosophical and scientific evidence supports Aquinas's medieval theory of animal minds. The evidence suggests that nonhuman animals are incapable of abstract reasoning and lack higher-order metacognitive abilities and episodic memory. Thus, nonhuman animals do not experience pain and suffering as persons. They do not have higher-order access to their lower-order mental states and they cannot self-referentially remember or anticipate painful experiences. Also, they cannot come to the understanding that they ought not be in pain.

It could be objected that this does not solve the problem, since animals are phenomenologically aware of pain and suffering. However, it was shown that this cannot be understood as evil because pain and suffering are metaphysically and instrumentally good physiological processes. So, pain and suffering are not evil because they are not privations of proper goods and are conducive to flourishing. Moreover, pain and other unpleasant states are not evils in nonhuman animals because nonhuman animals do not possess free will.

The evidence suggests that nonhuman animals are most likely not self-aware and that there is no problem of animal suffering. However, even if a certain kind of nonhuman animal were found to possess self-awareness, this would not eliminate the neo-Thomistic answer. Instead, all it would entail is that the certain kind of animal would most likely be rewarded with eternal life at the end of days. Thus, neo-Thomism not only provides an answer to the problem of animal suffering but also provides a more compelling answer than does neo-Cartesianism. Most researchers believe

Keltz, "God's Purpose for the Universe and the Problem of Animal Suffering," *Sophia* (2017): 1–18.

that nonhuman animals are conscious, but few, if any, believe that nonhuman animals are self-aware like humans. N: V

Do Thomists Have Rights?

DOMINIC LEGGE, O.P.
Dominican House of Studies
Washington, DC

In the standard account of the historical development of the idea of natural rights, the watershed innovation is typically said to be the notion that individual persons themselves “possess” rights: not only that we judge something to be “right” by nature, in an objective sense (“objective right” or “objective rights”), but that individual human subjects “have natural rights” that they can maintain over against others (“subjective rights”). Some view this development of the idea of subjective rights in a positive light as the crucial foundation for contemporary doctrines of human rights; others regard it as a corruption of classical theories of justice and the beginning of the decay and decadence of contemporary liberal regimes.¹

For centuries, Thomists—those who lay claim to the principles and heritage of St. Thomas Aquinas—have played a prominent role in this history. In the early sixteenth century, Dominican Thomists like Francisco de Vittoria, Domingo de Soto, and Bartolome de las Casas were instrumental in the development of a theory of natural rights that would serve to limit the power of the Spanish crown and of colonial masters over the natives of the new world. In the twentieth century, in the immediate aftermath of World War II, Jacques Maritain mounted a principled campaign as a Thomist for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And contem-

¹ For a moderate critique of the contemporary discourse that views rights as absolute, see Mary Ann Glendon, *Rights Talk: The Impoverishment of Political Discourse* (New York: The Free Press, 1991). Patrick Deneen has offered a more trenchant critique along different lines in “Unsustainable Liberalism,” *First Things*, August/September 2012, 25–31.

porary interest in Aquinas's approach to law and justice is increasing, as is evident from several recent publications.²

Yet a lively debate has developed in recent decades over the Thomistic pedigree of subjective rights. Were these Thomists in fact faithful to the principles of Thomas Aquinas?³ Is a doctrine of subjective rights found in Aquinas?⁴ If not, is it an organic development from Thomas's own views? Or can Aquinas's thought be used in a more general way to ground a theory of subjective natural rights? To put it in the terms of Leo Strauss, does Aquinas truly belong in what he terms the classic natural right tradition, or is Aquinas actually a precursor and forerunner of the modern doctrine of natural rights? (In *Natural Right and History*, Strauss himself seems to regard Aquinas as a liminal figure, still within the classic tradition but sowing the seeds of its demise in post-Enlightenment modernity.⁵) The participants in the debate over these questions, whether or not they think subjective rights are a positive development, generally take it for granted that the crucial shift is from a focus on duties based on an objective sense of "what is naturally right, or just, or due" to a subjective theory of "natural rights" that I "possess" as an individual person.

It is my claim that such questions miss the point and, worse, hide the fact that, in the centuries after Aquinas, some putative Thomists diverged in important ways from Aquinas's own principles. The resulting (so-called) Thomistic theories of natural rights involved a shift in perspective that has

² For example, J. Budziszewski's recent *Commentary on Thomas Aquinas's Treatise on Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) revives the medieval practice of commenting, line by line, on the text of an eminent authority. That something like this would be published by a major contemporary academic press is a good indication of the growing appeal of scholarship on Aquinas in this area. See also: Douglas Kries, *The Problem of Natural Law* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007); Russell Hittinger, *The First Grace: Rediscovering the Natural Law in a Post-Christian World* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2003).

³ Alasdair MacIntyre criticizes Maritain's putatively Thomistic argument for human rights as "quixotic," "an uncharacteristic lapse," and producing "a conception of rights alien to and absent from Aquinas's thought" (*Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* [Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990], 76).

⁴ Two prominent scholars on the history of natural rights disagree sharply on many issues, but they agree in opining that Aquinas did not have such a doctrine: Michel Villey, *La formation de la pensée juridique moderne: cours d'histoire de la philosophie du droit* (Paris: Montcrestien, 1975), and Brian Tierney, *The Idea of Natural Rights: Studies on Natural Rights, Natural Law, and Church Law, 1150–1625*, Emory University Studies in Law and Religion 5 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), esp. 257–60.

⁵ Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950), 163–64.

worked much mischief in the domain of natural rights theory. Recovering Aquinas's own view is, I believe, quite important if we are to think aright about a healthy political order. But contemporary commentators have generally failed to recognize that some supposedly Thomistic theories are only Thomistic masquerades.

In order to bring this to view, I will first discuss what I consider to be the key principles of Aquinas's own account and how the distinction between objective and subjective rights is a relatively unimportant side issue compared to the critical insight of Aquinas's position: that law and justice, and consequently any theory of natural rights, should always be understood in terms of an overarching order to the good. Then I will speak about how that key dimension was eclipsed, first in the thought of late-medieval thinkers opposed to Aquinas (like William of Ockham), and then in the thought of Francisco Suarez and subsequent Jesuit and Jesuit-influenced Thomists. Finally, I will discuss how the eclipse of this key dimension has widespread and damaging repercussions and will attempt briefly to make the case that, if we wish to have natural rights in a healthy political order, it is important to recover Aquinas's central insight.

Thomas Aquinas on Law, Justice, and *Ius*

Did Thomas Aquinas recognize subjective natural rights? In essence, the answer is yes. But focusing exclusively on this question obscures Aquinas's understanding of the complex interrelationship among justice, law (*lex*), right (*ius*), and the common good.

Let us start with justice. In his great synthetic *Summa theologiae*, Aquinas first discusses justice as an attribute of God. In doing so, he affirms a key principle: justice always refers to *a wise or reasoned ordering among things*. When we speak about justice in God, we are referring first of all to the divine intellect, insofar as God's intellect conceives the perfectly wise plan by which all things are ordered to himself. Justice is only secondarily in God's will, insofar as, by his will, he acts according to the wise order he has conceived.

Since the object of the will is the good as understood [by the intellect], it is impossible that God would will anything but the plan [*ratio*] he conceives by his intellect, which is like a law of justice, according to which his will is right and just. Hence what he does according to his will, he does justly, just as we act justly when we act according to the law.⁶

⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* [ST] I, q. 21, a. 1, ad 2: "Cum bonum intellectum sit obiectum voluntatis, impossibile est Deum velle nisi quod ratio suae

Here we are very far from later voluntaristic theories according to which the decree of God's will, which we are bound to obey, is the ultimate root of justice and law. For Aquinas, law is *not* primarily the expression of God's will, but rather, the wisely ordered plan of creation in God's intellect is like the "law" that guides the perfectly just willing of God. Law is an expression of *reason*, an ordering according to reason, even in God. And so justice results from rightly willing according to the wise or reasoned ordering of all things to God.

This understanding of justice, order, and reason is echoed by Aquinas's famous definition of law as "an ordination of reason for the common good, made by one with authority, and promulgated."⁷ Aquinas crafted this definition with care, intending it to account not only for human written laws but also for natural law, divine positive law, and the eternal law in the mind of God. Like justice, law designates for Aquinas an order of reason. It is a rule and measure of acts not primarily because a subordinate is bound to obey his superior, but because the law sets forth the ordered plan to attain the end. Insofar as an act fails to conform to that plan, it does not conduce to attaining the end, and so lacks the rectitude of order.

Later in the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas treats of justice in human affairs. There, he speaks of it as a moral virtue in the soul by which man is made good. That is, he treats human justice as part of a broader account of how man is ultimately ordered to God within the complex network of overlapping relationships he has with others, like his family, his neighbors, his city, and so forth:

Justice by its essence implies a certain rectitude of order . . . insofar as it implies a right order in man's very act. And thus justice is held to be a virtue, either as particular justice, which rightly orders man's act in relation to another individual man; or as legal justice, which rightly orders man's act in relation to the common good of a multitude.⁸

sapientiae habet. Quae quidem est sicut lex iustitiae, secundum quam eius voluntas recta et iusta est. Unde quod secundum suam voluntatem facit, iuste facit, sicut et nos quod secundum legem facimus, iuste facimus."

⁷ *ST* I-II, q. 90, a. 4.

⁸ *ST* I-II, q. 113, a. 1: "Iustitia de sui ratione importet quandam rectitudinem ordinis . . . secundum quod importat ordinem rectum in ipso actu hominis. Et secundum hoc iustitia ponitur virtus quaedam, sive sit particularis iustitia, quae ordinat actum hominis secundum rectitudinem in comparatione ad alium singula-

This text brings into the foreground another key dimension of justice for Aquinas: it implies a reasoned or wise ordering, and more specifically, an ordering *to the good, an ordering that makes man good.*

At this point, we have identified three key elements in Aquinas's account of justice: it involves (1) an ordering (2) according to reason (3) to the good. And with these elements in mind, we are now ready to take up a key Latin term for theories of natural rights: *ius*.

Thomas's says that *ius* is the *object* of justice. One is just when one renders to another his *ius*. What does this mean? *Ius* is hard to translate into English. Standard translations usually render it as "right," but it can also mean "the just thing," or "what is due." We could also say that *ius* is "what is right," or perhaps "the fair." The term is drawn from the Roman legal tradition, from Roman legal judgments: a judge would declare the *ius* in a case. (That Aquinas uses this Roman term in an otherwise Aristotelian definition of justice provides a good example of how Aquinas integrates and synthesizes Aristotle with the Roman and Augustinian traditions.) Sometimes *ius* can even be translated as "law," but that is not quite correct, according to Aquinas. Especially when we are speaking of a written law, he explains, the *ius* is the measure and the intelligible form of a law in the same way that the artisan's idea of the table he is going to make is the mental exemplar and measure of what he carves in wood. And more generally, law is a kind of expression of *ius*.⁹

Aquinas's point is that we judge whether an action is just, or whether a law is just, by reference to this objective measure or object of justice: have I rendered to another his *ius*, that is, what is fair, what is due? This has led to a misunderstanding, however. Aquinas certainly thinks that justice always has this objective dimension of *ius* as the object of justice, as something that expresses what is fair or equal in a given human relationship or set of relationships, but this has led some to argue that Aquinas presents an understanding of *ius*, and thus of "right" (or "rights"), as exclusively objective, or at least in a predominantly objective sense. This objective sense of *ius* is then contrasted with later natural rights theories that begin to use the term *ius* to designate a right or claim that belongs to an individual, one that he can assert over against others. Here, the argument goes, we find the origin of a modern understanding of subjective rights: rights as belonging to a person, a kind of moral faculty that characterizes individual subjects.

rem hominem; sive sit iustitia legalis, quae ordinat secundum rectitudinem actum hominis in comparatione ad bonum commune multitudinis."

⁹ *ST* II-II, q. 57, a. 1, ad 2.

Yet, if one accepts Aquinas's account of *ius* as the object of justice, it does not at all follow that *ius* cannot also be understood as a subjective right, as a claim that one person has over against another. Indeed, this is merely to reformulate Aquinas's account from a different perspective. The reason he emphasizes that *ius* is the object of justice and that it has an objective character is to underline that what is due in a particular case does not depend on the characteristics of the just man, but is rather a measure external to him. This marks a significant distinction between justice and the other moral virtues, which *do* depend on the subjective characteristics of the person who possesses that virtue. You cannot judge whether a man is temperate in eating unless you know what is the right measure of food for him, and that measure will depend on his subjective qualities (for instance, whether he is an offensive lineman on the college football squad or a sedentary professor who lives in the library), whereas you *can* judge that an act is just simply by looking at whether one has rendered what is due, the *ius*. This means that justice has a certain objective quality, because there is a kind of "out-there-ness" to the *ius*, to "what is due," that is a function of the relationship or order between the parties and does not directly depend on their personal qualities.¹⁰

Even so, it is entirely possible to speak about this objective *ius* from the perspective of the person *to whom* it is owed, and even to suggest that a person can make a claim for what is due to him—he has a "right" to it. This is simply to regard the objective *ius* from the point of view of the person to whom it is due. The objective "due" thus becomes a subjective claim or right.¹¹

My argument on this point cuts against the grain of most of the scholarship of recent decades on Thomistic natural rights. No less an authority than Ernest Fortin, the eminent priest and Straussian, claims that the notion of subjective rights based on natural law or natural justice is absent

¹⁰ Some additional qualifications are needed here. For example, for Aquinas, more is due to one holding a particular office than to the average citizen. In the United States, we recognize this in many ways: all in the courtroom stand when the judge enters, whom they address as "your honor"; the president, even though he will someday return to private life, is surrounded by honors and is "due" a personal staff and an executive mansion in virtue of the office.

¹¹ John Finnis makes this point quite persuasively, if briefly, in "Aquinas on *ius* and Hart on Rights: A Response to Tierney," *Review of Politics* 64 (2002): 407–10. Jean Porter makes a similar argument at much greater length, specifically about Aquinas's conception of *ius*, in "Justice, Equality, and Natural Rights Claims: A Reconsideration of Aquinas's Conception of Natural Right," *Journal of Law and Religion* 30 (2015): 446–60.

from, and even foreign to, Aquinas's thought. Fortin concedes that the research of Brian Tierney (a historian of natural rights) shows that, in the century before Aquinas, canonists formulated subjective rights based on positive law (like the Church's canon law). But this is a far cry, Fortin argues, from grounding subjective rights on natural law principles.¹² For his part, Tierney—whose scholarship is regarded as the standard historical account of the development of subjective rights—accepts the dichotomy between objective and subjective rights and regards Aquinas as a representative of the objective rights tradition, in opposition to both earlier and later subjective rights proponents.¹³

In my view, both Fortin and Tierney are mistaken. In fact, if you read beyond the narrow slices of the *Summa theologiae* that political theorists are wont to consult, Aquinas very explicitly speaks of what is objectively “due” to someone as a subjective *ius* or right that he possesses and can assert. I have come across at least twenty-three different examples of “subjective *ius*” in Aquinas.¹⁴ For example, he says that “free men . . . have the right and capacity [*ius et facultatem*] in some cases to resist the precepts of a king or prince.”¹⁵ In other words, the king's just authority is limited, and this same truth can be expressed as a right or faculty belonging to free citizens. Elsewhere, Aquinas says that, in some matters, a free citizen has a right of contradicting a ruler, *ius contradicendi*, which suggests a right to contradict in speech or even oppose a ruler, as well as to refuse compliance with the ruler's commands.¹⁶ Aquinas also says that, if one has suffered an injury, a private person “is able to prosecute his right [*ius suum*] in the

¹² Ernest Fortin, “On the Presumed Medieval Origin of Individual Rights,” in *Collected Essays*, ed. J. Brian Benestad, vol. 2, *Classical Christianity and the Political Order: Reflections on the Theologico-Political Problem* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), 243–64, esp. 246–47.

¹³ Tierney, *The Idea of Natural Rights*, 257–60. Annabel Brett offers a more nuanced perspective when she identifies different types of subjective right that she contrasts with the objective right tradition exemplified by Aquinas (*Liberty, Right and Nature: Individual Rights in Later Scholastic Thought* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997], 89–97; 123–24). Even so, the subjective–objective distinction animates important parts of her analysis.

¹⁴ It is not clear in all twenty-three examples that a subjective *ius* would correspond to what we would call a “right.” In some of these texts, *ius* might be translated as “authority” rather than “right.” My point here is not that Aquinas has a full-fledged enumeration of subjective rights, but that it is commonplace in his thought that an *ius* would “belong to” a person who could assert or make a claim based on it.

¹⁵ Aquinas, *De virtutibus*, q. 1, a. 4: “Liberis . . . habent ius et facultatem repugnandi quantum ad aliqua praecepta regis vel principis.”

¹⁶ *ST* I-II, q. 58, a. 2: “Liberis . . . habent ius in aliquo contradicendi.”

tribunal of his superior.”¹⁷ In other contexts, Thomas speaks of an adopted child having a right or *ius* in the adoptive family’s inheritance,¹⁸ of the finder of buried treasure having a right in it,¹⁹ of a baptized person having a right to receive the Eucharist,²⁰ of the Church as having rights [*iura*] that should be defended against usurpation by civil rulers (referring explicitly to Thomas a Becket and King Henry II of England),²¹ and even of certain communities having a right to provide themselves with a king, and thus also having the capacity to depose a king who becomes a tyrant.²² Many of these are, in fact, quite close to what later theorists will label natural rights.²³

¹⁷ *ST* II-II, q. 40, a. 1.

¹⁸ *ST* I-II, q. 114, a. 3.

¹⁹ *ST* II-II, q. 66, a. 5, ad 2.

²⁰ *ST* III, q. 67, a. 2.

²¹ *Contra impugnantes* IV, ch. 3.

²² *De regno* I, ch. 7.

²³ In addition to the eight examples just cited, and the ninth discussed just below, I have found fourteen other examples, across twenty-three different texts, of a “subjective *ius*” in Aquinas: *ST* I-II, q. 96, a. 3 (to protect the right of one’s friend [*ius amici sui*] may be a virtuous act of courage); I-II, q. 96, a. 4 (in some cases, a man should “go the extra mile” by ceding his *ius* to avoid scandal or disturbance); II-II, q. 87, a. 3 (a cleric with the care of souls has the right of receiving tithes [*ius accipiendi decimas*] from those he serves); II-II, q. 100, a. 2, ad 5 (*ius* in a bishopric or any other dignity or prebendary, acquired either through election or provision); a. 4 (a right of patronage [*ius patronatus*]—that is, a right to present clerics for an ecclesiastical benefice); III, q. 67, a. 6 (a cleric in certain cases has a right of baptizing [*ius baptizandi*] those under his care); III, q. 57, a. 6, ad 3 (Christ “acquired for himself and for us, in perpetuity, the right [*ius*] and the worthiness of a heavenly dwelling-place”); *De decem praeceptis*, prolog. (charity acquires for us an *ius* to the inheritance of God, which is eternal life); *Quodlibet* II, q. 5, a. 1 (a father has a right of governance [*ius prelationis*] over his children for the sake of the good management of the household); *In orationem dominicam*, a. 5 (we take away the *ius* of God when we prefer our will to his); *Super Rom* 13, lec. 1 (a king has rights [*iura*] to receive tribute from his subjects); *In orationem dominicam*, a. 2 (a king has an *ius* in his reign even before that reign is declared); *Super Rom* 9, lec. 3 (a king has rights [*iura*] in his kingship which he rightfully defends against others); *ST* II-II, q. 12, a. 2 (the *ius domini* of a prince to govern his subjects); I-II, q. 105, a. 1, ad 5 (it is the king’s *ius* to draft young men into military service and to take things from his subjects in order to secure the common good, though this is often turned into an unjust usurpation by tyrants); I-II, q. 114, a. 1 (paternal *ius* and lordly *ius*); II-II, q. 100, a. 4, ad 4 (Jacob received a right of inheritance [*ius promogeniturae*] by divine election); *Super Heb* 2, lec. 3 (the *ius* of primogeniture); *Super Rom* 8, lec. 6 (a son has an *ius* in sharing in the inheritance); *Super Matt* 25, lec. 3 (Marietti no. 2095; to take possession of an inheritance belongs to one with an *ius*); *ST* III, q. 46, a. 3, obj. 3 (“the devil had no *ius* in man because he deceived

One more notable example is worth mentioning because, in it, Aquinas expressly argues that a right possessed by an individual is based on natural law. It is found in one of his *quodlibetal* disputations at the University of Paris. *Quodlibet* literally means “ask whatever you please,” and it was a demanding academic exercise in which other members of the university could publicly pose to Aquinas a question on any subject they liked, and he would be expected to give a magisterial answer. In this case, a questioner asked whether one may baptize Jewish infants even if their parents object. Aquinas writes:

It would injure Jewish parents if their children were baptized notwithstanding their objections, because it would violate their right of parental governance [*ius patriae potestatis*]. . . . [The reason is that] it is of natural right [*de iure naturali*] that a son is under the care of his father until he gains the use of reason, and hence it would be contrary to natural justice if, before a child has the capacity for free choice [*liberi arbitrii*, the full capacity of free will in someone who has attained the use of reason, normally around the age of seven], he were taken away from his parents’ care, or if something were ordered concerning him notwithstanding his parents’ objections. But after he begins to have the use of free choice, then he begins to be his own [*incipit esse suus*], and he is then able to provide for himself with respect to those things that concern observing divine or natural law. At that point, he can consent to the faith and be baptized even if his parents object, though he must not be induced to accept the faith by coercion, but only by persuasion—yet not before he has the use of reason.²⁴

In this remarkable text, Aquinas speaks of the parents as *suffering an*

him by fraud”); *Super Rom* 8, lec. 1 (the devil has no *ius* regarding the innocent); *Super Ioan* 14, lec. 8 (Marietti no. 1975) (because the devil attacked Christ, over whom he had no right, he deserved to lose what he held justly).

²⁴ *Quodlibet* II, q. 4, a. 2, sc and corp.: “Fieret autem Iudaeis iniuria, si eorum filii baptizarentur eis inuitis, quia amitterent ius patriae potestatis in filios iam fideles. . . . De iure naturali est quod filius, antequam habeat usum rationis, sit sub cura patris; unde contra iusticiam naturalem esset, si puer ante quam habeat usum liberi arbitrii, a cura parentum subtrahatur uel de eo aliquid ordinetur inuitis parentibus. Postquam autem incipit habere usum liberi arbitrii, iam incipit esse suus et potest, quantum ad ea quae sunt iuris diuini uel naturalis, sibi ipsi prouidere, et tunc est inducendus ad fidem non coactione, set persuasione, et potest, etiam inuitis parentibus, consentire fidei et baptizari. Non autem ante quam habeat usum rationis.” *ST* II-II, q. 10, a. 12, duplicates this text, nearly word for word.

injury if they are deprived of their *ius* to raise and govern their children. No positive law can contravene this right, in Aquinas's view, because, according to the order of nature, children are entirely under the care of their parents until they attain the age of reason. *Ius* clearly has here a subjective dimension that is grounded in the natural order of things, and hence it pertains to the natural law: it is the *ius* of the parents to raise their own children, and to violate this *ius* would do an injury to the parents.

Once the children reach the age of reason, Aquinas thinks the situation changes. Parents still have a right to care for their children, and children still have to obey their parents with respect to the good ordering of the household and their education in virtue.²⁵ But as persons now fully possessed of the use of reason and free will, children come into full possession of themselves, which means that they now enjoy the right to worship God according to the judgment of their own minds, notwithstanding a contrary wish of their parents.²⁶ Indeed, this kind of possession of self is, according to Aquinas, the ultimate root of the equality of justice between human beings, and it is what makes it possible for us to be due something in the proper sense of the word, to possess a "right" or *ius*.

It would not seem a great leap from Aquinas's reasoning here to an account of natural rights as belonging to persons in virtue of their nature as free and rational creatures.²⁷ This was precisely the sort of reasoning that later Dominican Thomists *did* articulate in the controversies over the enslavement of the indigenous peoples of the New World. Indeed, in the very text I have been quoting, Aquinas expressly says that, even where the civil law places a man in a state of servitude, he retains his right of parental governance of his children, and also his right to determine how he himself will worship God, because these derive from "the order of natural or divine right [*ius*]."²⁸ "Nor should anyone disrupt the order of natural right, by which a son is under the care of his father."²⁹

This mention of order brings us back to the key dimension of Aquinas's

²⁵ *Quodlibet* II, q. 5, a. 1.

²⁶ It is hardly surprising that Aquinas takes this position about parental authority, since he himself, as a teenager, defied his parents and joined the then-fledgling Dominican Order.

²⁷ Porter emphasizes this aspect of Aquinas's thought and argues that it is a feature of Aquinas's core commitment to our natural equality, which is grounded in our "equality of status as free, self-directed rational agents" ("Justice, Equality, and Natural Rights Claims," 455–60).

²⁸ *Quodlibet* II, q. 4, a. 2, ad 3.

²⁹ *Quodlibet* II, q. 4, a. 2, ad 2: "Nec aliquis debet irrumperere ordinem iuris naturalis, quo filius est sub cura patris."

nas's account that I emphasized earlier. Aquinas never considers law, nor justice, nor *ius* (the object of justice), as belonging to an individual person abstracted from a wider teleological order. Rather, a subjective *ius* or right is, for Aquinas, always a way of looking at how an individual belongs to a larger order and is himself teleologically ordered, according to reason, to a good.

This is true even of the right to worship God according to one's conscience, which belongs to individuals who have the use of reason and free choice. For Aquinas, this right does not belong to them as pure or absolute individuals, abstracted from the wider order in which man exists. Rather, that subjective right is itself another way of expressing how man is ordered to God. Man possesses reason above all so that he can be ordered to God through it: "Man is ordered to God through reason, by which he is able to know God. Hence a child, before he has the use of reason, is, by natural order, ordered to God through the reason of his parents, to whose care he is naturally subject."³⁰

Subsequent Thinkers

Let us now shift our focus from Aquinas to subsequent thinkers. The standard historical account generally accepted by all sides in the contemporary debate over natural rights is that Aquinas lacked a doctrine of subjective rights, and that the development of such a doctrine in later thinkers involved a crucial shift from an objective sense of *ius* to a subjective one. Some praise it and others decry it, but most agree that the shift from objective to subjective marks a major change in approaches to law, justice, and rights. As we have seen, however, Aquinas clearly does sometimes speak of an *ius* as a right or a faculty of an individual derived from natural law or natural justice that he can assert over against other individuals, or even against a civil ruler, the deprivation of which causes him injury, and which he can vindicate by making a legal claim. To be sure, later thinkers develop a much more substantial account of subjective rights than Aquinas has. Some also have a theory of natural rights very different from his, but it is my claim that such theories are different *not* because they shift from objective to subjective rights, but primarily because they have lost sight of the truth that justice, law, and *ius* all depend on, and are facets of, *a wise or reasoned ordering of individuals to the good*.

³⁰ *Quodlibet* II, q. 4, a. 2, ad 4: "Homo ordinatur ad Deum per rationem, per quam Deum cognoscere potest: unde puer antequam usum rationis habeat, naturali ordine ordinatur in Deum per rationem parentum, quorum curae naturaliter subiacet; et secundum eorum dispositionem sunt circa ipsum divina agenda."

William of Ockham

In the history of moral theology, William of Ockham, the fourteenth-century Franciscan nominalist, is typically identified as the primary culprit on this score. As we saw earlier, when Aquinas spoke of justice in God, he held that the plan of God's wisdom by which all things are ordered back to God, a plan conceived by the divine intellect, is like a law for God's willing: God's will is just because he always wills in accord with his wise plan of order. Ockham reverses this because he thinks it denigrates God's omnipotence to suggest any limitation on what God could will. He thus places the divine will in the first and highest place, so that whatever God wills is thereby necessarily just.³¹ Likewise, where Aquinas had defined law as an ordination of reason for the common good (a definition that even applied to divine law), Ockham understood law as ultimately rooted in God's will, as a function of God's command.³²

For Ockham, then, law and justice cease to have a reference to a plan of order to the good and are principally matters of divine will or precept. The divine will becomes a source and measure of justice, and even of reason—a position nearly the direct opposite of Aquinas's. Indeed, Ockham even thinks that God could change what is just and right merely by changing his command: although God presently forbids us to hate, steal, and commit adultery, and therefore these acts are wrong, they would be right and meritorious if God were to command us to do them.³³

These changes to the conception of justice and law are the backdrop to Ockham's transformation of the meaning of *ius* in his political writings.³⁴

³¹ William of Ockham, *In I sent.*, d. 17, q. 3: "Eo ipso quod ipse vult, bene et iuste factum est" (*Opera theologica*, vol. 3, *Scriptum in librum primum Sententiarum (Ordinatio), distinctiones IV–XVIII*, ed. Girardus I. Etzkorn [St. Bonaventure, NY: St. Bonaventure University, 1977], 478).

³² Francis Oakley discusses this point in Ockham's thought in "Medieval Theories of Natural Law: William of Ockham and the Significance of the Voluntarist Tradition," *Natural Law Forum* 60 (1961): 65–75.

³³ Ockham, *In II sent.*, q. 15 (*Opera theologica*, vol. 5, *Quaestiones in librum secundum Sententiarum (Reportatio)*, ed. Gedeon Gál and Rega Wood [St. Bonaventure, NY: St. Bonaventure University, 1981], 352–53). God could even command the souls in heaven to hate him, in which case it would be right for them to do so, according to Ockham in *In IV sent.*, q. 16 (*Opera theologica*, vol. 7, *Quaestiones in librum quartum Sententiarum (Reportatio)*, ed. Rega Wood, Gedeon Gál, and Romaldus Green [St. Bonaventure, NY: St. Bonaventure University, 1984], 352). For Aquinas, such a view is nonsensical, since the beatitude of heaven consists in knowing and loving God.

³⁴ Armand Maurer's judgment is correct (*pace* Tierney and other recent interpreters of Ockham's political thought on rights): Ockham's political works should be read

Whereas Aquinas had spoken of *ius* as the object of justice, or what is due to someone in view of the complex ordering of individuals and communities to the good, such a conception of *ius* no longer makes any sense in Ockham's system of thought. Law and justice are principally matters of precepts handed down from above, demanding obedience of the will. For Ockham, the exterior act that one performs (such as eating, drinking, dressing, writing, reading in a book, or riding), considered as a matter of factual occurrence, is morally neutral.³⁵ What gives it its moral character is the *will* of the person who acts, namely, whether the person is actually willing prudently to act in conformity with the divine will according to the judgment of his or her conscience.³⁶ Consequently, he conceives of *ius* as a function of a positive grant of a privilege, a kind of positive enactment by the will of the sovereign. For Ockham, therefore, most rights are positive rights had "by some enactment or human agreement."³⁷ Ockham does acknowledge the existence of natural rights, *ius* "had from nature,"³⁸ but he seems to think of this along the same lines as a positive right: this *ius* arises from a kind of divine grant by which God gives a privilege to man that can be used as man sees fit. Thus, according to Ockham, in creating man, God gave to him a certain dominion, a legitimate sphere of activity and agency on matters not directly controlled by a precept of justice or

in continuity with his theological works (*The Philosophy of William of Ockham in the Light of Its Principles* [Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1999], 537). When one does so, one can see the deep coherence between them. After all, Ockham was one of the most brilliant minds of the fourteenth century, and one should expect that the core principles in one domain of his thought would not be abandoned another.

³⁵ Ockham, *Opus nonaginta dierum* 2, in *A Translation of William of Ockham's Work of Ninety Days*, vol. 1, trans. John Kilcullen and John Scott (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellon Press, 2001).

³⁶ This is evident if one examines Ockham's understanding of "actual prudence" (which he distinguishes from "habitual prudence"). Actual prudence, on his view, is something that "in no way is in our power," but rather is generated in us, moment by moment, by God. If God generates this actual prudence in you directing you to do some act and you then will to do it, the resulting act is virtuous. But if, in the midst of carrying out that act, God should cease to generate in you the actual prudence telling you that this act is to be done but you continue to carry out the act, your action is transformed from being virtuous into being vicious (Ockham, *Quaestiones variae*, q. 8, a., in *Opera theologica*, vol. 8, *Quaestiones variae*, ed. Girardus I. Etzkorn, Franciscus E. Kelley, and Josephus C. Wey [St. Bonaventure, NY: St. Bonaventure University, 1984], 409–20).

³⁷ Ockham, *Opus nonaginta dierum* 61.

³⁸ Ockham, *Opus nonaginta dierum*.

divine command.³⁹ It was here that Ockham located a person's natural *ius*, which he defined as a "licit power of a subject."⁴⁰ Within this sphere, an individual can freely use, or not use, whatever belongs to him, his *ius*.⁴¹

In sum, then, order, reason, and the good have been displaced in Ockham's thought from the central role they played in Aquinas's. For Ockham, justice and law do not necessarily involve an ordering to the good according to reason. Rather, they are matters of moral obligation: a precept of the divine will calls for man's will to obey. Consequently, *ius* is no longer understood as a function of an ordering to the good, but rather is a feature of the sphere of personal dominion granted to man by God, where man has the licit power to act as he sees fit as long as he remains within the bounds of the commands of God.

Francisco Suarez

It is important, however, that we not stop here, because some subsequent figures—including those who oppose Ockham's nominalism and claim to be interpreting Aquinas's thought—also lost sight of this crucial dimension of St. Thomas's thought. This is particularly the case with Francisco Suarez, the great Jesuit who, in the early part of the seventeenth century, stands at the origin of the distinctive Jesuit line of interpretation of Aquinas. (The founder of the Jesuits, St. Ignatius of Loyola, had designated Aquinas as the preferred theologian for his new society, and the Jesuits subsequently adopted Aquinas as their principal teacher in "Scholastic theology."⁴²) In 1612, Suarez published his *De legibus ac deo legislatore*, a massive treatise of moral and legal theory. As an obedient Jesuit, he consistently cites Aquinas throughout, which might give the impression that he is simply handing on and elaborating on the teaching of the Angelic Doctor. But he in fact consistently alters the meanings of the terms of Aquinas, ultimately producing a doctrine of law, justice, and rights that is different from the great Dominican thinker in some notable ways.

At the start of his treatise, Suarez sets out to define law, *lex*. For Suarez, the essence of law is not an ordination of reason to the common good, as Aquinas taught. Rather, Suarez reframes it thus: "Law is a certain measure

³⁹ Ockham, *Opus nonaginta dierum* 14: "complete power to subject and rule all temporal things and power to use such things." See also: *Opus nonaginta dierum* 2; Brett, *Liberty, Right, and Nature*, 65–66.

⁴⁰ Ockham, *Opus nonaginta dierum* 61.

⁴¹ Brett, *Liberty, Right, and Nature*, 62–68.

⁴² See Andrés I. Prieto, *Missionary Scientists: Jesuit Science in Spanish South America, 1570–1810* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2011), 161.

of moral acts, in the sense that such acts are characterized by moral rectitude through their conformity to law.⁴³ He then adds: “In the strict sense of the term, only that is law which imposes an obligation of some sort.”⁴⁴ Entirely absent from Suarez’s initial definition is any reference to an ordering to the common good. Law is first of all about moral precepts: one’s actions are good when they conform to the commands of a superior. As a result, even the terms “good” and “end” (which pepper Aquinas’s discussion of law and justice) largely disappear from Suarez’s treatment, replaced instead with the terms “right” and “wrong,”⁴⁵ measures not of whether an action produces the good or leads an actor to his proper end, but rather of whether an actor’s will is conformed to the moral command of his superior.

To be sure, Suarez does discuss the common good seventy-five pages later in his treatise, in chapter VII. But his understanding of the common good is far less robust than Aquinas’s, and it does not enter into the very definition of law. Rather, having defined law as a binding moral rule that imposes an obligation, he later adds, as a subsequent “characteristic condition,” that it should be enacted for the sake of the common good.⁴⁶ To put this another way, the central element of law—that law imposes an obligation—is derived from the *will* of the lawgiver who hands down the rule, whereas the fact that a law is ordered to “what is good and necessary” pertains to the lawgiver’s intellect.⁴⁷ And in the final analysis, Suarez affirms that the will of the legislator is primary and that his act of intellect gives shape to what his will has determined. Law, for Suarez, is therefore principally an act of the will of the legislator: “Law . . . as it exists in the lawmaker himself, is the act of a just and upright will, the act whereby a superior wills to bind an inferior to the performance of a particular deed.”⁴⁸

A similar transformation is also evident when Suarez examines the meaning of *ius*. While he acknowledges that *ius* can designate the object of justice, the true meaning of the word *ius*—its more strict and proper mean-

⁴³ Francisco Suarez, *De legibus* 1.1.5. All quotations from the *De legibus* are taken from Francisco Suarez, *Selections from Three Works*, ed. Thomas Pink, trans. Gwladys L. Williams, Ammi Brown, and John Waldron (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 2015).

⁴⁴ Suarez, *De legibus* 1.1.7.

⁴⁵ John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 46.

⁴⁶ See Suarez, *De legibus* 1.1.7: “It shall be formulated particularly with reference to that good.”

⁴⁷ Suarez, *De legibus* 1.5.21.

⁴⁸ Suarez, *De legibus* 1.5.24.

ing—is, he says, “a certain moral power which every man has, either over his own property or with respect to that which is due to him.”⁴⁹ Suarez’s definition differs from Aquinas’s not so much in the fact that *ius* can refer to a subjective right or faculty, but rather in that *ius* no longer, for Suarez, has any intrinsic reference to a wider order of relationships, nor is there any reference to a teleological ordering to the common good. (For Aquinas, it was precisely an individual’s place in a wider teleological order that gives rise to the *ius*.)

What is more, Suarez reverses the relationship of *ius* and *lex*, or law. In St. Thomas, *ius* is the just thing, the form of law, and thus the exemplar according to which a written law is crafted. For Suarez, however, law is the moral rule handed down by the will of a superior, and *ius* is the faculty or moral power that an individual possesses in virtue of the law.

Drawing Conclusions: Do Thomists Have Rights?

Because Suarez’s teaching was so influential among Catholic natural law thinkers, and especially among later Jesuit Thomists, contemporary commentators often assume that Suarez offers standard Thomistic natural law teaching. Fortin is a good example. He holds that the key break with Thomistic natural law teaching—the line between classical natural right and modern natural rights, if you will—is located not somewhere in the three centuries between Aquinas and Suarez, but in the three decades between Suarez and Hobbes.⁵⁰

Yet, as I hope is now evident, Suarez’s account of law, justice, and rights has a character fundamentally different from Aquinas’s, though not because of a shift from an objective sense of *ius* to a subjective one. Rather, the difference is twofold: (1) the loss of the recognition that law is fundamentally an ordination of reason to the common good, not the imposition of an obligation by the will of a superior; and (2) the loss of the sense that *ius* is a feature of the overarching teleological order to the good in which the rational creature is placed, rather than a moral power of the creature considered without reference to that order. Suarez may not be the source of these changes (one might wonder whether William of Ockham bears

⁴⁹ Suarez, *De legibus* 1.2.5.

⁵⁰ Fortin, *Collected Essays*, 2:273: “The real ‘watershed’ in the history of the rights doctrine is not to be located somewhere between Thomas and Suarez; it occurs with Hobbes, who set the stage for all subsequent discussion of this matter by denying that human beings are political by nature (something that Suarez and Grotius never did) and by proclaiming the absolute priority of rights to duties.” See also 2:248.

some responsibility for them, or even Duns Scotus⁵¹), but he is a major figure in their history. And it seems to me that these two changes together constitute the mainspring of the development of modern theories of natural rights, with their strengths but also the notable weaknesses identified by Strauss and others.

Should we try to return to the purity of the original Thomistic doctrine? Jesuit Thomists after Suarez may have modern rights, but do Dominican Thomists have rights? Can we formulate a Thomistic doctrine of rights that would be plausible today?

I would like to answer by summarizing the essentials of what I take to be Thomas's position. The *ius*, or what is due to another, the object of justice, depends, first, on the overarching order of the cosmos, which is laid out according to God's wisdom, and is therefore both intelligible and teleological, and which is composed of persons endowed with reason and free choice who are members of various communities that are themselves arranged in hierarchical order. Then, second, this *ius* is a function of the relationality that follows from the place that these persons have in this order.⁵² Nor is this order an abstraction: it is *the concrete, particular, historical order in which I find myself*. Man comes into the world as the child of parents, living in a human community, as a creature under God. He has not himself created or generated this order. Consequently, man necessarily and inevitably exists in an interlocking web of relationships, of belonging as a part to other wholes: his family, his clan, his city, the whole human race, the whole body of Christ, the whole of creation. These relationships are not constituted by man's choice. Rather, we could say that man is naturally and originally in these relationships.

Aquinas's understanding of justice, and thus of rights, is therefore quite different from the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment accounts derived from social contract theory, which postulate that man exists first as a kind of independent individual in a primitive "state of nature," and therefore brings to the relationships he chooses to enter certain fundamen-

⁵¹ MacIntyre, for one, identifies Scotus as a seminal figure, a precursor to Ockham and Kant, in the philosophical line of thought that accords primacy to the will over the intellect, and consequently that sees natural law as a matter of obedience to divine commands (*Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*, 155).

⁵² On this theme generally, see Christopher A. Franks, "Aristotelian Doctrines in Aquinas's treatment of Justice," in *Aristotle in Aquinas's Theology*, ed. Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 143–47. I got from Franks the idea to conceive of justice as relational. Of course, Aquinas transforms this idea from Aristotle because he understands all men to be in relation to God and to all other men in the *civitas Dei*.

tal rights that are, in a sense, anterior to those relationships. Such theories, whether we are speaking of Hobbes, Locke, or more recent authors like John Rawls, tend to abstract from the concrete historical relationships and, we might say, the initial conditions into which we are in fact born. They aim at developing an account of the basic or fundamental rights that human beings have purely in virtue of being human, such that justice becomes, at least in part, granting what is due in virtue of those rights, and so that individuals can then pursue whatever goods they deem worthy of their choice.

For Aquinas, in contrast, the ultimate end of man is not a matter of arbitrary choice, not even for God. The whole plan of divine providence originates in God's wisdom as an ordination of reason with respect to the good. And so, we are born into the world as creatures who naturally occupy a place in that order, and who are naturally ordered to a final end, a good, that we do not choose. Neither are our relationships matters of choice; we simply are in certain relationships: familial relations, relations with our neighbors, membership in a larger political and civic community, and so on. Justice thus has to do with our right ordering to the good that we do not determine for ourselves. It is based on a reality outside of us, in the order of relations in which we inevitably exist.

For a Thomist, then, rights are not properties of individuals as moral monads. Nor can we find the source of rights in an abstract definition of human nature, but rather by considering man as a rational and free creature ordered to God and to the common good of the hierarchy of communities to which he belongs. This allows us to see, then, how rights are connected to justice, to teleology, and to the common good.

In relation to Justice: Rights are a way of looking at what is due, the *ius* or *iustum*, insofar as it is due *to* someone who can then seek to have that "due" vindicated. This is, in Thomistic terms, a "right." Because of man's nature, we can draw certain conclusions about what man is, what man ought to be, and therefore how we should treat other persons, since they are equal to us insofar as they are human. Yet rights are not functions of individuals as individuals, but rather of persons who belong in a hierarchy of ordered wholes (families, cities, the whole human race, the whole cosmos), each of which has its own common good.

In relation to Teleology and the Common Good: Law is teleological. It is always ordered to the common good, either real or merely apparent. And rights are likewise teleological: they affirm what is required for persons to be rightly ordered to each other and to the political authority in view of the common good. Thus, to respect the rights of another, to give him what is *due* to him, not only pertains to his private good, but means acting in right

relationship to the order of the whole, to the common good.

Indeed, Aquinas teaches that man's ends are not arranged side-by-side on a horizontal plane, but exist in an ordered hierarchy: he is ordered to individual goods (like the good of his biological life), and then to higher and nobler common goods (like the good life that he shares in a virtuous family, a flourishing and friendly neighborhood, and a just city), and ultimately to God, the universal common good of the whole universe. Laws of various kinds direct man toward these various levels of good. Rights can therefore also be understood as a function of a just ordering of each person toward the common good.

