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THE VIRTUE OF CHASTITY AND THE SCOURGE OF PORNOGRAPHY: A TWOFOLD CRISIS CONSIDERED IN LIGHT OF THOMAS AQUINAS'S MORAL THEOLOGY[1]

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[A]ll that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides for ever. (1 John 2:16-17 [RSV])

Has virtue … lost its good name? Has the virtue of chastity in particular ceased to be respectable? Or is chastity no longer recognized as a virtue? It is not just a question of reputation. The use of a noun, and lip service to it, are not decisive. What matters is whether virtue is made welcome in the human soul, the human will. If not it ceases to have any real existence. Mere respect for the words "virtue" and "chastity" has no great significance. (Karol Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 143)

TODAY IN AMERICA AND IN EUROPE, we live in a culture of excess. Food is plentiful in both grocery stores and restaurants; material goods line the shelves of our emporia; videos, movies, and games abound on multiple digital

[1] An earlier version of this article was presented on 21 October 2011 at the "Thomistic Circles" conference on "Christian Marriage: Nature and Sacrament" at the Thomistic Institute of the Dominican House of Studies, Washington, D.C. The author of this essay is a husband, father, and university professor. The matters under discussion in this article detrimentally affect the well-being of youth, college and university students, single as well as married persons, and are therefore of concern to all Christians and persons of good will. The author's state of life as a married lay person suggests in and of itself that the apposite focus of these considerations will be on conjugal chastity and on chastity in the context of a call to the married life.

devices; and even information flows over us so that we can scarcely recall today what we watched, listened to, or read yesterday. Along with this remarkable abundance comes an equally remarkable wastefulness. Together, abundance and wastefulness make up the excess that marks contemporary Western culture. Excess is both a sign of a disordered appetite and an invitation for the vices of gluttony and lust which encumber proper human flourishing and endanger the dignity of ourselves and the persons with whom we interact.

One particular and pressing instance of such excess has been the widening availability of pornography. Twelve years ago *The New York Times* was reporting that pornography was an industry "estimated to total between $10 billion and $14 billion annually in the United States in America."[2] While exact statistics may be hard to come by,[3] it is indubitable that Internet porn is both plentiful and easily accessible to both adults and children who log onto computers without screening controls. Such widespread and easy availability of pornography constitutes a temptation to considerable moral errancy. Pornography, as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*[4] points out, is an evil because it

> offends against chastity . . . [and] perverts the conjugal act, the intimate giving of the spouses to each other. It does grave injury to the dignity of its participants (actors, vendors, the public), since each one becomes an object of base pleasure

[2] Frank Rich, "Naked Capitalists: There's No Business Like Porn Business," *The New York Times,* 20 May 2001 (http://www.nytimes.com/2001/05/20/magazine/20PORN.html?pagewanted=all).

[3] Websites commenting on the issue of Internet pornography frequently offer statistics, but given the difficulties in determining the nature and extent of the use of the Internet for pornographic purposes, such statistics must be acknowledged—as they often are on the websites themselves—with some caution.

[4] *Catechism of the Catholic Church. Second Edition Revised in Accordance with the Official Latin Text Promulgated by Pope John Paul II* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997). See also the resources offered at the end of the most pertinent 2007 pastoral letter from Bishop Robert W. Finn of the Diocese of Kansas, *Blessed are the Pure of Heart: A Pastoral Letter on the Dignity of the Human Person and the Dangers of Pornography* (http://issuu.com/knightsofcolumbus/docs/323?mode=embed&layout=http%3A%2F%2Fskin.issuu.com%2Fv%2Flight%2Flayout.xml&showFlipBtn=true).

and illicit profit for others. It immerses all who are involved in the illusion of a fantasy world. (*CCC* 2354)[5]

What is important here is that the moral evil of pornography threatens and eventually corrupts two fundamental moral goods: the dignity of the human person and the intimately conjoined virtue of chastity.[6] While it still seems obvious to many that

[5] Consider the following public echo of the Church's teaching expressed on 18 November 2004 by Dr. Mary Anne Layden, Co-Director of the Sexual Trauma and Psychopathology Program at the University of Pennsylvania, at a U.S. Senate subcommittee on pornography: "Pornography, by its very nature, is an equal opportunity toxin. It damages the viewers, the performers, and the spouses and the children of the viewers and the performers. It is toxic mis-education about sex and relationships. It is more toxic the more you consume, the 'harder' the variety you consume and the younger and more vulnerable the consumer" (http://www.ccv.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Judith_Reisman_Senate_Testimony-2004.11.18.pdf).

[6] Because the virtue of chastity resides in the agent, and because this essay's principal concern is the virtue of chastity, its diminishment, loss, and recovery, my analysis of the effects of the consumption of Internet pornography will be focused on the individual consumer. This concentration, however, is not at all meant to belittle the detrimental effects of pornography on others, especially on spouses (usually wives) and on the performers. Not only the above cited *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, but also empirical studies unmask the lie that no one else is harmed by consuming pornography. Two studies are especially relevant if one wants to reflect on the danger of pornography consumption for Christian marriage: first, on the relationship between pornography consumption and attitudes supporting violence against women, see Gert Martin Hald et al., "Pornography and Attitudes Supporting Violence against Women: Revisiting the Relationship in Nonexperimental Studies," *Aggressive Behavior* 36 (2010), 14-20; second, on the association between pornography consumption with weakened commitments to one's intimate partner, see Nathaniel M. Lambert et al., "A Love That Doesn't Last: Pornography Consumption and Weakened Commitment to One's Romantic Partner," *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology* 31 (2012), 410-38. A third study is relevant for considering the alarming rate of mental health issues and correlated trauma among female adult performers: Corita R. Grudzen et al., "Comparison of the Mental Health of Female Adult Film Performers and Other Young Women in California," *Psychiatric Services* 62 (2011), 639-45. Referring to the last study, Warren Kinghorn (to whom I am indebted for pointing me to these and the other empirical studies cited) astutely observes: "When . . . one views a pornographic product, one is very likely to be looking at the exposed body of one who has been raped, sexually degraded or otherwise devalued; to treat her as 'just an image' is a direct offense against charity, in that [one] refuses to see the other as one who is loved by God. Viewing such images, even if it results only in an additional 'click' for an Internet site, perpetuates these cycles of degradation" (private correspondence, 31 May 2012). Considered in light of Aquinas's moral theology, viewing pornography products is indeed an offense against justice as well as charity. However, spelling this claim out in detail would be the task of another, equally important essay.

pornography injures human dignity, it has become less obvious, or even unintelligible to many, that pornography offends against chastity. John Grabowski, in his insightful book *Sex and Virtue*, points out that

> one of the most maligned and misunderstood virtues in contemporary culture is chastity. The word often evokes connotations of inhibition, prudery, dysfunction, and perhaps even neurosis. This is especially true in a culture that sees sexual expression and pleasure as integral to personal health, happiness, and fulfillment. If one has to be sexually active to realize oneself, then continence or celibacy can seem perverse and any form of sexual restraint suspect. If sexual expression is not necessary [*sic*] limited to monogamous covenantal relationships for it to be seen as good, then even the notion of fidelity can come to be seen as arbitrary and oppressive.[7]

Quite contrary to the contemporary maligning and misunderstanding of chastity, it is nothing but the virtue of chastity that addresses the particular form of disordered excess that pertains to human sexuality. For this very reason, chastity is integral to genuine human flourishing. Against the common modern prejudice and, indeed, resentment against chastity, I will advance an argument for the rehabilitation of the virtue of chastity in conversation with Thomas Aquinas, whose moral theology remains a crucial point of reference for the Catholic Church's consistent magisterial insistence throughout the previous and the present centuries on the irreducibly rational and moral nature of human procreative acts. One of the most pertinent lessons to be learned from Aquinas—and here he is the surpassing synthesizer of the theological wisdom of the most eminent Church Fathers and monastic authors—is that while the vice of lust has a carnal object, the root cause of this vice has a spiritual nature. It is one of the maladies of the soul. Thus, uprooting the vice of lust means attending to the spiritual nature of its root cause. In order to make this solution intelligible I will need to take three prior steps, and hence the essay will comprise four parts.

[7] John S. Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue: An Introduction to Sexual Ethics* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 71.

In the first part, I will use Aquinas's moral psychology to clarify the nature of chastity and its indispensability for the moral integrity of the human person in sexual as well as other moral matters. Understanding the anthropological framework underlying Aquinas's account of chastity is necessary for a proper understanding of the negative spiritual roots from which the present problem arises. In the second part, I will have recourse to his analysis of vice in order to specify the vice of lust and the way he conceives the possible loss of chastity. In the third part, I will identify the spiritual root cause that gives rise to one preeminent foe of chastity in our days—the frequent, secretive, and in some cases, compulsive consumption of Internet pornography. The spiritual root of this vine is old: spiritual apathy, *acedia*, as well as its modern offshoots, boredom and *ressentiment*. The First Letter of John identifies the malaise—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—and notes how it is always in search of an ever-transient rush to fill the void (1 John 2:16). Lust, enkindled and fueled by the consumption of pornography, turns into a potent spiritual foe and serious threat to the chastity of the single person, to conjugal chastity, and eventually to the well-being of marriages. In the fourth and concluding part, I will propose a spiritual practice that rests on Aquinas's thoroughly Augustinian insistence that chastity is restored, preserved, and perfected from above. This theological axiom must inform all Christian practices that intend to tackle any form of intemperance at its spiritual root.

I. The Twofold Final End of the Human Being and the Virtue of Chastity

Because the extant order of providence is supernatural, Aquinas teaches that humanity is ordered to a twofold final end: an imperfect natural and an infinitely surpassing, perfect supernatural happiness.[8] From the first moment of human creation, humanity

[8] See esp. *Expositio super Librum Boethii de Trinitate*, q. 6, a. 4, ad 3; and *Summa Theologiae* [*STh*] I-II, q. 3, a. 6; but also *STh* I-II, q. 3, aa. 3 and 5; q. 4, aa. 5, 7, and 8. For the most recent comprehensive account of this profoundly complex topic, see Jacobus M. Ramirez, O.P., *De hominis beatitudo*, 5 vols. (Madrid: Instituto de Filosofia "Luis Vivies,"

(essentially endowed with a finality proportionate to human nature) was *de facto* ordained for and called to partake in the life and love of the Blessed Trinity, and hence to live and love forever. The originally granted divine life of charity was subsequently lost with the fall, and only regained in virtue of Christ's redemptive passion and death on the cross (*STh* III, q. 48, aa. 1-6).[9] Because of the supernatural character of the extant providential order, human beings flourish genuinely and lastingly only when they pursue those natural goods that contribute to natural happiness in light of their supernatural vocation (*STh* II-II, q. 152, a. 2). Only when the final end proportionate to human nature is further ordered to and elevated by the supernatural end can the human being flourish permanently and perfectly. Hence, most frequently, when Aquinas refers to the "order of reason" to which the virtues conform, he understands it to be in accordance with the truth of real things as encountered and engaged by human beings in the scope of the extant, supernaturally informed, order of providence. The order of reason is a theonomic order of a *de facto* supernatural orientation that variously participates in the eternal law, that is, divine reason, and includes both nature and grace.[10]

1972); and more accessibly and recently the explicatory notes by Servais Pinckaers, O.P., in S. Thomas D'Aquin, *Somme Théologique. La Béatitude*, Éditions de La Revue des jeunes (Paris: Cerf, 2001).

[9] On the complex and controversial question of nature and grace in the interpretation of Thomas Aquinas, see most recently the nuanced and comprehensive account of Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., "Nature and Grace in Thomas Aquinas," in *Surnaturel: A Controversy at the Heart of Twentieth-Century Thomistic Thought*, ed. Serge-Thomas Bonino, O.P., trans. Robert Williams, rev. Matthew Levering (Ave Maria, Fla.: Sapientia Press, 2009), 155-88. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in its first section states as clearly as beautifully: "God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man. He calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength. He calls together all men, scattered and divided by sin, into the unity of his family, the Church. To accomplish this, when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son as Redeemer and Savior. In his Son and through him, he invites men to become, in the Holy Spirit, his adopted children and thus heirs of his blessed life" (1).

[10] "[I]t is from the eternal law, which is the Divine Reason, that human reason is the rule of the human will, from which the human will derives its goodness. Hence it is written (Ps. iv. 6, 7): *Many say: Who showeth us good things? The light of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us*: As though to say: 'The light of our reason is able to show us good things, and guide our will, in so far as it is the light of (*i.e.*, derived from) Thy countenance.' It is

In complete concord with the antecedent Christian tradition, Aquinas regards chastity as indispensable for moral integrity in sexual matters and hence for human flourishing. Two elementary truths account for the indispensability of chastity. The first one is the Christian, anti-Manichean and anti-spiritualist axiom that the sexual powers to be found in the human being are a genuine good.[11] Aquinas states: "[J]ust as the preservation of the bodily nature of one individual is a true good, so, too, is the preservation of the nature of the human species a very great good. And just as the use of food is directed to the preservation of life in the individual, so is the use of [procreative sexual] acts directed to the preservation of the whole human race" (*STh* II-II, q. 153, a. 2). *Concupiscentia* in its elementary form is nothing but the natural inclination of every creature with a sensitive nature to seek the good proper to its nature (*STh* I-II, q. 30, a 1). Procreative sexual union and the concomitant sexual pleasure fall among the delectable goods that concupiscence seeks. And this natural

therefore evident that the goodness of the human will depends on the eternal law much more than on human reason: and when human reason fails we must have recourse to the Eternal Reason" (*STh* I-II, q. 19, a. 4). (All quotations from the *Summa Theologiae* are taken from the translation of the Fathers of the English Dominican Province [New York: Benziger Bros., 1948; repr. Christian Classics, 1981]. Alterations are indicated by brackets.) *Nota bene*: The order of reason encompasses and transcends human discursive rationality. Moreover, due to the surpassingly sublime character of divine reason and the divine mysteries, the one order of reason entails a twofold order of knowledge, each order different from the other in epistemic principle and object. See Romanus Cessario, O.P., "*Duplex Ordo Cognitionis*," in *Reason and the Reasons of Faith*, ed. Paul J. Griffiths and Reinhard Hütter (New York and London: T&T Clark International, 2005), 327-38. According to the twofold order of knowledge the eternal law becomes somewhat known by way of reason (natural law) and in an essentially surpassing, but complementary mode by way of revelation received by faith (old law and new law): "Although the eternal law is unknown to us according as it is in the Divine Mind: nevertheless, it becomes known to us somewhat [*aliqualiter*], either by natural reason which is derived therefrom as its proper image; or by some sort of additional revelation [*vel per aliqualem revelationem superadditam*]" (*STh* I-II, q. 19, a. 4, ad 3). For a lucid and penetrating analysis and discussion of this topic, see John Rziha, *Perfecting Human Actions: St. Thomas Aquinas on Human Participation in Eternal Law* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009).

[11] Attending to the different emphases in the tradition on the goodness of the body, of sexuality, the reproductive act, and even marriage would go far beyond the scope of this essay. It should, however, not be passed over unmentioned that Aquinas takes a considerably more positive stand on the goodness of sexuality and the inherent dignity of the procreative act than do many of his theological predecessors.

inclination itself, Aquinas argues, reason apprehends as being good.[12]

The second elementary truth is the axiom that the most necessary acts for the preservation of the individual human being as well as the human species—eating, drinking, and procreating—are irreducibly acts of the human being *qua* human being and hence *human* acts (*actiones humanae*) (*STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 1). Neither in their eating and drinking nor in the exercise of their procreative powers are human beings mere animals who are led by instinct.[13] Despite being animals biologically, in virtue of being living beings with a rational nature (*animal rationale*) humans essentially transcend animality. Hence, Aquinas argues that the more necessary a thing is for the preservation of the individual and the human species, and the more intense the pleasure that accompanies the respective acts, the more important it is "to observe the order of reason" (*STh* II-II, q. 153, a. 3). In order not to misunderstand intemperance and lust right from the start, one must not mistake them to be vices because of the amount of sensual pleasure their practitioners feel. Rather, intemperance and lust are vices because the sensual pleasure is indulged in inordinately.

Because the human being is inescapably *animal rationale*, attempting to abdicate from the theonomic order of reason is not concomitant with embracing some "natural innocence" but rather

[12] "[A]ll these things to which [the human being] has a natural inclination are naturally apprehended by reason as being good, and consequently as objects of pursuit" (*STh* I-II, q. 94, a. 2).

[13] Aquinas has worked out this truth in an analysis as subtle as it is extensive in his treatise on the passions in *STh* I-II, qq. 22-48, a treatise that is presently enjoying a renewed interest. See chapter 3, "Body Politics beyond Angelism and Animalism," in my *Dust Bound For Heaven: Explorations in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 75-101, for the recent, fast-growing literature on the passions and for the argument that only when the irreducible spiritual dimension of human affectivity is fully recovered along Aquinas's lines will theological anthropology become invulnerable to the equally pernicious tendencies of early modernity to reduce the human to the mind and of late modernity to reduce the human to the body. For detailed and instructive recent treatments of the passions in Aquinas, see Robert Miner, *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions: A Study of Summa Theologiae 1a2ae 22-48* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); and Nicholas E. Lombardo, O.P., *The Logic of Desire: Aquinas on Emotion* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010).

in fact is concomitant with sinning. Human beings cannot abdicate from being human, that is, from following the order of reason and applying right reason[14] to action. Because acts of human sexuality are not animal operations led by instinct but rather irreducibly human acts, there is a distinct virtue—a dispositional excellence informed by right reason—that pertains to human sexuality. As Josef Pieper states: "Chastity as a virtue . . . is constituted in its essence by this and nothing else, namely, that it realizes the order of reason in the province of sexuality."[15]

The theonomic order of reason entails, first, that one not obstruct or pervert the procreative purpose that is immanent to the sexual power, but rather fulfill it in marriage with its threefold good of *fides* (spousal faithfulness and friendship), *proles* (children), and *sacramentum* (instrumentality of salvation).[16] The order of reason implies, second, that the moral integrity of the human person is to remain intact in all respects and under all circumstances, and third, that love of neighbor and justice (giving what is due to the other person) be practiced among all persons (especially spouses, parents, and children, unborn as well as

[14] "Prudence is right reason applied to action" (*STh* II-II, q. 47, a. 2, s.c., referring to Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 6.5). Right reason apprehends the end according to the order of reason and the eternal law (*STh* I-II, q. 21, a. 1).

[15] Josef Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966; repr. 2011), 155. While I have taken the quotations from this edition, I would like to refer the reader to the original 1939 edition of Pieper's treatise. In the original version—"standing on its own feet" so to speak—the ongoing relevance of the virtue of "selfless self-discipline and proper measure" becomes most forcefully tangible: Josef Pieper, *Zucht und Mass: Über die vierte Kardinaltugend* (Leipzig: Hegner, 1939).

[16] For Aquinas, it is a sign of the corruption of natural reason when it is not anymore understood broadly in any given social whole that "human nature rebels against an indeterminate union of the sexes and demands that a man should be united to a determinate woman and should abide with her a long time or even for a whole lifetime" (*STh* II-II, q. 154, 2). While the commitment until death of one of the spouses is a precept of the natural law, the absolute and principled indissolubility of *matrimonium* pertains to the sacramental character of Christian marriage. While the former, the natural-law precept, is in principle accessible to natural reason, the latter is not. Both, the former and the latter, are indisputably obvious only to human reason enlightened by the doctrine of the gospel as taught by the Church.

born).[17] What is at stake in the virtue of chastity that upholds the order of reason in sexual matters, as Pieper aptly put it,

> is the purpose of sex as it was intended originally in the first creation, and ennobled by Christ in the New Creation . . . the existential structure of the moral person, as established in nature and in grace; . . . [and the] order among men as guaranteed not merely by natural justice, but also by the higher justice of *caritas*, that is, supernatural love of God and man. Chastity realizes in the province of sex the order which corresponds to the truth of the world and of man both as experienced and as revealed, and which accords with the twofold form of this truth—not that of unveiled evidence alone, but that of veiled evidence also—that is, of mystery.[18]

In short, the virtue of chastity enables us to regulate from within the desire for sexual pleasure, and to direct it to our twofold final end.

Far from being prudishness—a fearful contempt of sexuality as a "necessary evil," unavoidable but ultimately subhuman—chastity preserves the very dignity of what is a genuine good. As such, the virtue of chastity belongs to a more comprehensive moral excellence, the virtue of temperance (*temperantia*).[19] Temperance—or better "selfless self-discipline and proper measure" as Pieper renders this virtue—is the virtue that preserves the inner order of the human being concerning the most elementary forces of human self-preservation, the nutritive and sexual sense appetites: "The discipline of temperance defends [the human being] against all selfish perversion of the inner order, through which alone the

[17] The staggering number of abortions procured annually in the Western hemisphere (and increasingly globally) by teenagers and young adults outside of matrimony bespeaks in an all-too-sad way Aquinas's argument against fornication: "Simple fornication [heterosexual intercourse outside of marriage] is contrary to the love of our neighbor, because it is opposed to the good of the child to be born . . . since it is an act of generation accomplished in a manner disadvantageous to the future child" (*STh* II-II, q. 154, a. 2, ad 4). Hence, even children not yet conceived are morally part of the community of human beings, insofar as these "preborn" children become by way of the natural teleology of the procreative act inchoate objects of the love of neighbor and of the justice due to others.