Note, though, how this view differs from a typical contemporary theory of rights. In the classical Thomistic view, the end (the common good) and the ordering of the community to that end are primary. Rights articulate claims of justice in relation to the end. Consequently, rights are not absolute or unlimited claims, nor are they themselves the ultimate foundation of or reason for our political community. Rather, rights always point to something further and nobler than an individual or private good: the common good of the whole. This is not to say, of course, that individual rights must always bow before the demands of the political authority. To the contrary, Aquinas holds that some rights are a function of the order of man to a good that is prior to or transcends the political community (as we saw him argue concerning the right of a parent to care for his child). But even these rights do not stand on their own; rather, they stand in virtue of their relation to a good.

Contemporary rights theorists might object that this classical Thomistic view subordinates the liberty that individual rights guarantee under the common good in such a way that those rights will be endangered whenever the government (or the majority) find them inconvenient. Is this not, they would ask, precisely the reason why we should affirm the primacy of individual rights understood as anterior to political society and independent of the common good? A complete answer to this objection would require much longer treatment than can be provided here, but we can at least identify the confusion about the common good hiding in such questions. From Aquinas's perspective, the common good is not something that competes with the good of individuals, nor is it like other private goods that are diminished when they are shared (e.g., more people invited to the party means a smaller slice of cake for each). A common good is precisely the kind of good that can be shared by many without diminishment, like the good of victory for a sports team, or the good of justice in a city, or the good of peace among states. To say that rights stand in relation to a good, then, is not to say that some kind of alien or hostile "common good"

trumps or even destroys the good of the individual. Rather, the common good *is* a good for the individual, a good of a higher and nobler sort in which the individual participates, and without which it is impossible to have a full measure of human happiness. Human beings are ordered not only to private goods like food and shelter but also to common goods like justice, truth, civic friendship, and peace, and without at least some measure of these common goods, they will neither flourish nor be truly happy. As Aquinas puts it (paraphrasing Aristotle's *Politics*), the city exists "not only that men might live, but that they might live well."⁵³ That individuals have rights that they can assert, rights that the positive law should recognize, pertains, therefore, not only to the private good of individuals, but to the common good of the community: the "Blessings of Liberty" (as the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution puts it) should not be thought of as describing a merely private good, the individual property of discrete individuals, but rather a dimension of the common good. It is part of the common good that the community be just, that it recognize what is due to its members, that it be governed by the rule of law, and that it be composed of free citizens capable of directing their own lives by their own responsible choices. When the law acknowledges and protects the just right of a citizen, it is doing something quite different from pork-barrel spending that hands out material benefits (that is, essentially private goods) to the favored clients of the ruler. Acknowledging what is due to individuals is (at least in part) what makes a society just.

On this view, then, individual rights are not set over against the common good, as if an increase in the common good necessitated a diminishment of individual liberty. Rather, that individuals be secure in their liberties as citizens—that they "possess rights"—is precisely an aspect or dimension of the common good, and the protection of those rights in law is a means for securing the common good of a just republic. In all of this, subjective rights are understood as a function of an overarching order toward a good. To put it another way, rights are important (or even fundamental and indispensable) precisely because of the overarching primacy of the common good and the place that each individual has in the order of the whole.

Does this theory of rights offer a plausible alternative for our present political culture? Whether it would win many votes in a popular election, I will not presume to judge, but I think Aquinas would say that, no matter what theory we construct, in actual fact, by the very nature of the case, rights unavoidably and always are founded on some prior judgment about

⁵³ Aquinas, *In I pol.*, ch. 1.

the good, either the good for individual persons or the good for the human community. If that is true, then our epoch's shrill and proliferating claims of incompatible rights should tell us that, behind this camouflage, there is a deeper and more radical disagreement about what is good. Our political life can improve only if we bring this disagreement out into the open, where we can have an honest debate about the true end of our common life together.

There are some contemporary critics of the rights claims found in classically liberal political regimes who view such rights as the product of an Enlightenment mode of thought, containing a kind of poison pill ultimately destructive of the justice of such regimes. On such a view, one might argue that the American project was doomed to failure from the start: we should not be surprised that expanding rights claims have become the source of deep and enduring political conflict, and they are producing a regime that is increasingly illiberal. This is the inevitable corruption and self-contradiction of a regime built on a foundation of natural rights.

I hope it is evident that my argument is in a way the opposite of this view. While it may be true that certain Enlightenment versions of rights create mischief—namely, they set up insoluble political conflicts—it is not clear that the notion of rights must necessarily produce this kind of situation. My claim is that, underlying all rights claims there is always an orientation to some good, and so there always remains a real possibility to have a classical debate about how a community should order itself to the good. In other words, a regime that recognizes natural rights has not necessarily swallowed a poison pill, and a good Thomist can be a proponent of rights. What is more, our present regime does not necessarily need radical surgery to fix the problem. Rather, we need to recognize what is in fact already there: that rights necessarily involve an ordering to the good. Once one sees this, one can see how a regime like ours can be defended on Thomist terms.

So, in the end, do Thomists have rights? Yes. Does anyone else? Maybe not, at least, perhaps not the kinds of rights that work for a healthy political order. N.V.

Love as the Law of the Gift: Reading Paul with John Barclay and Aquinas

MICHAEL DAUPHINAIS

Ave Maria University

Ave Maria, FL

“Christmas is an irrational season.” This charming and poetic phrase has always struck me as profoundly wrong. Far from being irrational, Christmas is reason at its greatest height and depth: the manifestation of the Word, the divine reason, becoming flesh. Yet there is something understandable in the quote, since the gift of the incarnate Word in Bethlehem surely exceeds anything that human reason could have expected or deserved—and the incarnate Word is certainly opposed by fallen human reason. The actual quote is an excerpt from a poem by Madeleine L’Engle:

This is the irrational season
when love blooms bright and wild.
Had Mary been filled with reason
there’d have been no room for the child.¹

¹ Madeleine L’Engle, “After Annunciation,” in L’Engle and Luci Shaw, *WinterSong: Christmas Readings* (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw, 1996), 69. In another Christmas poem, L’Engle writes: “But now is the hour // When I remember // An infant’s power // On a cold December. // Midnight is dawning // And the birth of wonder.” (“Birth of Wonder,” in *Wintersong*, 99–100). It is worth observing that, in her poetry, L’Engle describes Advent/Christmas as both the “irrational season” and the “birth of wonder.” In so doing, she may well be objecting only a certain kind of rationalism that has been pervasive in modern thought. On the topic of reason versus rationalism, consider John Henry Newman’s distinction between implicit reason and explicit reason and his criticism of British empiricism, in particular for reducing reason to explicit reason (see Sermon 13 in his *Fifteen Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford between A.D. 1826 AND 1843*).

My interest here is not in L'Engle's theological views, but rather in considering the expression "the irrational season" as emblematic of a peculiarly modern way of thinking about God and his actions toward humanity. The typically modern way of considering gifts is to see them as opposed to reason. "Love blooms bright and wild" in the "irrational season," whereas a rational season in Mary would have shut the doors on the gift of love.² According to this typically modern view, the gift of the Christ child is neither self-interested nor calculated. Christ, according to this view, has entered the world to free us from the rational cycle of economic exchange and selfishness to enter a new world of gift, one in which human beings give freely to each other without any thought of return.

Yet we need to pause at this supposed dichotomy between reason and gift, between order and love. Such a dichotomy would undermine some of the most significant bonds within a society, particularly those of obligatory familial roles. For instance, a mother and father are obligated to love and provide for their children, an obligation discernable by reason; yet such loving support is also a gift given by loving parents, with those who give more in relationships often receiving more from such relationships. Moreover, gifts can be understood as gifts only to the extent that they possess an intelligibility open to human reason. Gifts have to participate somehow in the order of goodness and have to be recognized as such. A gift that purely does harm is no gift at all. The problem with opposing gift and order is that gifts both presuppose an order and establish new orders.

In his magisterial *Paul and the Gift*, John M. G. Barclay challenges many modern assumptions about the nature of the gift, assumptions that Barclay argues have clouded the interpretation of Paul and his teaching on redemption offered in Jesus Christ. Barclay draws on the anthropological investigations of the gift over the past several decades to remove some of our modern views of grace in order to allow us to see more clearly how Paul might have understood the climatic event of human history, the gift of Christ. The present article proceeds in two major parts. First, it will consider some themes from Barclay's book on the nature of the

² It is worth noting that the Catholic tradition has viewed Mary's "yes" to Gabriel as something rendered possible through her preservation from sin: Mary's "room for the child" requires more than the common "filled with reason." Hans Urs von Balthasar writes: "The *Maria fiat*, unequalled in its perfection, is the all-inclusive, protective and directive form of all ecclesial life. It is the interior form of *communio*, insofar as this is *an unlimited mutual acceptance*, far more than a human 'getting along together' or fraternization" (*The Office of Peter and the Structure of the Church*, trans. Andr ee Emery, 2nd ed. [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007; emphasis added], 223).

gift and Paul's unique understanding of grace as both incongruous and transformative. Second, the article will examine similar ways of reflecting on the Christian life in light of Aquinas's theology, with particular attention given to his commentaries on Paul. I will argue that Aquinas both confirms many of Barclay's insights and deepens—and gently corrects—the understanding of the gift of Christ as perfective of the Torah and creative of the new order in the Church.

Barclay: Pauline Grace as a Uniquely Transformative Gift

The Modern Distortion of the Gift

The phenomenon of the gift is reminiscent of Augustine's comments on time. We think we know what time is until we try to speak about it. Gifts are similar in many ways. We exchange gifts commonly. We use the language of "self gift" in the areas of the moral life and sexuality. We speak about God's gift of his Son. May gifts be taken back by the giver? Refused by the receiver? Do gifts come with an expectation of reciprocation? Is there such a thing as a "pure gift," and is this the ideal of the gift? Is a gift with strings attached a gift at all? The theme of gift is complex among humans, and only more so when considered between God and creation.

Certain strands within modernity developed the idea of gift in ways that have left it largely unrecognizable in comparison with its ancient and more standard approach. Barclay suggests that the modern Western idealization of the "pure gift" extended themes within the nature of the gift that also created distortions, distortions that are problematic in general, but particularly so for the interpretation of Paul. Barclay suggests that the ideal of the "pure gift" as something given freely without any expectations of a return created two new ideologies: first, that of the purely disinterested gift (the perfection of nonreciprocity); and second, that of the purely interested exchange (the perfection of reciprocity).³ These two ideologies create the modern tensions surrounding the nature of the gift and have led to the postmodern tendency to unmask putative gifts in society as merely exchanges.

So, are reciprocal gifts really gifts? Post-Luther, the emphasis has fallen on the ideal of nonreciprocity to such a degree that a gift that demands reciprocity is seen as no gift at all.⁴ The nonreciprocity of the gift pervades

³ John Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2105), 55. For the remainder of the present article, Barclay's book will be cited parenthetically in text simply by page number.

⁴ Barclay identifies, and limits, the role of Martin Luther in the "distinctively

typical modern thinking. It can be seen in the common opposition between egoism and altruism and between *eros* and *agape*. If the nonreciprocal gift arose in the Christian theological imagination in Luther, it has survived in the post-Christian imagination of Jacques Derrida, in which no gifts are possible and all exchanges are violent impositions of powers standing in judgment of the impossible pure gift (61–63). Yet this elevation of the gift to nonreciprocity comes at a cost, insofar as the gift no longer exists within the temporal history of humanity. Since all gifts, according to this view, can be shown to have some layer of exchange or intended reciprocity, no true gifts exist. Barclay helpfully shows that this view of the gift is not shared by the ancient world or much of the non-Western modern world. Instead, gifts form significant parts of the bonds that sustain human communities. Gifts given do expect return. Reflection on common experience supports this view. Parents give life, support, and love to their children; children give back such love, support, and care to their parents. Of course, such expectations may be abused, but this does not take away their proper use.

Barclay identifies Luther's break with the Augustinian and medieval tradition in his development of "pure altruism" as a possible perfection of grace.⁵ Luther saw the "instrumental reciprocity" in the work of Gabriel Biel as Pelagianism. Luther worried that, if grace is "I give this in order to get that," human beings would be the main agents in their own salvation. Moreover, Barclay identifies Luther's rejection of Aristotelian understandings of natures and *habitus*. In this way, the medieval tradition read Paul's teaching about grace as a new *habitus* influencing the Christian. Barclay has a powerful insight here that the Aristotelianism of Aquinas allowed him to read Augustine in a manner that shows the Christian life as powerfully elevated through the new *habitus* of divine grace.⁶ Luther's rejection

modern ideal of the gift-without-return": "This latter may have roots in Lutheran theology, but was universalized in Kantian ethics with its resistance to externally imposed obligation. We have thus become wary of the protestations of Derrida and others that a gift is truly such only if it entails no reciprocity or return. That peculiarly modern presumption does *not* correspond to the assumptions of antiquity and should not be allowed to determine what Paul or his fellow Jews might have understood by the grace or gifts of God" (185).

⁵ For the purposes of this article, I am following Barclay's presentation of Luther as a particular interpreter of Paul, one who emphasizes the nonreciprocity of grace. Whether Luther's actual theology allows for a more transformational notion of grace is not considered.

⁶ Barclay, however, appears hesitant to endorse what he identifies as the "narrowing" of grace in Augustine. According to Barclay, Augustine narrows his understanding of grace to a tightly interwoven complex of grace's priority and superabundance

of Aristotelianism thus created a misreading of Augustine on the transformative power of the Christ gift (100–101). Luther dropped the perfection of the gift identified by Barclay as efficacy. Grace is no longer effective in transforming the ungodly into the godly, who are thus capable of merit. Luther shifted the view of grace in the Christian imagination and in much of the modern world by emphasizing the “permanent state of incongruity”.

Barclay highlights how this modern idealization of the gift as pure gift separates the recipient from the giver. Without real gifts in the existing world, social bonds among particular individuals fail to be created and nourished. The rise of the modern understanding of the individual as existing prior to familial and social bonds might be viewed as a logical corollary to the deconstruction of gifts and reciprocity. Unity becomes an ideal unreachable in the actual self interests that drive human interaction. Barclay rightly expresses concern over how a one-sided notion of grace undermines the missional characteristic of modern Christian communities. Instead, grace properly understood as incongruous and reciprocal allows for a rebirth of such communities: “It is the incongruous grace that Paul traces in the Christ-event and experiences in the Gentile mission that is the explosive force that demolishes old criteria of worth and clears space for innovative communities that inaugurate new patterns of social existence” (572).

Paul's Incongruous Grace

Barclay develops this anthropological background into a substantive contribution to the role of grace in Paul. Specifically, he distinguishes among six unique perfections within the larger concept of gift and grace. Barclay's notable contribution to the debates surrounding Paul and grace is to disentangle the following aspects of grace. First, grace almost always includes a *superabundance* in which God gives according to the extravagant scale and “excessive” scope of his greatness, not according to that of his human recipients (70). Second, grace can be erroneously understood to require *singularity*, in which the omnibenevolent God gives exclusively according to his “pure benevolence” in such a manner that problematizes

with its efficacy and incongruity (95–97). On the theme of the way in which Aquinas marshals Aristotle's understanding of nature and motion (*motus*) to articulate the dynamic power of grace, see Simon Francis Gaine, O.P., “Aristotle's Philosophy in Aquinas's Theology of Grace,” in *Aristotle in Aquinas's Theology*, ed. Gilles Emery, O.P., and Matthew Levering (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 94–120.

“the punishment of evil” (70–71).⁷ Third, almost all accounts of grace entail *priority*, in which God’s gift always takes place “prior to the initiative of the recipient,” and is thus in no way obligated “by a previous gift” (71–72).⁸ Fourth, grace may be understood to be perfected in *incongruity* when God gives his gifts “without regard to the worth of the recipient” (72–73).⁹ Fifth, grace can be associated with *efficacy*, seen as perfect when it “fully achieves what it was designed to do” (73–74).¹⁰ Sixth, grace could be perfected—or perhaps distorted—in *noncircularity*, in which God’s gift is a “one-way, unilateral donation” without any expectation of a return, either because it is not desired or because it is not possible (74–75).¹¹ Having offered this classification of six distinct perfections within the broader concept of “gift,” and in particular divine gift, Barclay states, “to perfect one facet of gift-giving does not imply the perfection of any or all of the others” (75). This allows him to survey the historical tradition and contemporary world of Pauline interpretation and identify various threads by showing which cluster of perfections are grouped together or predominate.

Barclay’s contributions may be seen by considering the role of two of

⁷ Barclay here offers Marcion as the prototype of emphasizing this possibility within grace.

⁸ Barclay notes how this may be understood in various ways relating to predestination. His central point, however, is that the perfection of the priority of grace may be seen as common to all Second Temple Judaism, as in E. P. Sanders’s “covenantal nomism,” but also that the other perfections of grace are not commonly shared and are often held in tension.

⁹ A central achievement of Barclay’s book is to show that the perfection of incongruity is not necessary to the notion of grace. Many classical thinkers would have considered gifts perfected by congruity, when the best gifts are given to those worthy of them.

¹⁰ Barclay identifies this perfection above all with Augustine’s theology of grace, although he affirms that some amount of efficacy is entailed in all accounts of grace, “In some form or other, everyone can agree that God’s gifts are effective: the extent to which they are the sole and sufficient cause of the human response is the degree to which this facet of grace has been perfected” (74).

¹¹ Barclay identifies this perfection especially with Luther and the modern idealization of the “pure gift.” One of Barclay’s central insights could be summarized as showing that ancient cultures in general—and Paul in particular—did not perfect grace in this nonreciprocal manner. Barclay observes some of the negative consequences of such nonreciprocity: “The one-way gift establishes no relation, creates a permanent and potentially humiliating dependency, and frees the recipient of all responsibility. Nonetheless, its emergence in the modern era as a powerfully alluring perfection of grace, identified with ‘pure’ altruism or disinterest, makes this an important facet of the perfected gift to place alongside the others we have outlined” (75).

these perfections: incongruity and noncircularity. The notion of incongruity deals with the question of whether the recipient of the gift is worthy of the gift. Barclay helpfully shows that the common ancient understanding was that gifts typically did not share the perfection of incongruity. Instead, the more perfect the gift, the greater the congruity between the worth of the gift and the worthiness of the recipient. Consider Jesus's saying in Matthew when he speaks of not giving pearls to swine. A giver would be imperfect who gives good gifts to those unworthy. So to perfect incongruity within the gift is quite a distinct perfection within the ancient and biblical notion of the gift. The perfection of the noncircularity aspect addresses the question of whether the gift given expects a return. Notwithstanding the modern emphasis on the pure gift, the ancient understanding was that gifts received oblige the recipient to return something. This sense of reciprocity was not viewed negatively as giving a gift "with strings attached," but as assisting in the formation of the very fabric of a society and establishing varied roles, responsibilities, and mutual obligations.

By distinguishing between the aspect of congruity and circularity, Barclay ably disentangles a number of arguments about Paul. For instance, many interpreters have assumed that grace or gift always implies a lack of congruity or a lack of desert or worthiness on the part of the recipient. Here Barclay acknowledges the contribution of E. P. Sanders's recovery of grace in Second Temple Judaism, but also parts ways with his analysis. Sanders's "covenantal nomism" showed that the law was understood to be something given by God and not in any sense earned by Israel's keeping of the law. Thus, Torah observance did not get one into the covenant, but it was the condition for staying in the covenant. Thus, the Torah was broadly understood to be a prior grace or a gift from God, not something that was earned by human effort. Sanders's work and the broad "new perspective" movement it ushered in have demonstrated persuasively that Judaism was not a religion of works righteousness in which human beings became righteous through their own good works. Instead, Judaism was a religion of grace, especially emphasizing the priority of grace in terms of God's initiative in all covenant making.

Barclay observes that it is insufficient to show that the Second Temple authors agreed on the priority of grace (191). He shows that these authors do not agree on other facets of grace, with the result that they end up with diverse accounts of divine grace. Barclay faults Sanders for uncritically accepting the perfection of the incongruity of grace and, so, assuming that grace and desert are incompatible in the Second Temple period. Barclay employs the classification of grace-perfected-in-incongruity and grace-perfected-in-congruity to offer a more fine-grained analysis of the period to

show Paul's distinctive approach. Some texts and authors from this period, such as the book of Wisdom and Philo, present grace and desert as going hand in hand (for example, see 309–11). Thus, these authors emphasize the congruity of grace: God gives his good gifts to those who are deserving and worthy, the faithful Jews who suffer at the hands of the unrighteous. The gifts are not earned in any sense, since they come from the priority and superabundance of God's goodness and are not proportionate to human works, but nonetheless, God gives them to the worthy, not to sinners. This approach sees such congruity as a necessary implication of the overall order of the universe and the justice of God. What kind of king would give his greatest gifts to his evil subjects and give his greatest punishments to his good subjects? Barclay shows, however, that Second Temple Judaism does not always hold to congruous grace. Other texts from this period, such as Qumran's *Hodayot* and those of Paul, perfect grace along the lines of incongruity (for example, see 311 and 324).¹² God's goodness is given to the unworthy because all of humanity is seen as worthless, misaligned, or incapable of pleasing God.

Barclay deploys the distinction between reciprocity and congruity to address particular questions within the reading of Paul. For instance, he quotes James Harrison as arguing for the distinctiveness of Paul's understanding of grace in comparison to the rest of Second Temple Judaism: "only the grace of Christ . . . is unilateral, non-reciprocal," in contrast to ancient religious systems that were reciprocal (18).¹³ Barclay argues, however, that Harrison here confuses incongruity with noncircularity. Barclay makes the case that Paul does hold the incongruity of grace but does not hold its noncircularity. In short, this means that the Christ gift is given to the unworthy, and yet it is given to the unworthy to transform them into the worthy. Paul is not against works righteousness, but rather

¹² Barclay writes: "In comparison with Philo, what stands out is Paul's refusal to trace any line of congruence between God's mercy and its recipients, even if it risks making God seem arbitrary or unfair. . . . Paul's remarkable emphasis on the incongruity of God's grace, while shocking to Philo, would not have shocked the authors of the Qumran *Hodayot*" (324). The manner, however, is quite different in the Qumran versus Paul. Barclay sees the Qumran as a "cosmic plan, rooted in creation as part of its design," whereas "Paul's contemporary experience of the Christ-event and of the Gentile mission has convinced him that the central dynamic of God's plan is constituted not by nature, but by an event, not by primordial cosmic design, but by the enactment of God's 'glory' in the worldwide reach of the gospel (cf. Rom 10:14–21)" (325).

¹³ James R. Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace in Its Graeco-Roman Context* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 288.

Torah righteousness. The Christ gift is given to both the just and the unjust, yet it requires just acts, as did the gift of the Torah. Christ replaces the Torah for both Jews and Gentiles (544).

Reciprocal Grace and Eschatological Congruity

Gifts constitute new relationships and, thus, new obligations. As we have noted above, Paul perfects grace along the line of incongruity but not along the line of noncircularity. Barclay sums up this point by saying that the Christ gift is *unconditioned* but not *unconditional*.¹⁴ It is freely given to the unworthy, but it expects worthiness of life in return. Because Paul's theology of calling and theology of sin are founded on the incongruity of the Christ gift, he does not preclude a radical transformation in the new life opened up by the Christ gift (568–69). Christ offers a new life, a new *habitus*, a new standard of worth, judgment, and communal living.¹⁵ The gift, however, is always prior to the recipient's worth. Moreover, the gift is incongruous, meaning that it is given only to the unrighteous, to the unworthy. Barclay emphasizes that Paul discovered the incongruity of the gift in the context of his mission to the Gentiles.¹⁶ If the Gentiles, who were without the Torah, were called into God's covenant, then they could be called only in their very unrighteousness. The calling of the Gentiles also reinterprets the calling of Israel such that both Jews and Gentiles are seen to have been under sin. As Barclay summarizes his conclusion, the observance of the Torah, also known as "works of the law," ceases to be definitive for God's election; now the community is formed through "faith in Christ." The community of the new covenant is not meant to remain in sin, but to be redeemed and liberated from sin for righteousness.

The resurrection of Jesus opens up a new dimension in the moral life of believers. In a certain way, this means that grace moves partly from incon-

¹⁴ Barclay writes: "Thus, throughout this book, we have been suspicious of the modern (Western) ideal of the 'pure' gift, which is supposedly given without strings attached. We have been able to make sense of the fact that a gift can be *unconditioned* (free of prior conditions regarding the recipient) without also being *unconditional* (free of expectations that the recipient will offer some 'return')" (562). Elsewhere, he also states that "the grace of God in Christ is 'unconditioned' (without prior considerations of worth) but not non-circular or 'unconditional,' if that means without expectations of return" (446).

¹⁵ Barclay writes: "The new creation is evident precisely in (and not independently of) reordered patterns of social and personal behavior" (445).

¹⁶ Barclay writes: "Paul's Gentile mission reflects his reading of the Christ-event as God's fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises in the mode of incongruous grace" (491).

gruity to congruity. This mode of life needs to be properly distinguished from the manner of existence that is normally part of human existence. Barclay uses the language of an “eccentric” or “pneumatic” existence to distinguish it from a mere anthropological phenomenon.¹⁷ Grace is not merely part of human experience, but something that is given on a higher level. Barclay thus shifts the paradoxical character of the Christian life: no longer the Lutheran paradox of *simul iustus et peccator*, but a new paradox of *simul mortuus et vivens* (502). Barclay notes the transformation within the power of grace: “This permanent *incongruity* of new life in dying bodies is expressed in the *congruity* or fit between the new human obedience and the purpose or will of God” (503). The mystery of Christian existence thus is not the drama between sin and grace, but that between life and death, between the new life of grace communicated and present in the new ecclesial community and the ongoing realities of suffering and death.

Barclay emphasizes the way in which Paul comes to relativize the role of the Torah and Torah observance. The Christ gift alone comes in as the new criterion of worth that relativizes other criteria of worth, including both Gentile understandings and Jewish Torah observance. Barclay argues that this revaluation of all things in light of the Christ gift comes out of the radical newness of the Christ gift and the context of Paul’s mission to the Gentiles. Barclay grounds this argument in his treatment of the manner in which Paul steps behind the Law to the promises given to Abraham in Galatians and Romans. In doing so, Barclay deftly steps out of the paradox of Luther’s emphasis on the introspective self to the objective character of justification.

Barclay offers a helpful distinction between the Christ gift in history and the Christ gift at the end of time: in the present, the Christ gift is an incongruous gift, a gift given to the unworthy that opens up a future of transformation; at the eschaton, the Christ gift is a congruous gift, a gift given to those worthy (495). The eschatological dimension of gifts allows for a suitable resolution to the paradox of incongruous and congruous gifts. If the Christ gift were completely incongruous, then how would the God of cosmos be just? If the Christ gift were totally congruous, then why would it have been necessary for Christ to die on the Cross? Barclay argues that the gift is incongruous in its being given to the ungodly. Christ is the free gift of life—through his own death and resurrection—given to those who were unrighteous. Yet, ultimate rewards and punishments cannot be given indiscriminately. Thus, while Christ may offer righteousness to

¹⁷ Barclay writes: “[The new life in Christ] is an ‘eccentric’ phenomenon, drawing on the ‘life from the dead’ that was inaugurated by Jesus’ resurrection” (501).

the unrighteous, he cannot offer heaven to the unrighteous who remain unrighteous. Heaven and hell, eternal life and death, must be suitably given to congruous recipients. So, is the gift of Christ incongruous or congruous? Barclay solves this conundrum by distinguishing the incongruity of the Christ gift itself from the effect of the Christ gift. It is given freely by God to the undeserving, the ungodly, the unrighteous. As such, it must be received by faith in God's goodness and knowledge of one's own unworthiness; it must be received as the reception of an undeserved gift. In this way, the gift is a promise that the unworthy will receive worthiness, that the unrighteous will receive righteousness and, so, become righteous, performing works of righteousness.¹⁸ The gift parallels the promise made to Sarah and Abraham, who were barren and yet were guaranteed descendants in the midst of their barrenness. So also, the barren Jews and Gentiles who remain under death are promised eternal life in the final judgment and the resurrection of the dead.

The gift of life and death is thereby congruous. Eternal life is given to the worthy, to those who have received righteousness from the Christ gift, whereas to the unworthy is given death. Once this eschatological dimension of the two stages of the Christ gift is established, then the sheer unmerited, incongruity of the Christ gift remains, but also the transformative power of that gift to make the ungodly godly is recovered. As Barclay aptly summarizes in his treatment of Romans, "the purpose of the unfit-

¹⁸ Barclay repeatedly develops this interplay between initial incongruity and eventual congruity: "If there is reason to believe that Romans, like Galatians, is structured around the *incongruity* of grace, there is no reason to assume that it also perfects its *singularity* (which would rule out the just condemnation of sin) or its *non-circularity* (which would rule out the significance of the believers' works as the necessary response to grace)" (465); "If we can show that this eternal life is, for Paul, *both* an incongruous gift (6:23) *and* the fitting completion of a life of good works (2:6-7), we will have solved a conundrum that renders the early chapters of Romans the greatest stumbling blocks for interpreters of Paul" (466); and "This [divine] power is *incongruous* in its impact on sinful human material, but its transformative results are finally *congruous* with the just judgment of God" (467). Richard Hays offers a different approach that also attends to the question of God's righteousness and the need to move beyond certain categories of Protestant polemics of the sixteenth century: "The Reformation theme of justification by faith has so obsessed a generation of readers (Protestant readers, at least) that they have set Law and gospel in simplistic antithesis, ignoring the sign of coherence in Rom 3:1-26; consequently, they have failed to see that Paul's argument is primarily an argument about theodicy, not about soteriology" (*Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989], 53).

ting gift is to create a fit" (473),¹⁹ the unconditioned gift (congruous) that is not unconditional, since it calls for a response (circular). Barclay describes this as a new *habitus* of Christian living in response to the Christ gift.

This way of separating the incongruous and congruous aspects of God's actions removes the Lutheran trope that the justified remain ungodly. This allows for a retrieval of Augustine without Luther. Luther's Augustinianism removes the transformative aspect of the covenant. Aquinas's Augustinianism highlights the unconditioned character of the gift while also emphasizing its transformative character.²⁰ Interestingly, Barclay notes that Aquinas presents grace as a transformative *habitus* in a way similar to Paul, but he does not develop the connection. Yet, I would suggest that Aquinas presents a systematic manner of developing many of Barclay's readings of Paul. As we will see in the subsequent parts of the present article, Aquinas remains the Augustinian theologian who emphasizes both the undeserved and transformative aspects of the new law—the law of Christ (Gal 5) and the law of the Spirit (Rom 8).

Barclay argues for an objective genitive interpretation of *pistis Christou*. This allows him to avoid the emphasis on our religious subjectivity. "What matters now is not the subjectivity of belief, but the focus and basis of that faith: the unconditioned gift of God in Christ," (382) "faith in (what God has done in) Christ" (371). In Barclay's treatment of Galatians 2:11–21, the alternative to faith in Christ is "the practice of the Torah," *erga nomou*. Which gives value? The Christ event now sets the standard for all worth and upsets all other standards of worth, including both Gentile standards and the standard of Torah observance.²¹ Because of the Christ gift, God

¹⁹ Barclay writes in the same paragraph: "This is the crucial Pauline point—the *basis for that fit, the foundation and frame of the patient good work that leads to eternal life, is an act of divine power, an incongruous gift to sinful humanity whose transformative effects will be evident at the judgment.*"

²⁰ Although Barclay acknowledges a difference between Augustine and Luther, he tends to summarize their approaches as a single approach held in common. Their difference is that Augustine thought that God made the ungodly godly whereas Luther thought that the ungodly remain ungodly. According to Barclay, their similarities are that they both misread Paul by taking him out of the context of his mission to the Gentiles and saw in Paul's language of justification a general warning against trusting in one's own strength as opposed to God. The alignment of Augustine and Luther should also be complemented, and corrected somewhat, by the alignment of Augustine and Aquinas. Aquinas opens another way of continuing the Augustinian line that emphasizes the transformative character of justification.

²¹ The contemporary theologian Gilles Mongeau employs the subjective genitive reading of *pistou Christou* to argue for a similar reevaluation of the standard of worth in Jesus Christ: "Faced with the insistence of the Judaizers that belonging

now considers righteous those who have received the gift of righteousness in Christ.²²

Yet we might ask whether Barclay attends sufficiently to the manner in which the Torah remains present as fulfilled even if not outwardly observed. The Torah remains, albeit transformed and fulfilled, within the Christ gift. The new life made possible by the Christ gift allows for the moral law of the Torah to be lived more fully. Circumcision is clearly set aside in Romans 3:30, but the moral law clearly remains, as in 13:8 (“Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law”) and 13:10 (“Love is the fulfilling of the law”). The same pattern of rejecting circumcision but retaining the moral law is in Galatians 5:6 (“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircum-

to Israel is necessary to salvation in Christ (belonging to the group as a measure of authenticity), for example, Paul exposes this demand as an overly ‘cosmos-centered’ stance in his Letter to the Galatians (it would be a return to the world of the principalities and powers) and proposes instead the human consciousness of Christ (saved by the faith of Christ) as the measure of authenticity” (*Embracing Wisdom: The Summa theologiae as Spiritual Pedagogy* [Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2015], 37–38). It is not clear, however, that Mongeau’s contrast of an objective view to a subjective view is adequate to Paul’s reevaluation of worth in Christ.

²² It is interesting to note some of the earlier pedigree of viewing Paul’s theology through the lens of gift. In the middle of the twentieth century, the French Catholic biblical theologian Lucien Cerfaux published *Christ in the Theology of St. Paul* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), originally published as *Le Christ dans la Théologie de S. Paul* (1958). The second part of the work was simply entitled “The Gift of Christ,” and Cerfaux offers some of the following comments on the centrality of gift in understanding Paul’s theology of Christ. “This new status reveals itself first of all as an opposition to Judaism. Christ is our justice, and we are no longer justified by our works, but only through God’s gift. This gift is a reality, and the justification we receive far surpasses any juridical idea of ours. Second, there is an opposition to the Greek mind, in that God condemns human wisdom and grants us wisdom in the Spirit—wisdom of a higher order than our own, having Christ as its object” (362). “‘Christ our life’ is the most significant of all of the formulas used in connection with the gift of Christ. . . . The person of Christ is always basic to his thought in respect of Christ’s gift to Christians, and conversely, the gift unites us to the person of Christ” (362–63). “A Christian himself is a gift from Christ. God grants us the grace of being through Christ’s redemptive work, or since Christ’s person takes the place of this work more and more in Paul’s mind, we can say that our Christian being comes from Christ. Through Christ we achieve a new religious status, which is realized in fact both now and hereafter” (362). “All the gifts are for all Christians. It is the gifts that create the new race of men, forming the Church, which is at one and the same time a visible institution founded on Christ’s authority, and a spiritual body in which Christ’s gift is received” (363).

cision is of any avail, but faith working through love”) and 5:14 (“For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself”). So the moral law of the Torah remains.²³

Gift and Order: Wisdom and Paul

Barclay presents the book of Wisdom and the writings of Paul in opposition. Wisdom focuses on the cosmic order of righteousness and safeguards God’s ultimate justice and goodness in his ultimate congruous rewards and punishments to the righteous and the unrighteous. Paul, in contrast, views everything through the Christ event and his particular mission to the Gentiles, which together disclose the incongruous mercy of God.²⁴ Barclay ably summarizes the conclusion of his argument: “In place of Wisdom’s structured moral universe, Paul appears to hang every hope on a single thread, the mercy of God” (327). Yet, are Wisdom’s cosmic order and Paul’s Christ event truly in opposition to each other? I suggest that this opposition follows from some of the Lutheran dichotomies between order and event, between incongruity and congruity, that Barclay otherwise dispels in his interpretation of Paul. The ultimate harmonious character between Wisdom and Paul (or between order and event) can be seen in two main ways.

First, the cosmic order of Wisdom contains an eschatological horizon in which God’s actions are necessary for the restoration of justice. In this world, it is the unrighteous who will seek out and destroy the righteous. The ultimate reward of the just and punishment of the unjust requires God’s actions in the next life (Wis 3:1–4). God, who did not create human beings to die, restores the faithful to eternal life (Wis 1:13–16; 2:23–24). Of course, there is not yet the reference to Christ’s death and resurrection as in Paul, but there is a reference to the just man who will suffer at the hands of the unrighteous and yet will be vindicated (Wis 2:16–20; 5:1–5). So, Barclay is correct that Wisdom emphasizes the congruity of grace and

²³ Hays offers a distinct approach and yet argues for the complementarity of the Torah and Christ: “Paul agonized over the fact that his Jewish contemporaries failed to understand that Israel’s Law pointed to the righteousness of faith; now, Christians make the same tragic error when they fail to acknowledge that the Law and the Prophets bear witness to the righteousness of God and when they think that Torah and Christ are antithetical” (*Echoes of Scripture*, 77).

²⁴ Barclay writes: “Like *Wisdom*, Paul’s vision is universal and comprehensive, but on a very different basis. *Wisdom* appeals to the universal truth of a regulative cosmic order, a pre-existing reality to which all things conform. Paul appeals to an event—the resurrection of Jesus and his installation as ‘Lord’—that makes a claim on all (Rom 10:12)” (326).

not the incongruity of grace on the unrighteous, but this is not due to Wisdom's remaining in a vision of cosmic order that would deny eschatological divine action. Moreover, Wisdom's emphasis on cosmic restoration includes God's mercy on those who will be rewarded, since all need God's mercy.²⁵

Second, the centrality of the Christ event in Paul requires a cosmic order. Barclay summarizes Wisdom by saying that "the universe is fitly and morally ordered." In this way, Paul's articulation of the Christ event reveals a continuity and discontinuity with Wisdom. It is necessary for Paul that the cosmic order of creation and the goodness of the Creator remain. This order is necessary to make sense of exactly what the Christ gift has accomplished, and the Christ gift thus presupposes Wisdom's cosmic order. The new thing that God does in Christ is added to that order. The Christ gift opens up righteousness to all who enter into the new covenant.²⁶ Yet, as Barclay adroitly observes, even in Paul, the ultimate rewards of eternal life are congruous gifts: eternal life given to those who have received the righteousness of the Christ gift and eternal death given to those who have rejected that gift and, so, remain in unrighteousness of evil works. The meaningfulness of the Christ gift is intelligible to the extent that the cosmic order of Wisdom is maintained, even while it is expanded.

In Wisdom, the cosmic order also includes a cosmic history of disorder. The goodness of creation includes the history of sin and evil. Orders have histories. God is a good and wise Creator who made human beings for eternal life and communion with him. Human beings are free and moral agents who can act for good and for evil, who can become righteous and unrighteous. The existence and goodness of God can be known by reflecting on the order of the created world. Nonetheless, the devil has acted to create a cosmic disturbance: "Through the devil's envy, death entered the world" (Wis 2:24). Moreover, this rebellion has been joined by the unrighteous, "those who belong to his party," and those who seek to follow God's law will suffer at their hands. Finally, God will right these injustices and sufferings through the resurrection of the dead (Wis 4:7,16; 5:15–16).

Paul draws on this same cosmic order and cosmic history of disorder.

²⁵ On mercy needed even by the faithful, see Wisdom 12:22; on mercy to the wicked in terms of giving warnings before final punishments, see Wis 12:10–11.

²⁶ As typical of Barclay's contrast between cosmic order and event, he writes: "As Galatians has shown, his interpretation of this gift is *Christological* in focus, and therefore centered not on a general truth about divine benevolence but on an *event*—the death and resurrection of Christ—that has effected a transformation of reality. This divine gift is here coordinated neither with creation nor with Torah, but with a particular event endowed with universal significance" (445–46).

Human beings can know the existence of the invisible God through the created visible things (Rom 1:20; see also Wis 13:1). Human beings can know the law of right and wrong (Rom 2:14). God will judge human beings with justice according to their works (Rom 2:13). The death and resurrection of Christ disclose at least two new truths: first, that human beings cannot attain righteousness through following the law of the Gentiles or the Torah; and second, that human beings can attain righteousness through the gift of God in Jesus Christ (Rom 3:23–26). The incongruity of the gift of Christ renders possible the final congruity of the universe (Rom 8:18–23). The deeper harmony between Wisdom and Paul is theologically necessary, since it grounds a metaphysical dimension to God’s saving actions in Jesus Christ. The Christ event both fulfills the old and establishes a new cosmic order.

Aquinas: Charity as the Law of Grace

Aquinas’s New Law of Grace: Incongruous and Reciprocal

St. Thomas Aquinas’s theology of charity and grace parallels—as well as develops—Barclay’s thesis on the gift in Paul. Aquinas expresses grace as a new *habitus* that operates within human life. Aquinas’s new law of grace balances the incongruity of the gift and the congruity of the response and final judgment. Aquinas presents Christ as the teacher of the new law. In Barclay’s language, Christ is the giver of the new gift. Christ gives that which he alone can give, a divine gift that communicates a share in the very life of God. Aquinas contrasts the old law to the new law by drawing on the biblical motif that the old law was given through the mediation of angels. Instead, the new law is given by God himself in the incarnate Word. The gift of the new law, however, is not merely an affirmation of life. Instead, the new law must solve the problem of human sinfulness and death. Thus, Christ offers the forgiveness of sin and the resurrection from the dead. As the Apostles’ Creed affirms, “I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.” In this way, Christ’s followers are renewed via faith, hope, and charity. Aquinas summarizes this under the heading of the new law of grace.

The gift of the new law properly situates the treatment of grace and justification within the dramatic action of the life, death, and resurrection of the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. Aquinas refers to the new law as the new law of grace. How might this be illuminated by considering the interpretation of grace through the lens of gift as proffered by Barclay? Aquinas

speaks of Christ as the legislator and teacher of the new law.

Aquinas's treatment of grace should be viewed within his treatment of the dynamic between the old law and the new law. When grace is situated within its context of the new law of grace, then grace is always seen as a gift both incongruous and, yet, transformative. If grace were congruous, then the old law would have been enough, since it would have been the right path opened up to those worthy of receiving the divine law. Yet, the death of Christ manifests the incongruity of the gift by revealing the unworthiness and sinfulness of both Jews and Gentiles.

In this way, Aquinas and Barclay share a view of grace as incongruous yet transformative, but Aquinas develops the understanding of grace and its sacramental character. The new law of grace is a new principle or *habitus* of human existence, one that transforms the moral life in the Church and is received from the sacramental life of the Church. For Aquinas, grace is a *habitus* in the essence of the soul giving us a participation in the divine nature and flowing into the powers of the soul.²⁷ Thus, this habit in the essence of the soul that gives us a participation is the divine nature and life perfects the powers of intellect and will by the infused virtues of faith (in the intellect) and hope and charity (in the will).²⁸ The ceremonial precepts of the old law, such as circumcision, yield to the ceremonial precepts of the new, such as baptism.²⁹ Aquinas treats the Christ gift as present in the sacraments of the new law with respect to Christ's Passion, Christ's grace in us, and the eternal life with Christ.³⁰ Christ establishes a new horizon of human existence made possible through his life, death, and resurrection. Christ thus replaces the Torah as the new standard of worth and meaning. Nonetheless, the gift of Christ is not a mere idea or a mere belief. Aquinas holds that the new covenant includes the new ceremonial precepts of the

²⁷ *Summa theologiae* [ST] I-II, q. 109, a. 1; q. 110, a. 2. All English translation from ST is taken from that done by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1947), in its 1981 reprint by Christian Classics (Westminster, MD).

²⁸ ST I-II, q. 62, a. 1, ad 1, in which Aquinas shows how the theological virtues make us sharers in the divine nature: "By participation, as kindled wood partakes of the nature of fire: and thus, after a fashion, man becomes a partaker of the Divine Nature, as stated above: so that these virtues are proportionate to man in respect of the Nature of which he is made a partaker."

²⁹ Note the role of baptism in conferring the gift of Christ in Rom 6:3-4.

³⁰ ST III, q. 60, a. 3: "A sacrament properly speaking is that which is ordained to signify our sanctification. In which three things may be considered; namely, the very cause of our sanctification, which is Christ's passion; the form of our sanctification, which is grace and the virtues; and the ultimate end of our sanctification, which is eternal life. And all these are signified by the sacraments."

sacraments in order to communicate the reception of this gift. In this way, Aquinas presents a more deeply sacramental view of the gift of Christ than does Barclay.³¹

The modern deformation of gift as unilateral and nonreciprocal creates a social dynamic and theological universe in which actual gifts are tarnished by participation in reciprocity and exchange. Consider how the giver's separation from the recipient would impact Christian theology: God gives a gift that could never be returned; God's gift would not establish communion; God's gift would remain a transcendental or eschatological ideal that equally condemns and forgives all human actions and efforts. In this extreme consideration, God's gift is never properly received. In fact, one might ask whether such a gift is ever truly given.

In contrast, an understanding of gifts as reciprocal opens up theological dimensions of communion. In Aquinas's presentation of the virtue of charity or *caritas*, *caritas* is human friendship with God. This divine-human friendship is established by the communication of God's goodness to his human creatures.³² The gift is unilateral insofar as it may be given only by God, but it is reciprocal insofar as it may be given back by human beings to God; the divinely revealed friendship of charity becomes exemplary and transformative of all other friendships.³³ Moreover, the Aristotelian language of grace as a motion (*motus*) shows how the gift is continually given by God to allow us to give ourselves back to God.³⁴

³¹ Wilhelmus Valkenburg writes: "In the *Summa*, the soteriological effects of the resurrection of Christ are discussed in the theology of Christ the Savior, between the soteriological effects of his passion, and the sacraments as signs of our sanctification through Christ" (*Words of the Living God: Place and Function of Holy Scripture in the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* [Leuven, BE: Peeters, 2000], 119).

³² *ST*, II-II, q. 23, a. 1.

³³ See Guy Mansini, OSB, "Aristotle and Aquinas's Theology of Charity in the *Summa theologiae*," in Emery and Levering, *Aristotle in Aquinas's Theology*, 121–38, at 130: "For St. Thomas, charity is not beyond friendship, but rather true friendship, even truest friendship: it is founded on the surest *communicatio* of the best foundation of what potentially unites God and the angels and men, the divine beatitude; its first act is an act of divine love, where God estimates us as worthy of himself, and so makes us to share his nature; and its answering act is our own love of God above all things, and in the power of the love proper to him, and so, supernaturally."

³⁴ See Gaine, "Aristotle's Philosophy in Aquinas's Theology of Grace," 101, where Gaine shows that the gift is both given and continually being given: "While Aquinas makes use of Aristotle's concept of nature to clarify his position on the purposes *for* which we need grace (elevation and healing), he makes use of the concept of *motus* to clarify what we need *from* grace. According to Aquinas, our need here is not only for some kind of stable 'gift' (*donum*) from God by which we

Aquinas presents the Trinitarian dimensions of this divine gift when he presents the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit through the Incarnation and Pentecost.³⁵ Thomistic charity thus may be viewed as an authentic development of Paul's understanding of grace.³⁶ Charity may be seen as the lens that allows us to understand the gift of Christ.

There is a kind of perfection to the new law that often catches the eye of the reader of Aquinas. Aquinas will state simply that the old law is imperfect, the new law perfect. The old law foreshadows the gift of Christ; the new law contains the gift of Christ.³⁷ Nonetheless, the new law itself foreshadows the new law of glory. In this way, the new law of grace is imperfect: only heavenly glory is perfect.³⁸ Aquinas employs this distinction when he presents the three stages of the *imago Dei* in human beings: the image according to nature, the image according to grace, and the image according to glory.³⁹ To say that the new law of grace prefigures the law of glory recalls the reality that the new law has an eschatological dimension.

are healed and elevated, but also for God himself to move us to act in relation to this gift" (citing, e.g., *Summa theologiae*, q. 109, a. 9).

³⁵ *ST I*, q. 43, a. 1.

³⁶ Interestingly, Augustine describes holiness as this same charity in his *Catechizing the Uninstructed*.

³⁷ *ST I-II*, q. 106, a. 4: "No state of the present life can be more perfect than that of the New Law, since the nearer a thing is to the last end the more perfect it is."

³⁸ *ST I-II*, q. 106, a. 4, ad 1: "As Dionysius says (*Eccl. Hier.* v), there is a threefold state of mankind; the first was under the old law; the second is that of the new law; the third will take place not in this life, but in heaven. But as the first state is figurative and imperfect in comparison with the state of the Gospel; so is the present state figurative and imperfect in comparison with the heavenly state, with the advent of which the present state will be done away as expressed in that very passage (1 Cor. 13:12): 'We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face.'" Matthew Levering traces the importance of 1 Cor 13 in Aquinas's understanding of the new law of grace in *ST* in his *Paul in the Summa Theologiae* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2015): "The main role of 1 Corinthians 13 in the *prima secundae*, therefore, is to explore the virtue of charity" (247).

³⁹ *ST I*, q. 93, a. 4. Romanus Cessario, O.P., writes: "The first image is found in all men, the second only in the justified, and the third only in the blessed. This tripartite division of the *imago Dei* is not peculiar to Aquinas. Christian tradition returns frequently to the image of creation, the image of grace, and the image of glory, although some recent spiritual and theological authors eschew this tripartite understanding of man's relationship to God" (*Theology and Sanctity*, ed. Cajetan Cuddy [Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia, 2014], 80).

Faith in Christ and Works of the Law in Aquinas's Commentaries on Galatians and Romans

Let us consider how Aquinas treats some central passages in Galatians and Romans and how these might illuminate Barclay's insights, and vice versa.⁴⁰ Aquinas presents all of the Pauline epistles as unfolding the mystery of the grace of Christ: "This entire teaching is about Christ's grace."⁴¹ He summarizes Romans as considering the grace of Christ "as it is in itself."⁴² In his division of the text for Romans, Aquinas shows how he sees the grace of Christ as the unifying theme of the letter:

Part I. Romans 1:16–11:36: "the power of the Gospel of grace"
 Romans 1:18–4:25: "the Gospel of grace is necessary for salvation"

⁴⁰ For introductions to the historical, philosophical, and theological context of Aquinas's biblical commentaries, see Nicholas M. Healy, "Introduction," in *Aquinas on Scripture: An Introduction to his Biblical Commentaries*, ed. Thomas G. Weinandy, Daniel A. Keating, and John P. Yocum (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 1–20, and Eleonore Stump, "Biblical Commentary and Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. Norman Kretzman and Eleonore Stump (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 252–68. Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., suggests that the *Expositio et lecture super epistolas Pauli apostoli* as we have it now may represent multiple teaching periods. Torrell dates *Super Rom* "very probably" to the end of Aquinas's life, 1272–1273, as Aquinas corrected the first eight chapters in his own hand, and the commentary also includes broader theological development, while *Super Gal* is included in a section that is a *reportatio* from Reginald of Piperno, likely recorded from Aquinas's teaching in 1265–1268 (*Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1, *The Person and His Work*, trans. Robert Royal [Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1996], 340). Pasqual Porro reports Torrell's findings, but ultimately concludes that "no precise date can be fixed with regard to the course [of the Pauline commentaries], its revision, or its publication" (*Thomas Aquinas: A Historical and Philosophical Profile*, trans. Joseph G. Trabbic and Roger W. Nutt [Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2016], 189).

⁴¹ *Super Rom* prol. (Marietti no. 11). All English translation from *Super Rom* will be from an unpublished translation by Fabian Larcher, O.P. Aquinas identifies the first nine Pauline letters, Romans through 2 Thessalonians, as addressed to the church of the Gentiles and says those are concerned with the grace of Christ "as it is found in the Mystical Body itself, that is, the Church"; the next four, 1 Timothy through Philemon, consider the grace of Christ "as it exists in the chief members of the Church, namely the prelates"; and the final letter, Hebrews, which Aquinas attributes to Paul, considers the grace of Christ as "it exists in the head of the body, Christ himself."

⁴² Aquinas notes that Romans is placed before 1 Cor not because of its chronological priority, which it lacks, but because "the order of teaching requires that grace should first be considered in itself before being considered as it is found in the Sacraments" (*Super Rom*, prol. [Marietti no. 12]).

Romans 5:1–8:39: “the Gospel of grace is sufficient for salvation”

Romans 9:1–11:36: “the origin of grace, of whether it can be given by the sole election of God or by preceding merits of works, taking occasion from the seeming rejection of the Jews”

Part II. Romans 12:1–16:27: “the use of grace, which pertains to moral instruction.”

This division of themes resonates with some of Barclay’s treatment and insights. Although Aquinas is interested in theological questions with respect to election and grace, he nonetheless attends to Paul’s mission to the Gentiles, as does Barclay. Aquinas presents all of Romans as addressing a central theme of the grace of Christ, while Barclay centers Paul’s theology on the gift of Christ. Aquinas shows that the grace of Christ is properly understood as the new foundation of God’s covenantal relationship with his people. In other words, it is the new standard of worth, as Barclay says, replacing Torah observance. The grace of Christ is also incongruous and circular, as Barclay argues. Aquinas shows that the grace is incongruous, since it is necessary for salvation because no one can achieve the needed righteousness before God apart from the gift of Christ. The grace, however, is circular, since it is also sufficient for salvation, showing that it does transform the unworthy into the worthy. “Necessary for salvation” and “sufficient for salvation” parallel Barclay’s wording of the grace of Christ as incongruous and circular.

Having seen the overall centrality of the grace of Christ in Aquinas’s treatment of Romans, let us begin with Aquinas’s treatment of faith and the law first in his *Commentary on Galatians* and then, second, in his *Commentary on Romans*. He summarizes Galatians as considering the grace of Christ as it exists in the sacraments of the Church, “in which superfluous sacraments are rejected against certain men who wanted to join the old sacraments to the new ones.”⁴³ Aquinas addresses Galatians 2:16, where Paul says that he and Cephas had been “justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no

⁴³ *Super Rom.*, prol. (Marietti no. 11). Aquinas offers an outline of the entire Pauline corpus in the prologue of *Super Rom.* Barclay summarizes the difference between Galatians and Romans thus: “Galatians has a Christological focus whereas Romans has a theological focus. The theological focus on Romans allows Paul to situate the Christ-gift more clearly with the salvation history of Creation and Israel. It is definitive, final, complete, decisive, and comprehensive. The Christ-event explains God’s dealings with Israel, which are not revealed always to have been a gift to the unworthy” (560).

one be justified.” Aquinas first situates this verse in its context by showing that Paul is here explaining how he, Peter, and the other apostles were justified: even though Jews, they were justified by faith in Christ.⁴⁴ The Latin wording here is illuminating. Aquinas refers to the apostles’s *conversatio-nem*, or way of life, conduct, and behavior. In this way, justification refers to the apostles’s new way of living, and thus a new manner of being. The apostolic way of life no longer seeks righteousness from the works of the law, but is defined by its faith in Christ.⁴⁵ Aquinas interestingly contrasts the works of the law (*opera legalia*) with the precepts of faith (*praeceptis fidei*): a Torah-observance way of life versus a faith-observance way of life. The contrast is between works and precepts, the old law and the new law. In this pre-Lutheran interpretation, faith and the precepts of faith go hand in hand: faith submits to all that Christ has taught in the new law of grace. Aquinas supports his interpretation of Galatians 2:16 by quoting Romans 3:28 (“For we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law”) and Acts 4:12 (“For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved”). Faith is not contrasted with works in general, but specifically with the works of the old law.

Aquinas, however, is aware of the peculiarity of Paul’s expression that we are not justified by works of the law. He then asks how Paul’s expression here is to be squared with Romans 2:13—“For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.” Aquinas distinguishes two senses of justification. It may be considered as *doing* what is just or as *being made* just. With respect to doing what is just, it depends on which part of the law one is observing. Aquinas notes that “some works of the Law were moral and some ceremonial.” The ceremonial parts of the law are properly the “works of the Law,” because their force comes from the law itself. The moral parts of the law are not properly “works of the Law,” since human beings have a natural instinct and are led to them by the natural law.⁴⁶ With this distinction in

⁴⁴ *Super Gal* 2, lec. 4; all translations of *Super Gal* are taken from dhspriority.org/thomas/SSGalatians.htm.

⁴⁵ Valkenburg illumines such references to the apostolic way of life: “Another important aspect of this intellectual and spiritual horizon was the identity of the mendicant orders as presenting a new ideal of apostolic life. This passion for the apostolic life and for the newness of the Gospel leads to a form of hermeneutics in which the person of Christ and the Gospel gained a central position in the new law. . . . In Aquinas’ commentaries on Scripture, his sermons, and his polemical writings, this ideal of a new life of poverty and preaching was presented as an imitation of the apostolic life of the disciples of Christ” (*Words of the Living God*, 214).

⁴⁶ Aquinas clarifies that this natural inclination needs the guidance of the revealed

hand, Aquinas thus solves the apparent contradiction between Romans 2:13 and Galatians 2:16: Paul refers to the moral law when he says that “it is the doers of the law who will be justified” and to the ceremonial law when he says that “by works of the law shall no one be justified.” Faith in Christ will include both moral works of love and new ceremonial works of the sacraments. Aquinas then considers justification as being made just. Here, he clearly affirms that “no one is made just save by God through grace.”⁴⁷ This grace is not a general divine benefaction, but specifically “the grace of Christ.” The gift of Christ is communicated through the sacraments of the new law.⁴⁸

Following up on Galatians 2:16, Aquinas comments on the conclusion of chapter 2 to show that the gift of Christ is something new that cannot be absorbed into the old law. In this section, Aquinas emphasizes both the newness of the life Paul now lives and the irreplaceable role of the death of Christ in bringing about that new life. Paul writes in Galatians 2:20–21: “The life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose.” Aquinas interprets this passage as showing the incapacity of the old law to deliver the righteousness to which it pointed. If justification could have been achieved from the Torah, “the death of Christ would have been superflu-

old law so that human beings can come to know the requirements of the moral law. *ST I-II*, q. 100, a. 11, reads: “The judicial and ceremonial precepts derive their force from their institution alone: since before they were instituted, it seemed of no consequence whether things were done in this or that way. But the moral precepts derive their efficacy from the very dictate of natural reason, even if they were never included in the Law. Now of these there are three grades: for some are most certain, and so evident as to need no promulgation; such as the commandments of the love of God and our neighbor, and others like these, as stated above [a. 3], which are, as it were, the ends of the commandments; wherefore no man can have an erroneous judgment about them. Some precepts are more detailed, the reason of which even an uneducated man can easily grasp; and yet they need to be promulgated, because human judgment, in a few instances, happens to be led astray concerning them: these are the precepts of the decalogue. Again, there are some precepts the reason of which is not so evident to everyone, but only the wise; these are moral precepts added to the decalogue, and given to the people by God through Moses and Aaron.”

⁴⁷ *Super Gal 2*, lec. 4: “non autem iustus fit aliquis nisi a Deo, per gratiam.”

⁴⁸ *Super Gal 2*, lec. 4: “The sacraments of the old law were certain declarations [*protectiones*] of the faith of Christ, just as our sacraments are, but not in the same way, because those sacraments were configured to the grace of Christ as to something that lay in the future; our sacraments, however, testify as things containing a grace that is present.”

ous.⁴⁹ The death of Christ achieves righteousness because Christ himself now lives in Paul. Aquinas explains this reality by saying that, as Paul's body is moved by his soul, now his soul is moved by Christ. Paul lives then at two levels according to Aquinas: Paul himself lived according to the life of the flesh, subject to death and temptations; but, "as to his relation to God, Christ lived in Paul."

Now let us turn to see how Aquinas takes up the issue of the works of the law and justification in his *Commentary on Romans*. As we previously saw, in his *Commentary on Galatians*, Aquinas addresses Romans 2:13: "[It is] the doers of the law who will be justified." Aquinas comments that "this point seems to conflict with [Paul's] own statement below that 'no human being will be justified in his sight by the works of the law.'"⁵⁰ To unravel this apparent contradiction, Aquinas focuses on the cause of justification. What makes us righteous before God? Aquinas says that the doers of the law do not acquire justice from the works of the law. Here in Romans, he does not distinguish between the ceremonial and moral works of the law as he did in Galatians. Here, he includes both the ceremonial works and the moral works, saying that neither impart justifying grace. Instead, he writes, "we do such works in virtue of an infused habit of justice." In this manner, doers of the law are truly justified before God, but they cannot become doers of the law apart from the grace of God given in Jesus Christ.⁵¹

The same emphasis on the unilateral direction of grace comes forward in Aquinas's commentary on Romans 3:28: "For we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law."⁵² To begin with, Aquinas examines the prior verse, 3:27, in which Paul asks what is the basis for our boasting: "On the principle of works? No, but on the principle of faith." The word "principle" here is translated from the Greek *nomos* or the Latin *lex*. Aquinas observes that "the Apostle alludes here to two laws, that of works and that of faith." Aquinas first asks whether the law of works and the law of faith refer to the old law and the new law. He answers negatively,

⁴⁹ *Super Gal 2*, lec. 6.

⁵⁰ *Super Gal 2*, lec. 3 (Marietti no. 212).

⁵¹ Aquinas considers it the proper role of theological exegesis to discern principles. Christopher Baglow writes: "Thomas would consider the appropriation of Scripture in sacred doctrine to be, first and foremost, a quest for certain principles in Scripture that are characterized by their centrality and their preeminently irreducible status" ("Sacred Scripture and Sacred Doctrine in St. Thomas Aquinas," in *Aquinas on Doctrine: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Thomas Weinandy, Daniel Keating, and John Yocum [New York: T&T Clark, 2004], 1–25).

⁵² *Super Rom 3*, lec. 4 (Marietti nos. 314–17).

since the old law also requires faith and the new law also requires works. Instead, the “law of works” is “outwardly presented and written [law], through which men’s external works are directed,” and the “law of faith” is “inwardly written [law], through which are directed not only external works but even the very motions of the heart, among which is the act of faith first.”⁵³ Aquinas thus eschews any interpretation of “justified by faith” that opposes law and Gospel.

In his treatment of Romans, Aquinas emphasizes the unity of the old law and its fulfillment in the new. Here, he interprets the “works of the law” as both the ceremonial works and moral works of the old law. In commenting on Romans 3:28, he writes: “Not only without the ceremonial works, which did not confer grace but only signified it, but also without the works of the moral precepts, as stated in Tit 3:5, ‘Not because of deeds done by us in righteousness.’” This interpretation shows that the mode of Torah observance, including the moral precepts, was not sufficient for full righteousness before God. That righteousness was opened up only through the gift of Christ, received by faith.

To deal further with the role of works, Aquinas employs the temporal distinction between before and after justification, or before and after receiving the gift of Christ. Justification begins without works, but it does not continue without works. Aquinas writes that justification is “without works prior to becoming just, but not without works following it, because, as it is stated in Jas 2:26, ‘Faith without works,’ i.e., subsequent works, ‘is dead,’ and, consequently, cannot justify.”⁵⁴ Aquinas here summarizes Barclay’s fundamental insight into Paul’s teaching on grace: the Christ gift is *incongruous*, since it is given to the unworthy, but it is also *circular*, since those who receive the gift participate in Christ’s worthiness, and so offer works back to God.

It is worth noting that the ceremonial works and the moral works of the old law are treated in the same vein as oriented to the gift of Christ. Apart from the Christ gift, such works do not justify. Nonetheless, this way of putting it suggests that they are disconnected from the Christ gift. Aquinas approaches the gift of Christ, however, as the intelligible fulfillment of the moral and ceremonial precepts of the Torah. Commenting on Romans 3:31—“Do we then overthrow the law by faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law”—Aquinas avers that “by faith we complete and fulfill the law” and includes the dominical saying from Matthew 5:17: “I have not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it.” The

⁵³ *Super Rom* 3, lec. 4 (Marietti no. 316).

⁵⁴ *Super Rom* 3, lec. 4, (Marietti no. 317).

ceremonial precepts are fulfilled because, “being figures, they were upheld and fulfilled by the fact that the truth signified by them is shown forth in the faith of Christ.” The moral precepts are likewise fulfilled because “the faith of Christ confers the help of grace to fulfill the moral precepts of the Law and even adds special counsels, through which the moral precepts are more safely and securely kept.”⁵⁵ Thus, the gift of Christ is not given to dispense us from the burden of the moral precepts, but rather to allow the moral precepts to be fulfilled. Barclay employs this same dimension by stating that the gift of Christ is “unconditioned” (given by the goodness of God to unworthy recipients) but not “unconditional” (as if it were given by the goodness of God without an eye to the recipients becoming worthy).⁵⁶ Nonetheless, Barclay separates the Torah from the covenant promise and shows how the Christ gift completes the promise, and so eliminates the role of the Torah in the transformative dynamic of the Christ gift.⁵⁷ Aquinas shows that the Christ gift is the intelligible fulfillment of the ceremonial and moral precepts of the old law. This insight allows for a more sacramental understanding of the new law for Aquinas and a more cohesive and comprehensive understanding of salvation history in which the ceremonial precepts of the old law pointed toward the Paschal mystery they prefigured.

Law as Charity in Aquinas’s Commentaries on Galatians and Romans

Having considered how Aquinas presents the grace of Christ through the lens of faith and works of the law, let us now turn to how he presents the grace of Christ as a new law of love. Two central passages are Galatians 6:2 (“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ”) and Romans

⁵⁵ *Super Rom* 3, lec. 4 (Marietti no. 321). Aquinas identifies the three evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience in his treatment of the new law in the *ST I-II*, q. 108, a. 4.

⁵⁶ Bruce Marshall argues that Aquinas’s commentary on Romans 4 shows that he considers grace as both transformational and dispositive: “In just this twofold way, God not only cleanses our souls, but covers our sinful acts. For God to forgive sins is not only for him to be undeterred by the foulness of what he intends to change, but for him to overlook—to cover—what cannot be changed” (“*Beatus vir: Aquinas, Romans 4, and the Role of ‘Reckoning’ in Justification*,” in *Reading Romans with St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Matthew Levering and Michael Dauphinais [Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012], 216–37, at 233).

⁵⁷ Barclay writes: “What was entirely *unnatural* for anyone reared in the Jewish tradition was to decenter the Torah, to limit its role in history to an interlude, and to distinguish it categorically from ‘covenant’ and ‘promise.’ But this is precisely what Paul does in Galatians 3–4, a narrative account of the purposes of God whose interpretive center is the Christ-event itself” (401).

8:2 (“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death”). Commenting on the former, Aquinas summarizes the law of Christ in the one word “charity” in three ways. First, the new law is a law of love, not fear. Second, Christ promulgated his law as the new commandment to “love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:35). Third, Christ himself fulfilled this commandment when he “bore our sins out of charity.”⁵⁸ The grace of Christ transforms the believers to be able to fulfill the law of Christ, the law of love.

In Romans 8:2, Paul speaks of “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” In this context, Aquinas sees the new law not merely in terms of the goal or terminus of the law of love, but as the process of making that love possible. He paraphrases Romans 8:2 thus: “The law of the spirit frees man from sin and death.” Such a gift is clearly incongruous, since it is given to those under sin and death. Aquinas develops this incongruity, however, by viewing the gift as it is presented here by Paul as a law. Drawing on Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aquinas considers that all laws are given to make us good. Aquinas then distinguishes between human law and the law of the spirit in terms of how each helps us to be good: whereas human law can only indicate what ought to be done, the “Holy Spirit dwelling in the mind not only teaches what is to be done by instructing the intellect, but also inclines the affection to act aright.”⁵⁹ The emphasis thus moves from the incongruity of the gift to its efficacy and circularity as it frees the recipient to become worthy. In addition to considering the law as given to make us good, Aquinas considers the law of the spirit as the proper effect of the Spirit. Here he summarizes this effect as “faith working through love”: “[This] faith teaches us what is to be done, ‘His anointing teaches you about everything’ (1 John 2:27) and inclines the affections to act, ‘The love of Christ controls us’ (2 Cor 5:14).”⁶⁰ Aquinas identifies this law of the spirit as “the new law, which is the Holy Spirit himself or something which the Holy Spirit produces in our hearts, ‘I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts’ (Jer 31:33).”⁶¹ The law of the spirit is both the gift of the Holy Spirit and the movement of the Holy Spirit in the members of the new covenant.

Aquinas then considers how the law of the Spirit frees us from sin and death through the Incarnation taken as a whole. Here he speaks in a manner similar to Barclay’s treatment of the Christ event. The gift of

⁵⁸ *Super Gal* 6, lec. 1.

⁵⁹ *Super Rom* 8, lec. 1 (Marietti no. 602).

⁶⁰ *Super Rom* 8, lec. 1 (Marietti no. 603).

⁶¹ *Super Rom* 8, lec. 1 (Marietti no. 603).

the new law of the spirit is not something other than the Incarnation as a whole, but rather is intimately connected to the Incarnation. Aquinas shows this by observing that the Spirit is in an individual only insofar as that person is connected to Christ as head.

Aquinas shows how the law of the spirit of life depends on the Incarnation's power to justify the sinner.⁶² He points out that the first effect of the Incarnation is "the removal of sin" and that the second is "the justification of the law,"⁶³ and he expands upon the latter: "The justice which the Law promised and which some hoped to obtain from the Law" is now fulfilled in us, but justification can be accomplished only "through Christ."⁶⁴ Aquinas contrasts Christ's power to justify and the law's inability to do so: "It was necessary that Christ be incarnated, because the Law could not justify." Interestingly, Aquinas points out here that this is not "due to a shortcoming in the Law, but because it was 'weakened by the flesh' (Rom 8:3), . . . a weakness in man due to the corruption of the inclination to sin [*fomes*], . . . [and] sinful desire [*concupiscentia*]."⁶⁵

The Incarnation as a whole, including the death and resurrection, is given to make human beings worthy before God. The Torah was good and wise and showed forth "the path of righteousness" (Ps 23:3), but according to Aquinas, Paul came to see that his relationship to the Torah was changed in light of the death and resurrection of Christ. Christ's death reveals a deeper sense of human weakness and a deeper inclination to sin than did the Torah: the gift of Christ is given to those who are unworthy, who see themselves as unworthy, and who see themselves in need of the forgiveness Christ offers. In this way, Christ's death and resurrection perfect the Torah, insofar as Christ makes possible the path of righteousness that was previously outlined. The gift actualizes the drama of forgiveness and repentance that is necessary for human beings to live in right relationship with God.

Consider how Aquinas treats Paul's teaching on the love of neighbor as fulfilling the Law. Two central passages are Galatians 5:14—"For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'"—and Romans 13:8–9: "For he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. The commandments . . . are summed up in this one sentence, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" Let us consider first the passage from Galatians. Aquinas notes the parallel verse in Romans 13 and then asks

⁶² *Super Rom* 8, lec. 1 (Marietti no. 606).

⁶³ *Super Rom* 8, lec. 1 (Marietti nos. 609–10).

⁶⁴ *Super Rom* 8, lec. 1 (Marietti no. 611).

⁶⁵ *Super Rom* 8, lec. 1 (Marietti no. 611).

whether it is appropriate to speak only of the love of neighbor, and not of the love of God.⁶⁶ He answers that the love of God and the love of neighbor include one another, since “he who loves God should love his brother also” (1 John 4:21), and that “we love our neighbor for the love of God.” Following Paul, Aquinas reduces all of the law to the “one precept of charity.”⁶⁷ Aquinas then explains how this is true.

In Aquinas’s exegesis of Galatians 5:14, he emphasizes the unified character of the divine law by showing how the old law and the new law have the same *ratio*, at least in the order of precepts. Aquinas unpacks the unity of the law by beginning with the unity of the old law. He makes his customary distinction among the moral, ceremonial, and judicial precepts, yet he does not thereby separate them into three laws. The threefold distinction reveals a deeper unity: the moral precepts are the Decalogue and show that “three precepts concern the love of God, and the other seven the love of neighbor”; the judicial precepts offer specification of the love of neighbor; and the ceremonial precepts offer specifications of the love of God. So all of the law is fulfilled in the “one precept of charity.” Aquinas then concludes by citing Leviticus 19:18 as the source of this teaching: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Aquinas does not oppose the old law as bad and the new law as good. Instead, the precepts of the two show a profound unity, insofar as both may be reduced to the one precept of charity, the love of God and the love of neighbor for his sake. The difference that the gift of Christ makes is not primarily in the precepts, although the specifications are certainly changed, but in the power of justification.⁶⁸ The most perfect and righteous gift is given to the imperfect and unrighteous so that they may become perfect and righteous.

Aquinas elsewhere affirms the profound unity of the law that comes from God. When he describes it in the *Summa theologiae*, he speaks of one divine law with two parts.⁶⁹ The new law and the old law share the

⁶⁶ *Super Gal* 5, lec. 3.

⁶⁷ *Super Gal* 5, lec. 3.

⁶⁸ See *Super Gal* 1, lec. 2, in which Aquinas argues that Paul contrasts the “grace of Christ” as not properly “another gospel” to show that Christ properly fulfills the old law: “Although [the new law] is another gospel according to the tradition of the deceivers, yet according to [Paul’s] preaching it is not. It is different in the promises, but not in the figure, because the same thing is contained in the Old Testament and in the New [*idem continetur in veteri testamento et in novo*]: in the Old, indeed, as in a figure, but in the New as in the express reality. Therefore it is another gospel if you consider the outward appearances; but as to the things that are contained and exist within, it is not another gospel.”

⁶⁹ *ST* I-II, q. 91, aa. 4–5.

same end, and in this way, “the new law is not distinct from the old law: because they both have the same end, namely, man’s subjection to God.”⁷⁰ The distinction between the new law and the old law is found rather in the way in which the new law is closer to the goal than the old: “The new law is distinct from the old law: because the old law is like a pedagogue of children, as the Apostle says (Gal 3:24), whereas the new law is the law of perfection, since it is the law of charity, of which the Apostle says (Col 3:14) that it is ‘the bond of perfection.’”⁷¹ In this way, Aquinas interprets the Pauline image of the law as pedagogue to emphasize a discontinuous continuity.

When Aquinas turns to the parallel passage of Romans 13:8–9, he develops the theme of love in the language of debts and gifts. He begins by observing the full passage: “Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.”⁷² While we ought to seek to pay back all debts, there are some debts “from which a man can never absolve himself.” Aquinas considers the love of God and the love of neighbor as debts that ever remain with us. He quotes Psalm 116:12—“What shall I render to the Lord for all his bounty to me?”—to show that the excellence of God’s gifts are such that equal payment could never be made.⁷³ Aquinas then also presents the love of neighbor in this same context: “The debt of fraternal love is paid such a way that it is always owing.”⁷⁴ He says this because we owe our neighbor love on account of God, because we continue to love those to whom we are “alike in nature and grace,” and because the cause of love does not diminish, but “grows by loving.”⁷⁵ There is a delicate balance in this treatment of the gift of love: Aquinas emphasizes the incomplete circularity of the gift in this context. The gift of love expects and deserves return even when that return is inadequate to the original gift of God’s love or to the ongoing deepening of a friend’s love.

Aquinas situates the gift of love within the context of perfection. Romans 13:8–9 falls within the larger section of 12:1–13:14, summarized by Aquinas under the theme of Paul setting forth “the use of grace that man might be perfect.” This section he further subdivides, “first with regard to the holiness that man maintains for God (ch. 12), second with

⁷⁰ *ST I-II*, q. 107, a. 1.

⁷¹ *ST I-II*, q. 107, a. 1.

⁷² *Super Rom* 13, lec. 2 (Marietti no. 1045).

⁷³ *Super Rom* 13, lec. 2 (Marietti no. 1046).

⁷⁴ *Super Rom* 13, lec. 2 (Marietti no. 1047).

⁷⁵ *Super Rom* 13, lec. 2 (Marietti no. 1047).

regard to the justice that he shows his neighbor (13:1–10), and finally with regard to the purity that he preserves in himself (13:11–14).⁷⁶ The gift of grace has power to assist the human creature in attaining holiness.

Aquinas questions how the reader should understand Paul's teaching that the love of neighbor fulfills the law. Is Paul speaking of the law of the old law versus the law of the new law? In his *Commentary on Galatians*, Aquinas discussed how the love of neighbor fulfilled the law by referring back to the old law. Specifically, Aquinas showed how the entire old law, including the moral, ceremonial, and judicial precepts, could be reduced to the love of neighbor that entails the love of God. In his treatment of the parallel passage in his *Commentary on Romans*, he makes no reference to the ceremonial or judicial precepts, but only to the Decalogue, following Paul's reference in Romans 13:9. Aquinas first argues that the love of neighbor is included in the love of God, "as the effect in its cause,"⁷⁷ affirming that Scripture sometimes uses interchangeably the love of God and the love of neighbor as though either one were sufficient for salvation. Here, Aquinas follows Paul and suggests that the law and the precept of charity are synonymous. Thus, although Aquinas may at other points distinguish between the old law and the new law, here he sees the deeper shared *telos* of the laws God revealed. The gift of Christ fulfills the law, since Christ fulfills perfect love of neighbor in laying down his life for us while we were sinners and in loving the Father. Aquinas concludes his comments on Romans 13:8–10 by saying: "Paul draws the conclusion mainly intended, saying: 'Therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law,' i.e., the Law is fulfilled and made perfect by love, 'Above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony' (Col 3:14)."⁷⁸ With an emphasis different from that employed by Barclay, Aquinas affirms the fulfilled presence of the Torah in the new law, since both are ordered to love. Love does not eschew order, but both reveals and creates its own deeper harmony, drawing on the history of Israel and the gift of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Barclay offers a much-needed insight into Paul's notion of grace/gift that is simultaneously incongruous and reciprocal. The gift of Christ thus comes as a kind of *habitus* that has the power to transform us both interiorly and

⁷⁶ John Boyle, "On the Relation of St. Thomas's Commentary on Romans to the *Summa theologiae*," in Levering and Dauphinais, *Reading Romans with St. Thomas Aquinas*, 75–82.

⁷⁷ *Super Rom* 13, lec. 2 (Marietti no. 1049).

⁷⁸ *Super Rom* 13, lec. 2 (Marietti no. 1059).

communally. Aquinas offers a specification of this *habitus* that allows for a better understanding of how grace is circular/transformational/not-unconditional, and thus the fulfillment of the law in charity.

Aquinas argues for the primacy of charity in the new covenant. So, the transformed life of the Christian is principally a life of charity: love for God and neighbor that is a participation in God's own love. These insights of Aquinas develop an idea shared with Barclay, namely, that grace is unconditioned, but not unconditional. Aquinas, however, presents a deeper understanding of the nature of the *habitus* of grace and the fulfillment of the old law in the new law of the Christ gift.

By attending to Paul's emphasis on love as the fulfilling of the law, Aquinas shows forth the necessary relationship between gift and order. The deepest order and law of the cosmos is that of love, the Trinitarian love of God disclosed through the Incarnation of the second person of the Trinity. The ultimate order and love of the cosmos finds its meaning in divine friendship that exceeds the grasp of a darkened human reason and a disordered human will. To receive this higher order of gift and love one must escape the rationalism of the modern age. How can love be ordered with evil? Justice ordered with injustice? How can the creator's love be received and returned by the creature? Human reason on its own can merely affirm that these are not *per se* contradictions. The ultimate gift of divine love, however, has to be received from above and acknowledged from below. The Christ gift exceeds and yet perfects the drama of human existence. By following Barclay's lead—with slight corrections from Aquinas's treatment of grace, law, and love in his theological exegesis and doctrinal writings—we see that the Christ gift establishes a new order of living in communion with the Triune God and the members of the body of Christ. The new order is nothing other than the Christ gift given, received, and returned through the sacramental and moral life of the Church.

For a final consideration of the gift in Paul, we turn from L'Engle's earthly opposition between love and reason look instead to Dante's depiction of the beatifying vision in his great poem *The Divine Comedy*. Here, the incarnate Word strikes as "lightning," an unexpected gift disclosing a deeper harmony, and alone perfects and elevates the deepest human desires to know and to love in accord with Love himself.

O Light that dwell within Thyself alone,
 who alone know Thyself, are known, and smile
 with Love upon the Knowing and the Known!
 That circle which appeared—in my poor style—
 like a reflected radiance in Thee,

after my eyes had studied it awhile,
Within, and in its own hue, seemed to be
tinted with the figure of a Man,
and so I gazed on it absorbedly.
As a geometer struggles all he can
to measure out the circle by the square,
but all his cogitation cannot gain
The principle he lacks: so did I stare
at this strange sight, to make the image fit
the aureole, and see it enter there:
But mine were not the feathers for that flight,
Save that the truth I longed for came to me,
smiting my mind like lightning flashing bright.
Here ceased the powers of my high fantasy.
Already were all my will and my desires
Turned—as a wheel in equal balance—by
The Love that moves the sun and the other stars.⁷⁹

N.V

⁷⁹ Dante Alighieri, *Paradise*, trans. Anthony Esolen (New York: Random House, 2007), 357–59.

Divine Beneficence and Human Generosity in Second Temple Judaism: Reflections on John Barclay’s *Paul and the Gift*

BRADLEY C. GREGORY
The Catholic University of America
Washington, DC

In his recent landmark book, *Paul and the Gift*,¹ John Barclay situates Paul’s theology of grace within the ancient understanding of gift giving. In order to do this, he outlines six ways that gift giving or grace can be “perfected,” understood in its “purest essence.” A gift may be “perfected” in terms of superabundance (size, importance, permanence), its singularity (it is *the* defining characteristic of the giver), its priority (it comes before any initiative by the recipient), its incongruity (the recipient is unworthy of such a gift), its efficacy (it accomplishes the purpose for which it was given), and noncircularity (it is given without any expectation of return) (66–78). These different dimensions of gifts/grace provide a helpful schema for understanding how both ancient authors and their interpreters throughout history have understood what grace is and what it is not. For example, the different understandings of Paul found in Augustine and Luther largely stem from each of the latter’s different conceptions of how grace is perfected.

The upshot of this approach to grace for the study of Paul is twofold. First, in examining the anthropology and history of gift giving from antiquity to the present, Barclay shows that the “disinterested gift,” one that is given with no expectation of return, is an almost exclusively modern, Western notion. In contrast, for the ancient person, gift giving always expected

¹ John Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015). This work will be cited parenthetically by page number.

some sort of reciprocal exchange because gift giving was always embedded in an interpersonal dynamic of creating and developing social ties (11–65). Thus, it is no surprise that, in the second part of the book, when Barclay explores how different Second Temple Jewish authors perfect divine grace, not a single one perfects noncircularity. In each of the five works, some sort of return is expected, even if it is “only” profound gratefulness to God.

Second, by reading Second Temple works with these six different perfections in mind, Barclay shows convincingly that “grace is everywhere; but this does not mean that grace is everywhere the same” (319). For example, while *Wisdom of Solomon* and *Philo* do not perfect divine grace in terms of incongruity, the *Qumran Hodayot* and *Pseudo-Philo* do; yet all perfect grace in at least one way. In fact, each Second Temple Jewish author represents a different constellation of grace, perfecting it in different combinations of the six dimensions, and each perfection in different ways. In turning to Paul, then, it becomes quite clear that one cannot simply ask whether Paul agrees or disagrees with Second Temple Judaism on the topic of grace. Rather, the question is how his view of grace is situated among this diversity. On one hand, Paul is continuous with other ancient authors in *not* perfecting noncircularity. Like his contemporaries, he firmly believed that God’s grace creates a new relational dynamic and demands a response from the recipients. On the other hand, Paul’s view of divine grace as radically incongruous and centered on God’s gift in Christ was largely discontinuous with ancient views of (human) gift giving, though in different ways in comparison to Judaism and Greco-Roman culture. Key to this aspect of Barclay’s thesis is the claim that, for ancient authors, gift giving was routinely viewed as congruous in some way with the worth or status of the recipient, and then further, the question of how gift giving in early Judaism aligned with this broader Greco-Roman perspective. It is this aspect of Barclay’s work that I would like to engage for this symposium. I hope the following discussion will help to supplement Barclay’s treatment and to suggest some further ways that divine beneficence and human generosity are interrelated among some Second Temple Jewish authors.²

Social Worth and Well-Placed Gifts

One aspect of gifts in the ancient world that Barclay rightfully highlights is that the status or worth of a potential recipient was generally a significant factor in the decision to give: “What distinguishes the sphere of gift

² Barclay notes his hope to write a subsequent volume on social gift giving in Paul and early Christianity (63n172).

is not that it is ‘unilateral,’ but that it expresses a social bond, a mutual recognition of the value of the *person*. It is filled with sentiment because it invites a personal, enduring, and reciprocal relationship” (31). Because the proper context of gifts was friendship, whether created or continued, and involved an expectation of back-and-forth return, it was imperative that gifts be placed with those who would represent desirable social connections. For this reason, giving to those who would be unable or unwilling to reciprocate was considered a waste (see Theognis 105–12). For many Greek authors, the poor were simply unworthy of gifts and even their gratefulness was worthless. Notably, Aristotle thought it was unbecoming of a great person to give money to those of no importance, and he criticized Odysseus for giving alms to the poor for this reason (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1122a26–27; see Homer, *Odyssey* 17.420).³ As Barclay aptly summarizes it: “Nobody wants to think that they have voluntarily tied themselves to people who degrade their social capital” (39).

While cautions about the recipients of gifts can be found in early Judaism (e.g., Sir 12:1–6; 20:10, 14), the poor are viewed quite differently. Barclay is certainly correct to note that the Torah’s legislation and the demands of Jewish piety grounded care for the poor in religious obligation, and therefore that those who gave to the poor could expect to be blessed by God (see 41–44). Yet, we can press the point further to note that these religious obligations derived from a more profound theological understanding of the relationship between the poor and God. Throughout the Old Testament, there is the conviction that Israel’s God stands in solidarity with the poor (e.g., Exod 22:20; 1 Sam 2:8; Isa 11:4; Sir 4:4–6; 11:12–13; 35:20–22). For this reason, how a person treats the poor was understood to have a corresponding “double effect” toward God. For example, Proverbs 14:31 says:

Those who oppress the poor insult their Maker, but those who are kind to the needy honor him.⁴

Since God has a special relationship with the poor, God responds to the treatment of the poor as though the action had been done to himself. Distinctively, this “nexus” between God and the poor is actually intrinsic to Israel’s self-understanding as God’s people. For, their origins as a people are to be traced to their redemption from being poor, marginalized,

³ These ancient authors are cited in support of this point by Barclay (34).

⁴ Unless noted otherwise, all translations of the Bible are from the NRSV.

oppressed slaves in Egypt (see: Exod 22:21–23; Lev 25; Deut 15:1–10).⁵ Thus, unlike much Greco-Roman thought, early Judaism did not view gifts to the poor as a “waste,” but as an affirmation of the special status of the poor, both as specially loved by God and as emblematic of Israel’s own identity as God’s elect.

This recognition of the poor’s theological status provided one important motivation for giving to those in need that was, to a degree, independent of the social dynamics of reciprocity: in doing so, one was understood to be imitating God.⁶ For example, in Deuteronomy we read:

For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. (Deut 10:17–19)

Here God’s care for the poor and Israel’s own past as poor are linked as the foundation for Israel’s obligation both to render justice to the poor and to provide for their material needs. Similarly, the claim in Psalm 68:6 that God is a father of orphans and protector of widows is appropriated by both Job (31:16–18) and Ben Sira (4:10) to describe the ethical obligations of each Jewish person. In this way, human acts of charity mirror the way God cares for the poor and even can serve as God’s designated means of caring for the poor. Importantly, gifts to the poor are often unconditioned: the poor are to be helped simply because they are in need, not necessarily because they are righteous, worthy, or a potential social benefit to the giver in some way.⁷ In particular, Second Temple Jewish literature attests the view that giving to the poor *qua* poor is predicated on the fact that God is also good and merciful to all (see, e.g., *Aristeas* 207, 227; *T. Benj.* 4; cf.

⁵ On this see Bradley C. Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring: Generosity in the Book of Sirach*, Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Series 2 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 172–81.

⁶ This motif is not completely absent from Greco-Roman society, but it is less common there. For an example of generosity being understood as godlike, see Brad Inwood, “Politics and Paradox in Seneca’s *De beneficiis*,” in *Justice and Generosity: Studies in Hellenistic Social and Political Philosophy; Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium Hellenisticum*, ed. André Laks and Malcolm Schofield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 241–65, at 241–42.