[18] Pieper, *Four Cardinal Virtues*, 158.

[19] For a recent concise and clear introduction to Aquinas's understanding of chastity, see Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue*, 78-84. For a slightly more extensive treatment, see Albert Plé, O.P., *Chastity and the Affective Life*, trans. Marie-Claude Thompson (New York: Herder & Herder, 1966), 115-49.

moral person exists and lives effectively."[20] This makes temperance one of the four cardinal virtues, and chastity an indispensable subclass, or species, of it.

In the overall structure of the moral integrity of the human person, the intellectual virtue of prudence (or practical wisdom) holds primacy among the four cardinal virtues, followed by justice, courage, and temperance. The cardinal virtues are dispositional excellences that enable the realization of the human good according to the order of reason—prudence by identifying and commanding the appropriate specific act, justice by attending to the good of others and hence giving them their due, courage by overcoming fear pertaining to whatever threatens our bodily integrity and existence, and temperance by protecting the inner order from the ever-present power of our internal sense appetites.[21] In this essential order of the cardinal virtues temperance comes to stand in the lowest, least important position. When we consider the concrete interplay of the cardinal virtues, however, that is, in the order of operation, we find an all-important feed-back loop. For the habits of moral virtue correct

[20] Pieper, *Four Cardinal Virtues*, 150.

[21] Aquinas offers a summary of the essential order among the cardinal virtues in a brief passage in the context of his discussion of fortitude in *STh* II-II, q. 123. In article 12 he states: "Now reason's good is man's good; according to Dionysius (*Div. Nom.* iv) prudence, since it is a perfection of reason, has the good essentially: while justice effects this good, since it belongs to justice to establish the order of reason in all human affairs: whereas the other virtues safeguard this good, inasmuch as they moderate the passions, lest they lead man away from reason's good. As to the order of the latter, fortitude holds the first place, because fear of dangers of death has the greastest power to make man recede from the good of reason: and after fortitude comes temperance, since also pleasures of touch excel all others in hindering the good of reason. Now to be a thing essentially ranks before effecting it, and the latter ranks before safeguarding it by removing obstacles thereto. Wherefore among the cardinal virtues, prudence ranks first, justice second, fortitude third, temperance fourth, and after these the other virtues." An even briefer summary can be found in the discussion of temperance in *STh* II-II: "As the philosopher declares (*Ethic.* i. 2) *the good of the many is more godlike than the good of the individual*, wherefore the more a virtue regards the good of the many, the better it is. Now justice and fortitude regard the good of the many more than temperance does, since justice regards the relations between one man and another, while fortitude regards dangers of battle which are endured for the common weal: whereas temperance moderates only the desires and pleasures which affect man himself. Hence it is evident that justice and fortitude are more excellent virtues than temperance: while prudence and the theological virtues are more excellent still" (*STh* II-II, q. 141, a. 8).

the sense appetites, and because of these habits, we desire right ends that, when aided by prudence, allow us to make good judgments. In other words, the proper operation of prudence presupposes proper habituation in justice, courage, and temperance.[22] Consequently, what comes last in the essential order of the cardinal virtues comes first in their order of operation. Inordinate desire for sensual pleasure weakens and obstructs the virtues of courage and justice and, most detrimentally, the proper operation of prudence. Aquinas tersely observes: "As the philosopher states . . . *pleasure above all corrupts the estimate of prudence* [*existimatio prudentiae*], and chiefly sexual pleasure which absorbs the mind and draws it to sensible delight" (*STh* II-II, q. 53, a. 6). Selfless self-discipline and proper measure maintain the inner order of the person against the encroachments of this powerful desire, thus ensuring that prudence arrives at a right estimate. Without the virtue of temperance there simply is no "true and perfect prudence."[23] Impaired prudence issues in a tangibly hampered moral life and consequently in diminished human flourishing.[24]

It is only at this point that we can properly appreciate all the entailments of the feed-back loop between the moral virtues and prudence. The virtue of chastity is indispensable not only for the realization of the virtue of prudence in sexual matters, but also for the undisturbed proper operation of prudence in general. In other words, where the virtue of chastity is feeble and frail, the virtue of prudence will be encumbered and possibly corrupted. But more importantly, where the virtue of chastity is completely wanting—displaced by the vice of intemperance—charity, the love of friendship with God, might very well also be rejected outright. For there are not only venial, but also mortal sins against chastity.

[22] *STh* II-II, q. 47, a. 13, ad 2; *STh* I-II, q. 58, a. 5.

[23] See the pertinent discussion whether prudence can be in the sinner in *STh* II-II, q. 47, a. 13.

[24] It is important to distinguish those persons whose acquired virtue of prudence has been severely impaired and even corrupted by the vice of lust from those whose acquired prudence is simply imperfect. While the deliberations and estimates of the former, especially in the case of the corruption of prudence, turn out to be false, the deliberations and estimates of the latter are limited in scope.

This feed-back loop between temperance and the other cardinal virtues becomes a matter of importance for postlapsarian human existence: after the loss of original righteousness and the withdrawal of the original gift of sanctifying grace, human beings live in an existential predicament in which the acts of the sense appetites, the passions, can revolt at any moment because the rational appetite, the will, has been connatively weakened. Imagine a rider upon a horse that suddenly bolts—either away from a real or imagined danger or toward an enticing pleasure. If the rider does not have firm control of the reins, how will he or she ever reach his or her destination? In sexual matters, without the support of the virtue of chastity, the virtues of prudence and justice cannot properly develop, because they will constantly be left unsettled by the desire for inordinate sexual pleasure—especially if this desire has been habituated into the vice of lust, a particularly damaging subclass of the vice of intemperance.

As already stated, intemperance and lust are vices, because the agent indulges in inordinate sensual pleasures. Therefore the virtue of temperance is not first and foremost about regulating the amount of pleasure to be had ("moderation")—although temperance is *also* about this—but is principally about the pursuit of those pleasures (*delectationes*) that are in accord with the order of reason and related to the twofold final end. In short, pleasure is by no means absent from the exercise of the virtue of temperance. Commenting on Aristotle, Aquinas observes that there are pleasures "characteristic of the temperate man precisely as he enjoys his own activity; and these he does not avoid but rather seeks."[25] As secondary ends are related to the twofold final end, rightly ordered sensual pleasures are concomitant with virtuous activity that is ordered to the twofold final end. Hence, according to Aquinas, the enjoyment of rightly ordered pleasure is integral to the moral life.

[25] VII *Eth. Nic.*, lect. 12 (#1497) (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. C. I. Litzinger, O.P. [Notre Dame, Ind.: Dumb Ox Books, 1993], 464).

II. The Vice of Lust and the Loss of Chastity

Aquinas clarifies the central criterion of inordinate pleasure when he considers lust (*luxuria*) in its broader sense: "Lust is any kind of surfeit" (*luxuria est quaelibet superfluitas*) (*STh* II-II, q. 153, a. 1, ad 1). *Luxuria* in the wider sense is indexed to anything being in excess. Lust signifies the person "debauched with pleasures" (*luxuriosus quasi solutus in voluptates*), as Aquinas tersely quotes from Isidore's *Etymologia*. But Aquinas thinks it right to reserve the term "luxuria" in its specific and precise sense for the kind of sensual pleasure that is most intense—in short, for sexual pleasure. The primary reason for this stricter conception of lust is that temperance and intemperance concern those natural desires (*concupiscentiae naturales*) that are directed to the preservation of human nature: the desires for food and sex (*concupiscentiae ciborum et venereorum*) (*STh* II-II, q. 142, a. 2, ad 2). "Hence," Aquinas states, "temperance is properly about pleasures of food and drink and sexual pleasures. Now, these pleasures result from the sense of touch. Wherefore it follows that temperance is about pleasures of touch" (*STh* II-II, q. 141, a. 4). Touch, the somesthetic sense, is the basis of all the other senses (*STh* I, q. 75, a. 5; *De Veritate*, q. 22, a. 5) and hence holds primacy in respect to all natural desires of the human as a sensual being. Sensual desires and the sensual pleasures human beings seek are so strong because they are so basic to sustaining human nature through nutrition and procreation. Indulging intentionally and regularly in the pleasures of the palate inordinately—intemperance in matters of food—and consequently having acquired the respective *habitus* to do so, constitutes the vice of gluttony. Indulging intentionally and regularly in inordinate sexual pleasures—intemperance in matters of sex—and consequently having acquired the *habitus* to do so, constitutes the vice of lust.[26]

[26] Aquinas treats the important topic of the increase and diminishment of *habitus* in *STh* I-II, qq. 52-53. For a concise treatment of this crucial subject, see Vernon J. Bourke, "The Role of *Habitus* in the Thomistic Metaphysics of Potency and Act," in *Essays in Thomism*, ed. Robert E. Brennan, O.P. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1942), 101-10, 370-73; for a more comprehensive philosophical analysis of *habitus*, see George P. Klubertanz, S.J., *Habits and Virtues* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965); and for the indispensability of *habitus*

Aquinas reckons the effects of gluttony on a person's mind quite differently from the effects of lust: "[Sexual] pleasures . . . more than anything else work the greatest havoc in [one's] mind."[27] While he does not elaborate on this matter in detail, one can surmise that this effect of sexual pleasures is due to their surpassing intensity and to their complex connection with other desires that find their proper realization in conjugal union, desires for intimacy and comfort. The desire for inordinate sexual pleasure, when heeded and habituated as the vice of lust, can—due to the vehemence of the passions to which the vice of lust gives rise—frequently acquire a powerful and even absorbing reality. For this reason, Aquinas tersely states, "intemperance is the chief corruptive of prudence [*intemperantia maxime corrumpit prudentiam*]; wherefore the vices opposed to prudence arise chiefly from lust, which is the principal species of intemperance" (*STh* II-II, q. 153, a. 5, ad 1).

Aquinas's analysis of the vice of lust comprises two further components that are of consequence for our deliberations. First, according to a venerable tradition of patristic and monastic spiritual theology that Aquinas receives and affirms, lust is not only a species of intemperance, but also a capital or principal vice. A capital vice, he argues, is

> one that has a very desirable end, so that through desire for that end, [one] proceeds to commit many sins. . . . [T]he end of lust is [sexual] pleasure, which is very great. Wherefore this pleasure is very desirable as regards the sensitive appetite, both on account of the intensity of the pleasure, and because such like concupiscence is connatural to [the human being]. (*STh* II-II, q. 153, a. 4)

Second, Aquinas distinguishes between inordinate and disordered forms of lust. While the inordinate forms of lust include all forms of an inordinate enjoyment of the pleasure entailed in the sexual act that violate relations with others and hence constitute also

in the context of a fully developed theological virtue ethics, see Romanus Cessario, O.P., *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 2d ed. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 34-44.

[27] "[L]uxuria principaliter quidem est in voluptatibus venereis, quae maxime et praecipue animum hominis resolvunt" (*STh* II-II, q. 153, a. 1, ad 1).

grave sins against justice, the disordered forms of lust betray the natural teleological order of the procreative act and thus constitute "vices against nature" (*vitia contra naturam*) *(STh* II-II, q. 154, a. 12) and sins against God the creator of that natural, teleological order.[28] Confirming Aquinas's important distinction, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: "Sexual pleasure is morally disordered when sought for itself, isolated from its procreative and unitive purposes" (*CCC* 2351). According to Aquinas's distinction and in light of the Church's teaching, the consumption of pornography, undertaken for the end of obtaining sexual pleasure—for oneself and by oneself—from depicted sexual objects and simulated sexual acts, must be understood as an inordinate form of lust that can, however, lead to one of the disordered forms of lust.[29]

There are four entailments of Aquinas's analysis of the capital vice of lust and the loss of chastity that deserve closer consideration. Only by attending to these four entailments do we come to grasp the nature and the extent of the damage that the loss of chastity inflicts upon attaining our twofold final end: the imperfect as well as the perfect happiness to which humanity is ordained.

First, it is worth taking into account that to make a deliberate act of inner consent of *delectatio* in images, scenes, or movies that give rise to sexual lust may in some cases damage and in other cases destroy the virtue of charity, that is, the friendship with God (*STh* II-II, q. 23, a. 1), and with it the infused virtue of chastity.[30]

[28] "Just as the ordering of right reason proceeds from man, so the order of nature is from God Himself; wherefore in sins contrary to nature, whereby the very order of nature is violated, an injury is done to God the Author of nature" (*STh* II-II, q. 154, a. 12, ad 1).

[29] While Aquinas understands disordered forms of lust to be much graver offenses than inordinate forms of lust, in the order of justice, adultery and rape would be considered much graver offenses than masturbation and the consumption of pornography. However, in the order of justice, pornography figures as a grave offense against the dignity of all participants (actors, vendors, viewers, and the public). Finally, in order to maintain a properly balanced view of the whole matter, it is imperative to keep in mind that, according to Aquinas, sexual sins are not the worst; rather, the worst sins are "those which are directly against God, and sins that are injurious to the life of one already born, such as murder" (*STh* II-II, q. 154, a. 3).

[30] In *STh* I-II, q. 74, a. 8, Aquinas states the principle that allows us to demarcate the damage from the destruction of the virtue of charity and with it the infused virtue of chastity: "[T]hat a man in thinking of fornication takes pleasure in the act thought of, is due to his

While the question of what constitutes such a deliberate act is, of course, complex and beyond the scope of this essay, it is apposite to consider at least the central distinction to which any answer will need to conform. It is the distinction between a delectation that is the immediate result of acts of the sense-appetite that occur without the command of reason (*STh* I-II, q. 17, a. 7; *STh* II-II, q. 154, a. 5) and a deliberate act of consent, commanded by reason.[31] It is the deliberate act of consent commanded by reason that is incompatible with the presence of charity in the agent and is, therefore, a mortal sin. But there are other, more subtle and elusive forms of volitional consent that are venial sins, sins that do not immediately destroy the friendship with God. Developing Aquinas's distinction further, Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II, in the above-cited *Love and Responsibility*, helpfully delineates the very fine, but crucially important line between sensual desire and volitional consent:

> Neither sensuality nor even concupiscence is a sin in itself, since only that which derives from the will can be a sin—only an act of conscious and voluntary nature (*voluntarium*). . . . Further, a sensual reaction, or the "stirring of" carnal desire which results from it, and which occurs irrespectively and independently of the will, cannot in themselves be sins. . . . The source of this desire is the power of concupiscence (*appetitus concupiscibilis* as St. Thomas calls it), and so not the will. Concupiscence of the senses tends to become active "wanting," which is an act of the will. The dividing line between the two is however clear.

desire being inclined to this act. Wherefore the fact that a man consents to such a delectation, amounts to nothing less than a consent to the inclination of his appetite to fornication: for no man takes pleasure except in that which is in conformity with his appetite. Now it is a mortal sin, if a man deliberately chooses that his appetite be conformed to what is in itself a mortal sin. Wherefore such a consent to delectation in a mortal sin, is itself a mortal sin." See also *STh* I-II, q. 88, a. 5 ad 2; *STh* II-II, q. 154, a. 4; II *Sent*., d. 24, q. 3, a. 4; *De Verit*., q. 15, a. 4; and *Quodl*. XII, q. 22, a. 1 (Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones Quodlibetales*, ed. Raymund Spiazzi, O.P. [Rome: Marietti, 1949], 238). In these passages Aquinas is touching only briefly on the very important but complex issue of what he calls "consensus in delectationem" and what later moral theologians termed "delectatio morosa," one of the interior sins of lust. The topic deserves a more extensive and nuanced treatment than I can offer in this place. For an informative discussion, see Marie-Michel Labourdette, O.P., *Cours de Théologie Morale*, vol. 15: *La vie sexuelle. La chasteté*, (unpublished manuscript, Toulouse), 170-75.

[31] "[T]he consummation of sin is in the consent of reason. . . . Wherefore if the sin be a mere beginning of sin in the sensuality alone, without attaining to the consent of reason, it is a venial sin on account of the imperfection of the act" (*STh* II-II, q. 35, a. 3).

Concupiscence does not immediately aim at causing the will fully and actively to want the object of sensual desire: passive acquiescence suffices.

Here we stand on the threshold of sin, and we see that concupiscence, which seeks continually to induce the will to cross it, is rightly called the "germ of sin". As soon as the will consents it begins actively to want what is spontaneously "happening" in the senses and the sensual appetites. From then onwards, this is not something merely "happening" to a man, but something which he himself begins actively doing—at first only internally, for the will is in the first place the source of interior acts, of interior "deeds". These deeds have a moral value, are good or evil, and if they are evil we call them sins.[32]

Wojtyła's analysis can easily be applied to the common scenario of someone who, while perusing the Internet, is inadvertently confronted with sexually suggestive or even pornographic imagery that elicits an instantaneous sensual reaction. Following Aquinas, Wojtyła distinguishes between the passive acquiescence to this sensual reaction and the active desire, and between the active desire and the deliberate interior act of consent in delectation commanded by reason (which according to Aquinas does entail taking counsel and making a judgment).[33] It is only the latter "consensus in delectationem" that Aquinas understands to be a mortal sin.[34]

Second, Aquinas offers a morally salient and still pertinent moral phenomenology of the incontinent in distinction from the intemperate person. The temperate person, the person who has the *habitus* of selfless self-discipline and proper measure, finds it easy to abide by the order of reason in matters of food, drink, and sex. In the temperate person the desire for sensual and spiritual

[32] Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II, *Love and Responsibility*, trans. H. T. Willetts (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1981), 161-62.

[33] The virtue of prudence "is *right reason applied to action*," which entails three interior acts: (1) to take counsel (to inquire), (2) to judge what has been discovered by way of inquiry, and (3) to command, that is, to apply to action what has been counseled and judged (*STh* II-II, q. 47, a. 8). Being directed to a false end, a deliberate act of consent in such a delectation is an instance of false prudence (*STh* II-II, q. 47, a. 13). It is, indeed, a failure of prudence in the proper sense.

[34] On the important issue of the intensification and the remission of *habitus*, see Aquinas's detailed treatment in *STh* I-II, qq. 52 and 53. On the complex but relevant topic of the effect of infused virtues on acquired vices, see the instructive essay by Michael S. Sherwin, O.P., "Infused Virtue and the Effects of Acquired Vice: A Test Case for the Thomistic Theory of Infused Cardinal Virtues," *The Thomist* 73 (2009): 29-52.

pleasures is directed to and integrated in the proper pursuit of the final end. In the intemperate person, the desire for sensual pleasures is inordinate; sensual pleasure takes on the character of a final end; the pursuit of what is good for its own sake, the *bonum honestum* according to the order of reason, is abandoned, and consequently the intemperate person is unable to act well with consistency.

Between the temperate and the intemperate stand those who struggle with vehement desires (*STh* II-II, q. 143, a. 1). Those who, while struggling with these strong desires, abide by the order of reason, are continent; they exercise self-control by choosing to perform distinct temperate acts. Those who, while struggling with these strong desires, fall short of the order of reason and fail to exercise acts of temperance, are incontinent. The root of incontinence is a failure of the will. Aquinas helpfully identifies two forms of such a failure of the will, both of which are of immediate relevance to the consumption of pornography: the refusal to think about our acts, which is the sin of impetuosity (*praevolatio*), and the failure to follow through on our own best judgment, which is the sin of weakness (*debilitas*) (*STh* II-II, q. 156, a. 1).

Due to the failure of the will, the incontinent person lacks the power of resistance to sexual pleasures. He or she gives in to a sudden attack of the sexual appetite, but afterwards deeply regrets having been overpowered by sexual passion. The intemperate person, on the contrary, is committed to the vice of lust without moral qualms (*STh* II-II, q. 156, a. 3). In this person, consequently, Aquinas tersely observes, only false prudence is operative: "[W]hoever disposes well of such things as are fitting for an evil end, has false prudence, insofar as that which he takes for an end, is good, not in truth but in appearance. . . . This is the prudence of which the Apostle says (*Rom*. viii. 6): *The prudence* (Douay, *wisdom*) *of the flesh is death*, because . . . it places its ultimate end in the pleasures of the flesh" (*STh* II-II, q. 47, a. 13).[35]

For the incontinent as well as the intemperate person, indulging in the custom of watching the simulacra presented by Internet

[35] See also more extensively *STh* II-II, q. 55, aa. 1 and 2.

pornography may sooner or later issue in a habituated, intensifying "necessity," a compulsion to watch these simulacra again and again.[36] For whatever is experienced as lustful in watching them only lasts a short while and, moreover, subsides over time despite the same stimulus; hence, having the recurring experience of what makes the vice attractive in the first place will require a higher frequency as well as a greater potency. This compulsion works itself out differently in the incontinent and the intemperate.