⁷ The alternate view that it is better to give to the righteous poor than to the wicked poor can also be found (e.g., Sir 12:1–6; Tob 2:2; cf. b. B. Bat 9b).

Matt 5:38–48).⁸

A particularly vivid example of unconditioned gifts in early Judaism was the obligation to show kindness to the deceased. Consider two examples. The first is from Ben Sira:

And also to the needy stretch out your hand
in order that your blessing may be complete.
Give a gift to anyone alive
and even from the dead do not withhold kindness. (Sir 7:32–33)

The second is from Tobit:

In the days of Shalmaneser I performed many acts of charity to my kindred, those of my tribe. I would give my food to the hungry and my clothing to the naked; and if I saw the dead body of any of my people thrown out behind the wall of Nineveh, I would bury it. (Tob 1:16–17)

In the first passage, Ben Sira employs a merism to advocate generosity to anyone, whether living or dead, and there is no sense that the person should be worthy in some way. What is meant by “kindness [*hesed*] to the dead” is not completely clear, but it likely means the provision of a proper burial.⁹ This is precisely what is in view in the passage from Tobit. Alongside gifts of food and clothing to the needy, Tobit’s charity is exemplified by burying the dead. It is highly significant that, in this story set in the Assyrian exile, such actions pose a great personal risk to Tobit because they contravene the king’s decree and subject him to his neighbor’s taunts. Nevertheless, he continues to provide this kindness to the slain, and the concern for proper burial is one of the most important elements in the unfolding narrative. By focusing on the burial of the dead as the preeminent act of charity, the book of Tobit is able to encourage the faith required to trust God as the only one who can give a reward in return. Francis Macatangay observes, “that the dead cannot reasonably be expected to repay favors or reward any good deeds may have constituted the practice of burying the dead as

⁸ See David Flusser, “Love Your Fellow Man,” in *Judaism of the Second Temple Period: The Jewish Sages and Their Literature*, trans. Azzan Yadin (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009), 156–61.

⁹ Another possibility is the providing of assistance to the family of the deceased. See Georg Sauer, *Jesus Sirach/Ben Sira: Übersetzt und erklärt*, Das Alte Testament Deutsch 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 94.

a paradigmatic act of charity,” and he goes on to quote Israel Abrahams: “Charity to the dead is the type and acme of disinterested love, of disinterested love which, by the strange ways of Providence, does find its reward.”¹⁰ Abrahams aptly characterizes a central point of *Tobit*, though as we will see, such charity is disinterested only with respect to the human recipient and not in the absolute sense found in modern Western understandings of the “pure gift” (see Barclay 43–44 and 51–63). The inability of the dead to reciprocate obviously eliminates any motivation based on forging or furthering social bonds with them and points to the conviction among early Jewish authors that the ultimate guarantor of reward for charity was God. The argument of these authors is that God can be trusted to repay such gifts both because of God’s faithfulness and because of God’s special relationship with the poor.

Reciprocity: Gifts to the Poor, Loans to God

Given the differences between Greco-Roman gifts, which were embedded within social reciprocity, and the Jewish view that generosity to the poor should be unrelated to their status or “worth,” the question arises as to whether gift giving in Judaism was wholly different from that of the larger Mediterranean world. A recent and influential answer to this question has been proposed by Seth Schwartz in his book *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society?*¹¹ He argues that, in contrast to the reciprocity of the rest of the Mediterranean world, with its concomitant systems of power and dependency, the Jewish ideal expressed in the Torah is a society based on solidarity, equality, and love. Examining key sources from the Second Temple period, Schwartz finds that these two antithetical systems (reciprocity and solidarity) are often mixed, creating an inherent tension. Here Barclay objects to Schwartz’s characterization of assistance of the poor in Judaism as “pure, unreciprocated gift” that stands in stark contrast to reciprocity. He rightly argues that “the Torah’s legislation regarding care for the poor is best seen not as a rejection of ancient assumptions regarding gifts, but as a Jewish *modulation* of those assumptions, wholly dependent on the expectation of reciprocity—in a different form” (41; italics original). Barclay goes on to describe care for the poor as an obligation of Jewish

¹⁰ Francis Macatangay, *When I Die, Bury Me Well: Death, Burial, Almsgiving, and Restoration in the Book of Tobit* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016), 47; Israel Abrahams, “Tobit and Genesis,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 5 (1892–1893): 348–50, at 350.

¹¹ Seth Schwartz, *Were the Jews a Mediterranean Society? Reciprocity and Solidarity in Ancient Judaism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

piety and a requirement of the legislation of the Torah whose fulfillment will be rewarded by God.

While I agree with Barclay's critique of Schwartz on this point, there is an additional aspect of this "modulation" of reciprocity that should not be missed and, in light of Barclay's discussion, is all the more striking. A straightforward modulation of the reciprocity dynamic would simply incorporate God into the circle of gift and countergift: one would give to the poor and then God would return some favor to the giver and it would all remain in the conceptual sphere of gift giving. But, interestingly, the way early Jewish authors actually describe this repayment by God is not so much in language of gifts and counter gifts, but in the dual language of gifts, on the one hand, and loans and debts, on the other. The classic verse in this regard was Proverbs 19:17:

Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and will be repaid in full.

As Gary Anderson has shown, this verse reckons *gifts* to the poor as simultaneously *loans* to God: "What one does toward the poor registers directly with God. It is as though the poor person was some sort of ancient automatic teller machine through which one could make a deposit directly to one's heavenly account."¹² In fact, as he goes on to demonstrate, the metaphor of a "heavenly account" is not just a vivid, contemporary illustration; it emerged already in the Second Temple period. Once the word for righteousness, *ṣēdāqâh*, came to have the meaning "almsgiving," it was quite natural to read verses like these in a particular way:

Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit, but righteousness delivers from death. (Prov 10:2)

Wealth is of no avail on the day of wrath,
But righteousness saves from death. (Prov 11:4)

If one simply reads *ṣēdāqâh* (righteousness) in these two verses as "almsgiving" (natural, since the contrast in each is with other uses of wealth), then these verses speak of a contrast between wealth put to evil use and wealth put to good use, with the latter understood as a stored up treasure that

¹² Gary A. Anderson, "Redeem Your Sins by the Giving of Alms: Sin, Debt, and the 'Treasury of Merit' in Jewish and Early Christian Tradition," *Letter & Spirit* 3 (2007): 37–67, at 47.

provides deliverance from death.¹³

The ideas of generosity to the poor as a loan to God in Proverbs 19:17 and of accrued credit that can deliver from death in Proverbs 10:2 and 11:4 are combined in the book of Tobit. In the fourth chapter, on his deathbed, Tobit gives a series of admonitions to his son Tobias, among which is the following:

Do not turn your face away from anyone who is poor, and the face of God will not be turned away from you. If you have many possessions, make your gift from them in proportion; if few, do not be afraid to give according to the little you have. So you will be laying up a good treasure for yourself against the day of necessity. For almsgiving delivers from death and keeps you from going into the Darkness. (Tob 4:7b–10)

If Anderson is correct that Tobit is integrating these concepts from Proverbs, and it is difficult to resist this conclusion, then the language of the (heavenly) treasury explicitly refers to credit generated by gifts to the poor that can be “drawn upon” for future benefits.¹⁴ This shows that Proverbs’s notion that gifts to the poor were simultaneously understood as loans to God was not restricted to Proverbs 19:17, but had begun to gain wider currency in the Second Temple period.

Further confirming Anderson’s observations is the fact that the same language of a treasury funded by almsgiving and its resulting future deliverance occurs in Ben Sira’s discussion of giving to the poor:

However, with the poor person be patient and do not keep him waiting for alms. For the sake of the commandment help the poor and according to his need do not turn him away empty-handed. Lose (your) money for a kinsman or a friend and do not place it under a stone to go to ruin. Lay up your treasure according to the commandments of the Most High and it will profit you more than gold. Store up almsgiving in your treasury and it will deliver you from every calamity. More than a strong shield and robust spear it will fight for you against an enemy. (Sir 29:8–13)¹⁵

¹³ Avi Hurvitz, “The Biblical Roots of a Talmudic Term: The Early History of the Concept ‘zedaka’ [Hebrew],” *Language Studies* 2–3 (1987): 155–60; Anderson, “Redeem Your Sins,” 48–49.

¹⁴ Anderson, “Redeem Your Sins,” 49–50.

¹⁵ Translation is my own. For the textual criticism and a more extensive discussion of

While many of the same elements from Tobit 4 are found here, what is particularly notable is that this passage is spliced in between a discussion of lending in 29:1–7 and one on going surety in 29:14–20. In both sections, Ben Sira acknowledges that most people are rightfully cautious about lending to humans because they so often do not repay. The disjunction at the beginning of verse 8, “however,” suggests that giving to the poor is like a loan, but one in which such caution (in vv. 6–7) does not apply. The reason is that, in giving to the poor, a person is lending to someone who is sure to repay: God. The placement of the discussion of almsgiving in the midst of a discussion of lending and surety, but in a way that contrasts its sure repayment with the riskiness of “normal loans,” makes sense only on the presupposition that the treasury that is funded by almsgiving is backed by God, not by fickle humans. To put it another way, if a person’s peers are unlikely to repay (29:6–7, 18), someone who is poor must have been judged an even bigger risk, if what is in view is human reciprocity. The overwhelming and sure benefit of almsgiving in 29:12–13, especially when viewed alongside Tobit 4 and Proverbs 19:17, makes it very likely that, in Second Temple Jewish texts, the language of “stored up treasure” from almsgiving refers specifically to credit with God, not to human return or reciprocity, as is sometimes thought (contra Barclay 44).

It is worth pausing to consider how remarkable it is that Second Temple authors viewed gifts to the poor as *loans* to God. On one hand, the integration of these two concepts to describe what happens when someone gives to the poor is not surprising. As Barclay points out, even though loans and gifts were distinct kinds of transactions, the obligation to reciprocate a gift meant that “debt” language could be used of both and there was some overlap between the dynamics of the two, and in fact, in some cases, recipients of gifts could feel burdened by a gift, since the obligation to make a counter-gift felt like repaying a loan (27). Nevertheless, despite this, Seneca could still hold that gift giving should not be “reduced” to the level of loans or impersonal financial calculation (46–47).

Thus, to characterize almsgiving as a loan to God, who is then required to repay, is potentially scandalous. This point was not lost on the ancient rabbis, some of whom reacted with shock that God would be “in debt” to the almsgiver, since, according to Proverbs 22:7, “the borrower is slave to the lender” (see b. B. Bat. 10a and Lev. Rab. 34:2).¹⁶ Yet, by characterizing generosity to the poor as a loan to God rather than a gift, the Jewish tradition underscored the certainty that God would repay in kind. And

these verses see Gregory, *Like an Everlasting Signet Ring*, 181–200.

¹⁶ Anderson, “Redeem Your Sins,” 47.

while Pericles observed that people tend to repay loans more slowly than they do gifts (see Sir 8:12–13; 29:1–7),¹⁷ it cannot be imagined that God would allow his debts to linger. Rather, God would be certain to be like the upright person who pays his debts on time (see Sir 29:2, 15), seeking to escape his indebtedness at first opportunity (see: Prov 6:1–5; 4QInstructionb 2 II, 4–6; 4QInstructionc 2 I, 21–24). Thus, the use of loan-debt imagery reinforces the virtue of generosity to the poor by presenting gifts to the poor as a “no-lose proposition” precisely because God is the indebted party and his righteousness prevents him from defaulting. It also releases the poor recipient from any pressure to try to reciprocate, and thereby alleviates the resulting social dependency that typically accompanies a patron/reciprocity system.¹⁸ Attention was instead redirected to God as the one under obligation.

There is a potential problem with conceptualizing gifts to the poor as a loan to God who is certain to repay. Despite the help that such gifts provide for the poor, is there not the possibility that this triangular relationship will result in the “instrumentalizing” of the poor as part of a shrewd calculation by the giver?¹⁹ I think the answer is “no” for a couple of reasons. First, as Anderson has argued, to accept the claim that gifts given to the poor will result in such a repayment (or reward) actually requires a great deal of faith, because it is, on the surface, not the “safest” (or maybe, “lowest risk”) way to use one’s money. To participate in this “triangular” relationship with the poor and God requires a view of life that is in many respects counterintuitive and that views oneself, like the poor, as entirely dependent on the goodness of God.²⁰ This is why, for example, before speaking of the heavenly treasure that would accrue through almsgiving, Ben Sira acknowledges that giving to the poor looks like a “loss” that is riskier than protecting one’s money and possessions (Sir 29:10).

Second, as discussed above, this theological framework is built on the convictions that God has a special relationship with the poor, endowing them with a unique dignity, and that care for the poor is an act of *imitatio Dei*. Since God does not depersonalize or instrumentalize the poor, neither

¹⁷ Cited in Barclay, *Paul & the Gift*, 27n65.

¹⁸ Barclay hints in this direction (44–45n121).

¹⁹ On this, see also Paul Veyne, *Bread and Circuses: Historical Sociology and Political Pluralism*, trans. Brian Pearce (London: Penguin, 1976), 26–33. My thanks to Gary Anderson for this reference. For Seneca’s worries about human giving becoming simply one of self-interested calculation rather than the fostering of friendship, see the discussion in Barclay, *Paul & the Gift*, 48–50.

²⁰ Gary Anderson, *Charity: The Place of the Poor in the Biblical Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 3–6.

should their human benefactors. This is not simply a point of morality, but a recognition that *God's presence is specially with the poor*.²¹ While Second Temple authors like Ben Sira and Tobit present almsgiving as an opportunity to “lay up treasure” for future benefit, they equally emphasize God's love for the poor and the importance of treating the poor with dignity, of showing concern for their emotional well-being, and they even encourage positive social interactions with them. In Sirach 4:1–10, Ben Sira advocates prompt giving and warns his students against ignoring, turning away from, or failing to greet the poor. But more than that, they are to engender positive social relations with the poor through seeking justice for them and becoming like a father to orphans and a husband to widows. Later in the book, he says that gifts should be accompanied by kind words and that graciousness when giving to the poor is the most important part of giving (Sir 18:15–18; similarly, see b. B. Bat. 9b). In fact, the Talmudic tractate Ketubbot even encourages giving anonymously or as a loan (that may or may not be repaid), instead of as alms, if it helps to avoid shaming the recipient (b. Ket. 67b). Thus, to reduce this triangular theological structure to a crass financial calculation in which the poor are simply a means to an end would be to miss the larger theological understanding of the poor in early Judaism. For these authors, charity ought never to be simply a “drive-by” affair; to be charitable is to invest oneself in a worldview where the poor are deeply valued.

Divine Beneficence and Generosity to the Poor in Paul

Finally, I would like to suggest a couple of ways these features of Second Temple Jewish theology regarding gifts to the poor may help illuminate some passages in Paul's letters. First, Paul's notion of incongruous grace, which Barclay beautifully elucidates mainly in the epistles of Galatians and Romans, finds an analogue not just in works like the Hodayot and Pseudo-Philo, but also more broadly in the Jewish understanding of the poor as those who enjoy a special relationship with God irrespective of human systems of value and worth, especially insofar as the poor were considered emblematic of God's chosen, favored people. The influence of this theological perspective on Paul's understanding of Christ as the gift of God is especially clear in 2 Corinthians, where, in 9:8–9 for instance, Paul describes the abundance of God's blessing to those at Corinth as a fulfillment of Psalm 112:9—“He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor, his

²¹ Gary Anderson (personal communication). For the sacramental character of helping the poor as those in whom God can be encountered see Anderson, *Charity*, 6–11.

righteousness endures forever.” Further, this generosity then enables the “poor” Corinthians to “share abundantly in every good work.” Here we see God’s kindness to the poor used as a theological template to characterize God’s beneficence to the Corinthians in a way that combines superabundance and incongruity (and possibly efficacy, to a degree), while excluding noncircularity. In the previous chapter, Paul states: “you know the generous act [τὴν χάριν] of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich” (2 Cor 8:9). Here again, the idea of gifts to the poor is employed to describe grace, but the “poor” Corinthians are given the riches of *Christ’s* incongruous grace in his *own* sacrifice of his “riches” through the Incarnation and crucifixion (cf. Phil 2:6–8).

Second, the kind of “triangular” relationship of giving to the poor, loaning to God, and God’s certain repayment can also be found in Paul’s letters to describe his understanding of the ecclesial context of his apostolic mission. Perhaps the most striking instance comes at the end of the letter to the Philippians:

For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs more than once. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the profit that accumulates to your account. I have been paid in full and have more than enough; I am fully satisfied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:16–19)

What is most interesting in light of the above discussion is that Paul considers their financial gift (τὸ δόμα) to him as someone who was needy, to further his mission, as something that is “profit that abounds to your account” (τὸν καρπὸν τὸν πλεονάζοντα εἰς λόγον ὑμῶν). Although Paul does not speak of a “treasury” per se, this “credit” is clearly something that God will repay out of the heavenly resources of Christ’s riches to satisfy the Philippians’ needs. While the “triangular” dynamic is usually noted by commentators, the conceptual background of Second Temple Judaism’s development of Proverbs 19:17 rarely is.

In his discussion of the perfections of grace and the background of gift giving in the ancient world, John Barclay has brought greater nuance to the understanding of grace in Second Temple Judaism and Paul that has provided the scholarly world with a much deeper understanding of

the complex topic of God's grace. By exploring the way Second Temple authors understood giving to the poor and its relevance for Paul's theology, it is hoped that Barclay's already rich discussion may be extended in some fruitful ways. N.V

The Ultimate Gift: The Transformative Indwelling of Christ and the Christian

DAVID VINCENT MECONI, S.J.

Saint Louis University

Saint Louis, MO

All those *ἵνα* and *ut* clauses should have given it away. As a patrologist with a special interest in the soteriology of Christian deification, I had always seen that the Church Fathers depicted the descent of Christ in terms of a purpose and a plan. His *kenosis* demanded our *theosis*, for he did not intend to visit in vain. The more modern understanding of God's descent into humanity and the consequent gift of divinizing grace as an event that required absolutely nothing in return, therefore, never quite squared with how I was interacting with these ancient texts. Instead, what I was encountering on those pages insisted that "this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: *so that* man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God."¹ We see the same construction of purpose clauses in Clement and Origen and throughout the Cappadocians, as well as at the heart at the most legendary and lapidary formula, the Athanasian dictum that "God became human *so that* humans could become gods."² Obviously this was no disinterested descent.

Surely the Incarnation was effected in order to achieve some end, an exhortatory truth not limited to the ancient world, but seen throughout the best of Christian thought. Take St. Thomas Aquinas, for example,

¹ Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adversus Haereses* 3.19.1 (PG, 7/1:939), as quoted in *Catechism of the Catholic Church* [CCC], 2nd ed. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997), §460.

² Athanasius, *De Incarnatione* 54.3 (PG, 25:192B), quoted in CCC, §460. For more on such statements, see Norman Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

whose lengthy meditations on the grace of the Incarnation led him to teach that “the only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, *so that* he, made man, might make men gods.”³ From Athanasius to Aquinas, the greatest Christian minds have understood that the gift of the Son’s human nature was so that humans could come to partake of the divine nature.

Yet, in many strands of modern Christianity, such an expectation would be piously disregarded as some merit- or work-based soteriology wherein God does something only in order to have something in return. There is (rightful) caution that the old pagan adage and the crux of their civil creed, *do ut des*, would erase the agapic covenant in favor of a commutative contract. But how does one speak of the utter gratuity of God without making his gift an undemanding frill or a favor so void of power that it refuses a return on its investment? Perhaps that is what every fallen soul, however, desires—a God who only gives but wants nothing really in return?

In his inimitable way, C. S. Lewis realized this when he teasingly wrote that no one really wants a Father-God who makes demands on those brought into his household, but rather a cognitively diminished deity who simply provides us with what we need to have fun and then apparently turns in early:

By the goodness of God we mean nowadays almost exclusively His lovingness; and in this we may be right. And by Love, in this context, most of us mean kindness—the desire to see others than the self happy; not happy in this way or in that, but just happy. What would really satisfy us would be a God who said of anything we happened to like doing, ‘What does it matter so long as they are contented?’ We want, in fact, not so much a Father in Heaven as a grandfather in heaven—a senile benevolence who, as they say, liked to see young people enjoying themselves, and whose plan for the universe was simply that it might be truly said at the end of each day, ‘a good time was had by all.’ . . . I should very much like to live in a universe which was governed on such lines. But since it is abundantly clear that I don’t, and since I have reason to believe, nevertheless, that God is Love, I conclude that my conception of love needs correction.⁴

³ Thomas Aquinas, *Opusculum* 57, lec.1–4 (On the Feast of Corpus Christi), quoted in *CCC*, §460.

⁴ C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: HarperOne, 1986 [originally 1940]), 31–32.

Lewis rightly sees that the modern notion of love is in need of correction, especially as regards whether it is congruent with any language of reciprocity, expectation, or bidding.

The most recent contribution by the biblical theologian John Barclay sets out to rectify not so much our modern understanding of God's love, but that of God's grace.⁵ Accordingly, the present article explores how Paul's understanding of grace, as Barclay reads it, opens up for us a more robust theology of the Mystical Body, arguing that Paul expects the *kenosis* of the Son to result in the *theosis* of many adopted sons and daughters now gathered into one body, the Body of Christ.

To do this, we shall first extrapolate those parts of Barclay's study that help us understand this expectation of the Incarnation. Barclay very adroitly draws out six characteristics of "gift" from Paul's world, proving very illuminating to us today when asking "why?" God became flesh. A second section of the present article examines Paul's theology of the Mystical Body and its possible roots and sources. Among all the New Testament books, the Pauline epistles exhort the Christian people into a unity unknown outside the ecclesia to which they are invited. The third and final section moves with Barclay more explicitly to Paul's letters to the Romans and Galatians in order to read anew the Apostle's theology of deification.

John M. G. Barclay's *Paul & The Gift*

This most recent *Nova et Vetera* symposium has chosen to focus on Durham University's biblical theologian John Barclay's wonderful *Paul & the Gift*, as he offers both a confirmation and a rectification of modern readings of Paul on the crucial concept of grace. Biblical scholars have recognized Barclay's work and have rightly received it as a very welcomed study, as it attempts to reconcile the so-called recent "new perspectives on Paul" with a more historically steeped reading of Paul's cultural and intellectual milieu. In so gathering his study and focusing his interest on the history and theology of *gratia*, Professor Barclay inevitably brings into dialogue some of the positions and readings of Paul advanced by such scholars as James D. G. Dunn (who coined the term "new perspective"), E. P. Sanders, and of course, N. T. Wright. A deepening of Paul's theology will always need to be done, and *Paul & the Gift* proves a definite way forward, as Barclay both highlights the surprisingly rich pre-Christian roots of grace and shows how we should read Paul rightly today.

For the past 2000 years, the majority of Christian thinkers have held

⁵ John M. G. Barclay, *Paul & the Gift* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015). This work will be cited parenthetically by page number in the text.

a robust theology of the Mystical Body as the key to understanding one's new life in Christ, having drawn mainly from the imagery in John's Gospel and Paul's theology of grace. Thus, this would prove to be an illuminating lens through which we study the key insights of *Paul & the Gift*. In so doing, we just might come to see a more pervasive and far-reaching appreciation for how this soteriological tenet is found throughout the Pauline epistles. Such a lens also allows us to see both how Barclay understands such deification and perhaps where this ancient Christian doctrine could be even more effective in the analysis offered here.

Barclay opens his study by canvassing various theories of what constitutes a gift, how it is different from, say, a loan or an investment. While he canvasses many modern thinkers, the real fruit comes when he turns to those Second Temple texts that surely constituted the intellectual world in which Saul of Tarsus lived and studied. Here Barclay highlights six crucial components to the classical notion of gift or grace.

The first is *superabundance*. A true gift in antiquity was marked by a sense of permanence and magnitude. While one category may be temporal (a gift was never transient or ephemeral) and the other ontological (a sense of boundlessness and inexhaustibility), they converge in the idea of an opulence that could hardly be demanded by the beneficiary, a most fitting description of the interaction between the divine and the mortal.

The second tenet is *singularity*. Sheer benevolence marks a gift in the ancient world, described by Barclay in terms of an unparalleled solicitude with which the gift is given. Here, motivation and intent not only define the obvious gratuity of the gift but also determine the giver's purity and purpose of intention as well.

Third of the tenets is *priority*. As the name suggests, timing also factored into the beauty of a gift. Here, factors of initiation, preference, and prerogative come to light. By definition, a gift is the origin and not the consummation of personal interaction: favor originates in the giver and is the means by which those gifted are enabled to enjoy something otherwise unavailable to them.

Fourth is *incongruity*. As prodigal as a gift may seem, it is always given with a certain discrimination and selectivity. The incongruity here is not between giver and gifted, but between all those to whom the giver could have potentially given. Qualifications and criteria do matter, as benefactors would never bestow blindly, but instead gladly on those whom they have intentionally chosen.

Fifth is *efficacy*. Although freely given, a gift is expected to achieve some purpose. Food was widely distributed to satiate hunger, games were financed to provide entertainment to citizens, and so on. Benefactors are

rarely described as wholly selfless individuals, but rather calculate their gifts in such a way that either a personal or a social outcome they desire may (or may not be) realized. Those with gifts to give are generally those who know how the world “works,” and they do not scatter their largesse indiscriminately or without an eye to some ameliorative upturn.

Finally, the sixth tenet is *noncircularity*. Whereas the post-Enlightenment concept of gift is marked primarily by a sense of “purity,” with absolutely no strings attached to the content of the giving, here we come to see how favor in antiquity did expect some effect to occur. Of course, the “value” of the beneficence could not be matched or returned *in toto*, but that did not necessarily negate any expectation of honor or some sign of gratitude. Of course, a gift might never be “returned” in the slightest (Barclay explores this raw possibility through the adverb *δωρεάν* as at Gal 2:21, meaning “to no effect” or “for nought”), but nonetheless, gifts were given and favors were bestowed in order to establish relationship and to accomplish some recognized results (70–75).

After laying out the mechanics of a gift in the time of Second Temple Judaism, Barclay makes sure the reader understands that there was no one monolithic understanding of grace during these years. A gift may exhibit but one of these characteristics only; one or more of these may be more or less intense depending on the nature of the benefactor, the favor involved, or the status of the recipient(s). Some systems and societies stressed, say, efficacy over incongruity, or any one of the other characteristics analyzed here. It becomes clear that there was no inflexible and static conception of grace and how it had to operate. Barclay then applies these criteria to reading of Pauline grace as found throughout Galatians and Romans (one hopes he will do the same in the future for the remaining epistles), and a new light is cast on many classical texts employed when trying to understand how the apostle understands the new favor available in Christ.

This towering convert and apostolic authority has been described as the first Christian teacher to be “motivated by a Hellenistic desire for the One.”⁶ According to Margaret Mitchell, for instance, the entire point of Paul’s theologizing was to foster concord and unity within an otherwise disparate and divergent demographic.⁷ For, the reigning philosophies of Paul’s time all tended in this direction, tending to equate that which was

⁶ Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) 181.

⁷ Margaret Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Compositions of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), esp. 20–64.

real with that which was one. The concept of *henosis* or *unitas* became the distinguishing characteristic of that which had meaning, value, and reality. St. Paul's exhortations toward unity played out most manifestly and missiologically in his many calls for ecclesial harmony as an extension and emblem of Christ's own life. Paul wanted his interlocutors to understand that the essence of their newly embraced Christian faith was not a matter of law, not measured by the good works accomplished, but neither could it be reduced to a discardable ornament that made no demands on their bodies and minds.

The gift Paul longed to share with the first generations of Jesus's followers was a theology of mutual indwelling: to live this new life in Christ is ultimately to be conformed to Christ as mortal creatures surrendering to the organic unity offered and effected only in Christ's own body, the Church. Alongside John the Evangelist, the Apostle Paul was the source from which most Church Fathers and medieval Doctors drew when explaining the indwelling that transformed a Christian into another Christ (perhaps telling in this regard is that Paul is the opening citation in Pope Pius XII's 1943 classic *Mystici Corporis*, Col 1:24). This trajectory reveals an unbroken reliance on Paul: from the foundational centuries of Christian theology through the tumultuous times of modernity, it is Paul on whom the Church has most often depended when explaining the Christian life in terms of incorporation into Christ. And Barclay knows this, analyzing Paul's theology of grace in the thought of Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and significant twentieth-century Protestant figures. Yet an even richer study comes into view when Barclay's own tools are used to focus more precisely on the Pauline understanding of the deifying body of Christ.

Most important in this study into the transforming and deifying union of Paul's understanding of the Mystical Body is Barclay's emphasis that grace is at once both a gift and a reward that seeks to achieve its implicit expectation:

There is no antithesis here between gift and merit; grace and recompense stand in conjunction, not opposition. This is not to make the gift any less a gift or something akin to "pay." Those who deserve the gifts are still the recipients of gifts, given voluntarily and without legal requirement. They do not *cause* the gift to be given (that is always a matter of the benefactor's will), but they prove themselves to be its suitable recipients and thus provide the *condition* for its proper distribution. We must insist, against our instincts, that the ancients knew, and had reason to celebrate, a form of divine grace that rewarded those who were fitting recipients of its free and lavish beneficence. (316)

Reading Barclay on these many excellent points reminded me of much of the work Peter Brown has done as of late, not on Augustine (as Barclay cites), but on euergetism in late antiquity. Gifts were freely given out of a benefactor's largesse to those whom such a donor chose to trust with his or her wealth. People who knew the world well enough to work (or, perhaps more often, inherit) their way to the proverbial top were not careless spendthrifts or irresponsible do-gooders. They were savvy men and women enjoying a respectful social stratum and whose beneficence was meant to accomplish something noble and beautiful for those who drew near to their care.⁸

Both Brown and Barclay are sensitive enough to the ancient sources available to realize how the nature of gift and covenant in Judaism and in the Hellenic Roman world worked. Writing particularly about the book of Wisdom, but applicable to the overall point here, Barclay notes how Solomon obviates the worldview that God's goodness will always be futile with humanity's depravity, and so "might is right." For instance, for all posterity to hear, Solomon appeals to an undeserved yet efficacious wisdom: "God's generosity toward all of humanity is celebrated throughout this text, but its emphasis on a just and non-arbitrary cosmos requires that God's gifts are fairly distributed to those 'worthy' to receive them. Wisdom is a gift freely offered to those who desire and seek her and, like all the good gifts, is fittingly given" (309). The active favor of the benefactor is to be met by the humble receptivity of the beneficiary. Only in this way is a unilateral enslavement eschewed. The fittingness of the gift thus allows those in need to realize their own dignity and free decision to respond accordingly.

Let us now turn to that free and fitting gift as evidenced in St. Paul's theology of the Mystical Body of Christ, where the followers of Jesus surrender to love, and thus become other Christs extending the Incarnation in their own human and participatory ways. In doing so, I do not wish to imply that this is the only way grace operates in Paul's letters, nor do I see this as a major part of *Paul & the Gift*. What I do see is how the work Barclay has achieved here helps open for us today the ways Paul uses the ancient imagery of the body's working in unison as a foundational metaphor for the Christian life.

⁸ See Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350–550 AD* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012). See also my review essay, "Earthly Treasure, Spiritually Refined," *Harvard Theological Review* 108, no. 4 (2015): 621–28. For a more recent and much shorter study, see Brown, *Treasure in Heaven: The Holy Poor in Early Christianity* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016).

Paul's Theology of the Mystical Body

When taking up the Christian beginnings of the concept of the Mystical Body, the first voice we hear is fittingly that of the Lord himself as he instructs his listeners that whatever they do to the least of his brothers and sisters they inevitably do unto him as well. We hear, for example, the Gospels describe that relationship between Christ and these "least" as an organic unity between vine and branches (John 15) and as a union so intimate and unifying that it courses through one's very body (John 6). In Acts, we also hear Jesus cry from the heavens, "Saul, Saul, Why are you persecuting me?" (Acts 9:4; 22:7).⁹ For, it is the Lord himself who realizes how love unites and transforms lover and beloved. No longer Saul, the Apostle Paul translates this insight (and personal experience!) into language of head and body. Emile Mersch, S.J., observed in his classic on the Mystical Body: "What launched [Paul] on his apostolate and gave him a gospel to preach was the revelation that he had received that Christ is everything in the Church. . . . He sums up his entire gospel in this teaching, just as Christ sums up everything in Himself (Eph 1:10)."¹⁰ As one surely immersed in the culture and intellectual atmosphere of Hellenic Roman culture, Paul realized well how the body was the most apt metaphor in the pagan Mediterranean world by which to represent both civic cohesion and the intellectual ideals that bound otherwise disparate individuals into an organic whole.

This metaphor of the needed unities and sympathies of a body, stressing not only concord but also the needed hierarchy that ensures proper oversight and effectiveness, is found easily in Aesop's fable on *The Stomach and the Body*. This tale was originally intended as a cautionary warning against military brass abusing those below them, as well as a statement that foot soldiers stand in need of leadership from above. According to Aesop, every member of a body politic must listen to one another if any level of harmony, and thus survival, is to be realized:

The stomach and the feet were arguing over their strength. The feet constantly alleged that they were much superior in strength because they carried the stomach. To this the stomach replied: "But, my friends, if I don't provide you with nourishment, you won't be able to carry me."¹¹

⁹ All quotations of Scripture are taken from the NABRE.

¹⁰ Emile Mersch, S.J., *The Theology of the Mystical Body* (St. Louis, MO: Herder, 1951), 56.

¹¹ Fable no. 66 (no. 130 in Melvin Perry's standard numbering) in *Aesop's Fables*,

Such imagery abounded in other early writers, the best-known probably being in Plato's likening his city-state, the *Republic*, to the human soul. Plato held that, since the invisible soul was impossible to behold, it must be seen in magnification in the republic in which one lives. For Plato, governmental and societal structures are therefore nothing other than the magnifications of each of our own individual selves, the manifestation of our own priorities and ensuing desires. The body politic is a reflection of the values of each found within that body.

As insightful as Aesop and Plato were, by the time Paul developed his reflections on the Church as a body, the most common story on the body came from more contemporary authors like Cicero, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (d. ca. 7 BC) and Livy (d. AD 17). It recalls how a Roman consul in 503 BC, Menenius Agrippa, was sent to call the Roman army to greater harmony, as a great fissure had developed between a particular legion and its leaders. The senators who sent Menenius Agrippa, of course, stood in fear of conspiracies and assassination attempts by unruly and disgruntled military men. They therefore sent this eloquent statesman, and Menenius Agrippa relays this story:

In the days when man's members did not all agree amongst themselves, as is now the case, but had each its own ideas and a voice of its own, the other parts thought it unfair that they should have the worry and the trouble and the labor of providing everything for the belly, while the belly remained quietly in their midst with nothing to do but to enjoy the good things which they bestowed upon it; they therefore conspired together that the hands should carry no food to the mouth, nor the mouth accept anything that was given it, nor the teeth grind up what they received. While they sought in this angry spirit to starve the belly into submission, the members themselves and the whole body were reduced to the utmost weakness. . . . [And a bit later, Livy concludes] drawing a parallel from this to show how like was the internal dissension of the bodily members to the anger of the plebs against the Fathers, he prevailed upon the minds of his hearers.¹²

It is not too much of a stretch of the imagination to conceive how a story

trans. Laura Gibbs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 35.

¹² As related in Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita* 2.16.33, in *The Rise of Rome: Books One to Five*, trans. T. J. Luce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 104. The same apologue is found in Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.3.18, and Cicero, *De officiis* 3.5.22.

as old as Xenophon (d. 354 BC) and one kept alive in Cicero and Livy might have been readily known to a rabbinically trained scholar like Saul (Acts 22:3).

Of course, we cannot know for sure what Paul had read and had studied, but this classical speech finds a very similar tone in his warning against civic discord in 1 Corinthians, surely the most Hellenic and learned of all of his addresses:

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. Now the body is not a single part, but many. If a foot should say, "Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. Or if an ear should say, "Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended. If they were all one part, where would the body be? But as it is, there are many parts, yet one body. (1 Cor 12:12–20)

Many recent scholars have argued that Paul here translates the pre-Christian understanding of the civic body into the Mystical continuation of God's own Incarnation. Here, heavenly charity transforms Christian into Christ, and since the Christian has been originally created in the divine image and likeness (Gen 1:27), this is neither an obliteration nor an obfuscation of the human nature, but its only true consummation and perfection.

In his work on *Christ's Body in Corinth*, Yung Suk Kim, for instance, argues that the "space" of Christ's Body, his ecclesia on earth, was the only locus of incorporation where first-century Christians could know that they were no longer alone or without meaning or purpose. But just as importantly, they knew they were not being subsumed into a faceless hegemonic body. They were perfected as individuals precisely because they were being perfected as a body, what Professor Kim calls "the Christic body," where even the forgotten, sick, and enslaved, the abused and the downtrodden, found a meaningful participation because they were now

part of a lacerated yet eternally glorified body!¹³

Similarly, David Litwa, of the Australian Catholic University, grounds Paul's main soteriological message in his multivalent use of body metaphor:

The destiny of Paul's converts, in other words, is to be assimilated to the pneumatic/glorified body of Christ—a divine being regularly worshipped in Paul's churches. To bear this divine image is to be isomorphic with a divine being. Such strong assimilation to a divine being (believers become "the same image" as the divine Christ, 2 Cor 3:18) can fairly be recognized as a form of deification.¹⁴

Assimilation and imitation are the primary exhortations Paul uses to instruct his people on where their desires should lie: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1).

Paul clearly commits himself to the position that the historical Messiah Jesus is also the Mystical Christ and that the years separating the birth and the death of the Savior from Paul's own time are traversed, and thus united, by grace of the sacraments: "We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death" (Rom 6:4), and the elect have been "crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin" (Rom 6:6). As God, the Palestinian Jew Jesus Christ is not constrained to any one place or time, but is now mystically and sacramentally available in a new body of which he alone is Head.

Such union and charity were synonymous for St. Paul. Sin shatters and death divides; love unites and enables true life. This is where the apostle's theology of the Mystical Body and his understanding of divinization coalesce: Love not only wants to be in union with the beloved, but actually wants to become like the beloved, and vice versa. Love is an exchange of selves, and that is why Paul can so confidently boast that, in Christ, he, this separated aloof sinner, is no longer alive, but it is Christ who now lives in him (Gal 2:20). *Eros* and ecstasy unite otherwise disparate individuals into the body of Christ, where his divine headship allows each within the body to become one with him and with others: "For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another" (Rom

¹³ Yung Suk Kim, *Christ's Body in Corinth: The Politics of A Metaphor* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2008), 93ff.

¹⁴ M. David Litwa, *We Are Being Transformed: Deification in Paul's Soteriology* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), 163.

12:4–5). Or, as Augustine would preach so beautifully a few centuries later (Paschaltide, 407), in the end, there will be only one Christ loving himself (*et erit unus Christus amans se ipsum*).¹⁵ This view on transformative power of love forces everyone to ask, “what ought I love?” So that others might answer this question rightly, Paul sets out to teach all that we must clothe ourselves with Christ (Gal 3:27) if we would ever know the effect the great gift of God was always meant to have. While this putting on of Christ will receive different images throughout his epistles—a new building (Eph 2:20) or a new, developing body (Eph 4:13–16; Col 2:19)—the point Paul wants to make is that creatures are able to enjoy communion only in Christ and that, in his drawing near to each individual, Christ draws those individuals into each other. This is no extrinsic covering; the resurrected Christ envelops every person and every nation in a binding so tight that it renders dissimilar sinners into his own living Body (1 Cor 12:12–13). Each is now committed to the needs of every other as the pilgrim people of God begin to see themselves in their neighbor, to see the Christ in the least of their brothers and sisters.

This doctrine of the Mystical Body is wholly Pauline in nature, so it should not surprise us to see it throughout Romans and Galatians, the two epistles Barclay treats at length. These two missives are easily enlisted as showing the myriad ways Paul tries to explain the Christian life in terms of incorporation and imitation. Since these are the two works Barclay examines specifically, we should now take up his treatment of the concept of grace as he sees it in these two Pauline epistles.

Barclay on the Deifying Body in Galatians and Romans

What strikes Barclay about Galatians is its utter either–or schematic. Here there is no room for lukewarmness or indecision, as its “starkly antithetical rhetoric” demolishes any third option between self and God, between slavery and freedom, between a moribund Judaism and a Christocentric ecclesia. Between these two unalloyed alternatives, there is no natural progression and no healthy liminality. One is not allowed to stand and wait. When it comes to Paul’s preaching of Christ, it is all or nothing. So, whereas Paul’s two major concerns regarding his flock at Galatia—that the Abrahamic promise was originally meant for all the nations of the world and that the advent of Christ has inaugurated a radically new opportunity for these nations to realize the fullness of God’s promise—can be realized only by turning from the old ways to the good news, this can be done

¹⁵ St. Augustine of Hippo, *Commentary on the First Letter of John* 10.3 (*Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina* [Turnhout, BE: Brepols, 1953–], 36:216).

only as a people: “It is no accident that the superordinate authority of the Christ-event becomes clear in the context of communal activity. Peter’s alignment to this ‘truth’ is tested in commensality, the conditions of possibility for community and reciprocity in Christ” (368). A new community is now to be fostered: not the old political bodies of earthly rule, but a divine heavenly body that disregards any differences not essential to Christ’s presence (Gal 3:28). The truth of the Good News (Gal 2:14) is now the only valid demarcation.

It is at this point that Barclay highlights the logic of Paul’s use of “we” in Galatians 2:15–21, thus stressing the organic unity meant for both “Jew” and “Gentile.” What is at stake here is not mere table fellowship, but the worth one has in the eyes of the wider community. Such dignity is now reducible only to the basis of faith in Christ: “. . . not because this faith in itself establishes a kind of ‘worth,’ but because it is directed to the event in which was created, without regard to worth, a new source of life in relation to God (2:19)” (379). This, what Barclay labels a “genitive of quality,” points to a personal reconstitution by and in Christ that renders one now not just a new person in and of himself, but a desired and needed member of a new kind of communal body:

Paul has broken with the authority of the Torah not because of a willful decision on his part, but under the impact of the Christ-event, which has wholly reconstituted his existence. The crucifixion of Christ—not just a death, but a cursed and scandalous execution (3:13; 5:11)—marks a radical disjunction. The reference to the “Christ who lives in me” gestures to the resurrection (1:1), which founds a radically new existence . . . that collapses the distance between past and present. “Living to God” is not just a reorientation of the self, but a mode of existence founded on, and shaped by, the life of another, the life of “Christ in me.” The Christ-event therefore founds not only a change of vision and value, but a change of “self.” Out of that newness, every value is newly evaluated and every norm reassessed. (386)

Barclay’s insight here is key: in Christ, a new sense of self emerges and what is wholly radical is that my “self” was actually constituted to be an other-centered, covenantal ego. When Christ takes up life in the soul of a believer, that believer does not become two, but it is now, Paul knew, a Christ who lives in *me*. Because one has been made for the divine life (Gen 1:26–27), when that divine life finally takes root in one’s self, that self finally flourishes and is enabled to realize its only true vocation.

If Paul's great contribution is a call to communion in the body of Christ, this is a new sense of cohesion that actually begins with Christ living his life, extending his life, in each individual who comes to him in order to find the fullness of their life in the first place. Such a theological anthropology is not of interest to Barclay, but the historical and biblical principles he presents help those interested in the Mystical Body and the deifying transformation available there. The gift of Christ's own life demands a response, an eternally binding response. The priority of the gift is wholly the descent into humanity well preparing the ascent into divinity, but the efficacy is an all-or-nothing event. The human person is the only animal who has been given the vocation to become God (talk about "superabundance").¹⁶ Paul's interlocutors are therefore instructed repeatedly: do not try to straddle the old and the new, do not attempt to live in both worlds, for the former world is passing away and you have been made not for an enervating enslavement to some code, but for the freedom of the children of God.