Third, Aquinas—with the help of Augustine—offers a first step toward a deeper understanding of the reasons why the consumption of Internet pornography can easily become compulsive and thus lead to the slow destruction of moral self-possession: "Concupiscence, if indulged, gathers strength: wherefore Augustine says (*Conf*. viii. 5): *Lust served became a custom, and custom not resisted became necessity*" (*STh* II-II, q. 142, a. 2).[37] Concupiscence indulged and habituated gathers such strength that it takes on the nature of a certain kind of necessity which compels the *arbitrium* in such a way that the attribute "liberum" becomes increasingly vacuous. And this resembles and—for an increasing number of clinicians—actually constitutes

[36] According to Dr. David Kupfer, chairman of the DSM-V task force with the American Psychiatric Association, in 2008 "[s]ex addiction [was] not listed as a disorder in the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), the bible of psychiatric disorders, but it [was] being considered by a work group on non-substance-related addictions for inclusion in the next edition [in 2013]" (Allen Salkin, "No Sympathy for the Sex Addict," *The New York Times,* September 7, 2008); http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/subjects/s/sexual_addiction/index.htm). For a nuanced empirical study that works toward a conceptual clarification of problematic Internet pornography use, see Chad T. Wetterneck et al., "The Role of Sexual Compulsiveness, Impulsivity, and Experiential Avoidance in Internet Pornography Use," *The Psychological Record* 62 (2012), 3-18.

[37] In Maria Boulding's translation Augustine's analysis in *Confessions* 8.5 takes on a new, pertinent ring: "The truth is that disordered lust springs from a perverted will; when lust is pandered to, a habit is formed; when habit is not checked, it hardens into compulsion. These were like interlinking rings forming what I have described as a chain, and my harsh servitude used it to keep me under duress" (St. Augustine, The *Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding, O.S.B., *The Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* I/1 [Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 1997], 192).

addiction.[38] Indeed, what seems most characteristic and paradoxical of compulsive behaviors, such as the regular consumption of pornography, is that there is little delectation found in the simulacra viewed, only an ongoing craving. Evidence suggests that in advanced cases of compulsive perusal, no consummatory pleasure is gained, and the appetitive pleasure, which arises from imaging something desirable, is in need of ever stronger visual stimulation in order to be experienced at all. Eventually, appetitive pleasure likewise ceases to be experienced but continues to be craved.[39]

There obtains, fourth and finally, a subterranean connection between long-standing , illicit sexual pleasures and the corruption of natural reason. Aquinas assumes that long-standing and culturally accepted but per se illicit sexual practices arising from the vice of lust contribute to the corruption of natural reason (*STh* II-II, q. 154, a. 2, ad 1) such that not much if anything besides the first principle of the natural law is naturally accessible to such a culturally corrupted reason. In such a context it requires grace and the moral catechesis of the Church to restore reason to its full created capacities of natural moral reasoning.[40]

[38] For a study by a Christian philosopher that is as innovative as it is thoughtful on how the category of "habit" allows to overcome the simplistic alternatives of "disease" versus "choice" in the understanding of addiction, see Kent Dunnington, *Addiction and Virtue: Beyond the Models of Disease and Choice* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 2011).

[39] A number of articles on Internet pornography, compulsive behaviors, and addiction can be found in the journal *Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity*.

[40] In contemporary late-modern Western culture, the broadly accepted contraceptive mentality, that is, the principled separation of sexual activity from procreation and the redirecting of sexual activity to the primary if not exclusive purpose of sexual pleasure (possibly but not necessarily in combination with the expression of personal affection and intimacy), and the widely shared moral indifference to the unborn human being, arguably indicate a considerable corruption of natural reason. The fact that it is virtually impossible to communicate rationally to those engrossed in the contraceptive mentality that the current transvaluation of morals betrays the gift of life, abandons the order of reason, and is largely borne from the vice of lust might be an indication of how far the corruption of natural reason has already progressed. Hence the familiar and pervasive charge that the Catholic Church's teaching on the procreative and unitive ends of the conjugal act is hopelessly out of touch with the dominant spirit of the time might very well be correct, but for precisely this reason it also betrays the profound corruption of natural reason from which the plaintiff, the dominant spirit of the time, suffers. For this reason the very methodology of empirical-studies-based self-perceived effects of the consumption of pornography is vulnerable to the

If Aquinas is right about these connections, then we should expect just the sort of cultural symptoms documented, for example, by sociologist Jill Manning, who perceives a correlation between the repeated consumption of "cyberporn" and an increased appetite for more graphic types of pornography, a growing number of people struggling with compulsive and addictive sexual behavior, increased marital distress, and risk of separation and divorce.[41] Manning also cites statistics from the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, who in 2002 reported that, for example, 56 percent of divorce cases involved one party having "an obsessive interest in pornographic websites."[42]

III. The Spiritual Root of the Problem: Acedia and Her Daughters

The *ecclesia militans* is continuously faced with the varying consequences of the connative woundedness of the human will and is aware of the truth expressed in the First Letter of John: "[A]ll that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world" (1 John 2:15-16 [RSV]). This inspired exhortation has profoundly influenced subsequent theological reflection on sin and vice from Evagrius of Pontus and John Cassian to Augustine, from Pope Gregory the Great to Thomas Aquinas. A contemporary rehabilitation of the virtue of chastity cannot afford to ignore the classical Christian analysis of the negative spiritual root that gives rise to acts and to vices contrary to and eventually destructive of

self-deceptive assessments of those answering the questionnaires and consequently offer little else than a mirror of a collective and hence largely imperceptible indulgence in the vice of intemperance. For an empirical study whose methodology is vulnerable to such critical questioning, see Gert Martin Hald and Neil M. Malamuth, "Self-perceived Effects of Pornography Consumption," *Archives of Sexual Behaviour* 37 (2008): 614-25.

[41] See Jill C. Manning's testimony for the Hearing on "The Impact of Internet Pornography on Marriage and the Family," Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Property, Committee on Judiciary, United States Senate, Washington D.C., August 2005 (http://s3.amazonaws.com/thf_media/2010/pdf/ManningTST.pdf).

[42] See J. Dedmon, "Is the Internet Bad for Your Marriage? Online Affairs, Pornographic Sites Playing Greater Role in Divorces," 2002 press release from Dilenschneider Group, cited in Jill Manning's testimony above.

chastity. Synthesizing and systematizing the spiritual wisdom of the Church Fathers, Aquinas's moral psychology enables the retrieval of both the nature of chastity and the nature of its spiritual foes.

To understand and appreciate the nature and the indispensability of the virtue of chastity in sexual matters is not necessarily to understand the notoriously elusive negative spiritual root that gives rise to the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh, the typical symptoms of the capital vice of lust, which in turn has further offspring. Identifying this root is a separate task, especially if one holds that in a particular society, such as our own, the lust of the eyes and the flesh is both encouraged and easily facilitated.[43] However, a theological analysis, informed by the moral theology of Thomas Aquinas, of the prevalence of pornography and its addictive nature will not need to get entangled in intricacies of assessing and evaluating contemporary data, but will rather inquire into the spiritual and moral deficiencies that account for this moral problem.

In order to identify the spiritual root of said problem we must turn to a largely forgotten vice, another of the capital vices: *acedia*, sloth, better rendered as "spiritual apathy"[44]—a profound

[43] Consider the *cri de coeur* by the president and C.E.O. of Morality in Media: "Pornography is now more popular than baseball. In fact, it has become America's pastime, and we are awash in it. Porn is on our computers, our smart phones, and our cable or satellite TV. It's common in our hotels and even in many retail stores and gas stations. For many men—and increasingly, women—it is part of their daily lives" (Patrick A. Trueman, "The Pornography Pandemic," *Columbia*, November 2011, 24).

[44] Richard Regan in his translation of *De Malo*: Thomas Aquinas, *On Evil*, trans. Richard Regan, ed. with an introduction and notes by Brian Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 361. Basil Cole rightly observes that "[t]he most neglected capital vice in the literature of spiritual theology in our times is *acedia*" (Basil Cole, O.P., *The Hidden Enemies of the Priesthood: The Contributions of St. Thomas Aquinas* [Staten Island, N.Y.: Society of St. Paul/Alba House, 2007], 215). In order to address this lacuna, a noticeable effort has been undertaken recently to recover a fuller awareness of this particularly damaging vice. See Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, "Resistance to the Demands of Love: Aquinas on the Vice of *Acedia*," *The Thomist* 68 (2004): 173-204; idem, *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009), 79-98; idem, "Aquinas on the Vice of Sloth: Three Interpretive Issues," *The Thomist* 75 (January 2011): 43-64; idem with Colleen McCluskey, and Christina Van Dyke, *Aquinas's Ethics: Metaphysical Foundations, Moral Theory, and Theological Context* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009), 175-81. For an extension of DeYoung's analysis and argument, see Matthew Levering's

sorrow about the spiritual good. In this section, I will first, by way of entry into unfamiliar territory, propose two modern offsprings of *acedia*—boredom, or *ennui*, and *ressentiment*. Next, I will treat *acedia* itself, and finally I will turn to one of this vice's perennial offsprings, what the tradition of patristic and monastic spiritual theology identified as the sixth "daughter" of *acedia*, the "wandering of the mind" (*pervagatio mentis*) (the other five daughters of *acedia* being malice, spite, faint-heartedness, despair, and sluggishness in regard to the commandments).

Acedia, which is concomitant with the loss of hope and charity and with a profound weakening if not loss of faith, is an insidious vice, and today we tend to know it by one of its most common effects: *ennui* or boredom.[45] The vice of spiritual apathy is the aversion and the inward resistance to the interior divine good, charity, through which the Holy Spirit effects inchoately the realization of a person's supernatural orientation to eternal communication in the life and love of the Blessed Trinity. Since this realization is not instantaneous but progressive, the life effected by sanctifying grace (shaped by the theological and the infused moral virtues) always involves the struggle with old sinful patterns. The perfective elevation into the divine good is, consequently, an arduous process that entails a conscious

instructive chapter "Sloth and the Joy of the Resurrection" in his *The Betrayal of Charity: The Sins that Sabotage Divine Love* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2011), 41-62. The indispensable classic study remains Siegfried Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth:* Acedia *in Medieval Thought and Literature* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1967).

[45] *Acedia* is arguably the root cause of the typically modern *Langeweile* of which Martin Heidegger has offered an intriguing phenomenological analysis. Due to the inescapably supernatural character of the extant providential order, *acedia* itself becomes the theological key to Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of boredom. He gains his insights into boredom from a philosophically intentional though theologically unacknowledged stance ("bracketed" by Heidegger's phenomenological method) within the existential horizon of *acedia*. The scope of his analysis coincides with the existential horizon of *Dasein zum Tode* which is nothing but a shrewd philosophical elevation of *acedia* to the constitutive characteristic of *Dasein*, being-in-the-world ("Die Verfallenheit des Daseins an die Welt"). See Martin Heidegger, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik: Welt—Endlichkeit—Einsamkeit* (Freiburger Vorlesung 1929/30), ed. Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1983), 117-249. English: *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics: World, Finitude, Solitude*, trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 78-167.

struggling against and dying to old weaknesses and vices. In short, the process is open to contrariety that issues in aversion and resistance:

> [T]his divine good is a source of sadness for human beings because of the contrariety of the spirit to the flesh, since "the flesh lusts against the spirit," as the Apostle says in Gal. 5:17. And so when desire of the flesh [*affectus carnis*] is dominant in human beings, they have distaste for spiritual good as contrary to their good. (*De Malo*, q. 11, a. 2)[46]

The reference to Galatians 5:17 indicates that the desire of the flesh, the "*affectus carnis*," signifies the lingering effects of sin that form obstacles to the arduous realization of a life transformed and patterned by divine charity. Aquinas is intensely aware that the Pauline "*sarx*" signifies not only an obstacle but an opposition to the divine good. This opposition usually arises from the sense appetites and issues in attacks of the passions. As long as the rational appetite, the will, clings in charity and hope to Christ, the person is able to withstand the opposition arising from the sense appetites.[47] However, failing to rely on charity and hope, a person might acquiesce in the movement of the sense-appetite by giving the consent of reason:

> [T]he movement of sloth is sometimes in the sensuality alone, by reason of the opposition of the flesh to the spirit, and then it is a venial sin; whereas sometimes it reaches to the reason, which consents in the dislike, horror and detestation of the Divine good, on account of the flesh utterly prevailing over the spirit. In this case, it is evident that sloth is a mortal sin. (*STh* II-II, q. 35, a. 3)

Acedia creates a void to be filled not with what one has come to detest, the divine good, but with transient rushes of pleasure—primarily sexual pleasure—to ward off the *ennui* of life

[46] Regan, trans., 365-66.

[47] For a discussion of the complex matter that is as nuanced as it is clear, see Cessario, *Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 117-23. Cessario helpfully points out that "[t]his kind of union . . . can coexist—think of Christ alone with the apostles in the storm (Mk 4:35-41)—with even the most violent movements of the sense appetites" (121).

bereft of its *telos*, the divine good.[48] But the *simulacra* that promise such rushes of pleasure betray. They only increase the craving, breed compulsion, and intensify spiritual apathy. Unchecked, such detestation of the divine good issues in a sadness that cannot remain without consequences, for "no human being can long remain pleasureless and sad."[49] Aquinas perspicaciously observes in *De Malo*:

> [D]ue to the sadness conceived regarding spiritual goods, their minds then wander over the illicit things in which the carnal spirit takes pleasure. And in avoiding such sadness, we note the progression wherein human beings indeed first avoid spiritual goods and then attack them. (*De Malo*, q. 11, a. 4)[50]

The flight from sadness, which begins with avoiding and resisting spiritual goods and ends with attacking them, represents with uncanny accuracy the anti-Christian *ressentiment* typical of secular, post-Christian societies. The collective ideological, cultural, social, and political aversion to the divine good (previously received and embraced) might very well issue in a collective spiritual state of *acedia*.

Hence boredom is only one shoot that springs from the collective *acedia* pervading this secular age. Another one of its shoots is *ressentiment*. Max Scheler, in his influential phenomenology of feeling states, has offered an astute analysis of this distinctly modern spiritual attitude. *Ressentiment* arises from the

[48] For a contemporary, fictional account of addiction to pornography—initially fostered, in large part, by boredom—see Russell Banks, *Lost Memory of Skin* (New York: HarperCollins, 2011). The protagonist—"the Kid"—notes that "[m]aybe what the psychologists and the shrink in prison were trying to get the addicts to overcome was boredom instead of desires and cravings, and in reality the main cause for addiction is being bored" (346). Dunnington's pertinent philosophical analysis of the malaise of late-modern culture echoes Banks's perceptive fictional account. Bereft of the *telos* that the divine good affords, many modern persons suffer from a deep sense of arbitrariness that haunts their decisions. Consequently, "[a]ddictions provide compelling motivation toward specific ends in a way that is otherwise inaccessible to the modern person who can find no final criterion to justify activity in a definite direction. . . . If there is a uniquely modern disease, it is the disease of modern boredom, for which addiction is one of the rare proven antidotes" (Dunnington, *Addiction and Virtue*, 116).

[49] *De Malo*, q. 11, a. 4, citing *Nic. Eth.* 8.5.1157b15-16 (Regan, trans., 369.)

[50] Regan, trans., 370.

weakness of the will and issues in contempt of those moral values one despairs of achieving oneself. And this *ressentiment*, according to Scheler, not only characterizes the modern secular individual but also the most influential strand of modern secular moral theory: it motivates the whole modern subjective theory of moral values, an approach to ethics currently best known as emotivism.[51] If moral values amount to nothing but subjective phenomena of the human mind without independent meaning and existence—a position held by a variety of naturalist, positivist, and pragmatist philosophers—one never can be found lacking in light of an objective standard of moral values.[52] In a chapter entitled "Chastity and Resentment" in his *Love and Responsibility*, Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II advances Scheler's analysis by instructively relating it to and differentiating it from Aquinas's analysis of *acedia*:

> Resentment possesses . . . the distinctive characteristics of the cardinal sin called sloth. St. Thomas defines sloth (*acedia*) as 'a sadness arising from the fact that the good is difficult'. This sadness, far from denying the good, indirectly helps to keep respect for it alive in the soul. Resentment, however, does not stop at this: it not only distorts the features of the good but devalues that which rightly deserves respect, so that man need not struggle to raise himself to the level of the true good, but can 'light-heartedly' recognize as good only what suits him, what

[51] For two of the most incisive and by now classical criticisms of emotivism in the English-speaking context, see C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (repr.; San Francisco: HarperOne, 2001); and Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3d ed. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

[52] "The *ressentiment*-laden man, who in his insufficiency is oppressed, tormented, and frightened by the negative judgment of his existence which flows from an *objective* hierarchy of values—and who is secretly aware of the arbitrary and distorted character of his own valuations—'transvalues' the idea of value itself by *denying* the existence of such an objective hierarchy. . . . The man of *ressentiment* . . . wreaks vengeance on the idea whose test he cannot stand by pulling it down to the level of his factual condition. Thus his awareness of sin and nothingness explodes the beautiful structure of the world of values, debasing the idea for the sake of an illusory cure. 'All values, after all, are "only" relative and "subjective"—they vary with the individual, with desire, race, people, etc.'" (Max Scheler, *Ressentiment*, ed. with introduction by Lewis A. Coser, trans. William W. Holdheim [New York: Cronwell-Collier, 1961], 145-46. The original work is *Über Ressentiment und moralisches Werturteil* [Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann, 1912], 77-78.) There is hardly any other place in modern secular society more thoroughly penetrated by *ressentiment* than the late-modern, secular research university. There is also hardly any other place where the virtue of chastity is met with such unqualified contempt of *ressentiment*.

is convenient and comfortable for him. Resentment is a feature of the subjective mentality: pleasure takes the place of superior values.[53]

In other words, while its root condition is spiritual apathy, the typically modern condition of *ressentiment* carries the inner logic of *acedia* further—to contempt of what is truly good and to cleaving to what is individually agreeable. Therefore, a proper appreciation of the dynamics characteristic of this *ressentiment* goes a long way toward helping us understand a large part of the motivation behind the widespread maligning of chastity in contemporary culture: the true and objective good inherent in the virtue of chastity indicates an objective moral standard that amounts to a salient critique of the prevalent moral relativism and subjectivism in matters of human sexuality.

I shall now turn from the consideration of *acedia* itself to her six classical "daughters." For if one consults the spiritual wisdom of the Church Fathers, one quickly learns that the capital vice of *acedia* rarely comes alone, but issues in other vices that persons affected by *ressentiment* are especially prone to develop. Free from the modern penchant for originality, Aquinas turns to the theological authority of Pope Gregory the Great, who in his *Moralia in Job* famously assigns to the vice of spiritual apathy the six daughters of malice, spite, faint-heartedness, despair, and sluggishness in regard to the commandments, and the wandering of the mind after unlawful things.[54]

[53] Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 143-44.

[54] The pertinent section from Pope Gregory's *Moralia in Job* can be found in volume 3, part 2 (31.87-88; pp. 489-91) of the only extant English translation of this important work: S. Gregory the Great, *Morals on the Book of Job*, trans. James Bliss, in *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, anterior to the divisions of the East and the West*, trans. Members of the Church of England, vols. 18, 21, 23, and 31 (Oxford: John Henry Parker; London: F. and J. Rivington, 1844-50): "From melancholy there arise malice, rancor, cowardice, despair, slothfulness in fulfilling the commands, and a wandering of the mind after unlawful objects" (490). It is not without interest for our topic that in Gregory's grammar *tristitia*, translated as "melancholy," holds the place of *acedia* and that despair (*desperatio*) is one of its consequences. For the Latin original, see *Sancti Gregorii Magni Moralia in Job*, ed. Marc Adriaen, lib. 23-35, *CCSL* 143B (Turnhout: Brepols, 1985), 1610, ll. 28-30: "De tristitia, malitia, rancor, pusillanimitas, desperatio, torpor circa praecepta, uagatio mentis erga illicita nascitur." For an instructive study that makes the convincing case that Gregory's *Moralia in Job* constitutes a theologically still relevant Christological and ecclesiological

This *pervagatio mentis*, this wandering of the mind, takes initial shape in one of its subspecies, a vice hardly anymore recognized as such: *curiositas*. Curiosity is the first allegedly innocent step that can soon lead to habitual pornographic voyeurism and addiction. In his brief but incisive treatment of the vice of curiosity, Aquinas lets Augustine deliver the authoritative principle: "Concupiscence of the eyes makes [one] curious" (*STh* II-II, q. 167, a. 2, s.c.).[55] The scriptural authority adduced is the already quoted 1 John 2:16. In his response, Aquinas regards the inordinate and undisciplined consideration of sensible things as sinful, first, "when the sensible knowledge is not directed to something useful, but turns [one] away from some useful consideration," and second, "when the knowledge of sensible things is directed to something harmful, as looking on a woman [or a man] is directed to lust" (*STh* II-II, q. 167, a. 2). In his response to an objection it almost seems as if Aquinas had a prophetic knowledge of the future rise of Internet pornography: "Sight-seeing [*inspectio*

commentary on the book of Job in the form of a spiritual exegesis inspired by Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*, see Katherina Greschat, *Die Moralia in Job Gregor des Großen: Ein christologisch-ekklesiologischer Kommentar* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005).