This is why righteousness and identity, questions of worth and societal allegiance, are no longer defined by Torah and striving toward its fulfillment. What matters with Christ's coming is the incongruity of God coming into humanity, reflected by new societal relations between rich and poor and between keepers of the Law and the Gentile peoples. We are all made to become one in this divine body. The old divisions that once separated and discriminated horizontally are eradicated vertically as the Jewish and the Roman worlds discover that they are both in the line of the Abrahamic family brought into existence not for the Law, but for Love:

Paul traces a deep homology between the incongruity of divine grace and the incongruity of divine power. That God operates in the fashion here described is Paul's justification for his conduct of the Gentile mission, requiring neither circumcision nor submission to the Law. But it also grounds Paul's hope for the future of the world (Rom 8:18–39) and for the salvation of Israel (11:11–32). By tracing God's *creatio ex nihilo* in the story of Abraham, the starting point of election, Paul can place Israel, believers, and the world on a common trajectory, since nothing is impossible for the mercy of God (11:28–36). (489)

¹⁶ See Gregory Nazianzen, Oration 43 (Eulogy of Basil the Great), no. 48 (PG, 36:560).

It is surely not coincidental that Paul's appeal to corporate unity is more cosmic and more imperial in Rome than anywhere else. The unity God intended for all people everywhere and at all times through his offer of self begins not even in the Christ, but in the Abrahamic covenant. Aged like Abraham and barren like Sarah, pagan Rome stands in need of the only antidote that saves a people from decrepitude and death.

Barclay rightly acknowledges how this (what he calls a) mismatch between divine mercy and human error is greater in those addressed in Rome than in Galatia. Romans 9–11 accordingly shows how the incongruity of the gift softens these differences by calling both Gentile and Jewish believers to unity in Christ and among one another. Such a call demands response, exacts obedience, and calls forth a change in one's way of life. Henceforth, once one has encountered the Christ, one cannot stay as one was. Transformation is thus at the heart of Paul's entry into Rome, and there he draws from his earlier reliance on the new divine body of believers to tell those close to imperial power that they must surrender to divine rebirth:

Developing the body-motif from its earlier use in 1 Corinthians 12:12–31, Paul imagines a community so interdependent that all are figured, individually as organs of one another (12:5): everyone is essential to everyone else. . . . By fostering this new communal life, oriented to God through Christ in service and worship (12:11; 15:6–13), bodily practice is reoriented and newly regulated in its post-baptismal form. "Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ" (13:14) enlists every organ of the moribund body for a new allegiance, whose social shape reflects the capacity of the Christ-gift to question every norm. (510–11)

The message to the Romans outweighs that to the Galatians exactly in this incongruity of the gift: the undeserved gift is received by both rich and poor, by the powerful as well as the weak. All stand as debtors before God, with the consequence that all now stand before God in a new identity, as new creatures.

In Christ, incorporation is transformation. Only the gift who is the incarnate Son can perfect one's intended identity as a member of God's body, as only here can one grow in individual perfection as he or she grows in mutual intimacy with the rest (Rom 12:5: "So we, being many, are one body in Christ; and every one members of one another"). The Mystical Christ is humble enough to gather all and any, based not on their natural

merit, but on his own holy desire that all respond rightly to what has been offered them. From start to finish, all is gift, but what I have taken away from Barclay is that God lavishes gifts *in order that* societal relationships continue and peoples are formed anew, formed in him and—we dare say—as him.

Conclusion

As there was no one monolithic view of the nature and workings of grace in Paul's time, Paul himself emerges as one more view of how divine favor works. If anything, we close Barclay's monograph realizing just how much grace was very truly a multidimensional reality in antiquity. Yet, in the Jesus Christ of St. Paul's letters, the superabundance, priority, and incongruity of such a gift are utterly unmatched: there is nothing a sinful creature could do, no mortal voice strong enough, to demand membership in the Body of Christ and participation in the divine nature. Yet that is precisely why God created men and women, and that is exactly why the Son of God entered the human condition. No longer should status and subjugation form societies and bind peoples; no longer should individual worth be wholly reducible to works and wealth.

It is clear throughout Paul that, just as a corporeal body is one with various and diverse parts, the Mystical Body of Christ is also to be a unity in diversity. Accordingly, true Christians are those who forfeit a monadic, solipsistic life and allow Christ to live his own life in them, the blood of Christ now able to tear down all walls of enmity and division, thereby creating one new person in those who are organically bound together into a new type of body. Barclay's magisterial study helps us understand how a gift, classically conceived, had a particular expectation built into its giving. As is so refreshingly laid out at the beginning, the "pure gift" idea is a construct of the modern, and particularly Western, mind. Post-Enlightenment constructs of gift and favor became the lens through which most read Paul's unmatched emphasis on grace. But modern systems of eleemosynary activities are usually set up institutionally blind, reducing benefactor and recipient to anonymous accounts, allowing for no sense of second-person relationship or demands on those who stood in favor.

Of course, this is not to say that human response and obedience to the gracious gift of God are preconditions that must be made before divine favor comes. But Christ comes to every human soul *so that* each might know the true meaning of Israel: a people called to come to the living God, now incarnate, the one body where the Hebrew children and the Gentile races converge, as both originate in, are sustained by, and are oriented

toward the same divine favor. This is how the Christ event is no mere afterthought, nothing artificially external to the history of Israel: Jesus Christ is the ultimate gift the Father gives those made toward his image and likeness. Adam, as Paul knew, is the first form of the one to come (Rom 5:14). In this one who has come into the world, humanity and divinity commune and become one in the person and presence of Christ.

Now all the children of Adam and Eve can finally understand this journey of life, finally realize the purpose of their very existences. As far as this great gift, there was no other reason, but reason there was. This is the ultimate gift, that God becomes human so humans can become God. Christian baptism admits each to this life, and Paul makes it clear that the graces offered in that font would cost each one his or her own natural life. That is why all those instances of *in* and *ut* fill the best of theology, for the ancient and wise Doctors of the great Christian Tradition understood that, while Paul may have preached a grace freely given, such freedom would come with a cost. N:V

Paul and the Gift of Sonship

ISAAC AUGUSTINE MORALES, O.P.

Providence College

Providence, RI

In recent years, the world of Pauline scholarship has seemed like a competition to publish the longest book on the apostle or on one of his letters. One thinks, for example, of the nearly one-thousand-page tome of Douglas Campbell, focusing primarily on the Letter to the Romans.¹ Not to be outdone, N. T. Wright subsequently published roughly sixteen hundred pages in two volumes on the thought of the apostle, the lengthiest in his ever-expanding series *Christian Origins and the Question of God*.² Among commentaries, there is, of course, Robert Jewett's massive 2006 commentary on Romans, weighing in at over eleven hundred pages.³ While John Barclay's recent contribution to the discussion does not quite attain to these unwieldy page counts, neither is it a slender volume.⁴ Given the relatively narrow range of the topic (grace and gift) and its limited discussion of the Pauline corpus (the work covers only Galatians and Romans), one might be tempted to chide Barclay for excessive verbosity. To do so, however, would be a failure to see the significance of Barclay's project for Pauline scholarship, and indeed, for theology in general.

¹ Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009).

² N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 4, 2 vols. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2013).

³ Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2007)

⁴ John M. G. Barclay, *Paul & the Gift* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015). With bibliography and indices, the book comes to 656 pages. Unless otherwise noted, subsequent parenthetical page numbers in this essay refer to Barclay, *Paul & the Gift*.

Grace and Gift in Contemporary Context

The reason for the heft of Barclay's work can be seen in one of the primary targets of his argument: E. P. Sanders's classic *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*.⁵ It is fitting that the two works come out to roughly the same length, as they share similarities in both approach and aim. Both authors seek to situate Paul in his Jewish context, as well as to offer a fair-minded assessment of the Judaism of Paul's day. One of Sanders's goals in writing the book was, in his own words, "to destroy the view of Rabbinic Judaism which is still prevalent in much, perhaps most, New Testament scholarship."⁶ Later in the introduction, Sanders notes the reason for his strident tone: "Milder statements [about the nature of Judaism] have fallen on deaf ears and are now cited as if they supported views which in fact they opposed."⁷ In order to accomplish his goal, Sanders devotes some four hundred pages to discussing various Jewish texts from the early rabbinic and Second Temple periods, nearly four times the space devoted to his discussion of Paul.⁸ Toward the end of the first section on Judaism, Sanders concludes: "On the assumption that a religion should be understood on the basis of its own self-presentations, as long as these are not manifestly bowdlerized, and not on the basis of polemical attacks, we must say that the Judaism of before 70 *kept grace and works in the right perspective*, did not trivialize the commandments of God and was not especially marked by hypocrisy."⁹ A little later in the same paragraph, he notes: "By consistently maintaining the basic framework of *covenantal nomism*, the gift and demand of God were kept in a healthy relationship with each other."¹⁰ One of the central points Sanders seeks to make in his monumental work is that Judaism, no less than Christianity, is a religion of grace.

All of this may seem like a digression, but it actually touches on the heart of Barclay's project. While Barclay agrees with Sanders that Judaism is indeed a religion of grace, he nevertheless suggests that Sanders's work flattened out the meaning of grace and that discussions of both Judaism and the apostle Paul have suffered from imprecision ever since. In the prologue to *Paul & the Gift*, Barclay asks: "If 'grace' is everywhere in

⁵ E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1977).

⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, xii.

⁷ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, xiii.

⁸ More than one reader of Sanders has suggested that the book would be more aptly titled "Palestinian Judaism and Paul."

⁹ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 427 (emphasis added).

¹⁰ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 427 (italics original).

Second Temple Judaism—in the celebration of divine beneficence, goodness, and mercy—is it everywhere the same?” (2). This question drives the study, leading inexorably to the conclusion that “grace is everywhere in the theology of Second Temple Judaism, but not everywhere the same” (565). Barclay arrives at this conclusion after a careful and nuanced study that traverses the history and anthropology of the gift, the history of Pauline interpretation, five Second Temple Jewish authors, and close readings of Galatians and Romans. The result is a magisterial study on grace in Paul and in antiquity, one that should benefit both exegetes and theologians interested in the topic. Because of the richness and the importance of Barclay’s work, I will spend the bulk of this essay highlighting some of the major advances it presents—in methodology, in the study of Second Temple Judaism, and in the reading of Paul—before offering one humble suggestion for moving the discussion forward. In particular, I will suggest that Barclay’s treatment of grace could itself use some more precision by specifying the content of the “gift” of his title. I propose that interpreting the gift as sonship would provide a clearer definition and can connect various aspects of Barclay’s study to the important Pauline category of participation in Christ.

Grace and Gift in Historical Context

Barclay begins the work with a historical and anthropological consideration of the category of “the gift.”¹¹ Attempts to incorporate theory into exegetical studies can often seem gimmicky or faddish, but Barclay’s appropriation of the anthropology of the gift pays significant dividends. One of the main goals of this first section is to problematize and challenge the widespread modern understanding of “gift” as something that is given with no expectation of a return. Surveying the various ways that ancient Mediterranean cultures (Greek, Roman, and Jewish) practiced and understood gift giving, Barclay shows that the notion of giving a gift with no expectation of a return would have been utterly foreign to most ancients. In contrast to the modern notion of “no-strings-attached” gifts as the ideal, Barclay notes from the outset: “Even the slightest knowledge of antiquity would inform us that gifts were given with strong expectations of return—indeed, precisely in order to elicit a return and thus to create or enhance social solidarity” (11). Gifts in antiquity formed an integral part

¹¹ It is important to note that *Paul & the Gift* is not a simple word study, but rather a treatment of the *concept* of the gift. Understandably, much of the discussion hinges on the Greek word *χάρις*, which can mean either “gift” or “grace,” depending on context.

of a system meant to establish bonds between the givers and the receivers. Far from being opposed to the notion of gift, then, obligation and reciprocity play a central role in gift giving. In most ancient cultures, then, people discriminated carefully when bestowing gifts upon a recipient. As Barclay notes, in the mentality of the Romans, “one does not want to tie oneself to a disreputable, ungrateful, or otherwise worthless beneficiary” (39). For this reason, giving to the poor, although not totally absent from Roman society, was uncommon.

As Gary Anderson has shown in two recent works, however, giving to the poor played a fundamental role in ancient Judaism, and thus in early Christianity.¹² This emphasis on the practice of charity might seem to set the Jews (and the early Christians) apart from the reciprocal understanding so prevalent in the ancient world, but a closer look at the dynamics of charity shows otherwise. While it is true that the poor were unable to repay in kind for gifts received, according to the Jewish Scriptures, gifts to the poor nevertheless included the expectation of a return. In the case of charity, God is the one who completes the cycle of the gift. Thus, Barclay notes, “Jewish giving to the poor is fully enmeshed in the expectation of reciprocity, and its distinctive elements are justified not by an ‘anti-reciprocal’ ethos but by the modulation of the reciprocity-ethos into the expectation of reciprocity from God” (44). Across Mediterranean cultures in antiquity, then, reciprocity was a firmly ensconced aspect of gift giving.

How, then, did the idea of the “pure” gift that is so commonly accepted today arise? Several complex social, theological, and ideological factors played a role, but Barclay suggests that the two figures most responsible for this shift were Martin Luther and the Lutheran philosopher Immanuel Kant (56–59). Luther was driven by theological motivations, resisting the reciprocal understanding of gift still prevalent in Catholic circles. For the reformer, Christ’s love for his people, exemplified in his sacrifice on the Cross, was a gift with no strings attached, the quintessential modern understanding of the gift. Kant transposed Luther’s theological ideal into a philosophical key, turning the notion of the pure gift into a “universal ethical ideal” (57). This notion reaches its epitome in the thought of Jacques Derrida, for whom any kind of reciprocity renders a gift null. For Derrida, “what makes [something] *gift* (as opposed to economic exchange) is that *it does not come back*” (61; original emphasis). On his definition, then, the giving of gifts becomes impossible. In light of the history and anthropol-

¹² Gary A. Anderson, *Sin: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); Anderson, *Charity: The Place of the Poor in the Biblical Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).

ogy of the notion of gift giving, however, Barclay concludes that Derrida's understanding is a historical anomaly, one that "speaks of everything but the gift" (63).

It may seem that I have devoted excessive space to one chapter out of eighteen, but this opening chapter is crucial for the project. Barclay concludes by noting that any analysis of the language of grace and gift must take into account the historical context of the writings that use this terminology (64). Such an approach is particularly important for modern interpreters, all of whom have been influenced to one degree or another by the notion of the "pure" gift of Kant and Derrida. If we are to understand premodern uses of the language of gift, we must be aware of the different connotations and implications the term had in earlier times. While a plea for historical awareness may seem obvious, perhaps even banal, given the stark contrast between ancient and modern understandings of gift, it is perhaps nowhere more important than in interpreting gift language.

The Perfect Gift

Building on his historical analysis of the concept of "gift," Barclay develops a taxonomy of gift and grace relying on the notion of "perfection." Barclay borrows this term from Kenneth Burke, describing it as "the tendency to draw out a concept to its endpoint or extreme, whether for definitional clarity or for rhetorical or ideological advantage" (67). Barclay proposes six different modes of perfecting the concept of "gift." Some concern the nature of the gift itself, others the nature of the giver. A gift might be perfected in "superabundance." On this understanding, the perfect gift is the most excessive, the most lavish, the all-encompassing gift (70). A gift can also be perfected with respect to the giver. Barclay calls this perfection "singularity," a term that refers to the giver's character as purely benevolent (70–71). The perfection of "priority" concerns the timing of the gift. This perfection has at least three features: it is given spontaneously, not in response to anything; it is, therefore, "free," since nothing precipitated it; and it indicates the superiority of the giver (71–72). "Priority" seems to be the primary perfection that drives Sanders's study, leading him to the conclusion that Judaism was indeed a "religion of grace." A fourth perfection, "incongruity," points to the lack of merit on the part of the receiver. The giver bestows gifts in spite of the lack of worth in the recipient (72–73). This perfection was rare in antiquity, since it seemed unfitting, given the reciprocal nature of gift giving. The fifth perfection, "efficacy," focuses on the effectiveness of the gift. The efficacious gift accomplishes that which its giver intended (73–74). The final perfection, "noncircular-

ity,” was rare in antiquity. As the name implies, this perfection implies that a gift expects nothing in return (74–75). The modern conception of the “pure gift” is the most obvious example of this sixth perfection.

Barclay follows this taxonomy of perfections with a number of qualifications and implications. First, it is not necessary to perfect grace in any one of these modes, either in the human sphere or in the divine sphere. In fact, doing so can lead to problems such as eliminating notions of justice or mutuality (75). Second, these perfections are not mutually exclusive. While it is rare for an interpreter to embrace all six perfections, it is not uncommon to choose two or three when interpreting grace, and some of the perfections tend to cluster together (76).¹³ Third, and perhaps most importantly, Barclay suggests that disagreements between interpreters of Paul on the question of grace—as well as between Paul and his contemporaries—stem not from a denial of grace or of its importance, but rather from their different *definitions* of grace (77).

This taxonomy is one of the most significant contributions of Barclay’s work, a twenty-first-century analog to the medieval *distinguo* (“grace” can be said in many ways, Thomas might say). Exegetes and theologians alike would benefit from applying these categories to the endless debates about grace. In the rest of the study, the taxonomy functions as an analytical tool, applied in turn to the history of interpretation, a variety of Second Temple Jewish texts, and finally to two of Paul’s letters, Galatians and Romans.

Grace Among Christians and Jews

Barclay first turns his attention to the history of interpretation, considering a few representative “theologians of grace” before turning to more recent exegetes. Some of his selections and omissions may surprise the reader. Few would think of Marcion as a “theologian of grace,” but Barclay argues that he exemplifies the “rhetoric and ideology of perfection” (83). Marcion perfects the *singularity* of grace, insisting that God is purely benevolent and contrasting the God of his narrower Christian canon with the evil, wrathful God of the Old Testament (80–85). Less surprising are his selection and analyses of Augustine, Luther, and John Calvin. Barclay rightly notes that Augustine perfects grace with respect to priority, incongruity, and efficacy, and that the bishop of Hippo’s influence has significantly shaped the way that many since his time have understood grace (97). Neither should it surprise us that noncircularity plays a crucial role for Luther (115), marking a decisive step toward the modern notion of the “pure gift.” A bit more

¹³ Barclay suggests that Campbell is the only example he has come across of a reader of Paul who embraces all six perfections of grace (173).

controversially, though not without support, Barclay suggests that noncircularity does not figure into Calvin's understanding of grace. Rather, in his thought, the accent falls on incongruity and efficacy (129–30). Jumping forward to recent history, Barclay then applies his taxonomy to Karl Barth and a number of Pauline interpreters from the twentieth century up to our own day.

This foray into the history of interpretation avoids some of the weaknesses that commonly beset *wirkungsgeschichtliche* approaches, which can easily turn into museum pieces. Barclay does not treat these interpreters out of mere curiosity. Rather, this section shows how his taxonomy can help us better understand longstanding disagreements over grace, as well as how the history of interpretation has influenced these debates. One can quibble over his selection of interpreters. Interesting though the French philosopher Alain Badiou may be, devoting four and a half pages to his thought seems disproportionate to his significance. The selection becomes all the more puzzling in light of the omission of one of the great theologians of grace, Thomas Aquinas. This criticism stems not from Dominican chauvinism, but rather from the close affinities between Aquinas's reading of Paul on grace and Barclay's. One could even argue that, in the history of interpretation, Aquinas comes closest to Barclay's account.¹⁴ Despite this glaring omission, the survey of theologians and exegetes of grace underscores the usefulness of Barclay's taxonomy of perfections.

The same can be said for the second part of the book, which considers the notion of grace in Second Temple Judaism. It is in this section that Barclay most forcefully and effectively problematizes Sanders's characterization of Judaism. As already noted, Barclay sees Sanders's account as overly flattened. While it is true that Second Temple Judaism was a religion of grace, Sanders's presentation can, with some exceptions, make the Jewish texts he considers seem monolithic. Barclay seeks to offer a more variegated description of the Jewish understandings (plural) of grace, exhibiting his mastery of the literature of this period. Not surprisingly, the picture that emerges in many ways reflects wider ancient understandings of the gift. The Wisdom of Solomon, for example, agrees with many

¹⁴ Consider but two examples. Although less detailed, Aquinas's discussion of the essence of grace in the *Summa theologiae* [ST] maps well onto Barclay's discussion in the appendix ("The Lexicon of the Gift") of *Paul & the Gift* (see ST I-II, q. 110, a. 1). Similarly, Thomas's noncompetitive metaphysics supports Barclay's suggestion that "Paul's language requires us to banish 'zero-sum' calculations of agency (the more God, the less the human), it seems better to speak of a pattern of 'energism' in Pauline agency" (442).

Greek and Roman thinkers that an incongruous gift would be unfitting: gifts ought to be given to those who are worthy, and so the text seeks to explain why the Jews deserve to be the object of God's affections. Instead of incongruity, the text perfects the notion of superabundance, the lavishness of God's gift to Israel (211). Similarly, Philo of Alexandria is not interested in perfecting incongruity. Instead, Barclay suggests, he emphasizes superabundance, singularity, priority, and efficacy (237). The *Hodayot* of Qumran, the *Liber antiquitatum biblicarum* of Pseudo-Philo, and 4 Ezra all likewise perfect different aspects of divine grace in a variety of combinations.

While by no means exhaustive, Barclay's study of these texts certainly gives a representative sample of the range of interpretations of grace in the Second Temple period. Significantly, he finds only two areas of agreement among all five authors: "*All of them* perfect the superabundance of divine 'grace'; . . . *none of them* perfect the non-circularity of grace" (314; original emphasis). Apart from these agreements, however, the texts vary greatly in the details. The question then becomes not whether Jews believed in grace as Paul did, but rather *how* they understood grace and where Paul fits on the map of Second Temple Judaism.

An Incongruous Gift

It should come as no surprise that Paul's characterization of grace is neither unique nor identical to that of his fellow first-century Jews. Barclay sees in the Pauline version of grace three distinctive elements. First, in agreement with some of the Jewish texts surveyed, Paul perfects the notion of incongruity. God gives his gifts "*without regard to worth*" (e.g., 350; original emphasis). Second, the fundamental nature of God's gifts is to be seen in the Christ event, Christ's self-gift on the Cross (e.g., 331). Third, Paul's understanding of grace undergirds his mission to the Gentiles (e.g., 350). It is because God's grace comes to people regardless of their worth and through Christ that this grace is open to Jew and Gentile alike: "Since no one is granted this gift on the grounds of their ethnic work, no one of any ethnicity is excluded from its reach" (361).

Much could be said about the final two parts of *Paul & the Gift*, which treat Galatians and Romans. For the sake of brevity, I would like to highlight three significant aspects of Barclay's treatment before offering a suggestion to develop his reading further and give it greater precision.

The first noteworthy aspect of Barclay's reading is his critique of so-called "new perspective" readings of Paul. According to these, particularly as expounded for the past several decades by James Dunn, the "works

of the law” to which Paul objects refer to boundary markers, those Jewish practices that separate Jews from Gentiles (especially Sabbath, circumcision, and food laws). The problem that Paul addresses with his doctrine of justification, according to Dunn, is nationalism, the insistence that Gentiles become like Jews in order to become a part of the people of God. Barclay rightly suggests that this reading is too narrow and fails to get to the heart of the matter. With Dunn, Barclay agrees that Paul’s concern with the insistence on performing works of the law (the Torah) has nothing to do with works righteousness. Against Dunn, he convincingly argues that the problem is not ethnocentrism, but rather a denial of the incongruity of grace.

While several factors may have contributed to Paul’s understanding of works of the law after the Christ event, Barclay traces its roots to his conversion, which neither took account of Paul’s position in Judaism nor continued it (358–60). Paul’s encounter with Christ was a totally incongruous gift, and in working out the nature of this event, Paul saw that grace, because it does not depend on one’s ethnicity, be it Jewish or Gentile, is open to all. There are two advantages to this aspect of Barclay’s reading. First, it better explains statements, such as those in Galatians 5:6 and 6:15, that devalue *both* Judaism *and* Gentile existence (“neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything”). If the problem for Paul was Jewish ethnocentrism, then there would be no reason for him to devalue Gentile status (393). This leads to the second strength of Barclay’s reading: it not only better explains Paul’s argument but also manifests more clearly its relevance for today. “Because the Christological event of grace is both highly particular and impacts on *any* criteria of worth that are not derived from the good news itself, Paul’s theology does not remain encased within its first-century Jewish context” (573; original emphasis). The gospel of grace challenges any and all systems of worth that rival Christ’s self-gift, and so it has a perennial relevance not seen as clearly in new-perspective interpretations.

A second significant, though narrower, aspect of Barclay’s approach also relates to the new-perspective approach, specifically his reading of Romans 4. Most interpretations of this chapter account for only one part of the argument: either they make good sense of Paul’s emphasis on Abraham’s faith in the opening verses or they explain well the picture of Abraham as the father of a multinational family later in the chapter. A satisfactory reading that accounts for both parts of the chapter is hard to find.

Once again, for Barclay, the theme that unites the chapter, as it does Paul’s theology of grace more broadly, is the incongruity of grace: God’s election of his people does not consider the inherent worth of those chosen.

Paul appeals to the example of Abraham to show that this incongruity is not a new development, but rather the way God has always operated with his people. God chose Abraham not because of any merits on his part, but rather by a completely incongruous gift. This is the point Paul establishes in Romans 4:1–8. On this basis, Paul can then show in Romans 4:9–12 the fittingness of God calling both Jews and Gentiles, since God calls not on the basis of human worth, but simply on the basis of his generosity. This very particular understanding of grace, not universally accepted in antiquity, thus plays a major role in Paul’s argument. Barclay wisely notes that, while Abraham appears first in the order of the argument, it was Paul’s experience of the Christ gift that made possible this rereading of the Abraham story (486).

Given the emphasis in the first chapter of *Paul & the Gift* on the novelty of the notion of a “pure gift,” no discussion of the work would be complete without showing how this analysis influences Barclay’s reading of Paul. It should come as no surprise that, for Barclay, Paul does not oppose grace to an expectation of some return: “None of Paul’s hearers would have been surprised to learn that as recipients of the divine gift they were placed under obligation to God” (498). He develops this idea with the help of Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus*. One of the consequences of the incongruous grace of God is a later congruity in the eschaton (493). Although God chooses people by his grace who are in no way fit for the gift he offers, he renders them fit for reward in the afterlife by means of that same grace. Grace accomplishes this in the body by transforming the dispositions of the baptized, moving them from the “mindset of the flesh” to the “mindset of the Spirit” (506; citing Rom 8:6).¹⁵ This reorientation equips the baptized to live lives worthy of the gift they have received.

This emphasis on *habitus* makes much better sense both of Paul’s theology of grace and of his moral exhortations. For Paul, grace is not simply a gift, but rather a *transformative* gift, one that demands a fitting return. Readings that stress the noncircularity of the gift have a much harder time explaining the rationale behind Paul’s exhortations: “Christian obedience is thus vital, but only ever in a responsive mode: it arises in conjunction with faith and gratitude as the answer to a prior gift. The gift is entirely undeserved but strongly obliging: it creates agents who are newly alive, required to live the life they have been given” (518). Once again, we see how

¹⁵ Again, one could note the congruence between Barclay’s account and Aquinas. Centuries before Bourdieu, Thomas’s virtue ethics emphasized the importance of *habitus* as a disposition (see *ST* I-II, q. 49). Thomas himself builds on the much earlier explication of Aristotle.

distorting the modern notion of the noncircular gift has been on readings of Paul. Thoroughgoing fear of “works righteousness” makes it far more difficult to make sense of Paul’s exhortations.

The Gift of Sonship

For all the precision that Barclay’s study offers in the general notion of gift, in understanding the history of interpretation, and in Second Temple Jewish perfections of grace, there remains some ambiguity in his account. What exactly is the gift that Paul has in mind? Barclay speaks at times of Christ’s gift on the Cross, but at other times, the term remains more nebulous. The passage just quoted comes closest to giving a definition of the gift: “the life [the baptized] have been given.” While Paul’s understanding of gift is, no doubt, multifaceted and nuanced, I would like to propose a category that can integrate a number of Barclay’s proposals, as well as connect his reading of Paul with those interpretations that emphasize participation in Christ. For Paul, the gift, particularly in Romans and Galatians, seems to consist in divine sonship, received by the grace of adoption. Reading the gift in this way closely connects it with Christ’s self-sacrifice on the Cross, fits with the incongruity of the gift, and gives clearer definition to the *habitus* that Paul seeks to cultivate in his audiences. Moreover, it accounts for the circular nature of the gift and more clearly connects grace with participation in Christ, one of the lasting contributions of Sanders’s work.

The notions of adoption and sonship, though not frequent in Paul’s letters, nevertheless appear at climactic points in his arguments in Galatians and Romans. There is a hint early on in Galatians that Paul closely associates grace with sonship. In the autobiographical portion of the letter, Paul writes: “But when the one who set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace was pleased to reveal his Son ἐν ἐμοί” (Gal 1:15–16a). Interpreters disagree over the translation of the phrase ἐν ἐμοί. Some take the preposition as pleonastic, thus reading the phrase “to me.” Others, however, argue that we should give full weight to the preposition, suggesting that God revealed Christ “in” Paul. If the latter reading is correct, then we see here a close connection between the grace of God and participation in Christ, as well as Christ’s own sonship. While such a reading is intriguing, we should not hang too much on it. Nonetheless, at the very least, Paul’s autobiography connects the grace of God with Christ’s sonship, whether it was manifested *to* him or *in* him.

Later in the letter, Paul twice emphasizes the importance of the Galatians’ newfound status as sons, and in both cases, he connects this newly received sonship with the status of being heirs. At the end of Galatians 3,

in the context of an appeal to baptism, Paul reminds the Galatians: “For you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus through faith” (Gal 3:26). He then grounds their newfound status in baptism, which leads into precisely the kind of statement that reflects the incongruity of the gift: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female” (Gal 3:28). Barclay rightly notes that, in these verses: “What is altered . . . is the *evaluative freight* carried by these labels, the encoded distinctions of superiority and inferiority. In common solidarity with Christ, baptized believers are enabled and required to view each other without regard to these influential classifications of worth” (397; original emphasis). Disappointingly, however, Barclay takes no notice of the new status of sonship with which the passage begins. It is precisely by belonging to Christ as sons of God that earthly distinctions lose their significance and that the baptized become heirs of the promise.

A similar pattern, but without the relativizing of social status, appears in the passage that immediately follows. Developing the contrast between slavery and sonship, Paul describes the purpose of Christ’s redeeming act as leading to divine adoption: “But when the fullness of time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those under the law, in order that *we might receive adoption*” (Gal 4:4–5; emphasis added). This divine adoption is the gift that the redeemed receive in baptism, the gift that transforms them from slaves into sons, and therefore heirs (Gal 4:6–7).

Romans 8 develops the theme of adoption with slightly different nuances. Here Paul connects divine adoption with being led by the Spirit: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God” (Rom 8:14). The Romans received the Spirit as a gift that enables them to call on God as Father: “For you did not receive a spirit of slavery leading again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by which we cry, ‘Abba, Father!’” (Rom 8:15).¹⁶ The Spirit testifies to believers’ new status as children of God (Rom 8:16), and once again, Paul connects this adoption with receiving the status of “heir,” a status believers share with Christ (Rom 8:17). Most significantly, in this text, Paul signals the circular nature of the gift: “And if children, then also heirs, heirs of God and fellow-heirs with Christ, *provided we suffer with [him]* in order that we might be glorified with [him]” (Rom 8:17; emphasis added). The gift of sonship cannot be earned, but those who receive it are expected to act in conformity with the

¹⁶ It is worth noting that Galatians also closely associates adoption with reception of the Spirit: “And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying, ‘Abba, Father!’” (Gal 4:6).

gift. A little later, Paul reiterates that this newfound status hinges on being sons of God with Christ: “For those whom he foreknew, he also designated beforehand to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brethren” (Rom 8:29). Again, we see that the fundamental gift from which everything else flows is adopted sonship.

Seeing the gift as sonship neatly ties together several of Barclay’s central categories. For Paul, divine adoption in Christ is utterly incongruous, as can be seen by his references to the Spirit. In both Romans and Galatians, Paul connects adoption with the reception of the Spirit, and in Galatians, he makes it abundantly clear that the Spirit cannot be earned (Gal 3:1–5). Moreover, sonship explains both the circularity of the gift and the bodily *habitus* that should inform the life of believers. Those who have been adopted as sons are expected to act like sons, particularly by conformity to Christ’s suffering and death (Rom 8:17). This is the *habitus* that Paul expects of the baptized: the *habitus* of a son, conformed to the Son. And this *habitus* is nothing other than living out the symbolism of their baptism, whether seen as being clothed with Christ (Gal 3:27) or as dying and rising with him (Rom 6:3–4). Barclay rightly notes: “One could hardly imagine a more effective demonstration of this ‘rescue’ than the physical rite of baptism, which Paul interprets as a transition from death to life *performed on and with the body*” (508; original emphasis). The result of the rescue, though, is not simply death and resurrection, but death and resurrection *as sons and daughters in Christ*, a new status that must be lived out in the body in imitation of and participation with Christ. One of the clearest examples of this participation in Paul’s letters combines gift language with Christ’s status as Son of God: “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; but what I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for my sake” (Gal 2:19b–20). In the following verse, Paul asserts, “I do not reject the grace of God” (Gal 2:21a). Here grace, sonship, and participation converge in a compact summary of Paul’s understanding of redemption.

A Gift to Scholarship

As should be clear, my proposal in no way detracts from the abundant merits of Barclay’s magnificent work. It seeks rather to develop the many strengths of his reading and to find a clearer unifying thread that can tie these elements together. Others could be suggested, and Barclay no doubt has thought of some on his own. As he himself notes in the preface to *Paul & the Gift*, there remain aspects of gift giving that he was unable to cover in this book and to which he hopes to devote a future volume (xv). As we eagerly await his next contribution, we can thank Barclay for this gift to

exegesis and theology. The clarity and precision with which he has treated so many important issues stands as a model for all future work on Paul, on the history of interpretation, and on the theology of grace. N.V

Paul and the Gift: A Mirror for Our Protestant Faces

MATTHEW J. THOMAS

Regent College

Vancouver, BC

John Barclay's *Paul and the Gift* is a monumental work, one that will represent a landmark for later generations of scholars who tell the story of how the Apostle's theology has been understood.¹ In a book replete with valuable Pauline analysis and insights, there are three points in particular that have left an enduring impression on me, the first two of which I believe are major achievements. First, Barclay shows that while E. P. Sanders is right that grace is everywhere in Second Temple Jewish sources, it is not everywhere in the same way; as Barclay's study makes eminently clear, it is essential to understand *how* grace functions in different sources, not simply to note that it is present. Second, Barclay demonstrates that contrary to modern notions, ancient conceptions of gift do not imply noncircularity, and to project this onto Paul is anachronistic; the difference between wage and gift is not circular versus noncircular, but that gift implies (and creates!) relationship with the giver.

The third point is a curiosity, and it is the one that I wish to reflect on here. No doubt the first two points will be rightly recalled by posterity as more significant, but it is the third that has recurred to me most often in the months since finishing *Paul and the Gift*.

Imagine an academic volume of Church history, one that tells the story of Christian thought by examining key figures in the faith. Say that in

¹ For full disclosure, I admit from the outset my positive connections with Barclay: I was his teaching assistant at Regent College in 2012, and he has played a formative role in shaping my own work, eventually serving as the external examiner for my dissertation at Oxford in 2016. Unless otherwise noted, parenthetical citations of page numbers in the remainder of this article are from John Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015).

covering the first fifteen hundred years of Christian history, this volume engages precisely two figures, and that these two figures are Marcion and Augustine, those most commonly identified by later claimants as proto-Protestants. Imagine that this history then devoted the vast majority of its space to covering the five hundred years since the Reformation, featuring nine key players and a host of minor ones, and that apart from the occasional atheist, all of these were Protestants as well.

Within the field of ecclesiastical history, to label such a volume as a Christian history at all would be impossible; it might be a confessional or denominational work of some sort, but with such a scope no one could regard it as actually representative of Christian thought. But if one does quite the same thing in the field of biblical studies, hardly anyone blinks an eye—for in its lengthy historical survey of Christian interpretation on Pauline grace, this is precisely the framework that Barclay's volume adopts.

Modern academic biblical studies operates under an assumption of confessional neutrality, in which our judgments are thought to be characterized by a disinterested fairness to all sides. And Barclay himself is well-attuned to how this is often an illusion, with our standard evaluative standpoints actually reflecting smuggled-in theological assumptions. For example, in responding to common objections that Second Temple Jews diluted grace by including "recompense," Barclay astutely notes that such critiques take for granted a particular understanding of grace: "What is not considered is whether grace and recompense may be a perfectly normal combination in antiquity (gift to the worthy, gift as reward). As we have seen, this is not a self-contradiction; it simply entails that grace is not perfected *as an incongruous gift*, as espoused by Augustine and in the Protestant tradition" (169; italics original; see also 211). Barclay similarly defends Philo against his scholarly detractors by shedding light on the Protestant framework that underlies their judgments:

If we rid ourselves of the assumption that divine grace is, by definition, given to the *unworthy*, an assumption that (for ideological reasons) makes one perfection of grace its defining characteristic, it is perfectly possible to hail Philo as a profound theologian of grace, even though he does not perfect its incongruity. As we have seen, there are good reasons why Philo finds God to give to the 'worthy,' reasons that have nothing to do with 'synergism,' 'legalism,' 'works-righteousness,' or other such categories. (238; italics original)

Likewise, Barclay pinpoints the confessional paradigm that leads to scholarly critiques of 4 Ezra's conception of grace according to equity: "There is no reason to dub this fitting reward as a form of 'legalism' or 'works-righteousness'—terminology that reflects distinctly Augustinian and Protestant theologies, and that presumes as natural or necessary a perfection of grace as an incongruous gift to the unworthy" (306).

Barclay's perceptiveness of latent Protestant frameworks makes it all the more surprising that his reconstruction of the history of interpretation on Pauline grace takes the shape that it does. For the five hundred years since the Reformation, the reader finds in-depth treatments of Luther and Calvin; Barth, Bultmann, Käsemann and Martyn; Sanders and the "new perspective"; various Protestant reactions to the "new perspective"; and Alain Baidou and (later) Brigitte Kahl. For the fifteen hundred years between Paul and the Reformation, the reader is presented with Marcion, for whom we possess no writings, and Augustine. Outside of this history are the great early interpreters: Irenaeus, whose sustained Pauline exegesis places Paul "at the centre of Christian theology" (so James Dunn²); Tertullian, whose fifth book *Against Marcion* presents in short form our earliest commentary on Galatians (a far more complete witness than any we have from Marcion); Origen, whose Romans commentary lays the interpretative foundation for all later commentators.³ Outside is Chrysostom, the definitive expositor of Paul for the Eastern half of the Church, whom the Catholic Fr. Lagrange similarly identifies as holding antiquity's greatest insights into Paul's thought in Romans and Galatians.⁴ Outside is Jerome, "undoubtedly the greatest biblical scholar that the Latin church ever produced" (so Gerald Bray⁵), whom Augustine himself confesses as his superior in knowledge of the Scriptures.⁶ The Spirit sleeps a familiar

² James D.G. Dunn, *Christianity in the Making, Vol. 3: Neither Jew nor Greek* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), 722.

³ See the work of Thomas Scheck, *Origen and the History of Justification: The Legacy of Origen's Commentary on Romans* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2008).

⁴ M. J. Lagrange, *Épître aux Romains* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1916), viii; Lagrange, *Épître aux Galates* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1926), viii, noted in Maurice Wiles, *The Divine Apostle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 3–4.

⁵ Gerald Bray, *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 91. See also Lightfoot, identifying Jerome's as "the most valuable of all the patristic commentaries on the Epistle to the Galatians"; in J.B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (London: Macmillan, 1914), 232.

⁶ Augustine to Jerome, Ep. 73, AD 404; see *The Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century*, ed. John Rotelle, vol. 2/1 (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2001), 275.

slumber for the eleven hundred years from Augustine to Luther, and none are able to wake him; neither the encomiums of grace in William of St. Thierry's Romans commentary, nor the clarion commentaries of Aquinas are of any avail; while the old couplet states, "if Lyra had not played, Luther would not have danced," here Nicholas makes no sound, and Martin dances alone. With such a foundation, is it a surprise that once the Spirit is roused at the Reformation, no later Catholic or Orthodox interpreters are found necessary to tell the history of grace?

The obvious defense of Barclay is that he is only following in a tradition; many of the later Protestant interpreters he engages choose one another as their conversation partners, and so the limited guest list is in some ways set for him. This is at least partially true, but for two reasons is not entirely sufficient. The first is that his hundred-page history of Pauline grace does not claim to be a confessionally circumscribed project, but rather a real history of interpretation.⁷ We would rightly object if an Orthodox scholar, writing from an academic standpoint, identified the only significant historical interpreters of Paul as his fellow Orthodox. The second is that Barclay himself is keenly aware of the consequences of a limited historical viewpoint. Thus Barclay begins his history of interpretation: "To understand our past is to understand ourselves. No contemporary interpreter of Paul can afford to remain ignorant of the history of interpretation, which influences us at levels deeper than we tend to recognize" (80). Here Barclay certainly speaks well, but his counsel is only partially followed. If we construct for ourselves a warped view of the past by examining only Protestant or quasi-Protestant interpreters, remaining uninformed of the mainstream of interpretation throughout most of Christian history, then it will scarcely be possible to accurately understand the past, or to understand ourselves in relation to it.

Just as much as its profound insights into the variegated and reciprocal nature of grace, then, this for me has been the enduring value of Barclay's book: as a mirror by which we in the discipline can see our own Protestant faces. There is no questioning Barclay's acumen as a scholar, nor his sensitivity to hidden confessional biases, and it is for these reasons that the way his study is circumscribed is all the more striking. Within academic biblical studies in general and Pauline studies in particular, ours is a

⁷ See e.g. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 5. On 79, Barclay offers as source criterion that "it would be hard to deny the significance and influence of each of the authors here discussed." And this may be so; but it is a narrow Protestant few who find Käsemann more significant than Chrysostom, and Baidou more influential than Aquinas.

discipline that is deeply and unconsciously rooted in Protestant pre-judgments. It is witnessed in our curiously selective engagement with historical and contemporary interpreters; in our assumed framework of “authentic” *Hauptbriefe*—governed in essence by Romans and Galatians—and “deutero-Paulines,”⁸ which we forget was constructed in the context of contra-Catholic polemics in the nineteenth century;⁹ in our identification of a reading tradition as “the old perspective,” which we demonstrate by including one interpreter from the fifth century, two from the sixteenth, and one from the eighteenth.¹⁰ The scope of Barclay’s book, though a limitation, can be of serious value in helping us recognize who we are as a discipline, and help us to move away from assumptions of a detached fairness or neutrality. Without such a recognition, even our best biblical scholars are likely to remain unfamiliar with the great interpreters of the majority of the Church’s history, and our own scholarship will continue in isolation from the bulk of non-Protestants, who will recognize from the guest list in our histories of interpretation that ours is a discipline that need not interest them. And this would be perhaps the greatest loss of all: because Barclay’s *Paul and the Gift* is a masterpiece of Pauline scholarship, a true gift that merits to be encountered by readers of every confession.

N.V

⁸ I write as a pot amongst kettles, as my own dissertation, like Barclay’s book, focuses its analysis on Romans and Galatians. On the “deutero-Pauline” designation, note the recent reflections in N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* (London: SPCK, 2013), 56–61.

⁹ See the excellent recounting of the *Hauptbriefe*’s origins in chapter 2 of Benjamin White, *Remembering Paul* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 20–25. White’s comments on Pervo’s recent work hold true for the discipline at large: “[Pervo] never connects the fact that the ‘real’ Paul discourse of the nineteenth century is part and parcel with the Lutheran reading of Paul. This is regrettable. The standard historical narrative that moves from Galatians (Paul) to Ephesians and Acts (pseudo-Paul) to the Pastoral Epistles (really pseudo-Paul) is ultimately built upon Luther being read through Baur” (65).