[55] In *De Vera Religione*, completed on the eve of his priestly ordination (390), Augustine engages in a lengthy discussion of curiosity (*De ver. rel.* 38.69-54.106) in the context of the threefold concupiscence of carnal desire, pride, and curiosity, a triad largely inspired by 1 John 2:16 (*De ver. rel.* 38.70): "Here those three vices are signified, because by the lust of the flesh the lovers of the lowest kind of pleasure are signified, by the lust of the eyes the curious and the inquisitive, by worldly ambition the proud" (*True Religion* [*De vera religione*], trans. Edmund Hill, O.P., *The Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* I/8 (Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2005), 77. In his late homilies on the first epistle of St. John, Augustine emphasizes the wide scope of curiosity. In light of the items named one might surmise that, had Augustine known about Internet pornography, its consumption might very well have made this list: "He calls all curiosity the desire of the eyes. How extensive is curiosity? It is in spectacles, in theatres, in the devil's sacraments, in magic, in evil deeds" (*Homilies on the First Epistle of John* [*Tractatus in Epistolam Joannis ad Parthos*], trans. Boniface Ramsey, *The Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* III/14 [Hyde Park, N.Y.: New City Press, 2008], 49.) For an illuminating study on curiosity in Augustine's thought, see Joseph Torchia, O.P., *Restless Mind: Curiositas & the Scope of Inquiry in St. Augustine's Psychology* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2013; and for a profound meditation on intellectual appetite *ad mentem S. Augustini*, see Paul J. Griffiths, *Intellectual Appetite: A Theological Grammar* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2009). Chapter 11, "Spectacle," and chapter 12, "Novelty," are especially pertinent. Both circle around curiosity and unfold in highly instructive ways pertinent aspects of Augustine's thought from the latter part of *De Vera Religione*.

spectaculorum] becomes sinful, when it renders [one] prone to the vices of lust and cruelty on account of things [one] sees represented. Hence Chrysostom says that such sights make [people] adulterers and shameless" (*STh* II-II, q. 167, a. 2, ad 2).[56]

In his *Confessions*, Augustine offers a strikingly powerful analysis of this pernicious dynamic, a dynamic that comes to new life in Maria Boulding's gripping translation. In a psychologically intriguing passage in book 6 of the *Confessions*, Augustine narrates an event in the life of his close friend Alypius—an event that caused Alypius being "assailed by an entirely unexpected craving for gladiatorial entertainments."[57] Dragged by some fellow-students to the stadium to watch gladiatorial fights, Alypius determines to keep his eyes shut and his mind detached from the occurrences around him:

> When they arrived and settled themselves in what seats they could find, the whole place was heaving with thoroughly brutal pleasure. He kept the gateway of his eyes closed, forbidding his mind to go out that way to such evils. If only he could have stopped his ears, too! At a certain tense moment in the fight a huge roar from the entire crowd beat upon him. He was overwhelmed by curiosity, and on the excuse that he would be prepared to condemn and rise above whatever was happening even if he saw it, he opened his eyes, and suffered a more grievous wound in his soul than the gladiator he wished to see had received in his body. . . . As he saw the blood he gulped the brutality along with it; he did not turn away but fixed his gaze there and drank in the frenzy, not aware of what he was doing, reveling in the wicked contest and intoxicated on sanguinary pleasure. . . . What more need be said? He watched, he shouted, he grew hot with excitement, he carried away with him a madness that lured him back again not only in the company of those by whom he had initially been dragged along but even before them, dragged along others.[58]

[56] John Chrysostom, *In Matth*., hom. 6 (*Patrologia Graeca*, 57:72).

[57] Augustine, *Confessions* 6.8 (Boulding, trans., 146).

[58] *Confessions* 6.8 (Boulding, trans., 146-47). Contrary to certain versions of contemporary pop-psychology, indulging in "sight-seeing," in the *inspectio spectaculorum*, does not serve as an innocuous (or at least less damaging) outlet for urges that might otherwise be lived out. (It has been suggested by some such pop-psychologists that freely making available child-porn on the Internet would reduce child sex crimes.) Augustine's keen psychological insight into the unexpected craving that befell Alypius should serve as a sobering warning.

The causal connection between curiosity, the visual reception of scenes of intense violence that elicit an overpowering reaction of the passions—sanguinary pleasure—in the soul, the passive acquiescence in the evil perceived and the resulting powerful craving for more scenes that would elicit sanguinary pleasure—all of this matches with remarkable accuracy the personal narratives of compulsive consumption of pornography.[59]

It is a perennial truth that the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh feed each other. The concupiscence of the eyes inflames the concupiscence of the flesh—and vice versa—and unchecked concupiscence lived out is nothing but the sin of intemperance, the willful abandoning of the virtue of temperance, that is, of selfless self-discipline and proper measure (see *STh* II-II, q. 142, a. 2).

IV. A Spiritual Remedy Proposed

On the threshold of my concluding section, it might be of help to recapitulate the main steps of the argument *ad mentem S. Thomae*. In the first section, I demonstrated the indispensability of chastity for genuine human flourishing in light of our twofold final end and chastity's significance in relation to the proper operation of prudence. In the second section, I adumbrated the vice of lust and described the ways chastity can break down over time and lust become a habit. In the third section, I probed the spiritual root cause of the problem, the capital vice of *acedia* and its various offshoots. In this fourth and final section I shall consider the moral and spiritual resources available to uproot the interrelated capital sins of *acedia* and lust and sever their various spiritual offshoots, and thereby address the forces that issue in the consumption of pornography. I will end by proposing one particular spiritual remedy that focuses on the root cause of *acedia* and attends positively to the virtue of chastity.

[59] See the website of *Morals in Media* (http://www.moralityinmedia.org/) for such accounts, and also a particularly instructive account in Norman Doidge, M.D., *The Brain That Changes Itself: Stories of Personal Triumph from the Frontiers of Brain Science* (New York: Vintage, 2007), 109-12.

Before considering such pertinent moral and spiritual resources, it is apposite to recall the Thomistic framework established in the first section. The proper starting point afforded by Aquinas's moral theology is *concupiscentia*, the natural inclination to procreative sexual union and the concomitant delectable good of sexual pleasure. Pornography consumption is vicious not because *concupiscentia* is evil, but because a delectable good, sexual intimacy and procreative union, is pursued in a gravely inordinate way, a way that not only offends against justice, charity, and chastity, but that is also ultimately life-denying. Indulging in *acedia*, boredom, and *ressentiment*, the consumer of pornography still seeks some good, a gravely misplaced good, but a good nonetheless. It is in virtue of the enduring integrity of the fundamental structure of the natural inclination toward the good fitting human nature (the intelligible good and the delectable good) that the proposed moral and spiritual resources enable the human being to turn from the misplaced goods sought inordinately to the twofold final end of the human being that encompasses the imperfect happiness of genuine, but finite human flourishing as well as the perfect happiness of life with and in God. The gravity of the concern gives justifiable urge to the quest for a proximate and sustainable solution, and—irrespective of the time needed—each solution must be in accord with the dignity of the human person and hence with the order of reason. Recall that the order of reason comprises nature as well as grace. Hence, there are two distinct, though tightly interwoven kinds of resources available. The first kind pertains to the natural capacity to address challenging, difficult, and potentially threatening situations by way of the moral virtue of courage or fortitude; the second kind pertains to sanctifying grace and the infused moral virtues.

The cardinal virtue of courage has its root in the basic human capacity of resilience; courage persists in the good of reason and orders the irascible power to acts that strive to achieve a difficult good (*bonum arduum*) that accords with the dignity of the human person. We need to keep in mind that it is axiomatic for Aquinas that the kind of virtuous life that accords with human dignity and with the ordination to eternal communion with the Blessed Trinity

involves in principle the striving after a difficult good. To put the matter differently, the human capacity of resilience and the corresponding virtue of courage are indispensable *in via* to the pursuit and achievement of the twofold final end to which humanity is ordained.[60] In *De Veritate*, Aquinas offers what might arguably be considered a prime example of mobilizing the hidden resources of resilience:

> No habit corrupts all the powers of the soul. Consequently, when one power is corrupted by a habit, [one] is led by any rectitude that remains in the other powers to ponder and to take action against that habit. If, for example, someone has his concupiscible power corrupted by the habit of lust, he is urged by the irascible power to attempt something hard, and its exercise will take away the softness of lust. (*De Verit*., q. 24, a. 10)[61]

What Aquinas has in mind is that a grave obstacle in the way of pursuing the *bonum arduum*—having been corrupted by the habit of lust, for example—elicits from the virtue of courage acts of resilience that will contribute to the diminishment of the habit of lust such that prudence, whose estimates had become erroneous by being absorbed by sensual pleasure, can increasingly coordinate the acts of resilience into coherent strategies. Such strategies of resilience are characteristic of the incontinent person, who still has sufficient rectitude "in the other powers to ponder and to take action against that habit."

Aquinas's recommendation exemplifies the realism of his moral psychology and, more importantly, offers a discipline available in

[60] In his important study *Resilience and the Virtue of Fortitude: Aquinas in Dialogue with the Psychosocial Sciences* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), Craig Steven Titus offers a helpful definition of resilience that comprises the physiological, psychosocial, and spiritual dimensions of the human person: "First, resilience is the ability to cope in adverse conditions; it endures, minimizes, or overcomes hardships. Second, it consists in resisting destructive pressures on the human person's physiological, psychosocial, and spiritual life; that is, it maintains capacities in the face of challenges, threats, and loss. Third, resilience creatively constructs and adapts after adversity; it implies recovering with maturity, confidence, and wisdom to lead a meaningful and productive life" (29). One central aspect in what Titus calls a "composite definition" is that resilience encompasses the full range of the order of reason, nature and grace.

[61] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Truth*. vol. 3, *Questions XXI-XXIX*, trans. Robert W. Schmidt, S.J. (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1994), 179.

principle to everyone. However, some cases, where the consumption of pornography has become deeply compulsive, call for measures that reach deeper than the courageous application of rigorous self-discipline and the equally courageous concentration of all of one's powers on an arduous good to be achieved. The *habitus* might already be too deeply rooted and might have already developed too severe a compulsiveness for a remaining rectitude in other powers "to ponder and to take action against that habit." Hence, the strategy of resilience—guided by prudence and courage—might entail the restoration of the corrupted power by way of counseling or therapy.[62] Such an effort becomes itself the pursuit of a proximate difficult good the end of which is the removal of the obstacle that encumbers and possibly even undercuts the pursuit of the moral life and the friendship with God.

But in the case of the Christian, resilience also has an important spiritual dimension, and this is the awareness that the rectitude of a corrupted power is restored from above. One central characteristic of resilience and its moral correlative, the virtue of courage, is the capacity to take initiative (*aggredi*). In *Resilience and the Virtue of Fortitude*, Craig Steven Titus not only demonstrates convincingly the intimate link between resilience and courage, but also, and more importantly, points out how deeply involved the passion of hope and, in the case of the Christian, especially the theological virtue of hope are in the exercise of resilience as guided by prudence and courage.[63] The theological virtue of hope, first and foremost, is a potent spiritual medicine against *acedia*, and against the despair to which spiritual apathy can lead.

[62] Here is the proper instance to emphasize the role of an accountability partner or of an accountability community. The importance of personal friendship must be emphasized at this point and the centrality of recovering a vision of the good that surpasses the alleged good that is sought in the compulsive perusal of Internet pornography. For a compelling account of drawing upon the therapeutic model of the twelve-step movement and at the same time transcending it into a vision of transformative friendships, see Dunnington, *Addiction and Virtue*.

[63] Titus, *Resilience and the Virtue of Fortitude*, 146.

By thematizing the infused virtue of hope I have already anticipated the second kind of resource, the one on which the Christian should rely first and foremost—sanctifying grace and the infused moral virtues. The theological virtue of hope relies on the help that comes from divine omnipotence, resting on the insight of faith that nothing is impossible for God, especially God's mercy.

I have established above that in the extant providential order, due to the wounds of original sin, chastity is restored, preserved, and perfected from above, that is, by way of healing and sanctifying grace. This restoration, preservation, and perfection of chastity is greatly aided by what Aquinas calls the "general virtue" of chastity, or "spiritual chastity":

> [T]he spiritual union of the mind with certain things conduces to a pleasure which is the matter of a spiritual chastity metaphorically speaking, as well as of a spiritual fornication likewise metaphorically so called. For if the human mind delight in the spiritual union with that to which it behooves it to be united, namely God, and refrains from delighting in union with other things against the requirements of the order established by God, this may be called a spiritual chastity. . . . Taking chastity in this sense, it is a general virtue, because every virtue withdraws the human mind from delighting in a union with unlawful things. Nevertheless, the essence of this chastity consists principally in charity and the other theological virtues, whereby the human mind is united to God. (*STh* II-II, q. 151, a. 2)

Spiritual chastity arises directly from the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, which unite the human mind to God. As a general virtue, spiritual chastity qualifies the other virtues such that in their exercise the spiritual union of the mind with God and with everything that is consonant with the will of God and the order established by God is preserved.[64] The proper exercise of the other virtues in union with each other entails that "every virtue withdraws the human mind from delighting in a union with

[64] Spiritual chastity fosters the spiritual union with the one whom Aquinas calls "our wisest and greatest friend" and makes one cleave to his counsels: "The counsels of a wise friend are of great use, according to Prov. 27:9: *Ointment and perfumes rejoice the heart: and the good counsels of a friend rejoice the soul.* But Christ is our wisest and greatest friend. Therefore His counsels are supremely useful and becoming" (*STh* I-II, q. 108, a. 4, s.c.).

unlawful things." Put differently, the general virtue of chastity is an immediate entailment of the friendship with God that is realized by the union of mutual charity between God and the Christian. Spiritual chastity preserves this friendship from the slightest betrayal of the beloved friend by thought, intention, or action. Consequently, it is spiritual chastity that protects the Christian from the profound spiritual betrayal at the very depth of the human soul, the detestation of the divine good and consequently of the very friendship with God.

But if spiritual chastity is to be fortified after being weakened, it needs potent medicine—and that medicine can be found in an active and persistent discipline of prayer. The restoration and protection of chastity, however, call especially for *communal* intercessory prayers. For such communal practices of prayer acknowledge explicitly the fact that the restoration and protection of chastity depend on the providence and grace of God. Moreover, in virtue of the fact that prayers of petition are means through which divine predestination is fulfilled with certainty (*certitudinaliter*),[65] these communal practices of prayer rely explicitly on the prayers of the Mother of God, the saints, and the faithful.

In conclusion, I shall propose one such communal practice and discipline.[66] I regard it as one of the most important spiritual initiatives that most directly addresses the problem of pornography (not at its contemporary shiny electronic surface but at its hidden spiritual root): the Angelic Warfare Confraternity promoted by the Order of Preachers. This confraternity "seeks to foster the connection between chastity and the other acquired and infused virtues, especially charity; which enables one to love and

[65] *STh* I, q. 23, a. 8; *STh* II-II, q. 83, a. 2. See also *STh* II-II, q. 83, a. 11, ad 2: "The saints impetrate whatever God wishes to take place through their prayers: and they pray for that which they deem will be granted through their prayers according to God's will."

[66] I understand this practice of prayer to be a spiritual discipline that is categorically different from and not a substitute for the kind of counseling or therapy advisable for persons who experience what clinicians might be increasingly inclined to diagnose as a form of gravely compulsive behavior, indeed, as an addiction. Because the root of the problem is a spiritual one, the healing from the addictive behavior will, however, ultimately be overcome only when the negative spiritual root (*acedia* and her daughters) is eradicated. It is the latter that the practice of prayer addresses.

reverence [one's] own body as well as the bodies of others."[67] The members of the Angelic Warfare Confraternity engage in a disciplined practice of daily prayer and support each other in prayer while they draw upon the intercessions of the Seat of Wisdom, the Mother of God, and on St. Thomas Aquinas, the confraternity's patron saint. Far from being a convenient but inconsequential outlet of pious and prudish impulses, the Confraternity's practice of prayer reflects a pertinent theological truth about the efficaciousness of prayer. As Aquinas states: "[S]ince prayers offered for others proceed from charity . . . the greater the charity of the saints in heaven, the more they pray for wayfarers, since the latter can be helped by prayers: and the more closely they are united with God, the more are their prayers efficacious" (*STh* II-II, q. 83, a. 11). In order to protect and liberate ourselves from the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, we might pray:

> Dear Jesus, I know that every perfect gift and especially that of chastity depends on the power of your Providence. Without you, a mere creature can do nothing. Therefore, I beg you to defend by your grace the chastity and purity of my body and soul. And if I have ever imagined or felt anything that can stain my chastity and purity, blot it out, Supreme Lord of my powers, that I may advance with a pure heart in your love and service, offering myself on the most pure altar of your divinity all the days of my life. Amen.[68]

In *Love and Responsibility*, Karol Wojtyła stresses that for virtue to be "rehabilitated" it must be "made welcome in the human soul, the human will. If not it ceases to have any real

[67] Fr. Brian T. Mullady, O.P., *The Angelic Warfare Confraternity*, 4th ed. (New Hope, Ky.: The St. Martin de Porres Lay Dominicans, 2006), 25. More information about the Angelic Warfare Confraternity can be found at http://www.angelicwarfare.org.

[68] Ibid., 32. These prayers are propitious not only for Christians who pray for themselves and for each other, but also as intercessory prayers for a pornographic culture and especially for those who are not motivated to pray or who may not be Christians. The prayers of the Angelic Warfare Confraternity include the following fifteen general petitions: "1. For our social and cultural climate; 2. For our relationships; 3. For modesty in dress and movements; 4. For our five senses; 5. For our sensuality; 6. For our imagination; 7. For our memory; 8. For our power of estimation; 9. For our affectivity; 10. For our intellect; 11. For our will; 12. For our conscience; 13. For our hearts; 14. For self-surrender; 15. For love."

existence."[69] If we are to benefit from a spiritual union of the mind with God and with everything that is consonant with the will of God and the order established by God, then spiritual chastity is needed. And in order to sustain spiritual chastity, an intentional discipline of prayer is essential. For "[b]y praying [one] surrenders [one's] mind to God, since [one] subjects it to Him with reverence and, so to speak, presents it to Him" (*STh* II-II, q. 83, a. 3, ad 3).

The essay has now come full circle. In the first part, I argued that in light of the twofold final end of the human being the virtue of chastity turns out to be indispensable for genuine human flourishing. Moreover, I showed that Aquinas makes a compelling case that for its proper operation the virtue of prudence relies significantly upon the virtue of temperance and, in particular, the virtue of chastity. In the second part, I undertook a form of moral *ressourcement* by recovering Aquinas's analysis of the vice of lust and by showing how Aquinas's moral psychology assists in understanding how the breakdown of chastity and the habituation in lust ensue. In light of this analysis, I argued in the third part that the spiritual root cause of the pervasive contemporary consumption of pornography is the capital vice of *acedia* and its various offshoots. In the fourth and final part, I identified the moral and spiritual resources that in light of Aquinas's moral theology hold the best promise to uproot *acedia* and lust and to restore, protect, and perfect the virtue of chastity. And the last matters greatly. For the virtue of chastity is a principal protector of human dignity. In the order of action, conjugal chastity realizes one's own human dignity and acknowledges the dignity of one's spouse. More comprehensively, and pertaining to all persons, it is the chaste person whose gaze can genuinely behold and affirm the dignity of the other.[70] Last but not least, it is the chaste person who is free from the lure of the enticing, the titillating, the

[69] Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, 143.

[70] For the most congenial and influential recent vindication and development of Aquinas's teaching on the moral integrity of the person and the indispensability of the virtue of chastity by way of a biblical theological commentary, see Bl. Pope John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. and introduced by Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2006), esp. 225-78. Especially pertinent is the section "The Ethos of the Body in Art and Media" (364-67).

demeaning, and the base and who is, hence, free to utilize the Internet, the cell-phone, or the iPod as what they are—nothing but subordinate means in the service of ends determined by the virtue of prudence in accord with the order of reason.[71] In a culture of excess the chaste person is the truly free person.

[71] For their critical and constructive comments upon earlier versions of this essay I thank Romanus Cessario, O.P., Paul Griffiths, Judith Heyhoe, Nancy Heitzenrater Hütter, Warren Kinghorn, Greg Robson, Miguel Romero, and an anonymous peer reviewer for *The Thomist*.

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THE NATURAL ORDERING TO MARRIAGE AS FOUNDATION AND NORM FOR SACRAMENTAL MARRIAGE

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GRACE PERFECTS NATURE, as the oft-quoted Thomist adage goes. If this is true anywhere, it is nowhere more so than in the case of marriage, an institution that belongs to the order of nature as owing to the natural law and which Christ, wishing to grant it its proper share in the economy of salvation, has at the same time elevated to the level of a sacrament. In short, all that belongs to marriage as a natural institution belongs also to sacramental marriage, even if this latter far exceeds the former in what it signifies and in its superadded elements. The intelligibility of sacramental marriage can be retained, then, only with reference to natural marriage as its norm and foundation. More specifically, since sacramental grace—which St. Thomas Aquinas calls the *res tantum* of the sacraments—has a twofold aim, namely, to heal and to elevate or divinize, we can understand exactly what is being healed and divinized in the particular case of the sacrament of matrimony only if we first gain a sufficient grasp of the proximate and natural ends of marriage (its natural teleology).

In what follows, and taking my chief inspiration from Aquinas, I propose to accomplish this on two counts: first, by arguing that marriage (natural marriage) comprises the joint goods of procreation and unitive love as its proximate and proportionate natural ends; and, second, by arguing that the healing and divinizing power of the sacrament of marriage (the *res tantum*) targets these same joint goods, since both suffer acutely under the

burden of sin. In a word, I shall argue that Christ, wishing that married partners attain the happiness in marriage they desire, has given the natural institution of marriage, of which he is likewise the author, a share in the fruits of his redemption, inasmuch as the grace of the sacrament of matrimony transforms this institution's intrinsic ordering to procreation and unitive love. Throughout, I shall attempt both to ground myself in the thought of Aquinas and to offer a faithful adaptation of the Dominican Master's thought.

I. Marriage as a Natural, Procreative-Unitive Institution

Human sexuality shares in a special way in our hylemorphic constitution as body-soul composite beings. First and foremost, it is primarily as embodied that we own a sexed nature in the first place. Indeed, the very basis of the sexual differentiation between male and female, obviously the distinguishing mark of sexuality as such, is our animal bodiliness, as seen in the simple biological fact that the sex chromosomal complement determines one's sex. In brief, without our bodiliness, without our animality, we have no truly satisfactory way of explaining the male-female sexual complement. Human sexuality implies embodied altereity, embodied complementarity.

While this point may seem incontrovertible, especially as we consider it in light of the entire animal kingdom, we should not take it for granted, since one would search in vain for references to human bodiliness in certain Cartesian-styled definitions of human sexuality that are in circulation today (e.g., "Sexuality refers to an intimate aspect of identity through which human beings experience an understanding of self and connectedness to others, the world, and God").[1] The point holds as well for those well-intentioned Catholic moralists who are in good standing with the Church but who, representing the "personalist" school of thought, locate the ground of human sexuality not in our embodied animality per se, but in the Trinitarian relations;

[1] This comes from the University of Notre Dame, whose Gender Relations Center, in its 2009 brochure, answers the question "What is sexuality?" with the quoted statement. This brochure boasts that Notre Dame's Gender Relations Center "is the first and only office of its kind within collegiate student affairs nationwide."

maleness and femaleness, they argue, should be looked upon as strict relational properties constitutive of personhood, like the Trinitarian relation of Father and Son, rather than as constitutive of our embodied, animal-like nature.

Now, it is obvious that sexual dimorphism, manifested primarily in the biological complementarity of male and female genitalia, exists for the sake of procreation. Since human sexuality arises immediately, and thus essentially, upon the body, upon our animality, human sexuality owns an intrinsic teleological ordering to procreation.[2]

However, if we say human sexuality is ordered exclusively to procreation, we distinguish in no way the meaning and purpose of our sexuality from that of the rest of the animal kingdom. We are not "centaur-like" creatures lacking integration, where the animal in us remains isolated in a subrational sphere of activity. To be genuinely *human*, our sexuality must share in what is unique and noblest in us; it must be integrated into the totality of our lives as rationally ensouled embodied beings. As matter is for the sake of form, as the body is for the sake of the soul, as lower is for the sake of the higher, so is human sexuality for the sake of the soul's highest, noblest functions: intellectual knowing and loving. Sexuality implies, then, not only the offering of one's (procreative) body, but the offering of one's entire self in the deepest bonds of knowledge and love, in the deepest bonds of personal communion and friendship.

Therefore, we can say that human sexuality owns an intrinsic teleological ordering not simply to procreation, but also to unitive love (to the "love-making" end). Human sexuality, in its primary ordering to procreation as owing to the body, is at the same time ordered essentially to personal, unitive love as expressive of our rationality. And while it is true that Aquinas the medieval Scholastic does not name this latter ordering "personal" or "unitive," he has nearly the equivalent. He affirms, for instance, that "the form of marriage" (*forma matrimonii*) consists in an

[2] This is a very brief summary of what Aquinas argues in *De ente et essentia*, cc. 5-6. For a fuller treatment of this, see my "The 'Inseparable Connection' between Procreation and Unitive Love (*Humanae Vitae*, §12) and Thomistic Hylemorphic Anthropology," *Nova et Vetera* 6, English edition (2008): 731-64.

"indivisible union of souls" (*in quadam indivisibili coniunctione animorum*), and that marriage constitutes a "society of domestic fellowship" (*domesticae conversationis consortium*).[3] These denominations approximate, and to a certain extent encapsulate, what the classical tradition, beginning with St. Augustine, calls the "secondary" (read: "personalist") goods of marriage: first, life partnership (or mutual help); second, sexual fulfillment (or remedy for concupiscence); and, third, conjugal love.[4]

Though we can distinguish the two essential orderings of our sexuality, to procreation and to unitive love, it is imperative that we avoid separating the two, just as we must avoid separating body from soul. As the human being is a fundamental unity, as each human individual is his material body *and* his immaterial rational soul, so is human sexuality a fundamental unity of the procreative (expressive of the bodily) and the unitive (expressive of our rationality).

Only marriage (heterosexual marriage) unites the procreative and unitive, as corresponding to the substantial union of body and soul. We can therefore say that marriage, nuptiality, marks the intrinsic and proportionate teleological meaning of human sexuality. Better yet, human sexuality has but one end, marriage, with its two proximate and complementary ends: the procreative (expressive of the body) and the unitive (expressive of the soul). Georges Cottier, theologian of the pontifical household under Pope John Paul II, calls sex the "great paradox" in that it symbolizes the paradoxical union of body and soul in man.[5]

[3] The form of marriage as an indivisible union of souls comes in *STh* III, q. 29, a. 2, while *domesticae conversationis consortium* appears in *Summa contra Gentiles* III, c. 123. One also finds Aquinas calling marriage a "conjugal society" (*associatio matrimonium*) in *STh* Suppl., q. 41, a. 1 (reproduced from IV *Sent*., d. 26, q. 1, a. 1). See also *STh* II-II, q. 26, a. 11. For a definitive treatment of love in Aquinas's thought, see Michael Sherwin, *By Knowledge and by Love: Charity and Knowledge in the Moral Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005). See aso Peter Kwasniewski, "The Ecstasy of Love in Aquinas's *Commentary on the Sentences*," *Angelicum* 83 (2006): 87-93; and Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas* (London: Routledge, 2003), esp. 277-306.

[4] These secondary goods are indeed called "personalist" by the moralists John C. Ford and Gerald Kelly, *Contemporary Moral Theology,* vol. 2: *Marriage Questions* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1963), 38-39, and 75-76.

[5] Cottier, *Défis éthiques* (Saint-Maurice, Switzerland: Editions Saint-Augustin, 1996), 25.

Now, when we bring natural law into the picture, we see the proper moral thrust of this truth.[6] For, when in natural law parlance we speak of the natural inclinations, we are affirming the fundamental reality that we are teleologically "hard wired," so to speak, to certain goods that God the author of our nature intends us to pursue. And there is one natural inclination that pertains immediately to our sexuality, namely, the inclination to procreation and to the rearing of children. Yet this inclination, which links us to the animal kingdom, remains in need of finalization, inasmuch as it must be integrated into the higher natural inclinations, commensurate with our rationality, if it is to serve our ultimate moral good.

This integration and finalization is achieved by the inclination to living in society, one of the inclinations following upon our rationality. And the only human society that can embrace the procreative inclination to bodily sexual union is, obviously, marriage. To be sure, while the inclination to communal living orders us to many forms of social institutions, that society which represents the bedrock of all other societies is what Aquinas terms the *domesticae conversationis consortium*, namely, marriage.[7]

In short, the inclination to living in community joins with the inclination to procreation and to the rearing of children in the way that form (representative of human rationality) joins with matter (representative of our animal-like bodies) in order to inscribe in the deepest fabric of our being a most powerful inclination to marriage.[8] This hylemorphic-styled inclination to marriage means that our sexuality targets not merely the good of sexual enjoyment or pleasure, but the two higher coessential goods of procreation

[6] For a much fuller treatment of the ordering of our sexuality to the joint goods of procreation and unitive love through the natural law, see my "The Natural Law Ordering of Human Sexuality to (Heterosexual) Marriage: Towards a Thomistic Philosophy of the Body," *Nova et Vetera* 8, English edition (2010): 553-92.

[7] *ScG* III, c. 123. Repeating a long-held Catholic teaching, Vatican Council II's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, §12, affirms marriage is the bedrock of all social institutions.

[8] This is essentially Aquinas's argument in *STh* Suppl., q. 41, a. 1 (pulled from IV *Sent*., d. 26, q. 1, a. 1), where, in answer to the question, "Whether matrimony is of the natural law," Aquinas replies in the affirmative, as we are inclined by nature both to "the good of offspring" and to "the society of marriage," whereby the spouses render to each other "domestic service" (*mutuum obsequium . . . in rebus domesticis*).

and unitive love-making (or spousal friendship), and into which sensual pleasure is subsumed. Since nature targets these goods together, it intends them always to be together, which only marriage accomplishes. Nuptiality, heterosexual marriage as a natural institution, operates, then, as a kind of intrinsic measure of what constitutes proper sexual activity.

We proceed now to the perfection of marriage through the power of the sacrament. First, though, I should sound a cautionary note on method. Having abandoned the project of the *Summa Theologiae* in the midst of his treatment of the sacraments, that is, before getting to matrimony, the mature Aquinas penned no actual treatise on this sacrament. In what follows, I will continue to draw upon the thought of Aquinas, but will rely chiefly upon his general sacramental theology. In a second adaptational move, I will attempt to fit the sacrament of marriage within this general theology.[9]

II. Marriage as Sacrament[10]

A) Dynamic Actions of the Person of Christ

First, let us underscore the inseparable connection between the sacraments and the person of Christ. Catholic doctrine professes that we best understand the sacraments, marriage included, if we see them as dynamic actions of the person of Christ himself. We

[9] Angela McKay ("Aquinas on the End of Marriage," in *Human Fertility: Where Faith and Science Meet*, ed. Richard J. Fehring and Theresa Notare [Milwaukee, Wis.: Marquette University Press, 2008], 53-70, at 60) points out that Aquinas's most developed treatment of marriage comes in his *Commentary on the Sentences* and in his slightly later *Summa contra Gentiles*. While McKay has in mind Aquinas's philosophical (natural-law) teaching on marriage, her point holds for his treatment of the sacrament of marriage as well: for the earlier work, this treatment comes in IV *Sent*., dd. 26-42 (subsequently reinserted in *STh* Suppl., qq. 41-68); for the later work, this treatment is reduced to one chapter only, namely, *ScG* IV, c. 78 (though the study of marriage as a natural institution is covered in *ScG* III, cc. 122-26). We should also note that Aquinas's remarks on the creation of the first man and woman in *STh* I, q. 92, aa. 2-3, make significant appeals to the sacramental nature of marriage.

[10] For a fuller and more developed treatment of this, see my "The Redemption and Divinization of Human Sexuality through the Sacrament of Marriage: A Thomistic Approach," *Nova et Vetera* 10, English edition (2012): 383-413.

obtain salvation only by attaching ourselves, inclusive of our (sexed) bodies, to the person of Christ. This the sacraments accomplish. Already in the fifth century, Pope St. Leo the Great professed: "What was visible in Christ has passed over into the sacraments of the Church."[11] Later in the High Middle Ages, we see this same understanding of the sacraments exhibited in the magnificent bas-relief sculpture of Christ on the central portal of the famous Romanesque church of Ste.-Madeleine in Vézelay, France: "There [on the portal]," explains the French Thomist scholar Jean-Pierre Torrell, "the sacraments are depicted as rays that come forth from (Christ), meeting the world of men at his feet, his hands meeting us through time and space."[12]

In short, the sacraments of the Church extend the humanity of Christ in time. They mark the historical continuation of the Incarnation, the prolongation of God's embodied presence among us.

Few theologians have amplified this teaching more than Aquinas. At the outset of the treatise on the sacraments in the *Summa* (III, q. 60), a treatise that follows upon this work's comprehensive treatment of the mystery of Christ (III, qq. 1-59), he makes this doctrine unequivocal: "the sacraments of the Church derive their efficacy from the Incarnate Word himself." A bit later he adds: "the sacraments of the Church derive their power from Christ's Passion."[13]

The sacraments of the Church represent the historical extension not simply of the Incarnation, then, but more precisely of Christ's Passion, death, and resurrection. To quote another succinct line from Aquinas: "Christ's Passion is, so to speak, applied to man through the sacraments."[14] The sacraments derive their efficacy from Christ's death and resurrection, from his divinity joined to his suffering humanity.

[11] Leo the Great, *Sermon 74*, 2 (*PL* 54:398), cited in Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1963), 45.

[12] Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Aquinas's Summa: Background, Structure, and Reception*, trans. Benedict M. Guevin (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 59.

[13] *STh* III, q. 62, a. 5.

[14] *STh* III, q. 61, a. 1, ad 3. Similarly in *STh* III, q. 64, a. 3, he asserts "the merit and power of Christ's Passion operates in the sacraments."

B) "Instrumental" Actions of Christ

Aquinas's general sacramental theology is especially distinguished by his appropriation of the Aristotelian notion of efficient causality (i.e., principal and instrumental causality) to flesh out this teaching and thereby make it intelligible to human reason.[15] (This provides us, Torrell promptly observes, with an example of how "the Master of Aquino . . . boldly transpose[s] a principle he gets from Aristotle to put it at the service of a reality that the Greek could never have imagined.)[16] Further, this philosophical notion of efficient causality allows Aquinas to avoid the tendency, seen especially at the time of the Reformation, to reduce the work of our salvation to an "either/or" proposition, namely, either to God's producing justifying grace (the grace that saves) in us or to the sacraments doing the same.[17] If the latter, then one must affirm that something earthly and material produces something divine and spiritual, which on the face of it is patently absurd and idolatrous.

Armed with the notion of principal/instrumental efficient causality, Aquinas succeeds in affirming that both God and the sacraments produce justifying grace in us, but in different respects: God by way of principal efficient cause (the One who is proportioned to the effect or to the production of justifying grace as such, the cause which operates by the power of its own form) and the sacraments by way of instrumental efficient cause (God's chosen channels or mediums through which he produces sanctifying grace, and which thus play a necessary role in the production of said grace). Since the principal cause and the instrumental cause operate at two different levels, each causes the

[15] The key texts are found in *STh* III, q. 62, aa. 1 and 4. For more on the philosophical solidity of this teaching, see Steven Long, "The Efficacy of God's Sacramental Presence," *Nova et Vetera* 7, English edition (2009): 869-76.

[16] Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 2, *Spiritual Master*, trans. Robert Royal (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 140 (with my own slight modification of Royal's translation).

[17] "The Spirit Saves, Not the Waters of Baptism," as the title of a recent Protestant tract puts it.

action completely, not partly and partly. As Aquinas explains in a key passage from the *Summa contra Gentiles*:

> When the same effect is attributed to a natural cause and to the divine power, it is not as though the effect were produced partly by God and partly by the natural agent: but the whole effect is produced by both, though in different ways, as the same effect is attributed wholly to the instrument, and wholly also to the principal agent.[18]

Without contradiction, then, we can and must affirm that justifying grace is produced both one hundred percent by God and one hundred percent by the sacraments, just as Michelangelo's *David* was produced both one hundred percent by Michelangelo, as principal cause, and one hundred percent by his chisel, as instrumental cause. Indeed, as Torrell points out, it is the constant teaching of Aquinas that an instrumental cause always leaves its mark, it truly modifies the action of the principal efficient cause (as the type of chisel used by Michelangelo would have played a role in the quality and style of his carving).[19]

Wishing to highlight the inseparable link uniting the sacraments with the person of Christ, Aquinas drives the notion of instrumental causality further. He observes that an instrument can be either conjoined (like the hand of the painter) or separated (like the paint brush). In the sacraments, God in the person of the Son acts as the principal efficient cause of our justification, but through his assumed humanity ("Christ's divinity working through his humanity," is how Aquinas suggestively puts it) as through a conjoined instrumental cause and through the sacraments as separated instrumental causes.[20] Working not independently of Christ's Passion, the sacraments work by way of extension of or participation in Christ's Passion.

[18] *ScG* III, c. 70 (translation: Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, 5 vols. [Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1955-57]). For the same idea as it pertains to the Bible's being authored both by God and by human beings, see Charles Morerod, *The Church and the Human Quest for Truth* (Ave Maria, Fl.: Sapientia Press, 2008), 33-37.

[19] Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 2:128-31, esp. 130. For texts in Aquinas (provided by Torrell), see *STh* III, q. 62, a. 1, ad 2; but also *STh* I, q. 45, a. 5; and especially *ScG* IV, c. 41.

[20] *STh* III, q. 62, a. 5; see as well q. 64, a. 3.

Holding in mind, then, this grand organic "chain" of efficient (principal and instrumental) causes, Aquinas explains for us how the sacraments operate as dynamic actions of the person of Christ. Christ on the Cross is the one who is active in the sacraments through his humanity as through a conjoined instrumental cause and through the words and material signs of the sacraments as through separated instrumental causes. As instruments in the hands of our Savior, the material earthly realities of water, oil, bread, wine, and words truly produce our salvation. The sacraments are dynamic actions of the person of Christ at the same time that they retain their own integrity, and thus nobility, of being veritable instruments of Christ; they are not mere occasions of Christ's dynamic justifying activity, they do not simply point to Christ's saving actions, but they are true causes of Christ's sanctifying activity ("not only as signs, but also as causes").[21]

C) The Power to Justify Marriage

That the sacraments derive their power from Christ's death and resurrection, that they have the power to justify in virtue of their applying the fruits of Christ's Passion, has direct bearing on our sexuality. Christ chose the natural institution of marriage, to which our sexuality is ordered as its normative proportionate good, as fit for inclusion in the sacramental economy. Catholic teaching affirms that by raising marriage, an institution common to all human cultures as deriving from human nature (natural law), to the level of a sacrament, Christ made it possible for marriage to share in the fruits of his Passion.

Holding in mind, then, Aquinas's tripartite formula, or three distinct moments, of the sacraments—*sacramentum tantum* (the external rite, or the outward sign of the sacrament), *res et sacramentum* (the symbolizing reality, or the intermediate cause and effect of the sacrament), and *res tantum* (the grace conferred, or the ultimate effect of the sacrament)—we can say the

[21] *STh* III, q. 62, a. 1, ad 1.

following.[22] In the sacrament of marriage husband and wife attach themselves, in faith, to the person of Christ, that is, to the person of Christ in his very redemptive act. Just as the sacrament of baptism has us undergo symbolically, though really, Christ's own death and resurrection, with water as the sign or symbol (the *sacramentum tantum*) of it (see Rom 6:3-4), so does the sacrament of matrimony place the love between husband and wife symbolically, though really, on the Cross with Christ, with the vows acting as the sign or symbol *(sacramentum tantum)* of it.[23]

So what happens to marriage, as an institution, by its participating in the redemptive offering of the Son of God? Here we take our cue from the fact that marriage as a natural institution remains normative for sacramental marriage. What the grace of matrimony perfects is precisely what natural marriage is ordered to: children and unitive love. The sacrament of marriage redeems and divinizes marriage as a procreative-unitive institution. It does so through the configuring of the natural and indissoluble loving bond of husband and wife unto the supernatural and perfectly indissoluble loving bond of Christ and the Church (the *res et sacramentum*). The *res et sacramentum* of matrimony, in other words, gives husbands a share in Christ's perfect self-emptying love and wives a share in the Church's perfect reciprocal love: "(Marriage) is a great mystery," St. Paul asserts in Ephesians 5:32, "and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church." The graced effect *(res tantum)* of this sacrament, because it draws upon Christ's power over sin, confers upon husband and wife Christ's power over sin, especially over sin's assault on marriage (let us call it power over "marital" sin). To be sure, each sacrament confers its power to justify in view of the particular human need Christ intends it to meet. This includes "over and above [sanctifying]

[22] I am grateful to Rev. Paul J. Keller, O.P., for providing me with his (unpublished), "Tri-Partite Formula (Three Moments of the Sacraments: *Sacramentum Tantum, Res et Sacramentum, Res Tantum*)," the insights of which have proved invaluable to me.