¹⁰ See Stephen Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The ‘Lutheran’ Paul and His Critics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003). The parochial quality of our categories becomes clear when we try to articulate them for non-Protestants: try telling an Orthodox priest that the “old perspective on Paul” is Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and John Wesley!

A Thomist Reading of Paul? Response and Reflections

JOHN M. G. BARCLAY
Durham University
Durham, UK

I am enormously grateful to all five of my respondents and to the editor for commissioning this enriching dialogue. I am truly honored to have my work read in such depth and with such generosity by this range of experts, who genuinely advance the discussion that I had hoped to evoke. The theological interpretation of Scripture is as important to me as its historical elucidation, and the interdisciplinary nature of these exchanges is a delight. Since many of these responses represent a distinctively Catholic approach to Paul, I will focus on that dimension of our dialogue. Both the agreement and the push-back in my response spring from my deep appreciation for the thoughtfulness that has gone into this symposium.

A theme running through these essays is appreciation of the way that *Paul & the Gift* disaggregates meanings and “perfections” of grace, and in particular the distinction I make between incongruity (gift to the unworthy) and non-circularity (gift that expects no return). As Isaac Morales notes, there is a touch of the scholastic *distinguo* in my method, and if that serves to clarify confusions and to challenge the modern idealization of the “gift with no return,” so much the better. I am glad to receive Bradley Gregory’s endorsement of my thesis that even gifts to the poor in Second Temple Judaism operated by a kind of circularity, so long as one factors in the promise that the return will come not from the poor themselves, but from God. I would hesitate, however, to put so much weight on the notion of charity as *loan* to God. Proverbs 19:17 is, I think, unique in using that particular striking metaphor, which could be taken to suggest that God is indebted by our giving and under contractual obligation to make a repayment. Widespread through the wisdom literature (Proverbs, Sirach, etc.) and on through Tobit into the New Testament, one finds the notion

that God will ensure that gifts to the poor are reciprocated, in one form or another, in this life or in the next. This is normally expressed in metaphors of harvest (you will reap what you sow), of return gift (what you give will be given back to you), of pay (there will be reward/wage [*misthos*] in return for work), or of investment (gifts constitute treasure laid up in heaven). In all cases, God is the overseer and guarantor of this return. But the particular concept of the loan (where one gives directly *to God*, who is then figured as a debtor, under legal obligation to give us what is owed *by right*) is rarely, if ever, carried through in our Second Temple or New Testament literature, even where Jesus says that those who give to the least give, in effect, to him (Mark 9:37; Matt 10:40; 25:31–46). In other words, one can have a robust sense of a proper and fitting return that is underwritten by God without the specific metaphor of the loan. But, on the fundamental point, we are fully in agreement: our texts factor God into human systems of gift, and promise divine reciprocity for gifts that are not, or cannot be, reciprocated on a human level (Matt 6:4 and Luke 14:14 are classic cases in the Gospels). And as some of the other essays note, at the deepest level, both John and Paul figure this divine return not merely as “payback,” but as the fulfilment of human potential that derives from *participation* in God’s generosity toward the world.

Several of my interlocutors highlight the extent of resonance between my reading of Paul and that offered by Thomas Aquinas, both in his *Summa* and in his commentaries on Paul. At times, my readers may be a little over-eager to find (or inclined to exaggerate) these resonances, but they certainly include: the *transformative* power of grace that is designed to turn its unworthy recipients into fitting, congruous children of God; the coinherence of faith and love, by which the trusting receipt of grace finds its necessary expression in recalibrated values and reordered relationships; the notion of the *habitus* (although, in my case, more in the sociological sense derived from Bourdieu than in the Aristotelian sense adopted by Aquinas); and a noncompetitive account of divine and human agency (which I learned from Aquinas via Katherine Tanner). Morales, Fr. David Meconi, and Michael Dauphinais gently suggest that my reading of Paul would have been deeper, at some points corrected, and certainly more systematic, if it had been more in line with Aquinas, and that is a challenge that, with some hesitation (given my inadequate knowledge of Aquinas), I wish to address here.

It is certainly notable that, as several of these responses note, Aquinas’s rich account of grace was not part of my survey in chapter 2, headed “Interpreting Paul on Grace.” Matt Thomas reads this as a kind of Protestant myopia, to which I plead only partly guilty. Augustine (who *was* included)

can hardly be regarded merely as a “proto-Protestant,” given the enormous influence of his theology of grace throughout the medieval period and his constant presence in the work of Aquinas. More importantly, I was not attempting to offer in that chapter “a history of interpretation on Pauline grace” (Thomas), but a survey of “Shifting Patterns of Perfection” (the subtitle of the chapter). “Perfections” are not just any readings of grace, but readings that draw one or other element of this motif to an end-of-the-line extreme. Hence, to take one example, although I was very conscious of the theology of John Chrysostom on this topic and often use his work in class, what is notable is how often he *refuses* to perfect grace in some of the ways that other Christians did or do. That is, of course, both interesting and important, and it might have been noted in the book, but the examples chosen in that chapter are all notable for the “perfecting” tendencies in their theologies of grace, and my point was to indicate how different these can be and how relative to particular theological contexts and purposes. But it is still the case that Aquinas (at least) could and should have been in the survey, since he does interestingly and carefully “perfect” grace in certain respects. I will try to make amends for that omission if there is ever a second edition of the book.

But the bigger question here is what would have been gained by fuller engagement with Aquinas in my reading of Paul. Behind that lurks the more fundamental question of what constitutes a good reading of Paul. A reading that situates Paul well in his first-century historical and cultural context is certainly one part of the answer, and in that respect, historical scholarship has moved on considerably since the thirteenth century. But I am not so enthralled to a “historicist” method as to believe that that is the whole of a “good reading” of Paul. In some cases, modern, historically informed readings of Paul are seriously deficient in elements that may be considered to make a reading “good.” A reading that respects the flow and dynamic of Paul’s letters as rhetorical arguments is another part of an answer, although opinions will divide on what textual frame should be considered (each individual letter? the whole Pauline corpus? the whole biblical canon?).¹ And beneath the question of the textual frame is the question of the theological (or other) basis on which one decides what is most central in Paul or what the “principles” are that undergird his theology. On a number of grounds, I doubt that there is, or ever will be, *one* final, complete, and fully “adequate” reading of Paul (or indeed of any

¹ There are complexities behind each of these potential answers that we cannot discuss here. It is notable, for instance, what difference it makes that a Catholic biblical canon includes Wisdom of Solomon while a Protestant canon does not.

text, sacred or secular). There will be some that are (on historical or textual grounds) impossible, but among the many *possible* readings of Paul, some will be better or worse, from a theological perspective, according to how well they *recontextualize* Paul's theology and render it theologically relevant and powerful in their own day. That is why I do not look to any figure in the past as definitive for our reading of Paul today and why, conversely, although I have my differences from Luther in his reading of Paul, I recognize his reading as "a brilliant re-contextualization of Pauline theology in the conditions of the sixteenth-century church" (*Paul & the Gift*, 572). Could the same be said of Aquinas in the context of the thirteenth century? I believe so, and in many respects, not least in his harvesting of the rediscovered Aristotle in order to fashion a theological system capable of embracing, within a single scheme of interpretation, both creation and salvation, both nature and grace. But, of course, the tendency of philosophy is to regard itself as "timeless," such that Aquinas's *contextual* rereading of Paul can be presented as universally and timelessly true. But, to my mind, there is much in Aquinas's (and Aristotle's) metaphysics that is time-bound and simply impossible for us today, eight centuries later, just as there is much in Luther and Calvin that we cannot merely repeat if we are to fulfil our contemporary responsibility in offering a theological reading of Paul. And this follows partly from the *nature* of Paul's theology, which was born *in and for mission*. A *missionary* theology that announces and explains the Gospel has to make itself contextually clear with a responsibility that is answerable both to the text of Scripture and to what constitutes life-giving "good news" today (and thus to the Spirit who speaks through Scripture). Thus, as a provisional response to my generous readers, I would like to reflect with them on some of the gains and losses that ensue from reading Paul through Aquinas. For the sake of simplicity, and to take up central themes in these essays, I focus here on just three areas of interest.

Nature and Grace

Aquinas's great achievement was to offer a theological vision that was both comprehensive and cohesive, embracing not just salvation and eschatology (the rescue and perfection of humanity) but also creation, or nature (including the design of humanity and of the world, before salvation, and even before the corruption of sin). This required not only an Aristotelian sense of God as the Prime Mover of all things, including all human agency, and an ontology of substance (including the rationality with which humanity is endued), but also a strong reconstruction of what humanity was like and was capable of being in its state of "integrity" before it was spoiled by

sin. On this basis, Aquinas could trace a crucial continuity between divine design and human fulfilment in salvation in which the grace of Christ exceeds, elevates, and perfects nature as something *superadditum* and *supernaturale* but does not destroy, counteract, or contradict creation or human nature as they once were and are designed to be. There is no doubt that this provides an integrative framework for theology that continues to prove its worth (not least in Catholic social teaching) and that is able to draw richly on the whole biblical canon. But does it constitute a good reading of Paul?

One could certainly point in support to the cosmic Christology of Colossians and Ephesians and to those hints in Romans 1–2 (including 2:14–15, if this is read as an allusion to “natural law”) that suggest that Paul’s soteriology has some connection to categories of “creation.” But much here has to be supplied to Paul from (Aristotle-inspired) speculation about the original human state of “integrity.” Paul himself appeals very little to the category of nature (or to “the image of God” in humanity), and where he does (e.g., in 1 Cor 11), he seems to use it to legitimate gender hierarchies that are in-built into ancient (including Aristotelian) versions of “nature” but are clearly cultural constructs and deeply unhelpful today. More to the point, Paul’s theology revolves around the great, stark *antitheses* between human sin and divine grace, between flesh and Spirit, between “the present evil age” and “the new creation” (Gal 1:4; 6:15). Paul seems to know only two kinds of human, the fallen human and the saved, not a third, pre-fall human whose rationality and morality is still partly intact in the midst of sin. Paul’s theology of inversion and contradiction, of the God who “raises the dead and calls into being the things that do not exist” (Rom 4:17), of the structuring symbols of Cross (death) and resurrection (*newness* of life), is not easily squeezed into a Thomist mold, or if so squeezed, it would be in danger of losing its creative, radical edge. One may protest that Paul’s vision, if taken on its own, is too narrowly focused on soteriology and on the great reversal of the broken human condition and that its horizons *need to be* expanded by the more comprehensive Thomist vision. But it may be that the sharp Pauline edges of *discontinuity*, *change*, and *reversal* (dangerously dualistic as they may sometimes seem) may be precisely what we need to hear in a contemporary context of mission and of increasing global dysfunction, where the wisdom of the Cross is needed to “destroy” the wisdom of the world (1 Cor 1:19). A subversive questioning of taken-for-granted norms and of the social order (which usually poses as “natural”) may be Paul’s greatest gift to contemporary theology. I have argued in *Paul & the Gift* that Paul’s theology of incongruous grace stood at the root of the creative social experiments that took place in his churches because it had the capacity to bring traditional, engrained value

systems into question. We would not want that voice to be muffled by its integration into a larger whole.

A Cosmic Order of Justice

Dauphinais makes an eloquent case for a theology of cosmic order, aligning Paul *with* (not, as I do, against) Wisdom of Solomon and locating a deep resonance with Aquinas if one traces through Paul the transformative power of grace, leading believers from incongruity (grace to the ungodly) to final congruity (godly and fitting heirs of eternal life). There is no doubting the appeal of this nonarbitrary justice in which human free will (and thus moral responsibility) is maintained, grace makes us pleasing to God (*gratia gratum faciens*), and one can speak of a human merit that God in justice properly, even necessarily, rewards. There are some overlaps, of course, between Calvin and Aquinas in their visions of an overarching cosmic justice: they disagreed on merit, but both spoke of “sanctifying grace,” both stressed final judgment, and both traced significant continuity between the old law and the new. And there is something profoundly satisfying in a Thomist account of this matter: does the unexpected, incongruous gift of Christ expose, as Dauphinais puts it, a “deeper harmony,” a cosmic order of wisdom to which the incongruous gift grants entry?

It would be foolish to deny that Paul can be read that way, especially if one places particular weight on Romans 2 and its image of just deserts at the final judgment. My reading of Paul is significantly different, however, for at least four reasons.

(1) Historical and philological research on the phrase “the righteousness of God” has shown that this means in Paul, as in his scriptural sources, not God’s distributive justice (as the Latin *iustitia* implies), but God’s saving power to right what is wrong. And the flow of Romans 1–3 indicates that the preliminary announcement of this “righteousness” in 1:16–18 points forward to 3:21–26, where that righteousness is revealed precisely in the saving and incongruous gift of Christ.

(2) What impresses Paul as the essence of the Christ-gift is that it is given to the ungodly, not the righteous (Rom 5:6–10), and this is impossible to reconcile with the careful way in which Wisdom traces God’s saving power as distributed to the righteous throughout history.²

² For a careful elucidation of the overlaps and contrasts between these two texts, see J. Linebaugh, *God, Grace, and Righteousness in Wisdom of Solomon and Paul’s Letter to the Romans: Texts in Conversation* (Leiden: Brill, 2013). I note that Fr. Meconi’s essay at points attributes to my reading of Paul what I said, in fact, about Wisdom of Solomon, whose perspective I placed in contrast to Paul’s.

(3) Although it is true, and significant, that Paul sees God's incongruous grace as transformative and designed, through the Spirit, to create moral *congruity* between believers and the will of God, everything that is said about that congruity depends, continually, on the resurrection life of Christ, and thus on an incongruous power of grace in weak and mortal human beings. As I argued with reference to Romans 5–8: “Christian life is an impossible newness given as an unfitting gift, such that everything in this new life refers back to its source and foundation in the Christ-gift, and forward to its eschatological fulfilment as eternal life. . . . Hence, the obligation now incumbent on believers is not to ‘gain’ grace (or salvation), nor to win another instalment of grace. There is a single *charisma* of eternal life (Romans 6:23), that runs from the Christ-event to eternity (cf. Romans 8:32), not a series of ‘graces’ won by increases in sanctification” (*Paul & the Gift*, 517–18). The Pauline confidence—“if God is for us, who is against us?”—is built on the Christ-gift (Rom 8:31–35) and indicates that there is something definitive about that incongruous grace of Christ that is not simply a mechanism within a larger scheme of justice.

(4) There is a strong strand of Pauline theology, not least in Romans 9–11, that indicates that, if there is an order in the cosmos, it consists, finally, of mercy. This mercy is not answerable to some final or deeper system of justice or law; it is God's unconditioned *Love* that “moves the sun and the other stars.” This gives to the tragic story of the cosmos an irrational, and finally inexplicable, hope: God has consigned all things to disobedience in order that he may have mercy on all (Rom 11:32). That makes the order of the gift ultimately untidy and, since we do not know fully what God's mercy means, also beyond our understanding (note the apophatic conclusion in Rom 11:33–36). But it also gives us hope at such times as these, when both the church and the world (and each one of us within them) are far from displaying the consistency of virtue that could be counted as merit in any full sense of that term.

Sanctifying Grace

In critiquing some aspects of the Lutheran *simul justus et peccator*, in speaking of the transformation of believers and their congruity with God, and in stressing participation in Christ and a model of noncompetitive agency (what I call “energism”), my reading of Paul certainly resonates at points with the Thomist tradition. Among the strengths of this tradition are its refusal, finally, to play divine and human agency off against one another, its sense of God's engagement, through grace, in all the believers' works (which are also, in an important sense, their own), and its insistence that

transformation is integral to salvation, not a supplement. The question is whether Aquinas's Aristotelian anthropology maps well onto Pauline discourse, or whether Paul's paradoxical language invites a more complex ontology of relation that is also, ultimately, more accessible and more effective in our communication of the Gospel today.

Aquinas's language of the "infusion" of grace, as if it were a substance that becomes immanent to the life of a believer, seems to stray beyond the range of possible meanings for Paul's Greek. *Charis* is the favor of the giver or the benefit or favor given, but it is not a substance that can be absorbed within the essence of its recipient, and there is a danger here that the "otherness" of God's intrusion into human life in grace is obscured. Even at those moments when Paul speaks of God's grace operative within his Christian life (e.g., 1 Cor 15:9–10 and 2 Cor 12:7–10), he seems at pains to highlight the notion of grace as a power that *comes upon* a believer. The "newness of life" in which believers live (Rom 6:4) is, and remains, the life of the resurrected Christ, without which they, in themselves, are simply dead or dying. In *Paul & the Gift*, I spoke of the believer's "eccentric" existence, trying to take seriously Paul's paradoxical expression that "it is no longer I that live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:19–20). How we interpret these verses in Galatians reveals, perhaps best of all, how we understand Paul's anthropology.³ Aquinas's tendency to see here a distinction between Paul's "soul" and his "flesh," with the latter understood as the body's sensual desires, maps an Aristotelian anthropology onto an author who persistently defies such categories. "The flesh," in Paul, is not reducible to "the physical body" or its desires, but often represents the whole self, in its entirety, as turned away from God: it is not a *part* of human existence, but a *mode*. The dialectics that run through Paul's anthropology (e.g., Gal 5:17 and 2 Cor 4:10) suggest that the believer's life is defined relationally: if one may speak of an ontology here, it is an ontology not of substance, nor of mere subjectivity, but of *relation*.⁴ And a believer's relationship with the grace of God seems, in Paul, neither stable nor linear: there is a drama about the way he speaks of the Christian life, a dynamic of interruption and event that suggests a constant and repeatedly renewed experience of dependence on grace. Indeed, the experiential (and affective) dimensions of Paul's language at this point are readily accessible and powerfully evocative today. At a time when mental health seems increasingly fragile

³ For the history of reception, see J. K. Riches, *Galatians through the Centuries* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008).

⁴ For a fresh approach along such lines, see S. Eastman, *Paul and the Person: Reframing Paul's Anthropology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017).

and when our young people are suffering crises of self-worth of epidemic proportions, a voice that persistently and repeatedly affirms our worth before God on the basis of his grace alone—a voice from *outside* and *beyond* ourselves—is good news indeed.

If Paul's anthropology is configured in terms of *relation*, the believer's state is one of *participation in the life of Christ*. Morales presses me to spell out the *content* of the Christ-gift, and if I had to choose one Pauline phrase to sum this up, it would be "being found in Christ" (Phil 3:9). Morales is right that the metaphor of adoption is a central Pauline expression of this reality, though its comparative rarity in Paul's letters (in the undisputed letters, only in Galatians and Romans) makes me hesitate to grant this metaphor the status to which he elevates it. However, its (necessarily) metaphorical language is unusually rich, since it evokes not only an analogy between the believer's and the Son's relationship with God but also, in some respects, a *sharing* in that relationship (believers cry, like the Son, "Abba, Father," according to Gal 4:6 and Rom 8:15). But precisely what that status of "son/child" means and what it means to "participate" in Christ are questions that need careful handling. Fr. Meconi utilizes a rich range of terms and phrases: "assimilation," "imitation," "transformation," "divinization," "partaking of the divine nature," "deification," "*theosis*," "becoming gods," "incorporation in Christ's body," "continuation of Christ's Incarnation," and even "becoming God." The current fascination with such language across several confessional traditions can mask deep differences in meaning arising from incompatible assumptions about humanity and the ontological structures of reality. We can all agree that the believer, in Paul's theology, is in some sense "transformed." But what kind of change are we talking about? It seems that the Pauline language of participation and transformation can spawn a huge variety of readings, some of which are in danger of pulling his theology out of shape. Paul appears, in fact, rather little interested in God's "being," or "essence," or "nature," and much more concerned with God's actions and activities: to be "found in Christ" is not to be absorbed into Christ's being, but to have one's self remade and redefined relationally, both in relation to God (in obedience and faith) and in relation to others (in love). Perhaps more can be said than that, but unless we are able to articulate and defend a theologically robust anthropology, we need to be cautious in what we claim.

Let me conclude by expressing again my gratitude for these essays and for the enormous stimulation they have evoked. For too long, the modern study of Paul has been the preserve of Protestants (as Matt Thomas complains), and I sincerely hope that this dialogue will be just the opening stage of a new phase of engagement between Pauline scholarship and Cath-

olic theological interpretation. Even if there will be no ultimate, definitive reading of Paul, we have much to learn from our varied traditions of scriptural interpretation. And that is part, at least, of what it means to live in an age of receptive ecumenism. N.V

Remarks Concerning the Metaphysical Character of St. Thomas's Moral Theology, in Particular as It Is Related to Prudence and Conscience

RÉGINALD GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, O.P.

Translated (with notes) by Matthew K. Miner

Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Ss. Cyril and Methodius

Pittsburgh, PA

Originally: Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, “Du caractère métaphysique de la Théologie morale de saint Thomas, en particulier dans ses rapports avec la prudence et la conscience,” *Revue thomiste* 30 (1925): 341–55. Permissions for translation (and publication thereof) have been granted by *Revue thomiste* via email by Fr. Philippe-Marie Margelidon, O.P.

Translator's Introduction

Given that I already have provided two appendices to address technical points that are raised by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange's vocabulary, I will here only provide a summary statement regarding why this translation is being presented to the reading public. A shortened, edited form of this article appeared in his *Le réalisme du principe de finalité*.¹ That version of the text is not thematically concerned with the implications of this topic for moral theology. These implications are discussed in this article from the *Revue thomiste*.

In this article, Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange voices concerns that he likewise echoes elsewhere² about casuistic trends in moral philosophy, as well as the

¹ See Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le réalisme du principe de finalité* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1932), 285–99. A translation of this volume is anticipated by Emmaus Academic.

² See Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange: *De revelatione per ecclesiam Catholicam proposita*, 5th ed. (Rome: Desclée et Socii, 1950), 31–33, esp. 31n1; *De beatitudine*

danger of separating moral theology off as a separate theological discipline. This connects him to certain aspects of Fr. Servais-Pinckaers's attempts at renewal in moral theology, although the latter Dominican differed from Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange on significant topics such as the importance of the Thomistic commentators and the vexed questions raised by Henri de Lubac's *Surnaturel*. Nonetheless, I believe that it is important to bring together as intellectual friends authors whose works mutually reinforce each other.

Likewise, in this article, we find Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange critiquing aspects of the tradition of ecclesiastical manuals, a theme to which he returns on occasion in various works,³ registering his concern that the manuals too frequently do not exposit topics by drawing attention to the subordination of principles that dominate the topic under discussion. Thus, instead of seeing him as being an uncritical "neo-Thomistic manualist," one should have a more nuanced (albeit, critically aware) appreciation of his place in the tradition of Thomist authors. This is important so that the current generation of Thomistic philosophers and theologians can have a healthy sense of vital continuity with past thinkers without naively "turning back the clock."

Finally, in this article, Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange makes some important points regarding the nature of prudential truth. Indeed, we could say that he presents prudence as the answer to many vexed problems concerning conscience and the personal character of moral acts. Likewise, the reader will find him touching on older debates surrounding probabilism. Perhaps current ecclesiastical discussions of conscience could be significantly deepened by incorporating this older debate into the Thomist doctrine on prudence. Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange suggests this himself in this article, expressing a profound appreciation for the personal self governance virtuously exercised through prudence.

These are my reasons for presenting this article to the reader. Well aware of the limitations of any presentation, I believe that the text provides great illumination on the topics of discussion that I have highlighted above.

(Turin, IT: Berruti, 1951), 1–12. Note that the English translation of *De beatitudine* published by Herder is somewhat periphrastic in nature. One should consult the Latin text for the full treatment provided by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange on these topics.

³ See Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le réalisme du principe de finalité*, 171–75, 239–41, 243–45, 250.

Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange's Text

In this article, we would like to briefly examine the principal characteristics of St. Thomas's moral theology with an eye to certain modern objections that are rather prevalent. A great difference separates his idea of moral theology from that which can be found in a number of works written on this subject from the seventeenth century onward. This difference is so marked that many modern theologians scarcely still know the treasures that they can find in the moral part of the *Summa theologiae*. At the same time, they no longer see that its profundity and elevation—indeed its great originality—nonetheless are in perfect conformity with the surest of tradition.

Above all else, it is certain that, in St. Thomas's thought, *moral theology is not a science that would be specifically distinct from dogmatic theology*:

Sacred doctrine, being one, extends to things which belong to different philosophical sciences, for in each of these things, it considers the same formal aspect, namely, inasmuch as they can be known through divine revelation. Hence, although among the philosophical sciences one is speculative (metaphysics)⁴ and another practical (ethics), nevertheless sacred doctrine includes both [kinds of knowledge]—just as God, by one and the same science, knows both Himself and His works.⁵

In a word, in dogmatic theology and moral theology, we are always concerned with *the same formal subject*—namely, *God*, whether God in Himself, God the Creator and Author of the supernatural order, God the Ultimate End of human acts, God the Legislator, God the Author of

⁴ [Trans. note: The parenthetical point is added by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange. Certainly, he is not reducing all of speculative philosophy to metaphysics. However, knowing well that the dignity of other speculative philosophical tasks derives from their orientation to the study of being as being, he places metaphysics as the primary type of speculative philosophy. Although Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange's vocabulary is marked by his era's use of terms like "cosmology" and "rational psychology," he is well aware not to fall into a kind of post-Wolffian curriculum of philosophy. On this, see his remarks in Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "Dans quel ordre proposer les sciences philosophiques," *Revue thomiste* 40 (1924): 18–34. This essay is also included in a slightly redacted form in *Le réalisme du principe de finalité*.]

⁵ *ST* I, q. 1, a. 4. [Trans. note: This translation is taken from the English Dominican Fathers' edition of the *Summa theologiae* from Benziger in 1947, which is popularly available.]

grace and of the sacraments, and so on.⁶ Thus, all is considered in light of *the same formal motive*—namely, virtual revelation⁷—from which theology wholly takes its specification, as the sense of sight is specified by light, which renders all colors actually visible. Thus, the profound *unity* of sacred science is admirably respected, for “that which is divided and scattered in inferior orders, is found under a form that is simple and perfectly one in more elevated orders.” Thus, like the uncreated knowledge of God Himself, sacred theology is formally and eminently speculative and practical.⁸ Therefore, specialization in a given part of theology is not possible in the same way that it is in inferior sciences, which are specifically distinct among themselves. Nobody can have profound knowledge of moral theology without being an expert in dogmatic theology.

Moreover, it is certainly the case that *moral theology cannot be reduced to casuistry*, which presupposes (but does not treat) the fundamental questions concerning the last end, the nature of human acts, the foundation of morality, the nature of law, the nature of the virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the various states of life, and so forth. Casuistry is only the inferior application of moral theology, with the simple goal of discerning

⁶ [Trans. note: This point is well expressed in a late-career teaching text written by a student of Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange, Fr. Emmanuel Doronzo, O.M.I., the author of an impressive sequence of texts in sacramental theology, as well as of the first two volumes of an impressive manual in theology. Doronzo was a professor of theology at the Catholic University of America into the 1960s. See Emmanuel Doronzo, *Introduction to Theology* (Middleburg, VA: Notre Dame Institute Press, 1973), 16: “This property of theology [namely, its specific unity] follows from the specific and indivisible unity of its formal object, the concept of Deity, which is constantly and equally considered in all the parts and treatises of this science. In fact, such treatises may be given the following formal titles: On the One God; On the Trinity in God; On God creating and Elevating; On God sanctifying through grace; . . . On the sacraments, sanctifying instruments of God; On God the Rewarder, or the Last Things. This is the reason why the divisions of theology into its various parts or treatises is not an essential division, that is, a division into specifically distinct treatises. It is only an accidental division, that is, into integrative or complementary parts which make up one total and single science.”]

⁷ [Trans. note: See the first appendix below.]

⁸ [Trans. note: On the way that theology is formally and eminently speculative and practical (though, more speculative than practical), see not only *ST I*, q. 1, a. 4, but also John of St. Thomas (Poincot), *On Sacred Science: A Translation of Cursus Theologicus I, Question 1, Disputation 2*, trans. John P. Doyle, ed. Victor M. Salas (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s Press, 2019), a. 10, especially nos. 8–12 and 20–22. I would like to thank Dr. Salas for providing me with helpful feedback regarding the contents of this upcoming volume, which has been somewhat delayed in its publication.]

what is to be avoided in a given case, whether as a mortal sin or as a venial one. Asceticism and mysticism are moral theology's superior applications for conducting souls according to true progress in charity and the other virtues toward intimate union with God.

If moral theology were reduced to casuistry, as all too often happens, it would become the science of sins to avoid rather than the science of the virtues to be exercised and perfected—as if optics were the science of shadows instead of the science of luminous phenomena! Moral theology would thus lack the ability and impulse for directing men in the practice of lofty and solid virtues.

This is one of the reasons why St. Thomas does not divide moral theology according to the division of precepts (which are often negative, having defense against sin as their end), but instead divides moral theology according to the division of the virtues. Thus, the very organism of the virtues, their subordination, stands forth in complete relief, enabling a scientific knowledge of human acts, a knowledge through their principles or through their causes (whether radical or proximate). Therefore, it is not astonishing that, in the moral part of the *Summa theologiae*, St. Thomas treats of grace as the principle of human acts. On the other hand, it is surprising that numerous modern theologians, more or less reducing moral theology to casuistry, remove the treatises on grace and the infused virtues from moral theology, providing expositions on them in dogmatic theology. Thus, the supernatural character, profundity, and integrity of moral theology are all very diminished, for from such a perspective, moral theology no longer expressly treats the supernatural principles of meritorious acts, namely, the nature and necessity of grace, the essential character of the infused virtues and the Gifts, and the nature of merit. However, it is clear that these treatises belong to moral theology, not in an accidental way but in a proper and wholly preeminent way. These profound questions are like the marrow of moral theology and show its intimate connection with the other part of sacred science, dogmatic theology.

However, we would like to insist above all else on the *metaphysical character*⁹ of the Angelic Doctor's moral theology. Also, we intend to answer an objection that is often made today against his methodology.

St. Thomas's speculative manner of proceeding in the very exposition

⁹ [Trans. note: By this he means that St. Thomas's moral theology proceeds not merely in an empirical manner, but in a philosophical one, though elevated by faith into the proper domain of theology as a science of that which is virtually revealed.]

of his moral doctrine disconcerts certain modern thinkers who barely can see beyond the practico-practical¹⁰ aspect of questions. If they do at times read the *Summa theologiae*, many difficulties come to their minds, and they search in vain for a solution, although one may well be present there for them in the *Summa* in a very precise (and, indeed, elevated) manner—though, perhaps too elevated for those who are preoccupied almost solely with cases of conscience.

Indeed, a good number of modern theologians, not undertaking an adequately speculative study of moral questions, want to be able to determine immediately how one must act in a given concrete case. Thus, they settle for a kind of moral empiricism without rising to true moral science, to knowledge of the precise reason why a given concrete case of conscience ought to be judged one way instead of another. And because they do not elevate themselves to true principles (which are abstract, necessary, and universal), they cannot consider the concrete facts themselves as they should be considered (i.e., in light of these principles that, in reality, govern the concrete facts).

If one wishes to have a clear and easily understandable example of this defect, one need only compare the majority of modern treatises on *conscience* with the treatise on *prudence* in St. Thomas's *Summa theologiae*.

In nearly all of the modern works of moral theology from the time of the discussions concerning probable conscience onward,¹¹ the greatest importance is given from the start to the treatise on conscience considered not only in its general scope (which St. Thomas discusses quite excellently at the beginning of the *prima secundae* in the treatise on human acts¹²) but also in relation to specific questions of moral theology (even very specific ones) that certainly do not pertain to general morality. Indeed, many modern theologians in all of the various theological schools, scarcely allowing themselves to be engaged with this general part of moral theology, not only ask whether conscience is the proximate rule of human acts and if it must always be right and certain, but furthermore pose numerous questions about how one is to form a right and certain conscience and

¹⁰ [Trans. note: See the second appendix at the end of this article.]

¹¹ [Trans. note: He is referring here to the debates concerning the binding obligation of conscience that is organized under the doctrinal headings of rigorism, tutorialism, probabiliorism, equiprobabilism, probabilism, and laxism. See Benedict Henry Merkelbach, *Summa theologiae moralis*, vol. 2, 5th ed. (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1947), no. 77 (pp. 70–72). For a recent study devoted to this period of Catholic theological history, see Stefania Tutino, *Uncertainty in Post-Reformation Catholicism: A History of Probabilism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).]

¹² [Trans. note: See *ST* I-II, qq. 6–21.]

about how one is to correct an erroneous conscience. Likewise, they ask questions about the species and gravity of sin entailed by every action against conscience, about cases of doubtful and of probable conscience, about a lax or a scrupulous conscience, and so on. And then, in the portion of moral theology not dedicated to general questions but instead to specific matters,¹³ when these authors should speak about prudence among the different virtues, they barely speak about it at all or discuss it in only six or eight pages—something we can find even in the excellent Billuart.¹⁴ This has led to a situation in which students do not see the importance of this virtue. (Indeed, this is perhaps true for many teachers as well.)

As was well noted recently by Fr. Merkelbach, a professor at the Dominican College in Louvain, it is truly astonishing that *the principal cardinal virtue holds such a small place in moral science today*.¹⁵ Prudence, which directs all of the moral virtues and is called the charioteer of the virtues, is so fundamental that no human act is good without, at the same time, being prudent. However, despite this fact, numerous modern manuals of moral theology pass over this virtue in near silence. This quasi-suppression of the treatise on prudence would have been a kind of scandal in the eyes of the Thomists of yore.

In contrast to this state of affairs, in St. Thomas, at the very beginning of general moral theology, in the treatise on human acts, matters are discussed only as is suitable for the general questions pertaining to

¹³ [Trans. note: The French expression “moral spéciale” describes the portion of moral theology covering the virtues in the *secunda secundae*. The distinction between “general moral theology” and “special moral theology” (without, however, separating them as independent disciplines) can be rendered clear if one thinks of the types of questions asked in the various treatises on the virtues in *ST* II-II in contrast to those in the treatise on habits and virtues in *ST* I-II, qq. 49–70, or the treatise on vice and sin in *ST* I-II, qq. 71–89. In the latter two treatises, one is concerned with articulating the nature of virtue, vice, and sin, all in light of the common principles of all virtues, vices, and sins. By contrast, in the *secunda secundae*, one is concerned with articulating the nature of various virtues and vices in light of their own proper principles. This point is addressed in Benedict Henry Merkelbach, “Quelle place assigner au traité de la conscience?” *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 12 (1923): 170–83. This article will be cited below by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange. A translation of the admirable text is scheduled for later this year in *Nova et Vetera* (English).]

¹⁴ Indeed, Billuart discusses prudence in eight pages, whereas earlier in his text, he devoted seventy pages to the treatise on conscience.

¹⁵ See Merkelbach, “Quelle place assigner au traité de la conscience?” [Trans. note: Josef Pieper notes this same point, indeed citing this very page in Garrigou-Lagrange: Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston et al. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), 6.]

conscience: Is it the proximate rule of human acts? Must it always be right and certain? Other specific questions remain: how is one to form a right and certain conscience? How is one to correct an erroneous conscience? What is the nature of doubtful or probable conscience? What is the nature of lax or scrupulous conscience? For St. Thomas, these kinds of questions are not at all treated in the general part of moral theology [i.e., in the *prima secundae*].

For this reason, many modern thinkers have appeared to accuse St. Thomas of having failed to discuss nearly all of the content needed for the treatise on conscience in his *Summa theologiae*. Hence, certain writers introduce this entire treatise, by way of appendix, after the two articles of *ST* I-II dealing with right reason and erroneous conscience, q. 19, a. 3, “Whether the Goodness of Human Acts Depends upon Reason,” and a. 5 of the same question, “Whether an Erring Reason Obliges.” Thus, the entire treatise on conscience, introduced as an appendix, seems out of harmony with the structure of the *Summa theologiae* and seems to be, as it were, a blemish on St. Thomas’s face.

Thus, would the holy Doctor have committed the imprudent act of omitting a great portion of the treatise on conscience? Not at all! On the contrary, he spoke about it where it was necessary, when it was necessary, and as it was necessary, according to his purposes. He did not wish to determine immediately what one must necessarily and practically do in a given case. Instead, he raises himself first and foremost to the highest, most abstract, most universal and necessary principles that govern actions, which themselves are concrete, singular, and contingent. Thus, he separates himself from moral empiricism in order to erect a true science.

The treatise on conscience as it pertains to specific matters is found in the *Summa theologiae* in its legitimate place, namely in the treatise on prudence, for *right and certain conscience* is nothing other than an *act of prudence*, which takes counsel [or, deliberates], practically judges, and commands. Commanding is the proper act of prudence, and it presupposes good counsel and good judgment. Already, Aristotle had well determined all these acts by relating them to their principles. Thus, he acknowledges *eubolia* and *synesis* as two virtues annexed to prudence. These two virtues respectively are the source of good counsel and good judgment.

In this treatise (*ST* II-II, qq. 47–57), St. Thomas has done something that no casuist would ever dream of doing: he undertakes a *metaphysical study of the very nature of prudence*, considering its object, its subject, its three acts, its extension, its genesis and progress, its mutual relations with the other virtues, and its parts and annexed virtues, including the Gift of counsel which corresponds to it. All of this is precisely concerned with *the*

formation of *right conscience* (through good counsel) and *certain conscience* (through good judgment). He even discusses how one is to form a conscience that is free from doubt concerning the most difficult and exceptional cases which require particular perspicacity (*gnome*).¹⁶ Moreover, in studying the vices opposed to prudence (above all imprudence, negligence, precipitation, and so on), he thus discussed the topics of lax conscience, perplexed conscience, and scrupulous conscience,¹⁷ and in every case, one can easily develop there the questions that are relevant to moral theology in its specific questions [i.e., in the *secunda secundae*].

As Fr. Merkelbach¹⁸ rightly notes, the ever-relevant importance of this treatise on prudence would be obvious to modern thinkers if only several words were added to its title: "On Prudence and the Virtues Annexed to It, in Relation to the Formation of Conscience." Indeed, all the specific questions concerning conscience could easily be explicated in this treatise, while the general questions would belong to the treatise concerned with human acts in general [i.e., in the *prima secundae*].

Moreover, by speculatively considering the intimate nature of prudence, its formal object, and its mutual relations with the other moral virtues, St. Thomas thus determined the very nature of its acts (and of right conscience in particular) and was equally able to resolve from on high the difficult questions of the treatise on conscience that, according to the majority of contemporary authors, remain without truly scientific solutions.

The first of these difficulties is this: How can we arrive at *certain conscience*, despite invincible ignorance concerning the numerous circumstances of human acts (for example, when it is a question of future contingencies that one must prudently predict in order to take the necessary precautions)? Or again, how could I determine with certitude *here and now*, in relation to what concerns *me* (and not you), *the golden mean* to keep in a matter of chastity, meekness, humility, courage, or patience, while this golden mean depends on particular circumstances (known only in a vague manner, or even sometimes unknown) of my temperament (e.g., as high-strung, sanguine, or phlegmatic), of my age, of the season (whether summer or winter), of my social condition, and so on? To what must we have recourse in order to have this *practical certitude of conscience* in the

¹⁶ See *ST* II-II, q.52, a.4.

¹⁷ [Trans. note: These were standard general categories used for discussing conscience: *conscientia laxa, conscientia perplexa, et conscientia scrupulosa*. See Merkelbach, *Summa theologiae moralis*, 2:122ff. (no. 112ff).]

¹⁸ See Merkelbach, "Quelle place," 178.

presence of conditions that are so varied and that often can be known only in a vague manner? Should I weigh the probabilities for and against this action? Does this suffice, even if one were to add to it some more or less certain reflex principles?¹⁹ A doubtful law does not oblige? The one in possession is in a better position (lit. *melior est conditio possidentis*)? This kind of investigation into probabilities will be lengthy. It will even exceed the capacity of many and often does not lead to anything that is actually certain.

St. Thomas provides a rather profound solution to this question. He does not disdain the consideration of probabilities for or against a given action, nor does he disdain the reflex principles that are commonly received. However, he insists above all else on a *formal principle* to resolve this question. Few modern theologians speak about this principle. However it is nonetheless found even in Aristotle.²⁰ This principle can be expressed thus: the truth of the practical intellect (i.e., prudence²¹) consists in *conformity with rectified appetite*, meaning conformity with the *sensitive appetite* rectified by the virtues of temperance and courage, as well as (and especially) conformity with the *rational appetite* rectified by the virtue of justice and the other virtues of the will. In other words, practico-practical truth consists in conformity with the habitually and actually *right intention*²² of the will because, as Aristotle adds, “As each is well or badly disposed in his will, so does a given end appear good or bad to him.”²³ For example, the

¹⁹ [Trans. note: In various scholastic treatments of conscience, it became very normal to discuss the role of a variety of received “reflex” principles like those mentioned here. These are the sorts of propositions that one integrates into one’s reasoning to bolster moral certitude when direct, proper certitude is not possible. Thus, one would speak about the acquisition of indirect certitude by means of the prudential application of such principles. By themselves, however, they still remain rather general, calling for further specification depending on the matter being considered. One could, perhaps, think of such principles providing guidance (whether implicit or explicit) to the prudential reasoning process that ultimately arrives at a terminal practical judgment. Doubtlessly, some applications of such principles could end up appearing to be nothing more than bloodless, formalistic casuistry. On this topic, see the text of Beaudouin cited below.]

²⁰ See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.4 and 6.2.

²¹ [Trans. note: On the primacy of prudence in practical truth, see especially Yves Simon’s highly accessible *Practical Knowledge*, cited in appendix 2 below.]

²² [Trans. note: Both parts are important. It is *right* (i.e., *rectified*) *intention*. This depends on the moral species of the object, which gives the formal specification to the will.]

²³ [Trans. note: For an approximation of this point, see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 10.5. This was a famed scholastic maxim: *Quails unusquisque est, talis finis videtur ei* (“As a given man is, so does the end seem to him”). Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange’s

person who is chaste, even if he has no knowledge of moral science, judges rightly (by the inclination of this virtue) concerning things that are related to chastity. They appear to him as being good and obligatory.

St. Thomas explains the truth of this point very well in *ST* I-II, q. 57, a. 5, ad 3, as he likewise does in the entire treatise on prudence. Indeed, he says in the aforementioned response:

The truth of the practical intellect (i.e., the practico-practical intellect or prudence)²⁴ is understood in another, different sense than is the truth of the speculative intellect, as is said in *Nicomachean Ethics* 6.2. This is so because *the truth of the speculative intellect* is understood in terms of *conformity to the known reality* [*per conformitatem ad rem*]. Now, because the intellect cannot have infallible conformity in contingent matters (especially future things to be prudently foreseen) but can have such conformity only in necessary matters, therefore no speculative *habitus*²⁵ concerning contingent matters is an intellectual virtue; only those *habitus* that concerned with necessary matters are intellectual virtues. *However, the truth of the practical intellect* (i.e., the practico-practical intellect or prudence) is understood in terms of *conformity with right appetite*.

By right appetite, St. Thomas means right intention of the will. And this suffices for having PRACTICAL CERTITUDE even when *invincible ignorance* or a *speculative error* exists alongside it. For example, consider

student and founder of the Aquinas Academy in Sydney Australia, Fr. Austin Woodbury, S.M., seems to have organized the oral delivery of his moral philosophy courses under this guiding principle, as is attested to by the notes taken by Dr. Anthony Russell, which can be found in the John N. Deely and Anthony F. Russell Collection in the Latimer Family Library at St. Vincent College, Latrobe, PA. Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange explicitly cites the importance of this maxim in *The Sense of Mystery: Clarity and Obscurity in the Intellectual Life*, trans. Matthew K. Miner (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2017), 274n43. More importantly, in his altered form of this essay, he made this dictum central to the discussion. See Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le réalisme du principe de finalité*, 285–99.]

²⁴ [Trans. note: All parenthetical remarks are the added interpretations of Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange.]

²⁵ [Trans. note: With good reason, one should refrain from referring to the virtues as habits, which could lead the reader to think that they are mere subjective dispositions and not ones that give objective capacity with regard to choice. Accepting the conclusions of Simon's life-long reflection, I am choosing to leave *habitus* untranslated; see Yves Simon, *The Definition of Moral Virtue*, ed. Vukan Kuic (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986), 47–68.]

someone invincibly ignorant of the extraordinary strength of a particular wine, judging that he can drink a glass of it to quench his thirst. Such a person can become drunk without being at fault. This prudential judgment is *practically true* according to its conformity with a right intention, though it is *speculatively false* (i.e., not conformed to the object, the nature of this wine).

Certainly, it often happens that modern theologians, in treating the formation of right and certain conscience, present their readers with an edifying statement: "In order to form your conscience, virtue is required and even the practice of the virtues." However, they do not explain well enough *why* virtue is thus required, and they do not see well enough that this element concerning *the conformity of the practical judgment to rectified appetite* enters as a *formal* element into the *practical certitude* of the prudential judgment. In order to better determine the necessity of this element, one must have recourse to a metaphysical study of the nature of prudence and of its relations with the moral virtues. Indeed, prudence presupposes *habitual* rectification of one's appetite by the moral virtues, and the prudential judgment presupposes *actual* rectification of the intention of the end. This right intention must persist so that prudence can determine what are the best means in view of the end that is willed, so that it can direct *here and now*, as it must, the particular and passing acts of the moral virtues by determining the *golden mean* that pertains to each person according to his temperament, age, and one's circumstances—all of which admit infinite variation.

To wish to silently pass over this metaphysical study of the virtues in the *Summa* would be like merely preserving the setting of a ring without keeping the very diamond contained therein. In contrast, it is the role of great commentators to show precisely where the most beautiful diamonds are in St. Thomas's work, just as great art critics make known the beauties of Raphael and Michelangelo. So too, the work of someone like Cajetan or John of St. Thomas begins where superficial commentators stop, commentators who barely exceed the letter of St. Thomas. Sometimes, these commentators respond saying, "if you wish to understand Cajetan, read St. Thomas." However, without the help of the great interpreter, few would be able to resolve certain objections raised by Scotus. It is very easy to neglect them, but one sometimes is content with juxtaposing conclusions without seeing how they are rigorously deduced from the principles that give the doctrine of St. Thomas the very spirit that animates its letter.

Cajetan excels in placing these principles in relief. In particular, one should consult his remarks concerning the matter occupying us here in *ST* I-II, q. 57, a. 5, and q. 58, aa. 3 and 5, and in the treatise on prudence in *ST*

II-II, qq. 47–57. He insists on this Aristotelian and Thomistic doctrine, noting that Scotus did not understand it. Indeed, this is an astonishing fact, for Scotus, who generally is a voluntarist, becomes, in the treatise on prudence, an intellectualist to excess, for he places prudence solely in the intellect as though (like *synderesis* and moral science) it did not presuppose the rectification of appetite. This is why, as Cajetan notes (in his comments on *ST* I-II, q. 57, a. 5, ad 3), Scotus does not explain the fact that the judgment made by prudence concerning every particular action to be performed is not only true in most cases, but instead, is *always true*. This is why prudence has a worth that surpasses probable opinion, which is not an intellectual virtue; for, in order to be a virtue, an intellectual virtue must *always* incline reason to the truth, *never* to falsity. Indeed, the prudential judgment *cannot ever* be practically false, for at that very same moment it would be imprudent (or, not prudent).

Therefore, as a result of its conformity to right appetite (i.e., to right intention), prudence succeeds at attaining practical certitude in the direction of particular and contingent acts in the midst of the most varying of circumstances. Thus, it is *superior to opinion* and deserves to be called an intellectual virtue. However, it is *inferior to synderesis and moral science*, which have necessary and universal principles as their objects and which do not presuppose rectification of the appetite, though they contribute to establishing it in the virtuous person or establish only advertence in the sinner.²⁶

Therefore, St. Thomas has profoundly understood, much better than Scotus, as well as many modern thinkers, the double axiom of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*: "As each is well or badly disposed in his will, so does a given end appear good or bad to him"—"The truth of the practical intellect (i.e., of prudence) consists in conformity to rectified appetite" (or, right intention).

This conformity to rectified appetite is not something artificial or mechanical, like the comparison of probabilities for or against some action, or like various reflex principles that are more or less certain. Rather, it is something *vital* and *excellent*. It is the virtuous life itself, which contributes to forming the rectitude of prudential judgment on the condition—it goes without saying—of presupposing knowledge of the first moral principles (i.e., *synderesis*) and ordinary diligence in examining the circumstances, something that is possible for everyone.

Given that a particular man is truly humble, that which pertains to true humility (and not to false humility) pertains also to him. He has a

²⁶ [Trans. note: Reading "pécheur" for "péché."]

sensitivity that enables him to discover what precisely must be done in this difficult matter. That which *here and now* for him is the golden mean between pusillanimity and vainglory has a profound *relation of suitability* to the virtuous inclination found in him, with his humility of heart. Thus, the virtuous man has this judgment by inclination or sympathy (*judicium per modum inclinationis*) precisely where the universal and necessary syllogism cannot descend, namely into the domain of individual, ever-variable contingencies, where one must, nonetheless, act without going astray, without confusing true with false humility, magnanimity with vainglory, firmness with inflexibility, indulgence with softness, or true charity with that form of liberalism which is only a lack of intellectual and moral rigor. Here, one must have the sensitivity given by virtue, indeed great virtue, sanctity that does not deceive in these matters.

Therefore, every virtuous man, above all when he is aided by the counsel of others, can generally succeed at forming a right and certain conscience without recourse to a meticulous comparison of probabilities for and against an action, and likewise without needing to consider the reflexive principles known only by theologians. Thus, we here have a principle that is at once vital, dynamic, organic, and virtuous, a principle of rectitude and of prudential certitude loftier than an empirical knowledge that is more or less artificial and that would not generally surpass the level of probability.

Thus, St. Thomas has well determined the specific character of the certitude proper to prudence, as he likewise did in relation to the certitude of faith²⁷ and the certitude of hope.²⁸ He was able to succeed in doing this only because he undertook a metaphysical study of these great questions.

In order to bring matters to a close, we will say a few words regarding another difficulty pertaining to the treatise on conscience, which can be resolved by means of St. Thomas's principles: *In the formation of one's conscience, why is the use of probability sometimes permitted and sometimes not?* From the time of the condemnation of laxism, all theologians agree in recognizing that *the use of probability is not permitted when there is a danger of an evil that one must absolutely avoid and that is independent of the forma-*

²⁷ See *ST* II-II, q. 4, a. 8: "Faith is, without qualification (*simpliciter*) more certain than the intellectual virtues, namely than wisdom, insight into first principles, and science."

²⁸ See *ST* II-II, q. 18, a. 4: "Certitude . . . *essentially* is found in a cognoscitive power; however, it is found participatively in everything that is *infallibly* moved to its end by a cognoscitive power ." [Trans. note: These remarks are well compared with Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Sense of Mystery*, 40–46.]

tion of one's conscience. For example, this is so in the administration of the sacraments, if one is concerned about their validity (unless there is a grave necessity). Likewise, if one is concerned with things that are necessary for salvation, with a necessity as a means, one must choose the course the most morally certain course of action—*tutior pars elegenda est* (the safer way must be chosen). One cannot make use of a probability that would be contrary. This also holds when there is a question of some right of a third party, as well as a grave danger of spiritual or temporal harm to oneself or to others, something that must absolutely be ruled out. In all of these cases, recourse to probability in favor of freedom is illicit. However, in other cases, it is permitted, and the matter is explained differently depending on whether one holds to probabiliorism, equiprobabilism, or probabilism.

It would be truly useful to relate this common teaching of Catholic theologians to a superior principle, and as Fr. Reginald Beaudouin has rightly shown in his *Treatise on Conscience*,²⁹ such a relation to a superior principle can be established by means of St. Thomas's distinction between the *medium rationis tantum* [the mean of reason alone] and the *medium rei* [the mean of the thing].³⁰ Before St. Thomas, Aristotle himself had already said that the equitable mean of justice is the *medium rei* (e.g.,³¹ the just measure or just price established according to the very thing that one buys), while the golden mean of temperance (e.g., the quantity of food to eat) or of courage (and the virtues annexed to these) is the *medium rationis tantum, non rei* (i.e., the just measure constituted in the interior dispositions of the subject who acts, dispositions that vary according to age, temperament, circumstances of time and place, etc.).

By this, we can easily see that the use of probability is *illicit* when the measure of the action to be performed is the *medium rei* (i.e., the golden mean established according to the exterior thing that one absolutely must

²⁹ See Reginald Beaudouin, *Tractatus de conscientia*, ed. Ambroise Gardeil (Tournai, BE: Desclée, 1911), 84–87.

³⁰ St. Thomas explains this matter in the treatise on virtues in general (*ST* I-II, q. 60, a. 2; q. 64, a. 2) and in the treatise on prudence (*ST* II-II, q. 47, a. 7).

³¹ [Trans. note: I translate “c'est-à-dire” here as “e.g.,” though the meaning would be “that is to say,” “that is,” or “i.e.”] “E.g.” is used here so as to avoid confusing the reader regarding the very limited case cited by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange. Later, for the case of temperance, he states “par exemple.” The simplest example of justice can be found in purchases, which can be reduced to quantitative exchanges admitting of strict equality. However, even here, matters quickly become difficult, for all monetary value must reduce to human use, i.e., artificial wealth to natural wealth. As distributive justice plays a role in the “value” of such wealth, the matters become very complex very quickly.]

do or avoid whatever may be our age or the circumstances in which we find ourselves). This is the case when one is faced with a matter of justice in matters pertaining to sales and purchases, when one is concerned about the validity of sacraments to be administered, and always when there is a danger of evil that one absolutely must avoid and that is independent of the formation of one's conscience.

On the other hand, the use of probability is *licit* when the measure of the action to be performed is a *medium rationis tantum*, meaning the golden mean constituted not by the exterior thing that one should do or avoid, but rather according to the interior dispositions of the subject who acts, as in a matter pertaining to temperance or courage (as well as the virtues annexed to them). Indeed, when the golden mean of one's action is only a *medium rationis*, practical reason itself (i.e., prudence) must *determine* by itself what this mean is, according to the probabilities in play and according to its conformity with rectified appetite. However, in the other case (namely, when the golden mean of the action is a *medium rei*), prudence must only *direct the execution* of the action, the measure of the matter already being determined in accord with an external thing or in accord with a given right of the other party in question. In that case, prudence cannot respond to a given obligation by commanding a doubtful or only probable satisfaction of the matter at hand but, instead, must without doubt render that which is without a doubt due.

And thus, this other difficulty—that concerning recourse to probabilities (a recourse that is sometimes licit and sometimes illicit)—is resolved by St. Thomas's principles concerning the intimate nature of human acts and of the virtues, especially that of prudence, to which the act of right and certain conscience properly belongs.

What then should we conclude? In the moral domain, we do not at all need to leave aside abstract speculation in order to determine here and now what we ought to do in a given concrete case. Were we to do this, we would disregard the universal and necessary principles that are the rule of particular and contingent actions. Even in moral science, we must first, in light of nominal definitions, raise ourselves upward by means of abstraction from concrete facts both to *real definitions* and to universal and necessary *principles*, as is done by the intellect in its purely speculative use [lit. *comme le fait l'intellect spéculatif*]. Second, we must *descend*, as is done by the intellect in its practico-practical use (i.e., by prudence), from abstract, universal, and necessary principles to particular and contingent concrete acts in order to direct ourselves well toward the proper ends of the virtues and toward

the final end. Without this outlook, nearly all of moral theology would be reduced to its inferior application (i.e., to casuistry). Moreover, casuistry itself would be abolished, since it cannot apply principles to concrete practical cases unless these principles of morality are in themselves known in themselves.

This is why, although the metaphysical study of the virtues at first seems useless to many people, it is in fact very useful, *more than useful*—indeed, supra-useful. It is a befitting good (i.e., something that is good in itself). If we say with Aristotle that “metaphysics is useless,” we must understand this adjective “useless” as meaning that it is above usefulness, not below it—like the befitting good, which is good in itself independent of every delightful or useful consequence.

Such is the moral theology conceived of by St. Thomas. It is not specifically distinct from dogmatic theology. It has a distinctly metaphysical character in the supernatural order. And if it truly remains at this loftiness, it will then proceed not only to *casuistry* but, by way of its superior applications, to *asceticism* and *mysticism*, the latter opening the way to contemplation of the mysteries of salvation. Thus the circle of sacred theology is brought to perfection, proceeding from faith in supernatural mysteries, then directing the human person toward contemplation of these mysteries, a contemplation that is, here below, along with charity, the normal disposition to the Beatific Vision in heaven.

Translator's Appendix 1: Concerning the Formal Object of Acquired Theology

The contemporary reader may not be familiar with the scholastic terminology being deployed above by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange, using the term “virtual revelation” to distinguish theological assent from the assent of faith. Strictly speaking, that which is known by faith is *formally revealed* or, we could say, “revelation in the formal and strict sense.” The motive for such assent is precisely *that God has supernaturally revealed this truth*, not the mere rational credibility of the contents of what is believed, nor even the faith-directed reasoning of the believer about the contents of what is believed. An assent based on rational credibility remains *natural*, whereas an assent involving revealed truths but based on the inferential processes of human reasoning is *properly theological as a form of knowledge acquired by studious activity*. The inferential process³² of human reasoning “colors”

³² Note well, however, that acquired theological wisdom is a form of *wisdom*, not merely a form of science. Hence, the acquisition of objectively inferential (or “objectively illative”) conclusions is not the only task standing before the theo-

the objects studied in theology, thus presenting the knower with a form of knowledge that is *supernatural but not infused*. It is both *supernatural* and *acquired*. The epistemological character of the formal object of this latter kind of knowledge—*both supernatural and acquired*—came to be termed “virtual revelation” by the later Thomist school, especially under the precisions of vocabulary offered by John of St. Thomas.³³

To articulate this point, Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange elsewhere³⁴ utilizes an important distinction that derives its terminology from Cajetan. As he notes, one must distinguish *Deus ut res* from *Deus ut obiectum*. The language is stilted, but the point is obvious once we formulate the matter aright. It is one thing to refer to God as he is in himself (*ut res*) absolutely speaking, prescinding from any knower whatsoever. However, *to be an object* implies that God is known by some intellectual being. Speaking in a general manner, we have the distinction between the material object (= *Deus ut res*) and the formal object (= *Deus ut obiectum*).³⁵

logian. Theology’s highest office, at least according to the tradition in which Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange stands, is the task of reflecting on the revealed principles of theology. See Doronzo, *Introduction to Theology*, 21–24. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, “La théologie et la vie de foi,” *Revue thomiste* 40, n.s. 18 (1935): 492–514; *De revelatione per ecclesiam Catholicam proposita*, 13–16.

This point is summarized very well in Jacques Maritain, *Science and Wisdom*, trans. Bernard Wall (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1944), 236: “This argument [from Fr. Ramirez] is very interesting because it shews what has happened to a certain conception of theology. Thus, only *theological conclusions* alone (that is, new truths not formally revealed, but deduced from the truths of faith) belong to the science of theology; and truths such as the existence of the last supernatural end and the fact of the fall and redemption of human nature, because they are truths of faith and not *theological conclusions*, cannot be truths of theology? As if the essential aim of theology was not to ‘acquire some intelligence’ as the Vatican Council says of its *formal subject* which is the divine reality under the *ratio* of Deity, and as if, consequently, the *principal* thing in theology were not to know in a more detailed and organic form the *truths of faith* themselves, and to penetrate ever deeper into these principles. The science of theology is not confined to theological conclusions which expand the area of its field of knowledge. It includes also, and chiefly, the very truths of faith which are penetrated and connected one to another with the aid of human inference—*ut connexae* said John of St. Thomas, *et penetratae modo naturali et studio acquisito*. For a theological inference which starts from a truth of faith can join up with another truth of faith. This augments theological knowledge in depth and is of primary importance to it.”

³³ See the forthcoming volume John of St. Thomas, *On Sacred Science*, translated by John Doyle, cited in note 8. The point is deployed on many occasions and is noted in the introduction provided by the volume’s editor, Victor Salas.

³⁴ See Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Sense of Mystery*, 126n9.

³⁵ As regards the distinction between *res ut res* and *res ut obiectum*, no dualism need

Thus, God is known *sub ratione entis mobilis* in natural philosophy, *sub ratione entis* in metaphysics, and *sub ratione Deitatis* (i.e., in his inner mystery) by faith (and theology, as well as by the gift of wisdom). Thus, the general character of one's knowledge is colored by the way that one approaches one's object. The distinction between knowing God as Prime Mover and knowing God as Source of created being is attested to in Aquinas, *De Trinitate*, q. 5, a. 2, ad 3. The fifteenth-century Dominican Dominic of Flanders takes a similar view, noting that natural philosophy proves the existence of God as cause of motion, while metaphysics proves his existence as cause of being.³⁶

In St. Thomas, the distinction between faith and theology is a little blurry at times. Nonetheless, see especially the remark in *ST I*, q. 1, a. 7: “[That God is the object of this science] is clear also from the principles of this science, namely, the articles of faith, for faith is about God. The object of the principles and of the whole science must be the same, since the whole science *is contained virtually in its principles*” (emphasis added). The conclusions are drawn out “from the power” (i.e., virtually) from the principle of the science. Also, the distinction between formal revelation and virtual revelation is at play in *ST I*, q. 1, a. 6, ad 3, as well as in *ST I*, q. 1, a. 8. However, it is not fully spelled out by Aquinas.

Therefore, to fully articulate the point with which I opened, we need to make a further distinction so as to understand these matters aright. For all its limitations, the vocabulary of Cajetan is helpful here. When we are considering something *as an object*, we should distinguish between the *ratio formalis obiecti ut res* and the *ratio formalis obiecti ut obiectum*.

The *ratio formalis obiecti ut res* is the *formal object quod* (i.e., the formal object that is known or the formality taken from the side of the thing known). Jacques Maritain has felicitously referred to this as the “intelligibility appeal” of the thing known. When it is known, the thing (*ut res*)

be presupposed. Instead, as Maritain has ably shown, the notion of *object* includes that of *thing*. For a rather clear expositions of this point, see: John C. Cahalan, “The Problem of Thing and Object in Maritain,” *The Thomist* 59, no. 1 (1995): 21–46; Maritain, *Degrees of Knowledge*, trans. and ed. Gerald Phelan et al. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 96–107, 127–36; Maritain, *An Introduction to Philosophy*, trans. E. I. Watkin (London: Sheed and Ward, 1932), 159, 193, 205n2, 253n1.

³⁶ Indeed, he explicitly states his view as being part of a longer conversation in agreement with Avicenna. See Phillip-Neri Reese, “Dominic of Flanders, O.P. (d. 1479) on the Nature of the Science of Metaphysics” (PhL thesis, Catholic University of America, 2015), 22–23n40.

offers itself to the given power from a particular perspective.³⁷ However, we can go further so as to understand how this given perspective (i.e., of the object, considered as a thing) can be approached under several different lights. In other words, the “intelligibility appeal” of the thing can be considered under several different “objective lights.”

In his presentation of this matter, Maritain focuses on the traditional Thomistic division of types of immateriality involved in the orders of natural knowledge. These represent various kinds of *rationes formales sub qua*, *rationes formales obiecti ut obiecti*, or “objective lights” under which the given “intelligibility appeal” is known. (Also, one could call this the formal object *quo*.) In his account concerning the various types of sciences, Maritain notes the role of objective lights in giving distinct specifications to, for instance, natural philosophy and mathematical physics.³⁸

This brings us, at last, to the important point regarding the formal object of theology as an acquired form of wisdom. A text from Maritain articulates this very well:

It may happen that, given a certain sphere of fundamental intelligibility determined by the intelligibility-appeal of the thing, the corresponding objective light be diversified into several different objective lights each specifying a type of knowledge. In such a case it is clear that what ultimately specifies a scientific *habitus* is the formal perspective *sub qua*, the objective light, more than the formal perspective *quae*.

Such is the case for theology—and this is Cajetan’s point: theology has the same intelligibility-appeal, the same formal perspective of reality (*as does the beatific vision: Deitas ut sic*) and consequently belongs to the same sphere of fundamental intelligibility. The intelligibility-appeal, the *ratio formalis quae* of theology is deity as such,

³⁷ I would note, as well, that one could perhaps apply this kind of reasoning to virtues in appetitive powers. Thus, the same *formal object quod* is involved in all of the theological virtues (i.e., God in the inner mystery of the *Deity*). However, faith, hope, and charity are each objectively differentiated with regard to the way that they perfect the given powers in question. Thus, roughly speaking, we have faith specified by *the-supernatural-Godhead-known-obscurely*, hope specified by *the-supernatural-Godhead-as-he-who-faithfully-aids-in-salvation*, and charity specified by *the-supernatural-Godhead-as-loveable-in-Itself*.

³⁸ Let this suffice for our purposes, though discussions of this matter could provide much clarification on a number of important points regarding the various sciences, especially the transitions among them. See Maritain, *The Philosophy of Nature*, trans. Imelda C. Byrne (New York: Philosophical Library, 1951), 125–35.

the deep depths of the divine nature; its sphere of fundamental intelligibility is *Deitas sub ratione Deitatis*, God taken not according to the intelligibility-appeal of the first cause, but according to that of the deity itself.

And yet the formal perspective *sub qua*, the objective light of theology, is not the light of the beatific vision and of the science of the blessed; our theology proceeds from a special objective light: the light of divine revelation, not *as* evident as it is in glory and not *as* inevident [*sic*], but simply *as* revealing: for the principles of theology are received from the intuitive science of the blessed by means of faith. In this case the intelligibility-appeal, the formal perspective of reality, has only a generic and not a specific determination, and the objective light corresponding to this intelligibility-appeal, (the formal perspective *sub qua* which corresponds to this formal perspective *quae*) also has a generic unity which is diversified into several species.

The *lumen divinum* is divided first into *lumen divinum evidens*, which is the perspective *sub qua*, the objective light of the theology of the blessed; secondly into *lumen divinum revelans abstrahendo ab evidentia aut inevidentia*, the divine revealing light considered neither as evident nor inevident, which is the objective light of our theology; and finally *lumen divinum inevidens*, the non-evident divine revealing light which is the objective light of faith. Three different objective lights for the one same sphere of fundamental intelligibility, for one same object intelligibly determined by the formal perspective of the object as a thing (*Deitas*).³⁹

We can summarize all of this as follows. In revealing himself, God opens up the very depths of the intimate nature of the Deity (*ratio formalis obiecti ut res*). This same objective formality (considered as an object, but still from the perspective *ut res*) can be viewed under various lights. There is the full clarity of God's own self knowledge. This knowledge alone is fully comprehensive of the depths of the Divinity. Then, there is the clear vision of the blessed souls in heaven, viewing God in the light of glory. Here below, there is need for the supernatural, though obscure, light of faith. Formally speaking, the depths of the Deity are seen (though obscurely) in this light. (Thus, we have the "intelligibility appeal" of the Deity seen under the "objective light" of faith—*formal revelation*.) Theology extends

³⁹ Maritain, *The Philosophy of Nature*, 129–30.

this light, so to speak, by a kind of refraction through faith-directed reasoning. This is a light that is unique, one that is supernatural as a formal object *quod* (i.e., *ratio formalis obiecti ut res*) but is naturally acquired through study, thus receiving its ultimate character in terms of its formal object *quo* (i.e., *ratio formalis obiecti ut obiectum*). The latter is the “objective light” (shining on the Deity as such) of “virtual revelation.” It thus has its own kind of certitude and approach to the Deity that differentiates it from faith (or, “formal revelation”).⁴⁰

Appendix 2: On the Speculative, the Speculatively-Practical, and the Practically-Practical

Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange does not introduce the distinction between the practico-practical and the speculativo-practical as a merely verbal distinction. Maritain deployed this distinction in at least two ways in his works, likely in dependence on Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange (who himself mediates the tradition crystallized in Billuart). In the *Degrees of Knowledge*, Maritain focuses on the essentially practical (or “operable”) character of all knowledge of human acts *qua operable*.⁴¹ Thus, he distinguishes between moral philosophy and the prudential command by qualifying the former as being “speculatively practical” (because of its mode of knowledge) and the latter as being practical in the highest degree. Here, he is making room for an intermediary kind of knowledge that would be “practically practical,” making room for moralists’ discussions in a more practical register than moral philosophy (and also making room for the

⁴⁰ We must direct the reader to other studies on such matters. Further details regarding the types of explicative and illative reasoning that fall to theology (and the relation of those forms of reasoning to dogmatic definitions) can be found in: Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God*, trans. Bede Rose (St. Louis, MO: Herder, 1943), 39–93; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality*, trans. Patrick Cummins (St. Louis, MO: Herder, 1950), 53–60; Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Theological Virtues*, vol. 1, *Faith*, trans. Thomas a Kempis Reilly (St. Louis, MO: Herder, 1965), 125–48. Also, one can profitably consult the work of the student of Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange, Fr. Joseph C. Fenton, *The Concept of Sacred Theology* (Milwaukee, WI: Bruce, 1941). See also Emmanuel Doronzo, *Theologia dogmatica*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1966), 40–49.

⁴¹ One finds resonances of this, as well, in Michel Labourdette, “Connaissance pratique et savoir morale,” *Revue thomiste* 48 (1948): 142–79, especially 151–55. A recent article by Fr. Philip-Neri Reese, O.P., outlines many of these points with great clarity, though he seems to view moral philosophy in a more speculative light than Fr. Labourdette, Maritain, and Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange. Nonetheless, his text is a very clear exposition of the difference between scientific reasoning in moral thought and action-directing thought in prudence: “The End of Ethics: A Thomistic Investigation,” *New Blackfriars* 95 (May 2013): 285–94.

kind of knowledge used by mystics in theology).⁴² In *Existence and the Existent*, Maritain uses a slightly different distinction *precisely within the process of prudential deliberation and judgment*. There, he notes that there are two sorts of syllogisms, one that is speculativo-practical, considering the moral character of the law without fully bringing *this* agent here and now into the reasoning, and one that is practico-practical, passing to the full application of the prudential judgment to oneself.⁴³ As he summarizes in a footnote:

There are in truth two practical syllogisms, one opening into the speculativo-practical and the other into the practico-practical. Take this as an example of the first: "Murder is forbidden by the Law. This act which attracts me is murder. Therefore, this act is forbidden by the Law." The conclusion expresses the rule of reason, which I know and from which I turn away my eyes when I sin. This syllogism considers the act and its law; the subject does not enter, unless to be *submitted* to the universal as any individual *x* which forms part of the species.

The following is an example of the second syllogism: "Murder is forbidden by the Law. This act which attracts me is murder, *and would cause me to deviate from what I love best*. Therefore, *I shall not do it (and long live [the] law!)*" Or it could be contrariwise: "Murder is forbidden by the Law. This act which attracts me is murder, *and I make it to be what I love best*. Therefore, *I shall do it (and so much the worse for universal law!)*."

In the second syllogism, it is the existential disposition of the subject in the free affirmation of the unique self which decides the question.⁴⁴

⁴² See Jacques Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, trans. Gerald B. Phelan (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 327–58 and 481–89. A lucid exposition can be found in Yves R. Simon: *A Critique of Moral Knowledge*, trans. Ralph McNerny (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002). This is a controversial topic that has led to pushback by writers such as Fr. Thomas Deman and even Maritain's own disciple, Simon, later on in the latter's life. These issues cannot be addressed in appendix such as this. See Maritain, *Science and Wisdom*, 227–30, and, Simon, *Practical Knowledge*, ed. Robert J. Mulvaney (New York: Fordham University Press, 1991), 79–87, 100–113.

⁴³ Granted, the prudential command remains as an imperative applied by the practical intellect to the will, though with mutual causality, the intellect functioning as the extrinsic formal cause and the will as efficient cause. See Réginald Garrigou-Lagrangé, *God: His Existence and His Nature: A Thomistic Solution of Certain Agnostic Antinomies*, vol. 2, trans. Bede Rose (St. Louis, MO: Herder, 1949), 306–38 and 370–72; see also *Le réalisme du principe de finalité*, 353–55.

⁴⁴ Jacques Maritain, *Existence and the Existent*, trans. Lewis Galantieri and Gerald

This appendix is meant only to introduce the reader to the issue, not to resolve Maritain's vocabulary. Likely, Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange was dependent on what one can find in Billuart's discussion of conscience:

Conscience is said to be "a judgment of practical reason" because the intellect is concerned either with merely speculative truths (e.g., "God is triune," and "All angels are specifically distinct") as well as with truths about the substance, value, and quality of things or of facts, and not about the moral fittingness or wickedness of human acts, as well as the permissibility [*licitate*] or impermissibility of them (e.g., whether a sacrament conferred in this manner is valid, whether a contract entered in this manner is valid, whether there are robbers along the road, whether a beast or a man is in the woods, and so forth). In either of these ways of speaking, the intellect is said to be speculative *simpliciter*. On the other hand, the intellect is also concerned with general principles or general conclusions concerning the goodness or wickedness of human acts, as achieved through synderesis or moral science. In that case it is called *speculatively-practical*. Or it is concerned with particular conclusions concerning the goodness or wickedness of this act here and now to be posited or fled from, as is achieved through conscience. Then, it is called *practically-practical*.⁴⁵

Thus, we find Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange stating in several passages in *De beatitudine*:

A speculatively practical judgment pertains to moral science and establishes advertence in the sinner. The *practically practical* judgment to be determined by prudence is *not psychologically necessary here and now*. Although the sinner may judge speculatively that justice is to be maintained by other men, especially in matters of justice related to himself, nonetheless, he practically [*in praxi*]

B. Phelan (New York: Pantheon, 1948), 52n3. See also F.-X. Maquart, *Elementa philosophiae*, vol. 2 (Paris: Andreas Blot, 1937), 476–86.

⁴⁵ C.-R. Billuart, *Summa sancti thomae hodiernis academiarum moribus accomodata*, new ed., vol. 2 (Paris: Victor Palmé, 1872), 329–30 (tract. *De actibus humanis*, diss. 5, a. 1; translation mine). He goes on immediately after this to contrast this judgment with the imperative command of prudence (or imprudence). Another account of these matters, following in Billuart's line, can be found in Beaudouin, *Tractatus de conscientia*, q. 3, a. 1, §1 (p. 49-50).

judges that here and now injustice in relation to another person is *simpliciter* something that is good for him to do on account of his appetite's evil desire. With the poet, he can say, "I see and approve of what is better" (speculatively practical judgment), "but follow what is worse" [Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7.20–21].⁴⁶

And later in the work, he writes:

We must note, along with Billuart [in *Summa sancti thomae*, tract. *De actibus humanis*, diss. 5, a. 1] that probable conscience (as well as doubting conscience) is subdivided into *speculatively probable* conscience and *practically probable* conscience. Later on, we will discuss how speculatively probable conscience (i.e., conscience emanating from a speculatively practical judgment in the abstract) can become practically certain here and now by means of a given reflex principle. However, if it remains practically probable, it cannot be the rule of one's moral actions. . . . For example, I can *speculatively* judge that it is more probably the case that the conferral of baptism with rose water is not permitted. This is a speculatively-practical judgment in the abstract. However, in peril of a child's death, if I have no other matter at hand, I *practically* judge here and now, in these circumstances, that it is permitted for me to confer baptism in a conditional manner [*sub conditione*] with this dubious matter, basing my judgment on the reflex principle, "Sacraments exist for the sake of men." Thus, faced with such a case of necessity and lacking certain matter, we can even make use of dubious matter in a conditional manner.⁴⁷

Given that this is already a lengthy appendix, I will leave the matter here. However, I have felt that the retrieval of Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange's thought on these matters required some pedagogical remarks to direct interested researchers down paths that hopefully would be fruitful for further reflection. Too easily could the words "virtual revelation" and "speculatively practical" be skimmed over without realizing the significant positions staked out in previous generations concerning these matters.

⁴⁶ Garrigou-Lagrange, *De beatitudine*, 264.

⁴⁷ Garrigou-Lagrange, *De beatitudine*, 376. Also, on the two kinds of moral certitude—speculative moral certitude (judged through conformity to reality [*ad rem*]) and practical moral certitude (judged through conformity to right intention [*ad intentionem rectam*])—see *De beatitudine*, 383–84.

However, the reader should remember that these appendices, in the end, only mean to provide these pedagogical notes, not a full treatment of these quite complex matters. N.V

Book Reviews

Divine Election: A Catholic Orientation in Dogmatic and Ecumenical Perspective by Eduardo J. Echeverria (*Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016*), 314 pp.

THIS STUDY is an ambitious and wide-ranging effort to articulate the clear but generous boundaries of Roman Catholic orthodox teaching concerning predestination within the context of alternatives, both within and without Roman Catholicism. Eduardo J. Echeverria's interlocutors thus range from the Protestant reformer John Calvin (1509–1564) to the Dutch Reformed theologians Herman Bavinck (1854–1921) and G. C. Berkouwer (1903–1996), as well as the German Protestant Karl Barth (1886–1968), Matthias Joseph Scheeben (1835–1888), and Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905–1988). A noteworthy feature of Echeverria's engagement with these diverse figures is his care to provide as nuanced and sympathetic an account of their views as possible. Thus, even where there is disagreement—and in some cases it is sharp—Echeverria provides a model of principled and charitable ecumenical interaction.

Echeverria's erudition is on full display in this volume. In addition to those figures named above, who receive chapter-level attention, Echeverria brings to bear a wide array of secondary sources and commentators related to the figures themselves and their respective traditions or schools of thought, as well as to Scripture and Church tradition. If the doctrine of divine predestination has been called "a portentous, awesome word in theology" (Scheeben) and "deep waters, in which every human mind begins to flounder" (Balthasar), then this treatment does justice to its subject matter by consistently placing the reader into very deep waters indeed.

At the same time, Echeverria provides a very helpful and summative statement at the end of each chapter, as well as in the concluding chapter of the book itself, concerning the Roman Catholic orientation for the elements that have been discussed in the preceding sections. This "Catholic orientation" is one of the clear strengths of the book and provides a valuable service for those looking to, as Echeverria puts it, understand "the boundaries of confessional Catholicism" (283). As might be expected, given the disagreements over predestination and grace that were at issue during the era of the Protestant Reformation, the Council of the Trent

figures largely in drawing such boundaries.

Nevertheless, Echeverria is to be commended for making clear from the outset that predestination is itself an ecumenical topic. Much popular and even semi-academic writing has characterized predestination as a specifically Protestant, and particularly Reformed or Calvinist, distinctive. Not so, contends Echeverria. Predestination is itself a biblical doctrine, and thereby an inheritance of theological tradition from the Church Fathers onward, particularly Augustine in the West. Echeverria's book thus explores questions that are of ecumenical or universal concern to all Christians: "The topic of the mystery of God in himself and his relationship with human persons, in short, divine election and human freedom. In other words, how do we reconcile God's sovereignty of grace with human freedom, not just in general but particularly with respect to the Church's full understanding of God's plan of salvation as a work of grace?" (2).

Even if predestination as such is not solely the domain of the Reformed tradition, Echeverria does consider whether Calvin, perhaps that tradition's most identifiable figure, is culpable of the heresy of *predestinarianism*, which logically equates and holds as symmetrical God's decision to elect some to eternal life and reprobate others to eternal damnation *in the same manner and mode* (62). Likewise, the Reformed tradition, as represented by Calvin, is judged to depart from the "Augustinian Principle," which holds that human nature remains fundamentally unchanged in the states of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation (36). Because this position holds that human nature is capable only of evil in the fallen state, "this fallen state is inconsistent with Calvin's description of the created will in its pre-fallen condition" (46). Echeverria leaves unexplored how the basically Augustinian view that humanity in the fallen state is unable to not sin (*non posse non peccare*), affirmed and codified by Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), differs from Calvin's view and is itself consistent with the so-called Augustinian Principle.

A characteristic feature of Echeverria's treatment of the views of figures like Calvin and Barth is the use of contemporary analytic categories to attempt to locate and identify their thought. Thus, writes Echeverria, "Calvin is a theological compatibilist regarding free will" (39), while Barth is likewise "a compatibilist regarding freedom" (160), and Bavinck "rejects libertarian freedom—i.e., the freedom of indifference—as inconsistent with divine foreknowledge, and hence embraces compatibilism" (52). A positive aspect of this approach is that it can fruitfully put figures from the past into contemporary conversations. A concomitant danger, however, is that such categories impose foreign or anachronistic modes of thought on historical figures, which can impede a sympathetic and immanent

understanding of what those figures thought of themselves and intended to teach.

I have no doubt that Echeverria has attempted in good faith and out of good will to truly and fairly represent Calvin's views of predestination. At the same time, Echeverria admits that he has difficulty seeing the coherence of Reformed views (e.g., 46, 52, 59). Part of the difficulty in understanding might be categorical or terminological. When Calvin is read as holding to "a theory of a will that is unable to produce any moral good at all" (44; per Dewey Hoitenga), this is understood as being synonymous with a rejection of libertarian free will defined as "having the power of contrary choice between good and evil" (117). But might anyone other than a Pelagian really affirm that fallen humanity has the innate and natural capacity to simply choose between good and evil? In such denials of the free choice of the good by fallen humanity, Calvin is not to be read as meaning that there is no power of contrary choice in the human will in any sense. He is not talking in the first place about mundane matters of sitting down or standing up, staying in or going out. Calvin's point is thoroughly soteriological: no action by a fallen, sinful human being can satisfy the conditions of goodness. This is not to say there is no way in which mundane actions might be distinguished, or that all human action is as bad as it possibly could be. But it is to say that, whatever civil or mundane moral good might be possible on the basis of God's common grace, none of that reaches the level of what might be called Christian good, and certainly not to the level of saving or meritorious good.

Echeverria rejects this reading of Calvin, what he calls a "mixed view," in a note engaging the work of contemporary analytical theologian Oliver Crisp (39–40n30). But such a distinction is absolutely fundamental to understanding the Reformed position on human work and merit. The Reformed point is not that there is no standard by which human conduct might be judged to be relatively better or worse. It is rather that no human work is able to rise to the level of that which is truly good in its fullest sense. The Heidelberg Catechism of 1563 defines this as that which "proceed from true faith, and are done according to the Law of God, unto His glory."¹ If this is the standard that defines good works, then clearly an unbeliever in a fallen state is not capable of performing good works. Perhaps unbelievers and pagans can fulfill some external aspects of some elements of the law of God. Reformers including Luther and Calvin thus

¹ Lord's Day 33, Question and Answer 91 (*Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation: 1523–1693*, ed. James T. Dennison Jr., 4 vols. [Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2008–2014], 2:790).

affirm that, for example, the estate of marriage and the ordinance of government exist among the pagans, which is an acknowledgment of the universal validity and response (at least at some level) to commandments against adultery and civil injustice. But such activities, while they may be identical from an external perspective, by definition cannot flow out of a true faith or fulfill the interior requirements and final *telos* of the law.

In this way, at least one cause of the misunderstanding might be the application of terms or analytic categories in ways that distort or make unclear the purpose of a thinker in his or her original context. Calvin is not, in the first place, working out a metaphysical theory of human action relative to divine omnipotence. He is articulating a soteriological doctrine of grace and good works relative to divine election. The latter may well have implications for the former, but broader philosophical categories of human causality may be applied to specific soteriological concerns in ways that obscure or unnecessarily problematize a theologian's doctrinal formulation.

One of Echeverria's purposes is to lay out the boundaries of Roman Catholic confessionalism regarding predestination and related issues, and in this regard, he is correct to criticize the Reformed, who have, since the time of Trent, been beyond the bounds of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. But Echeverria is not simply interested in deciding who is out of bounds. He is also interested in exploring the diversity and dynamism of views that are within the bounds of Roman Catholic orthodoxy. In this way, he engages the early modern and contemporary debates over Molinism and middle knowledge, as well as universalism.

Echeverria rejects Thomistic negative reprobation or preterition as "a theologically problematic notion that seems to lead to the denial of the following: the sufficiency of Christ's atoning work for all men, the universality of God's salvific will (1 Tim 2:4–6), contradicting the justice of God as well as man's freedom" (73). Likewise, he affirms that "a Molinist *cum* Congruist account of the reconciliation of predestination and freedom is within the boundaries of confessional Catholicism's teaching on grace and freedom" (284). With respect to universalism, at least the "hopeful" version espoused by Balthasar, Echeverria is dubious: "Balthasar says, it is 'infinitely improbable' (citing with approval the phrase of Edith Stein) that anyone is damned, given the complete triumph of grace over all things contrary to God's love manifested in his redemptive work in Christ. This conclusion is not within the bounds of Confessional Catholicism" (273).

Echeverria has done excellent work in identifying and unraveling some of the major threads of the tapestry of predestination in the history of Christian thought. In so doing, he shows himself to be an astute and care-

ful reader of figures from a variety of traditions and persuasions. This book is particularly helpful for identifying the diversity within orthodoxy that characterizes confessional Roman Catholicism. Echeverria notably identifies this as a “Catholic form of synergism in which man’s free response participates in God’s gift of salvation” that “is neither pelagian nor semi-pelagian, which are its heretical forms” (281). Echeverria’s effort at exploring and articulating a nonheretical form of synergism according to Roman Catholic confessional standards is salutary. The broader ecumenical question remains of whether there is a nonheretical form of monergism that might be identified as legitimate, whether for Roman Catholics or for Christians more broadly. As a Reformed theologian, I find this to be one of the most salient features of these debates over the last half millennium, as confessional orthodoxy concerning predestination has been more narrowly defined by differing ecclesiastical traditions and is increasingly identified along denominational lines. N.V

Jordan J. Ballor

Acton Institute for the Study of Religion & Liberty
Grand Rapids, MI

Exemplarist Moral Theory by Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski (*New York: Oxford University Press, 2017*), xiii + 274 pp.

THIS BOOK is the long-awaited culmination of Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski’s work over the past decade on a comprehensive moral theory grounded in the admiration of concrete exemplars. The theory appears in inchoate form in her 2004 book *Divine Motivation Theory*, in which Zagzebski first defends the claim that the emotion of admiration is the primary vehicle by which we apprehend goodness in moral agents. In a 2010 article,¹ she provides a more detailed elaboration of the theory and its transformative potential for the field of moral philosophy. Her 2015 Gifford Lectures, collectively entitled “Exemplarist Virtue Theory,”² present an even more mature version of the theory and establish the itinerary that comes to structure the chapters of the monograph. Zagzebski sets out five distinct aims for the book. The following paragraphs will consider each in turn.

The first and most general aim is the construction of an ethical theory that can provide the exhaustive account of human action and perform

¹ “Exemplarist Virtue Theory,” *Metaphilosophy* 41, no. 1–2 (2010): 41–57.

² giffordlectures.org/lectures/exemplarist-virtue-theory.

the same sort of evaluative tasks as deontological, consequentialist, or virtue-based theories. That Zagzebski acknowledges from the start that her book can provide only the initial framework and agenda for this theory makes this goal no less ambitious in scope. The premise most fundamental to the project is Zagzebski's claim that "there are elements of our pre-existing moral practices of which we are more certain than we are of any theory" (8). While recognizing that certain practices or judgments may change for the better when subjected to the scrutiny of ethical reflection, Zagzebski insists that ethical reflection itself cannot begin without some set of prior convictions that are formed within the context of personal encounter and that are more reliable than any theoretical mechanism by which we might try to justify them. Chief among these convictions, and the most basic element in exemplarist moral theory, is the admiration we feel for certain people whom we encounter in the world: "I think we are more certain that Confucius, Jesus, and Socrates are admirable than we are of claims about the good of pleasure, of what human flourishing is, or the good of doing one's duty, or any of the other claims that are used to ground a moral theory. In fact, I think that we are more certain that they are admirable than we are of *what* is admirable about them" (10). The emotion of admiration is the most immediate effect of our encounter with moral goodness in the world, and as such, it should form the basis of our account of moral reflection.