[23] For a textual analysis of the notion of marriage vows in Aquinas, see Mary Catherine Sommers, "Marriage Vows and 'Taking Up a New State,'" *Nova et Vetera* 7, English edition (2009): 679-95.

grace," affirms Aquinas, a special divine assistance that targets the precise aim of that sacrament.[24]

D) In Need of Particular Divine Assistance

That the institution of marriage stands in particular need of divine assistance is fairly obvious in today's culture. Facing obstacles particular to the married state, all spouses would admit that being married is not easy. The challenges that come with marriage are only too easy to enumerate: riding through the inevitable dissipation of romantic feelings, which come and go of their very nature, and the subsequent temptation to reduce one's marital love to a mere "feeling"; learning to live in intimate communion with another person who remains subject to inevitable "mood swings" and who retains his or her shortcomings and personality quirks, not to mention his or her distinctive male/female "hardwiring" (and the tension that results); handling the strain and stress that result from financial straits and from the countless sacrifices of time and desire demanded of spouses each day, especially when raising young children; learning to resolve the disagreements that inevitably arise, even between spouses who are committed to growing in holiness, and which are often exacerbated by the human tendency to dig in one's heels when in a dispute, no matter the objective truth of the matter; bearing the annoyances and personal grievances, often quite minor, that commonly occur in marriage and that often gnaw at each others' hearts, especially as these pull towards hurtful arguing; learning to forgive each other of and to bury in the past, even when they do not "feel" like it, those unavoidable hurts that spouses inflict upon each other on account of human shortcoming; learning to deal with and to overcome that ubiquitous albatross on all human relationships, especially marriage, namely, misunderstanding and miscommunication; and the list goes on, to say nothing of the more grievous harms, such as divorce or marital infidelity (including "virtual" infidelity, where a spouse, usually the

[24] "[S]acramental grace confers, over and above [sanctifying] grace commonly so called, a certain divine assistance in obtaining the end of the sacrament" (*STh* III, q. 62, a. 2).

husband, falls—often quite regularly—to the allure of internet pornography, or, worse yet, to chat-room sex or "cybersex," often with the inability to break himself of said allure, though he might desire to do so, and no matter the documented deleterious effects pornography has on marriage and family).[25]

These challenges make it clear that there must be more than just the spouses' own wills, however good intentioned, to fall back on in order to make their marriages work. Indeed, it would hardly be surprising if many couples getting married today, bearing in mind the plague on marriage marked by the near fifty-percent divorce rate, the rising tide of cohabitation and out-of-wedlock sex, or the growing legal recognition of gay marriage, were to approach the institution of marriage with a cynical attitude. More than ever married couples today need divine assistance.

While it would be silly to deny this need, many yet remain unwilling to acknowledge their personal inadequacies, both moral and spiritual, relative to their relationships, or to renounce the propensity to resort to one's own will and to "go it alone" without God's help in their marriage. Pelagiansim, that ancient heresy that encourages us to think we are capable on our own of always making the right choices, remains an ever-persistent temptation.[26] Particularly insidious to marriage, the Pelagian trap induces us, foolishly, to think that we possess the inherent ability, the right

[25] In his "Pornography—and Marriage" (*The Catholic Thing* online [nfiproofs.com], 29 Jan. 2010; a duplicate of "The Effects of Pornography on Individuals, Marriage, Family and Community," from the Family Research Council website [frc.org], 2 Dec. 2009), psychologist and researcher Patrick F. Fagan enumerates some of the "documented effects [of pornography] on family life," including: infidelity and divorce; a loss of interest and satisfaction in sexual intercourse with one's spouse; emotional distancing from and general dissatisfaction in one's spouse; the perception of infidelity by the other spouse (usually the wife), resulting in a sense of "betrayal, loss, mistrust, devastation, and anger," as well as of sexual inadequacy, if not in outright depression; a strong tendency by men who engage in voyeurism to view women as "commodities or as 'sex objects'"; etc.

[26] Specifically, "Pelagianism is the heresy which holds that man can take the initial and fundamental steps towards salvation by his own efforts, apart from Divine Grace" (*The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone [2d ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press], 1058). The *Dictionary of Dogmatic Theology*, ed. Pietro Parente, et al., trans. E. Doronzo (Milwaukee, Wis.: Bruce Publishing, 1951), 211, adds as one of Pelagianism's "basic principles" the view that "[m]an, with his natural forces and his free will, can avoid all sin and win the beatific vision."

judgment and the strength of will whenever we call upon them, to make our marriages work and be happy: "Whatever happens, we're never going to get divorced," is how one journalist, sounding a distinct Pelagian-like ring, describes her mindset when she got married, determined as she was, along with much of Generation X (those born between 1965 and 1980), not to inflict the pain and anguish of divorce upon her children, and yet who later got divorced herself.[27]

Contra the Pelagian mindset, Christian revelation makes clear that every human individual possesses a fallen condition, that we all, without exception, are born into original sin. It is this—sin—that accounts in large measure for the struggles that all married persons face. Moral shortcoming, sin, remains a fact of life—of everyone's life—and thus of married life, no matter how good the spouses' characters. Sin and sin alone poses the greatest obstacle to marital happiness. All our relationships, but especially marriage, bear witness to the moral brokenness within all of us and how we carry that brokenness into our relationships.

E) Divine Grace Needed Even for Natural Virtue

Catholic tradition proclaims that God, the author of our sexed nature with its teleological ordering to marriage, wishes that couples might attain the happy, fulfilling marriages they desire. Indeed, he wants happiness in marriage for us more than we even want it ourselves. (The happiness here, of course, is that relative to the present life, namely, a happiness that is partial and ordered to the attaining to beatific glory, or to the immediate beholding of the Triune God "face to face" [cf. 1 Cor 13:12], wherein all

[27] Susan Gregory Thomas, "The Divorce Generation," *The Wall Street Journal*, "The Saturday Essay," 9 July 2011 (online.wsj.com). Continuing in a Pelagian-like strain, Gregory Thomas elaborates: "No marital scenario, I told myself, could become so bleak or hopeless as to compel me to embed my children in the torture of a split family. . . . Call us helicopter parents, call us neurotically attached, but those of us who survived the wreckage of split families were determined never to inflict such wounds on our children. We knew better. We were doing everything differently, and the fundamental premise was simple: 'Kids come first' meant that we would not divorce.'" Yet as all Pelagianism in the end comes to naught, so too Gregory Thomas's determination to avoid divorce through her (and her spouse's) sheer will power: "And yet divorce came. In spite of everything."

human desire, bodily and spiritual, shall find complete and everlasting satisfaction. At the same time, as "face to face" typifies the very physical posture that is unique to human sexual union, and thus is symbolic of how the sexual joining of bodies becomes elevated to the level of personal union, we can appreciate how the sexual union of husband and wife "face to face," in its own faint yet privileged way, points toward our final aim, toward supreme human glory. It is precisely this glory to which the sacraments order us.) In view of this, and aware of the particular struggles against sin that the institution of marriage wages, Christ the Lord wished that married couples might share in the power which he alone, in virtue of his Passion, death, and resurrection, possesses over sin. Christ wishes to place himself squarely in the center of our marriages.

Concretely, this divine assistance, of which Christ alone, because of his redemptive accomplishment, is the source, again takes the form of justifying (or sanctifying) grace.[28] The only real antidote to sin, Christ's justifying grace alone can heal us of our brokenness, of our fallen condition. It is this grace that gives the sacraments, employed by Christ as separated instrumental mediums, the power to justify, the power to redeem. This power to justify, the ultimate effect of the sacraments, is precisely what the term *res tantum* signifies in Aquinas's sacramental theology.

Is it possible to obtain happiness in marriage without this grace? Since the corrosion of sin does not succeed in completely extracting the human ability to do good—"human nature is not altogether corrupted by sin, so as to be shorn of every natural good," insists Aquinas[29]—it would seem that we should, in principle, respond in the affirmative.

However, without Christ's healing justifying grace, the natural good we can do on our own, like being honest or just, or a self-giving spouse, will never amount to much. Wishing to underscore this very point, Aquinas gives rather paltry, almost laughable, examples of "good works" (and the context implies that he is speaking of good moral works), that we can perform without

[28] For Christ as the source of all grace, see *STh* III, q. 7, a. 9.
[29] *STh* I-II, q. 109, a. 2.

grace: "build dwellings, plant vineyards, and the like."[30] He does not put forward such examples trivially, as he knows that virtue denotes a stable disposition for doing good (as signified by the term *habitus*), which implies the unity of all the virtues. The virtuous individual, in other words, loves and does the good in all areas of his life, not just in some areas. While the judge who is an adulterer may appear to be honest and just, at most we can say that he performs honest and just external acts, or that he attains an external approximation of virtue. Strictly speaking, though, we cannot say he is virtuous.

So it is with anyone without grace. As Aquinas makes clear, our sinful condition leaves us with a diminished ability even for purely natural virtue.[31] For this reason, to excel even at purely natural virtue, that is, to attain to the habit (*habitus*) of natural virtue, one must have more than the acquired moral virtues, as these virtues result from our own, very limited efforts. With a fallen condition, we can perform nothing more on our own than good external acts, or imperfect virtuous acts; we cannot attain to the true (natural) habit of virtue. To attain to this, we must have benefit of the (natural) habit of virtue consequent upon the healing effects of divine grace, namely, the infused moral virtues.[32]

Divine grace is therefore necessary to excel even at the natural love of man and woman, to excel even at doing the moral good that is natural (or proportionate) to us. Only sanctifying grace, God's supernatural assistance, can give husband and wife the

[30] Ibid. Later, in *STh* I-II, q. 109, a. 5, showing that he follows Augustine on this point, he reiterates the same view: "without grace man . . . can perform works conducive of a good which is natural to him, as 'to toil in the fields, to drink, to eat, or to have friends,' and the like, as Augustine says in his third reply to the Pelagians."

[31] *STh* I-II, q. 85, a. 1. Later, in a significant passage (I-II, q. 109, a. 3), Aquinas adds: "unless is it cured by God's grace, the appetite of man's rational will follows its private good, on account of the corruption of nature. . . . [I]n the state of corrupt nature [then], man needs the help of grace to heal his nature."

[32] On this point, I am indebted to Steven A. Long, "The Gifts of the Holy Spirit and Their Indispensability for the Christian Moral Life: Grace as *Motus*," given at the annual conference of the Academy of Catholic Theology, May 26, 2011, Washington, D.C. On the practical benefits of infused moral virtue, Long writes: "Reason is fortified and elevated [by infused moral virtue] so as to be able to discern the practical implications of the Christian life, and to remediate the wounded natural inclinations so that action is befitting both to the proportionate natural and to the ultimate supernatural end."

power to overcome their selfish tendencies and moral shortcomings. Indeed, lest our desires to have happy marriages, which most newlyweds deep down yearn for, all in accordance with God's design, be left frustrated on account of sin, God fittingly offers us the help necessary to attain happy, fulfilling marriages.

F) Divine Marital Assistance Given ex opere operato

Scholastic theology employs the phrase *ex opere operato*, famously canonized at the Council of Trent (1545-63), to stress that this divine assistance is necessarily given in the sacrament of matrimony, as it is given in all the sacraments whenever they are validly celebrated.[33] To put it in Aquinas's equivalent phrasing, the sacraments necessarily "effect what they signify."[34] The phrase *ex opere operato* is much maligned (especially in Reformation theology, which sometimes speaks pejoratively of the sacraments as autonomous "magical" rites), and is much misunderstood. At bottom, it signifies the fact that the sacraments are, indeed, dynamic actions of the person of Christ, that in the sacraments we are guaranteed to encounter Christ on the Cross, receiving from him his power over sin: "The efficacy attributed to the sacrament is subordinated to the efficacy attributed to Christ as Mediator of salvation," writes the sacramental theologian Colman O'Neill.[35] The sacraments possess an objective integrity, whereby the person of Christ, as principal efficient cause of justifying grace, promises

[33] The phrase *ex opere operato* is used in canon 8 of the Council of Trent's decree on the sacraments (Session 7, 3 March 1547): "If anyone says that grace is not conferred by the sacraments of the New Law *ex opere operato* . . . let him be anathema" (*Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. Norman Tanner, 2 vols. [Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990], 685).

[34] *STh* III, q. 62, a. 1, ad 1.

[35] Colman O'Neill, *Sacramental Realism: A General Theory of the Sacraments* (Princeton, N.J.: Scepter, 1998), 16. Just before this, O'Neill observes how sacramental personalism, i.e., seeing the sacraments as dynamic actions of the person of Christ, helps "clear up misunderstandings about what the Council of Trent was trying to say when it attributed to the sacraments efficacy *ex opere operato*." See as well O'Neill's extended discussion on *ex opere operato* in his *Meeting Christ in the Sacraments* (rev. ed., ed. Romanus Cessario; New York: Society of St. Paul, 1991), 119-26.

to be present in the sacraments conferring the grace he intends to give.

For married persons this means that they are guaranteed to share in Christ's power to break them from the grip that sin holds on their conjugal life, they are guaranteed a divine assistance whose aim is to heal marital brokenness and to bolster and perfect spousal love. Giving our marriages a share in Christ's redemptive victory over sin, a share in Christ's power to justify, the sacrament of marriage has the power to redeem human sexuality in its inherently nuptial meaning, and so promises spouses a happy, successful marriage (the partial happiness proper to the present life, as noted above). Does this mean that spouses will be spared the hardships mentioned above, spared the manifold ways that sin assails the institution of marriage? By no means! The grace of the sacrament of marriage does not erase the effects of our fallen condition. But it does mean that Christian marriage will not succumb to these hardships, that Christian marriage is guaranteed not to fail, since husband and wife are guaranteed the divine assistance to overcome their marital struggles.

G) The Duty of Cooperating opus operans with the Grace of the Sacrament

At this point, calling to mind St. Paul's assertion in Romans 3:22 that "the righteousness of God [is] through faith in Jesus Christ," we must stress the requisite role of faith in reaping the fruits of the grace offered *ex opere operato* in the sacraments, as Aquinas himself insists.[36] Colman O'Neill explains the way in which it is a mistake to separate the act of faith, and more precisely faith acting through charity, from the objective action of Christ *ex opere operato* in the sacraments.[37] Faith and ritual sacrament are two (necessary) heads of the same coin. If properly understood, in other words, and in order to avoid being reduced to a static, purely formalized and impersonal reality, the doctrine

[36] *STh* III, q. 68, a. 8 (here Aquinas is speaking of baptism proper).
[37] O'Neill, *Meeting Christ in the Sacraments*, 38.

of *ex opere operato* demands as its necessary counterpart what O'Neill terms the *opus operans* of the sacrament. This means:

> [the believer's] personal dedication of himself to God, [which] is the effect of God's loving action within him, [and the corresponding] obligation [that] lies on the recipient to exercise his liturgical [i.e., sacramental] function with full deliberation and whole-heartedly; this applies not only to the period of preparation for the sacrament and the actual moment of reception but also to the time afterwards. . . . [T]he sacraments . . . are seen in a false light if they are thought of as sudden inputs of spiritual energy having no relation to what goes before or afterwards.[38]

"What goes before or afterwards." We can appreciate the practical demands this places on couples, not only in their preparation for their wedding, but throughout the whole of their married lives. At the very least it demands faith—faith on both partners' parts, since marriage is indeed a partnership—that Christ can and does effect what he intends to effect in this sacrament. It demands faith in the supernatural quality of the marriage. In their preparation for marriage, couples should at the very least seek to inform themselves adequately of the Church's teaching on the sacrament of matrimony and, more generally, of the Church's vision of the meaning and purpose of human sexuality and of marriage's role in it. (This places no small duty to articulate this teaching faithfully and clearly on those responsible for marriage preparation, whether through the Pre-Cana program or its equivalent, as some dioceses in the United States seem well to understand.[39]) Strict lifelong fidelity to each other and openness to children are, in this regard, the *sine qua non* starting point. Full, deliberate, and wholehearted participation in their sacramental function also means bride and bridegroom must ensure that the primary focus—and for them the prayerful focus—is placed squarely on the wedding ceremony and on the exchange of vows (how often do we find the wedding

[38] Ibid., 126-27.

[39] For instance, the Diocese of Phoenix, Arizona, has recently inaugurated a nine-month marriage preparation course "in an effort to reverse a trend to marital breakdown," as reported by Catholic World News (catholicculture.org; 27 Jan. 2010). This course includes "instruction in natural family planning, the theology of Christian marriage, and common problems that face young married couples."

reception afterwards, rightfully a joyous occasion, to be the highlight of the wedding day?).

It is important not to minimize the sometimes thorny moral issues relative to the ordering of marriage to procreation and unitive love that a life of faith united to charity must resolve according to the mind and heart of the Church. The principal point to stress here is that the only sure road to follow in properly disposing oneself for faithful reception of the sacrament of marriage, beyond the reception of the sacrament of reconciliation (which the Church's common tradition invites engaged couples to receive just prior to the wedding ceremony), not to mention reception of the sacrament of confirmation, is to live in strict fidelity to the Church's moral teaching. This necessitates living chastely and avoiding all occasions of premarital sexual intimacy, including, obviously, cohabitation. Ideally, couples should follow this path with a view not so much to observing Church "rules" per se as to the true good of the marriage and to the "new beginning" in the relationship that living in accordance with the Church's moral teaching promises. It is no mere coincidence that those married couples who live in accordance with Church teaching enjoy an exceedingly lower divorce rate.[40]

Extending throughout the whole of their married lives, this moral duty of cooperating with the grace of the sacrament through fidelity to the Church's moral teaching implies, among other things, avoidance of all use of artificial contraceptives, even in those circumstances where responsible parenthood might for a time mitigate against having children (in which case the natural method of birth control can be observed). It also includes, if we consider the opposite dilemma relative to procreation, the resolve not to resort to artificial methods of reproduction (IVF) when encountering difficulty in achieving pregnancy. Artificial methods either of contraception or of reproduction contravene the

[40] For instance, those couples who avoid the use of artificial contraceptives and instead rely upon the (morally licit) natural method of birth regulation enjoy a divorce rate potentially as low as 0.2%, and certainly no higher than 5%. See Erika Bachiochi, ed., *Women, Sex, and the Church: A Case for Catholic Teaching* (Boston: Pauline Books, 2010); and John F. Kippley, *The Legacy of Margaret Sanger, the Foundress of Planned Parenthood* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Couple to Couple League International, 1988).

objective moral law (natural law), whereby they constitute intrinsically disordered actions (*malum in se*).

Not meant to stand in isolation from the other sacraments, sacramental marriage also requires the spouses' full participation in the sacramental life of the Church (regular Mass attendance, frequent reception of the sacrament of reconciliation, etc.). And since grace perfects nature, the grace of marriage presupposes a certain kind of natural human compatibility between the partners, as well as the disciplined effort of observing the practical duties which growing and sustaining marital love and friendship require (such as the regular communication that friendship normally demands, expressing guilt and contrition when the spouses wrong each other, granting forgiveness whenever such guilt and contrition are expressed and then letting the issue rest, and the like). Hence, the duty to marry the right person, namely, the person of living faith and of sound moral character who has proved his or her commitment to living virtuously and to handling relationship issues maturely—and to turning to God for help.

It is imperative to realize that Christ's guarantee of a happy marriage does not release married couples from their duty to work diligently at their marriages; indeed, it requires it. In particular, it requires couples continually to call upon and exercise that most necessary and useful of virtues for the conjugal life: prudence, the aim of which is right judgment in all our practical decisions. Prudence, as one Thomist scholar puts it, "involves doing the right thing, for the right reason, with the right choices and emotions, at the right time."[41] In a word, as grace perfects nature, so does the grace of this sacrament perfect the partners' own natural efforts to make their marriages work. Matthew Levering and Michael Dauphinais sum up well the grace-perfecting-nature dynamic of Christian marriage when they write:

[41] Craig Steven Titus, "Reasonable Acts," in *Philosophical Virtue and Psychological Strength: Building the Bridge,* ed. Romanus Cessario, Craig Steven Titus, and Paul C. Vitz (Manchester, N.H.: Sophia Institute, 2013), 81-116. For an enlightening study on the role of "right reason" in the moral life, cf. Laurent Sentis, "La lumière dont nous faisons usage: La règle de la raison et la loi divine selon Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 79 (1995): 49-69.

[T]he natural life and the supernatural life do not exist as two separate planes of existence. Instead, they interpenetrate each other. The supernatural life reaches down to heal and to elevate the natural life without destroying its integrity. For example, Christ has elevated marriage into a sacrament of his grace. Christian marriage, nevertheless, has many aspects belonging simply to the natural order of marriage: earning a living, sexual intercourse, having and raising children, and so on. Yet in Christian marriage each of these natural elements now participates in the power of Christ's cross and resurrection.[42]

The *opus operans* of marriage implies, then, all the (natural) practical demands enumerated above. Only by observing all these demands can married couples hope to share in Christ's guarantee of a happy and successful marriage delivered through the Church's sacrament of matrimony. Otherwise this sacrament would indeed simply amount to an empty "magical" rite.

H)The Divinized Love between Husband and Wife

Turning again to the *res tantum* of marriage, the ultimate effect of this sacrament, we can see that there is still much more to the redemptive or sanctifying work of the sacrament of marriage. Aquinas clues us into this deeper reality when he observes that the sacraments (each of them) offer us not merely a remedy for sin, but also a supernaturalizing principle. In brief, Christ's justifying grace offered in the sacraments has a twofold aim: first, to heal us of our corrupted nature by restoring us to our natural abilities; and, second, to elevate us, proportion us, to our supernatural good, whereby we are ordered to acting in a genuinely supernatural, divine-like way.[43] Wishing to give full weight and veracity to the supernaturalizing power of Christ's justifying grace,

[42] Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering, *Knowing the Love of Christ. An Introduction to the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 50.