Even before we are able to speak about an instance of moral goodness, the emotion of admiration gives us evidence that we have encountered it. Thus, we identify exemplars of goodness or virtue through admiration just as we identify natural kinds such as water through sense perception. Zagzebski defends this claim by appropriating the direct-reference theory developed by Hilary Putnam and Saul Kripke in the 1970s for the use of moral terms such as "wise," "brave," or "just." Just as "a natural kind term like 'water' or 'gold' or 'human' refers to whatever is the same kind of thing or stuff as some indexically identified instance," so basic moral terms such as "good person" emerge not through conceptual definitions, but rather through acknowledged acts of direct reference (11). In the same way that people who were unaware of the chemical composition of water were nonetheless able with consistent success to refer to instances of H₂O within the natural world, a community can reliably identify the kind "good person" by means of direct reference to prototypical individuals whose conduct elicits certain characteristic effects. A good, wise, just, or courageous person is a person like *that*, where "that" effectively refers to an exemplar to which a group has common access. Such exemplars can be so described not because they satisfy the definition of a moral concept, but

rather because they themselves embody what these concepts seek to name. They therefore do not correspond to any prior conception of “wisdom,” “justice,” or “courage,” but rather fix the meaning of these terms by their own lives and character.

Exemplarism is thus a foundationalist ethical theory built on the emotion of admiration toward others, rather than any abstract concept, definition, or principle. According to this approach, moral reflection not only emerges through this sort of interpersonal encounter but also remains continually accountable to it as a regulatory point of reference. How we understand what it means to be good and act well ultimately depends on what makes us admire certain individuals we encounter in the world. Reflecting on the nature of morality means reflecting on who these people are and what it is about them that so attracts us. Yet, even if we succeed in identifying a trait or pattern they all share in common, Zagzebski will insist that it is the exemplars *themselves*, rather than what we take them to exemplify, that must anchor our moral analysis. This approach places the encounter between individual persons at the center of ethical reasoning, such that the identity of the particular “other” can never fade entirely into the background. Other ethical concepts such as “virtue,” “good motive,” “right act,” and “duty” retain their basic meaning and function within the theory, but only insofar as they inhere in exemplars to which we can directly refer. A virtue is a trait we admire in a person like *that*; a good motive is a motive of a person like *that*; a right act is what a person like *that* would decide to do in a given set of circumstances; and so on.

Zagzebski’s second stated purpose in constructing the theory is to provide a way for the emotion of admiration to exert its full force within the context of ethical reflection. Integral to the experience of admiration is an attraction toward the one admired that impels the admirer to bring about in herself the goodness she perceives in another. To this extent, placing admiration at the center of the theory cannot but motivate agents who reflect on their admiration to imitate those they hold up as exemplars. In this way, exemplarism not only pinpoints and dissects right action but also moves those who undertake ethical reflection to become better people themselves. Indeed, it cannot help but do so because its point of departure is reflective attentiveness to the admirability of concrete exemplars: if the exemplar in question is truly admirable, she motivates those who attend to her life to live their own in a similar way; that is an integral part of what makes her an exemplar.

The regulatory role of the phenomenon of admiration gives rise to another of Zagzebski’s main purposes in forming the theory, which is to build a bridge between what she calls the “*a priori* side of ethics” and

contemporary empirical research in fields such as psychology and neuroscience. Central to this aspect of the theory is Zagzebski's analogy between the physical structure of natural kinds and the "deep psychological structure" of those identified as exemplars. While claiming that "the exemplarist approach has the advantage that substantive matters about what makes a person good need not be settled at the outset," Zagzebski nevertheless presumes that those taking this approach must "think in advance that what makes good persons good is their deep psychological structure, just as we think in advance of investigation that what makes water *water* is its deep physical structure" (18). Advancing this analogy allows her to delegate a great deal of work to empirical studies in psychology and neuroscience, many examples of which she takes up in the second and third chapters of the book. One need not entirely grant that exemplars' "deep psychological structure" exhaustively accounts for what makes them admirable in order to appreciate how much empirical studies can add to philosophical or historical accounts of exemplars. Zagzebski's own remarkable ability to synthesize the findings of such studies with accounts of exemplars taken from other disciplines is a testament to the potential fruitfulness of this link between theoretical ethics and empirical science. She makes particularly good use of Jonathan Haidt's work on admiration, as well as various psychological studies on Holocaust rescuers, such as those by Samuel and Pearl Oliner, Anne Colby and William Damon, and Kristen Renwick Monroe. These studies focus principally on common characteristics shared by people identified as moral exemplars. They suggest that common features of exemplars' psychological structure can help explain what makes them capable of such admirable actions.

Empirical research also plays a central role in the fourth distinct goal of the project, which is to construct a theory that can more accurately track the process of moral development. Zagzebski addresses the relation of exemplars to moral development most directly in chapters 5 and 6 of the book, entitled "Virtue" and "Emulation," respectively. Although Zagzebski relies less heavily on empirical research for her arguments in these chapters, she is certainly aware of the extent to which such studies could illuminate the role exemplars play in the development of practical reasoning and the cultivation of moral dispositions. The crucial claim here is that, in the course of every human life, concrete exemplars precede the concepts we eventually come to associate with them. "The meaning of 'good person,'" Zagzebski insists, "is determined by something outside the mind—exemplars, or the most admirable persons," such that "the meaning of the other terms of most relevance to the moral life are determined by the features of moral exemplars" (100). By observing or hearing about the actions of good

people, we come to formulate distinct categories of moral goodness that we collectively call the virtues. The meaning of these concepts emerges by way of common reference to these exemplars and remains accountable to their concrete embodiment as we employ them and reflect on them. Thus, if our abstract definition of a virtue comes to be at odds with the exemplars from which the concept arose, our first task should be to reexamine the concept, rather than exemplar: “Exemplars are not simply stand-ins for abstract virtues whom we can ignore once we learn the virtues. We need exemplars all the time” (154). The primacy of exemplars in moral reflection simply mirrors their primacy in the process of human moral development. Virtues provide a name to the particular forms of goodness we encounter in them. We come to reflect on virtues only because we see them displayed in the lives of concrete individuals. Such is the way we learn to speak of any virtue, and also the way we begin to acquire any virtue: we must first see it and admire it, and by admiring it, we are drawn to emulate it, and so cultivate it in our own lives.

Exemplarist moral theory therefore tracks human moral development both by acknowledging the way in which exemplars precede ethical concepts and by characterizing *mimesis*—which Aristotle rightly identifies as the chief mechanism for acquiring virtue—in terms of admiration. The imitation of acts by sheer command has an important provisional place in the cultivation of virtue, but it is only emulation born out of admiration that can properly ensure the development of true moral goodness, for it aligns an agent’s motive for acting with that of the exemplar she imitates. “She emulates the admired person qua good, not just qua something it would be fun to imitate,” meaning that “part of what she admires in the person is the motive” from which the act proceeds (135). Zagzebski does well to acknowledge that, in emulating an exemplar’s motive, one need not experience the same subjective resonance with that motive that the exemplar feels, but only the admiration necessary to motivate them to develop that motive within themselves. Following David Velleman, she argues that an exemplar’s virtues gradually become part of one’s own character as one imagines oneself acting in the role or persona of that exemplar. Zagzebski mentions the phenomenon of method acting as an example of how this process of development might work. She even provides an intriguing argument for how emotions like admiration could provide justifying reasons for a particular moral judgment. Yet she is right to call for more empirical research that may confirm or refute many of the claims she makes about the role admiration plays in moral development.

One repeated theme that might prove particularly fruitful in this regard is the dependence of moral development on an agent’s immediate rela-

tional context. Exemplarism casts the entire process of moral perfection in relational terms, measuring success not by an agent's conformity to an abstract principle, but by her congruity to particular individuals recognized as embodiments of the human good in various ways. An especially attractive upshot of this view is that, unlike in so many modern ethical theories, moral growth need not track the expansion of an agent's cognitive capacity or practical autonomy. It also implicates others in the characterization of one's own moral agency in a way that makes it impossible to describe one's life as "good" without referring to the part other "good lives" have played in one's own. The inextricable dependence of one's own moral growth on the influential presence of other people reflects quite accurately, in my view, the constitutive role that others play in the determination of personal identity. Simply put, the story of who I am is the story of my relations to others, and likewise, the story of my moral development is the story of how my actions have come to relate to those of others. Not only does this approach to moral evaluation more adequately reflect the relational quality of human life and identity; it also helps to explain the full moral significance of the lives of those persons who are unable to articulate or reflect on their own intentionality as "free, autonomous agents." The moral development of those with severe cognitive disabilities may look very different from our own, but like our own, it is a story of how our agency has intersected with that of others.

The fifth and final aim of the book is to provide an ethical theory that can adapt to the needs of different communities, and so facilitate moral discourse between them. Zagzebski demonstrates throughout the book the possibility of this sort of discourse through her own thoughtful examination of exemplars from many different traditions (figures as diverse as Confucius, Simeon Stylites, Gandhi, Leopold Socha, Jean Vanier, and Flaubert's *Felicité*). Yet the theory underpinning such cross-cultural dialogue appears in the book's last two chapters, which deal with what she calls "the division of moral linguistic labor" and "exemplarist semantics." Attentiveness to the various ways moral reflection depends on an agent's connection to a social linguistic network allows for a more nuanced approach to the different ways ethical concepts function within different communities of discourse. Zagzebski writes: "In order to know what 'elm tree' or 'diamond' means, it is not enough to speak English and to be willing to defer to experts in identifying diamond and elm trees. There is a linguistic obligation to have a certain minimal competence in the use of the term in order to count as knowing what the word means" (184). The same principle applies to terms such as "wise," "brave," or "good person." Proper apprehension of the meaning of such terms requires that

one belong to a particular community in which their content is specified by reference to “stereotypes,” which, for moral concepts like the ones just mentioned, would mean exemplars. Although communities provide exemplars of different sorts through narratives, there remains an important role for “experts” who are entrusted with the task of properly determining the exemplars most worthy of imitation. They are therefore given a certain linguistic privilege in the use of moral terms, fixing their meaning by properly orienting them to the best available exemplars. Zagzebski is not saying that the existence or nature of virtue is contingent on the determination of experts, but only that they perform a necessary task in setting the parameters within which moral discourse can remain intelligible.

Nevertheless, the necessary role that experts play in Zagzebski’s account appears to threaten exemplarism’s capacity to speak across different communities of moral discourse. If the terms and concepts used by two communities are fixed by different experts in reference to different exemplars and different shared practices, how could there be any meaningful ethical exchange between their respective members? In the book’s last chapter, Zagzebski makes the fascinating claim that her account of the role of exemplars in moral reflection and development is even more fundamental than the question of whether moral values are real or not. Regardless of whether or not we regard a particular community’s understanding of virtue and a good life to correspond to anything independent of their members’ own judgment, it remains the case that this understanding emerges only through the process of reflection, deliberation, and discussion initiated by the emotion of admiration as directed toward particular exemplars. In this way, Zagzebski makes the bold claim that the emotion of admiration can serve as a true universal point of reference for any and all moral communities.

What is more, she contends that this emotion can easily be directed toward exemplars of different moral communities in a way that establishes a common ground for discourse built on precisely the same foundation from which a community’s ethical discourse first arose. She goes on to argue that, insofar as the emotion of admiration must correspond in all cases to certain features of the “deep psychological structure” of an exemplar, one may venture to conclude that the exemplars of different moral traditions will possess many, if not all, of these features in common. “We can see our highest ideals in the face of our exemplars,” she writes, “and we can compare that with the highest ideals expressed by the exemplars of another society” (234). At this point, she again calls for more empirical research to determine whether her claim is in fact true: do the exemplars of different traditions really possess a common “deep psychological struc-

ture” that makes them admirable to everyone no matter who they are or what ethical language they speak?

As one awaits the findings of such research, one might be forgiven for expressing some skepticism in this regard and for asking questions as to the ethical significance of such universality even if it were demonstrated empirically. Chief among such questions would be whether and to what degree grounding moral discourse across communities in the findings of empirical research privileges scientific methodology in a way that effectively designates psychologists and neuroscientists as the ultimate experts tasked with determining who is or is not a true exemplar. Discrete communities whose moral discourse subsists within a particular historical tradition may assign others this task in light of their eminent competence in the language and practices of a tradition, but when it comes to discourse between members of different communities, it seems that only the language and practices of empirical science can provide sufficient common ground. Perhaps I read too much into Zagzebski’s investment in the “deep psychological structure” of exemplars, but it seems to me she too easily grants the scientific account of what makes an exemplar admirable as the definitive and final account of what in fact constitutes an exemplar.

Another seemingly attractive advantage of the exemplarist model is that, by beginning with the sheer fact of human admiration and its role in the emergence of ethical thought and practice, we can bypass the contentious issue of how to conceive of human well-being and whether there is any ultimate end or *telos* to human life generally. In my own view, to study human conduct while entirely prescinding from these questions is to undertake a form of inquiry methodologically distinct from ethics. Moral philosophy may and should take the findings of empirical research as proper objects of its own analysis and debate, but in presuming that only empirical research can definitively arbitrate the conclusions of that analysis and debate, it cedes its own integrity as an intellectual discipline. To do so would unnecessarily limit moral philosophy’s understanding of the phenomena into which it inquires. In the case of exemplars, for instance, to presume that the final answer to the question of what makes exemplars admirable must come from an empirical account of their “deep psychological structure” is to conceive of their exemplarity as residing principally within *them* as individual agents. Zagzebski herself appears to take this view. At one point in the last chapter, she remarks that “the admirable person is the repository of admirable qualities” (231). But what if we take the view that we direct our admiration most often and most powerfully not toward the exemplary actions or qualities of individual agents, but rather toward what those actions or qualities reveal of the world outside them?

“In exemplarism, virtues, right and wrong acts, and a good life are all defined by reference to what the exemplar is, judges, or desires” (231). The moral community thus looks to the character, judgment, and motives of the exemplar to inform its understanding of all the various components that govern ethical reflection. In this book, Zagzebski puts forth a very persuasive argument for this bold claim. I would only add to her account that one of the most important contributions of exemplars to moral reasoning is what they reveal about the human good itself: what a human life is for, and in what its ultimate value consists. Raimond Gaita follows Simone Weil in supposing that the measure of a saint is not so much the degree to which her actions reveal the various excellences she herself possesses, but rather the beauty and worth her actions reveal in others, particularly in those who are in some way afflicted or demeaned.³ In many cases, Gaita goes on to argue, the true value of a human person can come to light only through the love of saints who not only act as if they believed that an afflicted person possessed such value but also, through their action, fully reveal that value. In such a case, the acts of an exemplar simultaneously disclose both what it means to act well *and* what it means to be human. In revealing the priceless value of another person, an exemplar also reveals something about the final ends that befit human life itself. I am far from certain that any empirical account of an exemplar’s “deep psychological structure” could adequately convey the significance of this “revelatory” aspect of exemplary action, since it presumes that admiration directs itself primarily toward the exemplar herself, rather than what her acts reveal. The thing we find so wondrous in a saint’s care for an afflicted person is not primarily the virtue it displays in the saint herself—although virtue is presumably an integral part of the act—but rather the beauty and worth it reveals in the afflicted person. If this type of act is at the heart of what makes an exemplar admirable, then the relational dimension of exemplary acts becomes all the more central to the task of ethical reflection. Such acts may even suggest that the identification of the moral good on which the theory is built—“a good person is a person like *that*”—is derivative of an even more basic identification of the human good as the good made apparent in the interaction between agents. Perhaps one direction Zagzebski’s impressive theory might take, then, is a shift in focus from exemplary individuals to exemplary encounters, friendships, or communities. It may be the case that these relational foci are able to embody forms of moral goodness that individuals considered alone cannot.

³ Raimond Gaita, *Good and Evil: An Absolute Conception*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 189–206.

The scope of Zagzebski's overall project in this book is staggering. Even though, by her own account, exemplarist virtue theory emerged as a variant of virtue ethics, it departs from such in significant ways, and so represents a truly innovative methodological approach to moral inquiry. Yet what makes Zagzebski's exemplarist approach so compelling is not so much its novelty or ingenuity as its intuitive plausibility. It just seems correct that what informs and motivates our moral choices in everyday life is not any conceptual ideal or worked-out theory, but rather our links to those others whom we have taken as exemplars of right conduct, as embodiments of the human good whom we trust to guide us in our own pursuit of the good. On this basic insight, *Exemplarist Moral Theory* constructs a ground-breaking approach to ethics whose enormous implications for the field have already begun to surface.

Moral theologians will likely find this approach particularly fruitful for their work, given the place it assigns to the historical particularity of traditions and communal praxis. Christian ethicists hoping to find some treatment of the unique exemplarity of Jesus Christ in this book will come away disappointed, but the possibility remains of adapting Zagzebski's general framework to a form of exemplarism that incorporates Christological doctrines. Indeed, I see in this approach one of the most promising appropriations for the theory, especially in light of the moves many past theologians have made in this direction: from St. Paul's appeals to imitation to Abelard's "exemplar model" of atonement to Livio Melina's contemporary efforts to develop a Christocentric exemplarism, the Christian theological tradition abounds in material that can be brought to bear and reread in light of Zagzebski's work. There is no doubt that this point of confluence will prove mutually enriching, but it is equally certain that the exemplarist approach will come to benefit, and likely even reshape, many other fields of moral inquiry as well. N.V

Patrick Clark
University of Scranton
Scranton, PA

Mother Teresa's Mysticism: A Christo-Ecclesio-Humano-Centric Mysticism by Robert M. Garrity (Hobe Sound, FL: Lectio, 2017), 208 pp.

FR. ROBERT GARRITY has written a fine introduction to St. Mother Teresa's life of mysticism in her service of the poor. In the first part of the book, he introduces the reader to the theological contexts of

Catholic mysticism that influenced Mother Teresa's mysticism. In the second part, he introduces the reader to the contributions Mother Teresa has made to the development of Catholic mysticism in our times.

Part I has eight chapters. In the first chapter, Fr. Garrity clarifies that mysticism is a genuinely experiential knowledge of God and his divine presence. For Mother Teresa, it was both a speculative and an experiential knowledge of God and his presence in the poor. Chapter 2 introduces the reader to mysticism understood as experiencing God's presence. It is, as John of the Cross states, an "unknowing" that is known, a *docta ignorantia* by which God purifies the mind and heart of the mystic.

Chapters 3 and 4 further explore this in John of the Cross and his "dark night" and the mysticism of "suffering and darkness." Mother Teresa sees this in Jesus's cry of "I thirst" from the Cross. For her, this is a thirst for love, a thirst for souls to love that Jesus redeems humanity in his suffering on the Cross. Because of Mother Teresa's letters on the darkness and suffering of her own soul, Fr. Garrity devotes chapter 5 to a detailed introduction to St. John of the Cross and his insights into the dark night of the senses, imagination, and intellect as purifying the mystic's knowing and loving as she enters a mystical theology springing from God's indwelling.

Chapter 6 sketches the Christological and ecclesiological dimensions of Mother Teresa's mysticism in her service of Christ and his Church among the poorest of the poor. Her mysticism is Christocentric in its love and service of the poor, thereby offering a new emphasis to the ongoing traditions of Catholic mystical theology. Chapters 7 and 8 conclude part I with a preliminary assessment of what is distinctive in Mother Teresa's mysticism as a deep appreciation of Christ as present in the poor. It is a mystical union with Christ in the poor that does not, as Fr. Garrity shows, in any way diminish the importance, emphasized in St. John Paul II's *Centesimus Annus*, of seeking economic, scientific, and other means of improving the lives of the poor. Catholic mystical theology is not opposed to reason and science.

Part II provides eight chapters outlining the contributions Mother Teresa has made to Catholic mysticism and theology. Fundamental to these contributions is her insistence on the divine and human natures in the Person of Jesus Christ, who founded the Catholic Church with her governance, sacraments, and mission to the world.

Chapter 9 shows how Mother Teresa's mystical theology both draws on the long traditions from the Catholic mystics and provides a new emphasis on the significance of these traditions in fostering service to the poor and destitute. Mother Teresa was insistent on fidelity to the Catholic Church and her hierarchy in order to reveal to the secular world that service to the

poor is indeed at the heart of Catholic faith and fidelity.

Chapter 10 is an important clarification of Mother's experiential Christology. Fr. Garrity shows various aspects of Mother's mysticism: its intimate union with Christ on the Cross, its Marian devotion in receiving Jesus in the Eucharist, and how Mary in her earthly life excelled in faith, hope, and charity. He also warns readers that Mother now and then engaged in a "spiritual hyperbole" that resulted in misguided statements, such as that Jesus "became sin" and so was rejected by the Father (101–2).

Chapter 11 acquaints the reader with the universal soteriology of Christ's "thirst" for souls. Drawing on St. Irenaeus and St. Bernard, Mother Teresa seeks to capture the "affections" of ordinary people, including the poor, to draw them into a love for Christ as redemptive. She assists the Church in linking the ecclesial and humanitarian affections of humanity. Chapter 12 continues this exploration by showing the implicit Trinitarian pneumatology in Mother's Christological soteriology. Yet Fr. Garrity mentions that, although Mother's pneumatology is deficient in some ways, it will be pastorally effective in winning souls for Christ and his Church.

Chapter 13 provides insights into the anthropology underpinning the soteriology of Mother Teresa. Every human being is created in the image of God. So creation is always united with redemption. Jesus redeems what the Triune God has created. Fr. Garrity draws on John Henry Cardinal Newman and Thomas Aquinas to state that the spiritual, intellectual, and transcending nature of each human being has a "real dynamism toward infinite truth and goodness, toward God" (128).

The ways in which Mother Teresa has contributed to the renewal of the Church are sketched in chapter 14. Fr. Garrity shows that Mother fostered developments in the "communio ecclesiology" of St. John Paul II. The communion of the Church extends especially to Christ disguised in the poor and destitute within the Church as his mystical body. Like Pope Francis, Mother sees the Church as the "instrument spreading divine mercy" to those on the margins of societies. Fr. Garrity does not elaborate, but could also call more attention to how St. Teresa's mystical theology linked the real presence of Christ in the poor with the Eucharistic real presence of Jesus. The Missionaries of Charity follow Mother's daily two hours in prayer in the real presence of Christ in Holy Mass and in the Eucharist reserved in the tabernacle. Thus, she insisted to reporters, her Missionaries were living out their faith and were not social workers.

In chapter 15, Fr. Garrity offers wonderful suggestions on how everyone can live the spirituality of Mother Teresa in many diverse ways. He counsels against an uninspired copying of specific applications of what she and

her Missionaries do. Rather, Mother's mysticism encourages each of us to deepen our life of prayer and attentiveness to what God is asking us to do for Christ in his poor. Mother's private revelation in which Jesus appeared to her with a call within her call to religious life is not an experience that others need in order to follow her self-giving love and service of the poor.

In Chapter 16, Fr. Garrity discusses the importance of Mother Teresa's mysticism for the Church as she engages in interreligious dialogue. Here too Fr. Garrity clearly outlines how Mother's mysticism enables Catholics to be fully faithful to the Church's teachings and thereby promote understanding with other world religions. He offers examples of Mother's self-giving in service of the poor evoking admiration from other religions, including Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus.

Fr. Garrity ends his wonderful book on St. Mother Teresa's mysticism with an epilogue summing up how her mysticism draws on the great Catholic traditions of Catholic saints and how this enables her to make important contributions to the renewal of spirituality as fostering the love of God and man. Self-giving services to the poor take on many different forms in fidelity to Mother's catechetical and mystical theology. I highly recommend this book to all those seeking a deeper understanding of St. Mother Teresa's mysticism. N.V

†*Matthew L. Lamb*
Ave Maria University
Ave Maria, FL

Ethical Sex: Sexual Choices and Their Nature and Meaning by Anthony McCarthy (South Bend, IN: Fidelity, 2016), 326 pp.

A DOMINANT contemporary attitude toward the human body might be said to be totalitarian in nature. This attitude embraces not simply the physical members of the human body; it extends its reach even to the natural inclinations. It treats human bodily reality "as a raw datum" that is "devoid of any meaning and moral values until freedom has shaped it in accordance with its design" (Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* [1993], §48). According to this view, the human body is external to the human person and, as such, simply furnishes the material condition for the exercise of free choice. The anthropology in question is dualistic in that it divorces human personhood from human embodiment. Reason is thus left free to manipulate the bodily conditions of human being, all too often in ways contrary to the indications inscribed within those very conditions themselves.

The recent significant trend in Western countries to legislate for homosexual “marriage”—or even, in the case of Ireland, to enshrine this “right” within the constitution—renders even more important the intellectual engagement with the inclination to the procreation and education of offspring, as St. Thomas puts it (*Summa theologia* [ST] I-II, q. 94, a. 2)—which is to say, sexual ethics. One reason for a rational defense of Catholic sexual ethics is precisely the fact that recent developments are the political expression of a dualistic anthropology and are, as such, as I have intimated, totalitarian in character.

Anthony McCarthy’s book, which offers such a defense, engages with a wide array of authors philosophical, theological, and literary. Included in this array are figures such as Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Immanuel Kant, John Paul II, Aurel Kolnai, Dietrich von Hildebrand, Josef Pieper, Roger Scruton, Janet Smith, Bernard Williams, William Shakespeare, Robert Sokolowski, Michel Foucault, and Peter Singer, just to mention a selection. Manifold arguments are adduced in support of what ultimately constitutes a Catholic sexual ethic, and countervailing arguments are rebutted in analytic style.

The first chapter of the book offers a sustained critique of the contention on the part of “new natural law” theorists that contraception is contralife. The author then proceeds in the next chapter to look at natural law, functions, and teleology. Arguments are adduced in defense of teleology and of the idea that any particular organism has a function. This chapter proceeds to sustain the intimate link between the functioning proper to human beings and human flourishing. In this regard, the author remains alert to the demands that attend the hylomorphic structure of human being, albeit with an exception noted below. The importance of embodiment and teleology carry over into McCarthy’s discussion of marriage and meaning. The notions of embodiment and teleology ground the objective reality of the conjugal act. Indeed, for McCarthy, “it is marriage which is that standard with respect to which sexual activity is judged to be good or not” (107). I would have to disagree with this formulation, however. Heterosexual marriage, rather, is a necessary but not sufficient condition for sexual activity to be good, a point the author would no doubt accept.

Teleological considerations flow over into the discussion of sexual desire. In this regard, McCarthy offers some useful reflections concerning pornography and fantasy. Thus, for example, with regard to the latter, he observes that “the moral demands of the real world are not being adequately met when an effect is deliberately produced which properly belongs to a different cause” (160). Teleological considerations also enter into the final chapter, on love, virtue, and vice, as also does the notion of

embodiment. McCarthy builds on Karol Wojtyła's / John Paul II's observations that the human body in itself is not shameful and that neither are sensual reactions and sensuality in general. Thus, writes McCarthy, "it cannot be objectifying simply to appreciate or be aroused by the bodily features of (in particular) one's spouse, which surely constitute the valuable sexual attributes of an inherently valuable person in a marital unit geared toward the couple's social and biological fulfilment" (187). Again, the *telos* of the sexual act, it is argued, is essentially marital. While all lack of respect or objectification is anti-teleological in nature, this is particularly so in the case of sexual activity that is not properly ordered within a marital context.

The foregoing brief delineation of the structure and content of McCarthy's book shows forth what is valuable in his work: his appreciation of the notions of embodiment and teleology in formulating an adequate sexual ethic. Many creative arguments are marshalled with a view to defending a Catholic position. In elaborating these arguments, as already intimated, he engages an impressive range of figures from the domains of philosophy, theology, and literature.

There are however some negative criticisms to be leveled at the author's laudable efforts. Thus, one gets the sense that the author at times is not as familiar with the thought of St. Thomas as one would wish a Catholic philosopher engaged in sexual ethics to be. Perhaps this lack is a downside of the wide range of thinkers with whom he dialogues. Thus, in referencing *ST II-II*, qq. 23–27, McCarthy writes: "For Aquinas, all kinds of love are grounded in the will (including desire), which provides the initial framework for seeing different forms of love as integrated" (171). Prescinding from the confused nature of this formulation (is it "all kinds of love" or "the will" that includes "desire"?), it is simply wrong to state that Thomas thinks that all kinds of love are grounded in the will. The confines of this review do not allow an adumbration of Thomas's teaching concerning love, but the following quotation demonstrates that, for Thomas, the notion of love extends well beyond the human will: "Now to love God above all things is natural to man and to every nature, not only rational but irrational, and even to inanimate nature according to the manner of love which can belong to each creature" (*ST I-II*, q. 109, a. 3).

A little further on, McCarthy asserts: "For Aquinas the approval expressed in the statement 'it's good that you exist' is an expression of will" (172). Thomas would, no doubt, agree with this idea, but I know of nowhere where he actually formulates it explicitly.

Another point pertains to the natural inclinations, concerning which the author arguably departs from the logical demands of a thoroughgoing hylomorphism. Thus, he writes that "a reproductive organ has a

‘pre-rational’ inclination toward its proper object (its function)” (91), in spite of his general insistence on the psychosomatic unity of the human person. (Admittedly, there are scholars of St. Thomas’s thought who espouse this view.) Elsewhere, he repeats this idea in a more general form: “While we might see certain ‘instincts’ as ‘drives’ toward the good, they are pre-rational” (259n3). In my view, however, the hylomorphic structure of the human person entails that the inclinations that man shares with other creatures are subsumed into the reality of the rational soul, the form of human being, and thus can never be simply prerational in his case. While the natural inclinations are not the result of deliberate choice, they do nevertheless seem to pertain to what Thomas means by simple willing (*simplex voluntas*).

One final observation: this book is written by a philosopher. Its deliberations begin in earnest with a discussion of “thick” and “thin” concepts, a distinction gleaned from analytic philosophical analysis. The first thinker quoted in this regard is Bernard Williams, an analytic philosopher. Given the sharp distinction between philosophy and theology that is the hallmark of much contemporary philosophy—lamentable and all as it is—it would seem that, as a matter of strategy, it would have been more effective for the author to keep a distance from quoting Catholic Church teaching. At any rate, as John Paul II points out in *Fides et Ratio*, a harmony obtains between faith and reason so that right reason naturally coheres with what the faith teaches us. A chance to evangelize contemporary culture has perhaps been lost precisely by the author’s explicit recourse to faith. This would be a pity, since his obvious philosophically ecumenical spirit deserves to be reciprocated. N.V

Kevin E. O’Reilly, O.P.

Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas
Rome

Thomas and the Thomists: The Achievement of Thomas Aquinas and His Interpreters by Romanus Cessario, O.P., and Cajetan Cuddy, O.P. (*Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2017*), xvii + 151 pp.

RECENT YEARS HAVE SEEN a large number of publications introducing Thomas Aquinas and his work to newer audiences. The sheer number of these publications attests to what Aidan Nichols referred to in his 2002 introduction as the “new renaissance” in the study of this master

in theology, philosophy, and biblical exegesis.¹ This new renaissance seems to have at least two features. Firstly, Aquinas's thought is taken on its own merits, instead of the uncritical adaptations of his thought to modern forms of thinking. Secondly, and without discarding the necessary contribution of a purely historical approach to Aquinas's thought, this renewed interest seeks to delineate Aquinas's intellectual coherence.

However, it is no coincidence that, alongside this renewed interest, one can witness a growing appreciation for the intellectual movement of Thomism that has sprung up from a continuous study of Aquinas's writings. Just as Aquinas's thought cannot be separated from his sources, as the historical approach has rightly argued, so also Aquinas himself cannot be detached from the tradition of his commentators. Such an abstraction of Aquinas from the tradition that has brought him to us would, in the words of the French Dominican Serge-Thomas Bonino, "fall into the trap that one had hoped to avoid: that is, to make of St. Thomas a thinker removed from history, and of Thomism a Platonic Idea."²

The authors of the volume under review have written an insightful and exciting analysis and a vibrant defense of the concrete reality that is the Thomist tradition. It all starts with the "unique genius" of Aquinas: his ability to lead his readers "to discover the real truth about real things that originate from the real God" (xii). In a dense but accessible analysis, the authors explain how, from the fundamental real distinction between being and nonbeing, Thomas discovered the real distinction between act and potency and how he "applied" this distinction to matter and form, as well as to essence and existence, resulting in the truth that, whereas God is his own existence, "everything else enjoys only borrowed existence" (xiii). The reader might recall at this point the vexed question regarding the essence of Thomism in which such giants as Gallus Manser, O.P. (1866–1950),³ and Norberto del Prado, O.P. (1852–1918), took part, emphasizing (respectively) the distinction between act and potency and that between essence and existence. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. (1877–1964), harmonized both approaches and emphasized the unity of the *via inventionis* and the *via synthesis*, since both have as their *terminus* and *principium* "the supreme truth of Christian philosophy," the *clavis*

¹ Aidan Nichols, *Discovering Aquinas: An Introduction to His Life, Work and Influence* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2002).

² Serge-Thomas Bonino, "Le thomisme et son histoire," in *Revue thomiste* 97 (1997): 5–8. See also Bonino, "To Be a Thomist," *Nova et Vetera* (English) 8 (2010): 763–73, and "The Thomist Tradition," *Nova et Vetera* (English) 8 (2010): 869–81.

³ Gallus Manser, *Das Wesen des Thomismus* (Fribourg, CH: Paulus Verlag, 1949).

aurea totius aedificii of the Angelic Doctor—namely, *Deus est ipsum suum subsistens*.⁴ The veiled presence of these Thomists in the opening pages of the book is but one of the many instances in which the erudition of the authors becomes apparent.

Perhaps an even more vexed question concerns the unity of the Thomist tradition. Again, the opening pages are representative of the authors' approach throughout the book. They start with an insightful negative criterion when they note that, although St. Augustine has a greater following in the Christian tradition than St. Thomas, "most will agree that those who cite Augustine make up a more diverse group than the Thomists treated in this volume" (xiv). For a positive criterion to discern "authentic followers" (xv) of Aquinas, the authors turn to his comments on John 17:17 ("Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth"), in which he emphasizes sanctification in the truth that is Christ, by faith and the knowledge of the truth as sent by the Holy Spirit.⁵ What this means for the authors is that "those who follow and interpret Aquinas faithfully commit themselves to the project as an ecclesial vocation" (xvi) at the service of evangelization. This also explains why the majority of Thomists treated in this volume belonged to institutes of consecrated life. "These persons enjoy a privileged starting point on the road toward developing a sanctified intelligence for service to the church's ministry" (xvi). Further defining characteristics are that most Thomists worked during periods of intellectual conflict and that "[all] Thomists sought wisdom, though without unnecessary accommodation to the intellectual fashion of their day" (xvi). "They also share Aquinas's conviction that one's humanity, academic achievement, and personal sanctity work together in the search for truth" (xvi). Naturally, the authors emphasize that the Thomist tradition is neither a mere repetition of Aquinas nor a monolithic unity. I would also add that it is precisely *because of* the unifying elements the authors see at work in the tradition that Thomists were and are able to apply Aquinas's thought to the questions of their time and to respond to them "from within the author's historical contexts" (xvii).

As the title of the book suggests, it consists of two parts: "Thomas, or a Story of Divine Providence" (3–43) and "The Thomists, or 'The Heritage of Truth'" (47–140). The first part, in a most eloquent manner (including the literary *Leitmotiv* of the archer), tells the story of Thomas's life and work. Relying on sound scholarly sources, the authors appreciate Thomas's

⁴ Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *De Deo uno* (Turin, IT: Marietti, 1950), 24–26.

⁵ See also Romanus Cessario, *Theology and Sanctity*, ed. Cajetan Cuddy, O.P. (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia, 2014).

achievements against the background of the medieval context of his life, but also in light of the differences with respect to contemporary theological reasoning. The reader should therefore not be surprised to find this part interspersed with references to *Fides et Ratio*, *Veritatis Splendor*, Pope Benedict XVI, and Alasdair MacIntyre.

Two characteristic features come to the fore. First is the radically theocentric nature of theological reasoning as ordering the divine wisdom that God has bestowed, and second is the distinctively Dominican imprint of his intellectual achievements: “The Dominican way of life, which Aquinas chose, . . . favors the acquisition of sacred truth by the distinctive way that it combines assiduous study with the exercises that one associates with monastic life, especially the following of the evangelical counsels and the common prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours” (13; see also, e.g., 17, 28, and 78, as well as note 28). The authors, therefore, do not view Thomas’s works as a “playing fields for intellectual gymnastics” (26), but rather as a teaching “about the living God” (26), as the work of a believer in the service of the Truth. Referring to the mature fruit of Thomas’s service to the Truth, the *Summa theologiae*, they write: “Aquinas recognized that the successful portrayal of Catholic truth required more than edification by beauty, inspiration by light, and moral encouragement by exhortation and example” (33). Aquinas knew, indeed, given man’s rational nature, that the only way to win him over eventually is to win over his intellect. The same harmony of faith and reason allows Aquinas, toward the end of his life, to respond to Christ’s offer for a reward for his theological writings: “Non nisi Te” (“Nothing but you, O Lord”), which the authors view as having become “a motto for properly educated Thomists” (38).

The second part of the book immediately draws the reader into one of its distinctive features. The *Korrektorienstreit*—the Franciscan William de la Mare’s *Correctorium fratris Thomae* and the reactions by five English, French, and Italian young Dominicans in defense of Aquinas’s thought—“suggests that, even shortly after his death, an *esprit de corps* centered on Aquinas’s teaching had begun to develop among at least some of his Dominican confreres, including the supervisors,” (50) and reveals “the birth of a tradition that one rightly calls Thomist” (52). Very early on, this tradition received institutional support from the Dominican order, indicating that the participants in the *Korrektorienstreit* “did not make up an eccentric band of dissident outsiders” (53). This reasoning is probably the single most important part of the book, at least from a historical viewpoint, because it gives a persuasive argument for a determinate beginning of the Thomist tradition.

Equally observant is the authors’ argument that the early-four-

teenth-century controversy over mendicant poverty and the seemingly contradictory reactions by two subsequent popes, notwithstanding differences in the question of papal teaching authority, “show unanimity” (58) in wanting to uphold the Dominican and Thomist position with respect to the vow of poverty. The subsequent pages contain Thomistic vignettes of the most influential Thomists in which both the historical contexts of their lives and works and their main contributions to the development of the Thomist tradition find concise but apt expression, always informative and engaging. We read, for instance, about Peter Crockaert (d. 1541), who at first held a nominalist position and subsequently, after having entered the Dominican order, started to teach the *Summa theologiae*. The authors write: “This work of Aquinas opens with a discussion of God as pure actuality. Architecture reflects styles of living and outlooks. The monastic cloister that the classical Dominican priory incorporated into its structure leaves an open space at its center that directs the mind beyond the skies towards God” (77–78).

Throughout their depiction of the history of Thomism, the authors are naturally aware of “fluctuations” that inevitably occur in a seven-centuries-old tradition, but they also emphasize—and rightly so—the ability inherent in the works of St. Thomas to sustain this tradition. More concretely, “what characterizes the authentic evolution of the Thomist commentatorial tradition remains its adherence to the first principles of speculative thought both in the natural and in the supernatural orders” (81). By placing the history of Thomism in its historical, philosophical, and ecclesial context, the authors are able to corroborate their claim that, even if one allows for a certain “elasticity” within the commentarial tradition, or even for the existence of “eclectic Thomists,” “it is a remarkable thing that Thomists carried on a lively intellectual existence that ran parallel to the upstart Protestant and secular initiatives” (95).

In this regard, the authors hold the “Dominican giant” John of St. Thomas in high regard for his setting down the criteria for identifying a “true disciple of Aquinas”: “One who follows those who have already commented on Aquinas, who loves his teaching and seeks to defend and develop it, who shows sympathy for Aquinas’s intuitions, who values his method of argument, and, in short, who holds fast to the commentatorial tradition” (105). This “definition” of what it means to be a Thomist does not entail the picture of an ivory-tower theologian, engaging in “abstract,” lifeless speculations. The commentatorial tradition has the ability “to sustain [not only] truth claims but also the theological life, that is, the life of Christian faith, hope and charity” (110), as is exemplified by the work of Vincent Gotti (1664–1742), facing the challenges of the beginning Enlightenment.

Another important scholarly contribution of this introductory text lies in the attention it draws to Dominican moral theologians who tried to deal with the “paradigm shifts” in moral theology towards casuistry (96–98). Mentioned in particular are Dominicans such as Bartholomew of Medina (1528–1580), John Vincent Patuzzi (1700–1769), Vincent Ferrer (1675–1738), and Antoine Massoulié (1632–1706). Their and other reactions to casuistry are aptly summarized as follows: “Thomists sought to develop well-tempered moral agents. To the extent that the virtuous person surrenders to the drawing power of the good, he or she does not require the assistance of a canon lawyer to discriminate between the permitted and the forbidden. . . . Thomists prefer to emphasize the priority of the divine initiative in human life before they begin to specify those rectified actions that lead to the possession of God’s happiness” (114).

Here, I think, lies a large area for future research that will benefit contemporary moral theology as well, given its contemporary use (or avoidance) of casuistry. For instance, the contributions in this respect of the Dominicans Benoit Henri Merkelbach (1871–1942), Dominicus Prümmer (1866–1931), and Marie-Michel Labourdette (1908–1990), whose extensive commentary on the *secunda pars* is currently being published, merit further research.

Likewise, Massoulié also provides the authors with another important defining element of Thomist identity: “Thomists should remember that Aquinas serves as his own best interpreter. Even today, the best of the commentators observe this axiom, which separates them from eclectic and even putative Thomists” (114). A number of times throughout the book, the authors write about “the self-purifying capacities” of the Thomist commentatorial tradition, meaning the ability of later Thomists to rectify earlier Thomists who fell under the sway of a particular cultural matrix, such as the introduction of the principle of sufficient reason into Thomistic philosophy. This again is a very insightful and useful concept that paradoxically allows one to discover the unity of the Thomist tradition.

It should therefore not be surprising that the authors express certain misgivings about the use of terms such as Leonine Thomism or neo-Thomism. In fact, the book’s second part on the history of Thomism does not employ the usual periodization that most often characterizes this history in terms of a rise, a golden age, a decline, and a rediscovery: “[Such a periodization] can suggest wrongly that the thought of Aquinas has only enjoyed intermittent popularity. In fact, as has been put forward in this book, Aquinas and his commentators lay claim to a continuity that dates back at least to his canonization at the start of the fourteenth century, and even earlier” (130–31).

The book closes with a commentary on the four qualities of Thomist method, enumerated by cardinal Georges Cottier, O.P.—confidence in reason, the courage of the truth, the truth of things, and wisdom—as providing “guidance for the one who would learn from the Thomist tradition” (137).

In this modest introductory text, Father Cessario, who is to be lauded for his many contributions to the history and vitality of the Thomist tradition,⁶ and Father Cuddy have done the Thomist community an enormous and groundbreaking service in at least three respects. The newcomers will find an engaging portrait of the single most important philosophical and theological tradition—a tradition that does not distort the original by accommodating it to the passing currents of thought, but rather exhibits the forcefulness of a life of the mind, led in the search of truth and holiness. The Thomist community now possesses the intellectual and motivational foundations to investigate in a comprehensive way the unity of the Thomist tradition. Evidently, such a large-scale project faces many challenges, but the authors have opened up the horizon (*Summa theologiae* I-II, q. 58, a. 5, ad 1: *ratio, secundum quod est apprehensiva finis, praecedat appetitum finis*—“reason, insofar as it apprehends the end, precedes the appetite for the end”). The Dominican community will find in this book a new stimulus for engaging St. Thomas Aquinas and his *Summa theologiae* as the normative source for doing theology within the order, as well as for exploring the specifically Dominican imprint on the history of Thomism, given that the spirit of the religious order to which Aquinas himself belonged has shaped significantly the reception and development of his thought, as Father Cessario and Father Cuddy amply illustrate. N.V

Jörgen Vijgen

Tiltenberg Major Seminary
Vogelenzang, NL

⁶ See, in particular: *Jean Capreolus en son temps (1380–1444)*, ed. Guy Bedouelle, Romanus Cessario, and Kevin White (Paris: Cerf, 1997); *John Capreolus (1380–1444): Treatise on the Virtues*, trans. Kevin White and Romanus Cessario (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001); Cessario, *A Short History of Thomism* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2001), and many of his articles in *Theology and Sanctity*.