[43] "[T]he sacraments of the New Law are ordained, first, as a remedy against sin and, second, for the perfecting of the soul in things pertaining to the divine worship" *STh* III, q. 63, a. 1. This is even clearer in I-II, q. 109, aa. 2 and 5: "in the state of corrupt nature, [man needs a gratuitous strength added to natural strength, i.e., he needs sanctifying grace] in order to be healed, and in order to do and wish supernatural good [and thus] to carry out works of supernatural virtue…[Indeed, since] everlasting life is an end exceeding the proportion of human nature… a higher force is needed, namely, the force of grace."

and following the lead of both Scripture (2 Pet 1:4 refers to grace as a "participation in the divine nature") and the Greek Fathers, Aquinas does not hesitate to use the bold terms "deify" (*deificare*) and "deiform" or "divinization" (*deiformitas*) in reference to the *res tantum* of sanctifying grace.[44] In one famous passage, Aquinas insists that by grace we gain a participated likeness of the divine goodness after the manner of "whiteness mak[ing] a thing white."[45]

While distinct, then, the two aspects of the *res tantum* of the sacraments, namely, healing medicine and divinizing power, must not be seen as separable realities, as if the one were simply "stacked" on top of the other, but instead as deeply interpenetrating principles. To be precise, as grace perfects nature, so the deifying element implies and subsumes the healing one. In divinizing the purely human love of husband and wife by likening it unto the indissoluble love between Christ and the Church, by likening it unto the God who is himself love, the *res tantum* of marriage implies also the healing of marital sin.

Much more than a mere safeguarding against the manifold ways sin assails the institution of marriage, then, the sacrament of matrimony, through its deifying work, elevates the natural human love of man and woman, of husband and wife, to the level of the divine, making it attain to the very love that is proper to God himself. As the economy of salvation, of which the sacraments are expressive, makes clear, God never intended marriage, common to all human societies as owing to the natural law, to remain a purely natural institution; he never intended the love between man and woman to satisfy nothing more than natural, proportionate needs. Christ, in his sacramental (instrumental) action, takes the institution of marriage and divinizes the human love (*eros*)

[44] *STh* I-II, q. 112, a. 1. For more on "deification" or "divinization" in Aquinas's theology of created grace, including references to ample texts and to the patristic heritage, see Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas,* 2:126-28; Torrell notes in particular that "grace is a deiform structure . . . [and] Thomas uses the terms 'deify' and 'deiform' so often as to leave no doubt on the subject." For even more extended discussion on this, see Jean-Hervé Nicolas, *Les profondeurs de la grâce* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1969), 56-76; cf. as well Luc-Thomas Somme, *Thomas d'Aquin, La divinisation dans le Christ* (Geneva: Ad Solem, 1998).

[45] *STh* I-II, q. 110, a. 2 ad 1.

between husband and wife and orders it immediately to the supernatural love of God (*agape*).[46] For when bride and bridegroom pronounce their vows before an ordained Church minister, their natural love becomes, truly, albeit symbolically (symbolized, that is, by the consent or exchange of vows), Christ's own perfect, indissoluble (or unfailing) love for his Bride, the Church, and the Church's own perfect, indissoluble love for her Bridegroom, Christ.[47]

We are now in a position of appreciating the full import of the Scholastic adage that the sacraments necessarily effect what they signify, at least as it applies to the particular case of the sacrament of marriage. In Christ we see what kind of lover God is, namely, a lover who takes on our lowly body and soul not for his benefit but for ours, and who offers himself completely, to the point of undergoing the worst imaginable (not to mention undeserved) suffering, utterly for our sake. What the sacrament of marriage proclaims is that God, desiring that we enjoy truly happy, fulfilling marriages, wants husband and wife, man and woman, to be this kind of lover to each other as well, and guarantees to communicate to them the divine grace (or help) that alone can bring it about. Without the sacrament of marriage, the love between husband and wife would never become the kind of love God intends it to be; with the sacrament of matrimony, it is *guaranteed* to become this kind of love.

We know that the best husband, the best father, is the one who serves the needs of his wife and children before his own, who gives of himself to his family completely without thought of cost

[46] "Matrimony as ordained to natural life is a function of nature. But insofar as it has something spiritual it is a sacrament" (*STh* III, q. 65, a. 2, ad 1). While not addressing the sacrament of marriage per se, the first part of Pope Benedict XVI's encyclical letter *Deus Caritas Est* makes this very argument of *eros*; if *eros* is to avoid degenerating into a dehumanizing love, it needs to be taken up into and finalized by *agape*.

[47] "Since there is in the human species a natural exigency for the union of male and female to be one and indivisible, such unity and indissolubility must needs be ordained by human law. To that ordinance the divine law adds a supernatural reason, derived from the fact that marriage signifies the inseparable union of Christ with His Church [*ex significatione inseparabilis coniunctionis Christi et Ecclesiae*], which is one as He is one" (*ScG* III, c. 123). For similar wording, see Aquinas's commentary on Romans, *Super Romanos*, c. 7, lect. 1 (cited in Sommers, "Marriage Vows," 693).

to himself. The best husband and father is the one who loves like Christ; the best wife and mother is the one who loves like the Church. So it is that in the sacrament of marriage, Christ transforms the husband's love into his own and the wife's love into the Church's: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave his life up for her," St. Paul adds in Ephesians 5:25, just after telling wives to be subject to their husbands "just as the Church is subject to Christ." Because, as Aquinas tells us, the union of Christ and the Church is "one to one to be held forever," in that "there is one Church" and that "Christ will never be separated from his Church," it follows that the sacrament of marriage "is a union of one man to one woman to be held indivisibly [or indissolubly]."[48] Too rarely do those who partake in this sacrament understand or appreciate the "great mystery" that marks Christian marriage, a mystery that the ancient Christian author Tertullian (d. ca. 220) grasped and sought movingly to describe in a treatise addressed to his own wife:

> Both [Christian spouses] are brethren, both fellow servants, no difference of spirit or flesh; nay, they are truly 'two in one flesh' (Gen 2:24). Where the flesh is one, one is the spirit too. Together they pray, together prostrate themselves, together perform their fasts; mutually teaching, mutually exhorting, mutually sustaining. Equally are they both found in the Church of God; equally at the banquet of God.[49]

I) A Ministry of Body and Soul

When looking for a term that denotes the heart of this sacrament, Aquinas opts for a term that may surprise the modern reader: ministry. Christian spouses, Aquinas tells us, "are those who propagate and safeguard the spiritual life by administering to

[48] *ScG* IV, c. 78. Previous to this Aquinas writes: "Because the sacraments effect what they signify, one must believe that in this sacrament a grace is conferred on those marrying, and that by this grace they are included in the union of Christ and the Church."

[49] From "To His Wife," trans. H. Ellershaw, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 4, *Tertullian, Part Fourth; Minicius Felix; Commodian; Origen, Parts First and Second* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994 [1885]), 47-9, quoted in Matthew Levering, ed., *On Marriage and Family: Classic and Contemporary Texts* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005), 26.

both body and soul . . . [since] husband and wife are joined together in order to beget children and to bring them up in the fear of the Lord."[50] The ancient Christian author Clement of Alexandria (d. ca. 215) puts it nicely when he interprets the passage in Matthew 18:20, "Where two or three are gathered in my name," to signify the Christian family of father, mother, and child praying together.[51]

Behind this recognition of marriage as a type of ministry stands Aquinas's teaching, unique to him, that the sacramental life (or the Christian spiritual life) parallels the dynamic growth and development of bodily life (providing another example of how retaining a robust view of nature with all its ontological density pays dividends in the perfecting supernatural order).[52] It is proper to the nature of our embodied life to live in society (i.e., to live in community with other embodied persons), and for this marriage is essential, inasmuch as its fecundity makes human society possible.[53] Since marriage not only unites in love a man and a woman, but also and especially brings human individuals into

[50] *ScG* IV, c. 58.

[51] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 3.10.68.1, quoted in Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 135.

[52] *STh* III, q. 65, a. 1. While the foundation for this teaching on the sacramental life paralleling bodily life is laid in IV *Sent*., d. 2, q. 1, a. 2, its first explicit appearance comes in *ScG* IV, c. 58, as Torrell (*Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 2:295 n. 60) points out. On the uniqueness of this teaching, Torrell continues: "[W]hile the theologians of Thomas's time sought to justify the number of seven sacraments by a correspondence with the seven deadly sins (Albertus Magnus) or by the three theological virtues completed with the four cardinal virtues (Bonaventure), Thomas seems to be the only one to develop this parallel between corporeal and spiritual life, simultaneously more natural and fecund. Virtues or vices, good works or sins, the expressions of the spiritual life do not appear in him as more or less artificially tacked on to the Christian life, but rather as manifestations of a living organism, one which can certainly be affected by illnesses and recover its health or even die, but whose growth is the usual rule and which can also, through regular exercise, firm up and consolidate itself."

[53] This view can also be found in Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 8.12.1162a17-19; for Aquinas's commentary, VIII *Nic. Ethic*., lect. 12 (nn. 1719-23); *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. C. I. Litzinger (Notre Dame, Ind.: Dumb Ox Books, 1993). In his "Children as the Common Good of Marriage," *Nova et Vetera* 7, English edition (2009): 697-709, Michael Waldstein points out that while marriage puts us squarely in relation to the common good of human society, this notion is largely ignored in current discussions on marriage and human sexuality. The ill fruits of this are especially apparent in the same-sex marriage debate.

existence, all of whom (spouses as well as children) have a supernatural destiny, or all of whom God wills to deify, marriage entails profound spiritual and bodily needs. It is in order to meet these needs that Christ elevates the natural institution of marriage to the level of a sacrament.[54] More specifically, because marriage, as a natural institution, comprises a unity of proximate goods or ends, in particular, procreation and unitive love, the healing and divinizing efficacy of the *res tantum* of marriage perfects these same joint goods. It bears repeating: the whole of married life, encompassing both spousal and parental goods and duties, is sanctified, that is, healed and deified, in this sacrament.[55]

Thus, when husband and wife administer to their own and their children's physical and spiritual needs, they perform a ministry of body and soul. Summing up these physical and spiritual needs, at least as regards the rearing of children, Aquinas writes in one passage, "the young need not only bodily nutrition, as animals do, but also the training of the soul."[56] That marriage demands a "training of the soul" (*instructione quantum ad animam*)—a splendid phrase for parental undertaking that points to the "personalist" strain of Aquinas's views on marriage against those who criticize him for being overly "physicalist" in his emphasis on procreation—we should interpret broadly, inasmuch as it covers a whole gamut of needs (emotional, moral, and spiritual), not only

[54] "The spiritual life has a certain conformity to the life of the body, just as other corporeal things have a certain likeness to things spiritual. Now a man attains perfection in the corporeal life in two ways: first, in regard to his own person; secondly, in regard to the whole community of the society in which he lives, for man is by nature a social animal. . . . In regard, then, to the whole community, man is perfected . . . by natural propagation. This is accomplished by Matrimony both in the corporal and in the spiritual life, since it is not only a sacrament but also a function of nature" (*STh* III, q. 65, a. 1). Although Aquinas, common among medieval authors, gives exclusive attention to the procreative ordering of marriage, his argument holds for the unitive ordering as well.

[55] In its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium*, §11, the Second Vatican Council implies this when it proclaims: "Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony, whereby they signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church, help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children."

[56] *ScG* III, c. 122.

in the children but also in the spouses.[57] Each member of the family is made to know and love the good, each is called to holiness, and so husband and wife must administer both to their children and to each other. To this administration the sacrament of marriage is ordered.

In short, this administration, or this ministry of body and soul, follows upon the procreative and unitive orderings of marriage. As I have argued in this essay, marriage as a procreative-unitive institution suffers mightily on account of human sin, for which reason it seeks a share in Christ's redemption. Granting it this share, the sacrament of matrimony confers a grace, or a divine power, that is both healing and deifying, and that targets, specifically, the procreative and unitive dimensions of marriage (Aquinas in one passage affirms that this grace helps spouses attend to "fleshly" and "earthly" matters "in such a way that these are not disconnected from Christ and the Church").[58] Through their partaking in the sacrament of matrimony, then, Catholic married couples find themselves healed, strengthened, fortified, perfected, and divinized in their very spousal (unitive) and parental (procreative) roles, that is, in the natural teleology of their conjugal union.

Conclusion

In a world where the institution of marriage labors under an unprecedented assault, whether from widespread marital infidelity (including the invasive allure of internet pornography and

[57] For a sustained argument on Aquinas's recognition of what today is called the "personalist" dimension of marriage, see McKay, "Aquinas on the End of Marriage." Further, Charles J. Reid (*Power over the Body, Equality in the Family: Rights and Domestic Relations in Medieval Canon Law* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004], 87) notes that this teaching on parental responsibility by Aquinas marks a significant theological development. Indeed, Reid explains that by appealing to 2 Cor 12:13-15 in expressing his view on the matter in *STh* Suppl., q. 49, a. 2, ad 1 (which opens with the assertion "offspring signifies not merely the begetting of children, but also their rearing"), Aquinas suggests that "sacrificial giving should characterize the parents' relationship with the child." Indeed, Ford and Kelly (*Contemporary Moral Theology*, *2:*49) quite rightly point out that "one should not make the mistake of imagining that procreation and the rearing of children are not personalist values, too, or that the so-called personalist values do not contribute to the biological or social ends."

[58] *ScG* IV, c. 78.

"cybersex") or the near fifty-percent divorce rate, or whether from rampant cohabitation or the push to redefine this institution to cover same-sex unions, the Church, in its sacrament of marriage, acts as a true beacon of hope. Dynamic acts of the person of Jesus Christ that are fitted to seven particular human needs, the sacraments have as their aim the on-going application of the fruits of Christ's salvation. By electing marriage as fit for elevation to the level of a sacrament, Christ has willed to include this natural institution within his economy of salvation. The sacrament of marriage joins our sexuality in its nuptial ordering to the person of Christ, thereby redeeming it.

If on the outside, then, it seems that those who are sacramentally married are no different from any other married couple, including those who have contracted a purely civil marriage, the reality is quite different: Christian marriage inhabits another world, so to speak; it is of a whole other order. Deep within Christian marriage flows, as from a wellspring, divine sanctifying or justifying grace, whereby husband and wife gain a share in Christ's redemption; they become sacramentally joined to the person of Christ in his very redemptive act, namely, in his Passion, death, and resurrection. Carrying with it both the power to heal the wounds of marital sin and the power to divinize or deify our sexuality, the grace of this sacrament (*res tantum*) targets marriage as a procreative-unitive institution, that is, it heals and divinizes marriage in its very procreative-unitive ordering. Thus, those who, with a living faith, cooperate *opus operans* with this grace are guaranteed to attain happy, successful marriages *ex opere operato*, since the signifying reality *(res et sacramentum)* of Christian marriage, which causes or disposes one for the *res tantum*, is nothing other than the indissoluble love between Christ and the Church. This is not to deny that many couples with living faith undergo much suffering in their marriages, and that this suffering capacitates them for eternal glory. But without the sacrament of marriage, the love between husband and wife would never become the kind of love God intends it to be, namely, the love between Christ and the Church. With this sacrament, it is *assured* of becoming this kind of love.

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WOMAN'S SELF-INTEREST OR SACRIFICIAL MOTHERHOOD: PERSONAL DESIRES, NATURAL INCLINATIONS AND THE MEANING OF LOVE

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ANYONE WHO STUDIED moral philosophy in the 1950s and 1960s," Fergus Kerr writes, "would remember being confronted with a choice: utiliarianism or deontology, John Stuart Mill or Kant, the right course of action decided by calculating the benefit to others or by considering one's duty."[1] Within the context of these limited parameters, it is not surprising that desires would be suspect by moralists. In the utilitarian framework, they threaten to pit the individual against his neighbor by setting the former's interests against the latter's and vice versa. In the context of deontology, they threaten the same by setting "base" nature against "enlightened" reason. In both cases, they clearly lesson the impetus for self-giving love. Lost, in both cases, is the notion that desires—precisely as expressive of a God-given nature—might serve as an impetus for virtue, by "naturally" leading us to the end for which we were created: human happiness. In its place is the perpetual conflict between love of self and love of neighbor, which can be resolved only by the sacrifice of one or the other.[2]

[1] Fergus Kerr, *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomism* (Alden, Mass.; Oxford; Victoria, AS: Blackwell, 2002), 115

[2] For more detail, see Servais Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics,* trans. Sr. Mary Thomas Noble (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), especially 240-53; 327-53; and idem, *Morality: The Catholic View,* preface by Alasdair MacIntyre and trans. Michael Sherwin (South Bend, Ind.: St. Augustine's Press, 2001), 65-81; Michael Sherwin, "Happiness and Its Discontents," *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and*

Remarkably illustrative of this conflict—between utilitarianism and deontology, on the one hand, and between love of self and love of other, on the other hand—is what the French philosopher Elisabeth Badinter has recently presented as the "conflict" between "the woman," ruled by reason and the will to choose in the absence of both natural inclinations and social pressures, and "the mother," who succumbs to the call of duty heralded by Mother Nature and a patriarchal society. Badinter, who has recently been acclaimed as France's "most influential intellectual"[3] and its "most prominent voice on feminist topics,"[4] is encouraging "the woman" in her battle against "the mother." I, on the other hand, refuse to choose between the two, since I am convinced that the premises of Badinter's argument are mistaken at the outset.

In defense of my position, I will present an exposition of Badinter's argument in part I, before arguing in favor of a natural maternal desire, which—far from being an animal-like inclination, or instinct, as it is understood by Badinter—is, I will argue, proper to woman *qua* rational. This inclination, I will maintain in part III—after clearing up certain misunderstandings concerning the meaning of desire in part II—should be understood in terms of a woman's love for her children or of her desire to love children whom she only yet imagines as her own. To be sure, this natural inclination to love is to be understood—and with this I am in perfect agreement with Badinter—not in terms of a naturally masochistic or self-effacing spirit that would belong to woman *qua* female, but rather, as we shall see in part IV, as a spontaneous affirmation of the intrinsic goodness of children.[5] Hence a

Culture 13:4 (2010): 35-59; Albert Plé, *Par devoir ou par plaisir* (Paris: Cerf, 1980). To contextualize this tension, see Michael Allen Gillespie, *The Theological Origins of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); and Louis Dupré, *The Enlightenment and the Intellectual Foundations of Modern Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004).

[3] Poll CSA-Marianne 2010. See "Têtes, la star des intellos," *La Liberté* (Fribourg, Switzerland), 12 October 2010.

[4] See "Picking a Fight with Motherhood," *International Herald Tribune*, 7 June 2010.

[5] This is not to deny original sin, in virtue of which children are "deprived of original holiness and justice . . . subject to ignorance, suffering, and the dominion of death; and inclined to sin," as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (no. 405) teaches. However, the

woman's spontaneous love for children may be said not only to precede but even to motivate her desire for maternity.[6] In other words, her desires—rather than being simply haphazard—might be understood as orientated at the outset by certain goods or ends: a child or children, in the case at hand. This in turn implies that desires need not simply be haphazard; nor must they be limited to what is subjective or assertive. Rather, or more positively, they might also be seen as *responsive* and thus *objective*.[7] Finally, after arguing for what Josef Pieper calls "the creative power of human love," I will conclude, in part V, that there need be no "conflict" between the woman and the mother, between a woman's happiness and her maternal vocation (or maternal "function," as Badinter would have it), between self-love and authentic love of the other, between the way of nature (properly understood) and the way of love.

Catechism also teaches that "human nature has not been totally corrupted" thereby (ibid.). Hence, I suggest we call upon the Thomistic principle according to which goodness is "coextensive with being." There nonetheless remains one difference: "What good adds to being is a reference to desire or appetite; something desirable is simply a being viewed as the object of desire" (David M. Gallagher, "Goodness and Moral Goodness," in idem, ed., *Thomas Aquinas and His Legacy* [Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1994], 37-60, at 41).

[6] As such, this understanding is compatible with Daphne de Marneffe's presentation of maternal desire: "It is the longing felt by a mother to nurture her children; the wish to participate in their mutual relationship; and the choice, insofar as it is possible, to put her desire into practice." This, more specifically, she instructs us, is "the authentic desire to mother felt by a woman herself—a desire not derived from a child's need, though responsive to it; a desire not created by a social role, though potentially supported by it; rather, a desire anchored in her experience of herself as an agent, an autonomous individual, a person." (Daphne de Marneffe, *Maternal Desire: On Children, Love and the Inner Life* [New York, Boston: Back Bay Books, Little, Brown and Company, 2004], 3, 4).

[7] As I have argued elsewhere: "I am, firstly, drawn *inwardly* (or subjectively) toward that which (or toward one whom) I passionately or instinctively desire or, more nobly, toward that which (or toward one whom) I willfully—that is rationally—esteem as *good* and thus desirable. Secondly, I am at the same time—hence the priority is not temporal but ontological—drawn *outwardly* (or objectively) as it were, by an *actual* attraction whose force lies less in me than in the objective goodness of the person or thing whom I love." (Michele M. Schumacher, "Feminism, Nature and Humanae Vitae: What's Love Got to Do with It?" *Nova et Vetera,* English Edition 6:4 [Fall 2008]: 897-900, here 886).

I. BADINTER'S CONFLICT

Elisabeth Badinter is certainly not new to the scene described above. The sixty-nine-year-old feminist, humanities scholar, philosopher, and business woman has also authored and edited some twenty books, so she is well positioned to act as a strategist in this "battle" for woman's freedom to self-determination. Having witnessed the "180-degree turn" of feminism[8] within the space of about ten years—from Simone de Beauvoir's emphasis on sexual equality by downplaying differences to the consideration, by so-called essentialist feminism, of femininity as both an "essence" and a "virtue"[9]—Badinter clearly invites us to return to that "golden age" when women were encouraged to seek autonomy from their anatomy.

In those early years, following the publication of Beauvoir's famous book, *Le deuxième sexe* (*The Second Sex*), in 1949,[10] women's battle for the preservation of their freedom was clearly conducted on two fronts: on the one hand, against nature and the argument for biological determinism—or the reduction of woman to what lies within the realm of her body and its working–-and on the other hand, against cultural determinism, or the pressure to live up to a culturally promoted ideal of womanhood, orchestrated largely by men of a macho mindset seeking to keep woman in her place within a man's world. Today, however, Badinter observes that these two forces have combined to form a single powerful enemy to which feminism itself has succumbed. To be sure, it has always been in the interest of a patriarchal society, Badinter recognizes, to present nature as being on its side. The presentation of woman as created to be docile, submissive, and maternal is thus recognized by Badinter as nothing more than cultural conditioning

[8] See Elisabeth Badinter, *The Conflict: How Modern Motherhood Undermines the Status of Women*, trans. Adriana Hunter (New York: Metropolitan Books / Henry Holt and Co., 2011), 55 (*Le Conflit, la femme et la mere* [Paris: Editions Flammarion, 2010], 83.

[9] See ibid. (*Le Conflit,* 84).

[10] See *Le Deuxième Sexe: I. Les faits et les mythes, II. L'expérience vécue* (Paris, Gallimard, 1949). The original English translation is by H. M. Parshely (Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1952, 1953, 1956; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1974, 1989). Newly translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2011).

dressed in the form of natural determinism. Today, however, this strategist for women's rights has recognized a dangerous change on the battlefield. This time it is as if nature has the strongest voice, thus co-opting macho-style men on its side, together with feminists of the essentialist mode—that is, those who emphasize sexual differences, in contrast to the feminism of equality, based upon likeness, to which Badinter subscribes. These essentialist feminists,[11] together with thinkers in ecology and human sciences, have united, Badinter mournfully observes, in proposing a common ideology oppressing young mothers, or those who would be mothers, under the banner "Mother knows best."

In Badinter's view, this well-knowing Mother is *not* to be found within woman herself; for Badinter believes that she has already destroyed "the myth" of the maternal instinct in one of her previous books, *L'Amour en plus* (translated into English under the title, *Mother Love*),[12] although she admits—with frustration—that it keeps popping up in public discussion.[13] Rather, this well-knowing Mother is yet another enemy of women's freedom of self-determination. This time it is "good" old Mother Nature who is under attack by Badinter; for She has called for a return of the traditional model of maternity,[14] which is "obviously" opposed to the emancipation won for women by feminists under the influence

[11] The most obvious name that comes to a fore among French feminists is Luce Irigaray, although Badinter's argument is constucted in opposition to Alice Rossi, Carol Gilligan, and Antoinette Fouque. See Badinter, *The Conflict*, 56-60 (*Le Conflit*, 83-92).

[12] Elisabeth Badinter, *L'Amour en plus: Histoire de l'amour maternel, XVIIe à XXe siècle* (Paris: Flammarion, 1980, 2000). English translation: *Mother Love: Myth and Reality* (New York: Macmillian Publishing, 1981). For her conclusion that the natural instinct is a myth, see *Mother Love,* 327: "A review of the history of different forms of maternal behavior gives birth to the conviction that maternal instinct is a myth. No universal and absolute conduct on the part of the mother has emerged. . . . Everything depends on the mother, on her history and our History. No, there is no universal law in this matter, which transcends natural determinism. Mother love cannot be taken for granted. When it exists, it is an additional advantage, an extra, something thrown into the bargain struck by the lucky ones among us." It is particularly interesting to note that this last phrase ("something thrown into the bargain struck by the lucky ones among us") does not appear in the French original. See *L'Amour en plus*, 439. Similarly: "Women who refuse to sacrifice their hopes and ambitions for their children's well-being are too numerous to be categorized as pathological exceptions who only confirm the rule" (*Mother Love*, 307 [*L'Amour en plus,* 415]).

[13] See, e.g., Badinter, *The Conflict*, 44-50 (*Le Conflit*, 68-83).

[14] See, e.g., ibid., 4 (*Le Conflit*, 13).

of Simone de Beauvoir. To be more specific, this "all-knowing" Mother is oppressing poor human mothers by way of her "good" counsels: natural childbirth,[15] nursing on demand,[16] attachment parenting (preferably "skin-to-skin"),[17] biodegradable or cloth diapers,[18] sleeping with baby,[19] abstinence from all alcohol during pregnancy ("zero tolerance"[20]) and likewise from all smoking (even after pregnancy),[21] to say nothing of sexual relations. On that last point, Badinter cannot help but add sarcastically that "good" Mother Nature counsels her daughters not only to sleep with their babies, but also to give priority to the mother-child relation over that of the couple.[22]

In short, with the return of naturalism, Badinter witnesses "the tyranny of maternal duty," not without the help of "innocent infants" who, "quite unwittingly," have become "the best allies of men's dominance."[23] So strong, in fact, is the influential power of "saintly" Mother Nature today, that Badinter poses the question: "What mother would not feel at least a twinge of guilt for failing to follow the wisdom of nature?"[24] Decrying such backwards-leaning traditionalism, Badinter surmises that: "Just as Jean-Jacques Rousseau [1712-78]succeeded in doing, troops of this movement intend to persuade women to return to nature, which means reverting to fundamental values of which maternal instincts are a cornerstone. But, unlike in the eighteenth century, women now have three options: embracing motherhood, rejecting it, or negotiating some middle ground, depending on whether they privilege their personal pursuit or a maternal role."[25]

[15] See ibid., 38-42 (*Le Conflit*, 58-65).

[16] See ibid., 42-43, 67-84 (*Le Conflit*, 65-66, 101-26).

[17] See, for example, her treatment of bonding theory in ibid., 46-50 (*Le Conflit*, 70-77).

[18] Ibid., 43-44 (*Le Conflit*, 66-68).

[19] Ibid., 101: "co-sleeping" (*Le Conflit*, 153: "cododotage").

[20] Ibid., 64 (*Le Conflit*, 97).

[21] Ibid., 63-67 (*Le Conflit*, 97-101).

[22] Ibid., 101-6 (*Le Conflit*, 152-59).

[23] Ibid., 97 (*Le Conflit*, 146). See also Badinter, *Mother Love*, 4 (*L'Amour en plus*, 28).

[24] Badinter, *The Conflict*, 61 (*Le Conflit*, 93).

[25] Ibid., 4-5 (*Le Conflit*, 13). On Rousseau's philosophy, see ibid., 168 (*Le Conflit*, 251-52); and Badinter, *Mother Love*, 30, 134-42, 166, 180-83, 186, 201, 208-16 (*L'Amour en plus*, 60, 127, 193-203, 235, 252-55, 260, 279, 287-98).

Badinter would thus open our eyes to what she judges to be social conditioning dressed in the form of natural (or biological) conditioning, so as likewise to awaken within us the will-power to rise above animal-level (prerational) inclinations towards maternity and *rationally* to choose or to reject it. This in turn requires, Badinter reasons, that women discern behind the current counsels of "Mother knows best" an ethic of constraint or obligation based upon an identification of the natural and the good. But on what, Badinter insists, are we to base that identification of the good and the natural, if not on what she esteems a "scandal"? After all, as she contends in her previous book, "to say that nature does things well cannot be admitted without difficulty. Its work is not without defect. And to be convincing, one must work hard to defend its cause, which for many is God. The whole problem consists in demonstrating that we live in the best possible world, which, after all, is not evident."[26]

Not evident indeed; for Badinter believes that she has already proven in *L'Amour en plus* that huge numbers of French mothers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were willing to sacrifice the lives of their newborn children by confiding them to wet nurses, all the while knowing—or so Badinter believes—that their chances of survival, already relatively low, were thereby further endangered, and significantly so. Although the mortality rate was, more specifically, generally doubled for children who were nursed by women who were not their mothers, "this did not prevent the majority of mothers from continuing the practice when the necessity of their own work prohibited them themselves from nursing."[27] Badinter thus concludes that "the wet-nurse system was 'objectively' a disguised form of infanticide."[28]

[26] Elisabeth Badinter, "Avant-Propos," dated July 1981, in *L'Amour en plus*, 16-17: "Car, dire que la nature fait bien les choses ne va pas sans difficulté. Son ouvrage n'est pas sans défaut. Et pour convaincre, il faut plaider durement sa cause qui est, pour beaucoup, celle de Dieu. Tout le problème consiste à démontrer que nous vivons dans le meilleur monde possible, ce qui, après tout, n'est pas évident." This preface does not appear in the English translation, which appeared in that same year.

[27] Badinter, *Mother Love*, 113 (*L'Amour en plus*, 166). See also ibid., 109ff. [*L'Amour en plus*, 159ff.]; idem, *The Conflict*, 162-63 (*Le Conflit,* 244-45).

[28] Badinter, *Mother Love*, 112 (*L'Amour en plus,* 164).

To be sure, Badinter admits that there is more to this picture than a woman's important social role, which was unquestionably hindered by a nursing child. Cultural pressures also exercised an important influence in favor of "family cohesion,"[29] which doctors and moralists judged was endangered by prolonged sexual abstinence, as was counseled during both pregnancy and the nursing period.[30] But what of those mothers who, upon the weaned child's return to the family home, quickly confided him or her to a governess or sent the child to a boarding school?[31] And what, still, of "the cheaters" ("*les tricheuses*")[32] who later—under the important influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau—kept their newborns and infants at home, presumably under their "careful," "loving regard," but hired poor young mothers from the countryside who left behind their own babies to serve as wet nurses in these affluent homes? And—still more heart wrenching—what of those same poor women, barely recovered from child birth, who all-too-willingly (Badinter presumes) abandoned their own newborn babies to nurse instead the children of these affluent women?[33] Why, Badinter asks, even in the event of extreme poverty, did they not at least wait until their own children were several months old before venturing on such a mercenary endeavor?

> May we not surmise, even if caution forbids any final judgment, that these women put their own lives and interests ahead of their children's, demonstrating that devotion was still not a value thoroughly embraced, even by a society that loudly proclaimed it as a fact of nature? And such a hypocritical society at that—simultaneously celebrating the virtues of the happy homemaker, championing the child, and at the same time closing its eyes to the false pretenses of some and the very real misery of others?[34]

[29] Badinter, *The Conflict*, 161 (*Le Conflit,* 242); cf. idem, *Mother Love,* 70 ff. (*L'Amour en plus*, 110ff.).

[30] Sperm was thought to spoil a mother's milk. See Badinter, *Mother Love,* 70 (*L'Amour en plus*, 110); idem, *The Conflict*, 161 (*Le Conflit,* 242).

[31] See, Badinter, *Mother Love,* 103-8 (*L'Amour en plus*, 147-59).

[32] Ibid., 196 (*L'Amour en plus*, 273).

[33] Badinter points to a mortality rate of 64 to 87 percent. See ibid., 197 (*L'Amour en plus*, 274).

[34] Ibid., 199 (*L'Amour en plus,* 277).

Badinter is in fact convinced that, in the absence of social pressure to the contrary, women clearly prefer, and even opt for, their own self-fulfullment over the good of their children, even when the very lives of their children are at stake.

> Neither poverty nor ignorance explains such infanticides—only indifference, which until almost the end of the eighteenth century was not really frowned upon as a violation of the moral or social code. This last point is essential, for it seems to indicate that in the absence of any outside pressure of this kind the mother was left to act according to her own nature—a self-centered nature excluding the remotest hint of self-sacrifice for the good of the child she had just brought into the world.[35]

Having thus destroyed—or so she believes—the "myth" of a natural maternal instinct some thirty years ago, Badinter's purpose in her most recent book is to save women from the cultural image, built upon this myth, of the "good mother." We don't need to be "good" mothers, Badinter argues, for if we hold up this kind of an ideal we shall never be mothers at all. Contemporary motherhood, due to readily available contraception and abortion, has become a matter of *choice*,[36] resulting in a certain predicament: on the one hand, a new consideration of the "responsibilities for the children they have chosen to have"; on the other hand, the elevation "of the concept of personal fulfillment."[37] Such are the terms that Badinter supplies to "the conflict" of the women of our time, who find themselves prey to a still larger conflict between naturalism, with its ethical constraints and obligations promoted by patriarchy, and hedonism, which she apparently views as the authentically human means to self fulfillment.[38] "The greatest enemy of naturalism is individualism and its hedonistic promise,"[39] which "wants the pleasures without the pains."[40] In fact, from

[35] Ibid., 113-14 (*L'Amour en plus,* 166-67).

[36] See Badinter, *The Conflict*, 1, 17, 128, 153 (*Le Conflit*, 9, 31, 188, 229).

[37] Ibid., 1 (*Le Conflit*, 10). Badinter admits, "Making the choice to be a parent is no guarantee of being a better one" (ibid., 15, [*Le Conflit*, 28]).

[38] See ibid., 12-14 (*Le Conflit*, 24-25).

[39] Ibid., 168 (*Le Conflit*, 252).

[40] Ibid., 169 (*Le Conflit*, 253).

Badinter's perspective, if women are still choosing to be mothers today, it is only because they view this as somehow contributing to their own satisfaction or pleasure.[41]

Badinter thus points out, in a matter-of-fact sort of way, that women are currently opting for one "instinct" over another: on the one hand, a so-called maternal instinct, which naturalism would assign to women in virtue of a particular feminine "nature," or on the other hand, an instinct, drive, or appetite for pleasure. Hence, the fundamental option that she sets before us: self-fulfillment in the form of egotistical pleasure, typifying "the woman," or self-sacrifice, typifying "the mother"; the realization of woman or her loss.

Presented with such an option, one might rightly wonder who, other than the martyr, would willingly choose motherhood. It is not motherhood that Badinter suggests that we abandon, however, but "martyrdom": living for our children rather than living for ourselves. This stark contrast (the "woman" or the "mother"-martyr) serves, in other words, the particular purpose of awakening in women the desire for rational decision-making, so that they might move beyond their desires and act in service of what they deem their true self-interest.[42] Badinter's argument thus suggests that our desires, precisely as *pre*rational, are also *ir*rational. Hence, much of our choosing is only an illusion, deriving "more from emotional and societal factors than from any rational assessment of advantages and disadvantages."[43] As a case in point, she reads a recent French national poll as revealing—falsely, in my opinion[44]—that "first among the

[41] See, e.g., ibid., 2, 12-13 (*Le Conflit*, 10, 22).

[42] See, e.g., ibid., 13-14 (*Le Conflit*, 25).

[43] Ibid., 11-12 (*Le Conflit*, 22).

[44] This is the conclusion that she draws from the following responses: "A child improves daily life and makes it happier"; "A child means continuing the family, handing down its values and history"; "A child gives love and affection, and company in one's old age"; "A child makes a couple's relationship more intense and stable"; "A child helps you become an adult and take responsibility"; etc. (ibid., 10-11) (*Le Conflit,* 21). All of these reasons are, it seems to me, compatible with what I will present as the motive of love, especially love understood as an affirmation of the intrinsic goodness of the child. In other words, far from competing with affirmations regarding the intrinsic worth (goodness) of the child, such references to the pleasure (or delight) that a child evokes within (or even outside of) a family

motives" for having children is "hedonism . . . with no mention of self-sacrifice."[45]

The real problem, then, as Badinter thus sees it—that is to say, once we have done away with social conditioning—is that of our desires themselves. Surely, she reasons, they should be followed to the extent that they conform to our hedonistic principles, which she ironically does not call into question, but far too often these desires actually lead to the contrary: "The future mother tends to fantasize about love and happiness and overlooks the other aspects of child rearing: the exhaustion, frustrations, loneliness, and even depression, with its attendant sense of guilt."[46]

It bears repeating that despite such apparent dissuasion, Badinter—herself a mother of three—does not simply maintain that we ought not to have children. Rather, she suggests that children should be rationally chosen in accord with one's freely chosen program or lifestyle.[47] On the other hand, she also warns young women against walking blindly into the motherhood "trap," for this is a path of no return: "[T]o admit that you are not cut out to be a mother, that it gives you little satisfaction, would brand you as a reckless monster." It is thus not the case that choosing to be a mother guarantees a happier maternity. "For one thing, our belief in having chosen from a position of freedom might be illusory; for another, this assumed freedom burdens women with greater responsibilities at a time when individualism and a 'passion for the self' have never been stronger."[48]

might be understood as a confirmation of his or her intrinsic goodness. This means that it is not our desires that render children lovable. Rather, our desires are a response to the fact that children *are* lovable. Hence also these desires are "not only entirely 'in order'" but are also "the indispensable beginning of all perfection in love. . . . What is more, all human happiness (which we instinctively desire, but not necessarily selfishly, and therefore with rightfully clear consciences) is fundamentally *the happiness of love*" (Josef Pieper, "On Love," trans. Richard and Clara Winston, in idem, *Faith, Hope, Love* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997], 139-281, here 223, 224).

[45] Badinter, *The Conflict*, 11 (*Le Conflit*, 22).

[46] Ibid., 14 (*Le Conflit*, 25).

[47] It is worth mentioning that Badinter's motherhood has not stopped her from authoring nine books, which have won for her a certain renown, as I mentioned above.

[48] Ibid., 28: "Choisir d'être mère ne garantit pas, comme on l'a cru au début, une meilleure maternité. Non seulement parce que la liberté de choix est peut-être un leurre, mais aussi parce qu'elle alourdit considérablement le poids des responsabilités en un temps où

What women *really* desire, Badinter seems to suggest, is not motherhood as such (i.e., children), but rather the pleasure that it accords (or they accord) us. Hence, when the pleasure dies, or is outweighed by sacrifices, women are quickly disenchanted, and they must admit that they have been duped by false expectations, reinforced, Badinter suggests, by an idealistic notion of motherhood orchestrated by naturalists, feminists of the essential mode, and the residues (or so she hopes) of patriarchy and its macho sorts.[49] So what is a poor women to do?

Given the serious weight of the responsibilities that motherhood entails—at least in terms of social expectations—Badinter urges us to make clear-headed decisions for or against motherhood in light of "the pleasures and the pains, the benefits and the sacrifices" and in consideration of our "altruist capacity."[50] In short, because we are free to decide for or against maternity, we should do so *rationally*. This in turn means that we should carefully consider whether or not it accords with our most profound subjective desire for self-fulfillment in the form of maximized pleasure. For Badinter this means that—and this is one of my major points of contention with her reasoning—*rational* motherhood (maternity specially chosen for its ability to promote one's own pleasure) is opposed to *natural* motherhood (motherhood that is chosen in accord with social pressure, and is thus under the spell of naturalists and patriarchy).

II. Clearing Up Misunderstandings about Natural Desire

Of course, not everyone would agree that self-fulfillment is to be obtained by way of maximized pleasure, and often enough Badinter's brand of feminism has "freed" women from the

l'individualisme et la 'passion de soi' n'ont jamais été si puissants."

[49] On this subject, see also Susan J. Douglas and Meredith W. Michaels, *The Mommy Myth: The Idealization of Motherhood and How It Has Undermined Women* (New York: Free Press, 2004); Miriam Peskowitz, *The Truth behind the Mommy Wars: Who Decides What Makes a Good Mother?* (Emeryville, Calif.: Seal Press, 2005); and Susan Maushart, *The Mask of Motherhood: How Becoming a Mother Changes Our Lives and Why We Never Talk about It* (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 2000).

[50] Ibid., 25: "des plaisirs et des peines, des bénéfices et des sacrifices"; "capacité altruiste."

"drudgery" of housework and childcare to that of the factory, office, or corporation. And while she willingly denounces various forms of cultural conditioning that present an idealistic picture of maternity, she ironically hails the current cultural ideal of individualism and hedonism. The more important objection to Badinter's argument, however—and the one I will consider in what follows—is the clear lack of any reference to that simple four-letter word, which most of us, I believe, still consider the most fundamental and certainly the most significant reason for choosing motherhood (or fatherhood for that matter),[51] namely, *love*. Why, I cannot help but ask, would anyone opt to be a mother, if not for love?

In responding to this important question, it is important first to clear up a number of misunderstandings concerning our desires. Far too often it is assumed, as Badinter has done, that anyone holding to the position that a woman is naturally drawn to children or that she naturally desires to be a mother has *de facto* fallen into the trap of biological reductionism: the assumption—based on the empirical observation that women are biologically orientated (by way of physical capacities and hormone-led desires) to bearing and nourishing children—that women are ethically obliged to be mothers, at least if we hope to realize our destinies and to be fulfilled. How can it be otherwise, it is maintained by naturalists, when nature has outlined our perfection in these terms? Indeed, naturalism, in contrast to natural-law theory, which has traditionally dominated Catholic moral teaching,[52] would reduce nature—including so-called feminine nature—to its lowest common denominator: that which is physical, material, or

[51] The same argument holds for men, but Badinter has good reason to argue that much more is at stake for the woman than for the man. Hence, as Pope John Paul II expresses it, "Parenthood—even though it belongs to both [man and woman]—is realized much more fully in the woman, especially in the prenatal period. It is the woman who 'pays' directly for this shared generation, which literally absorbs the energies of her body and soul. It is therefore necessary that *the man* be fully aware that in their shared parenthood he owes *a special debt to the woman*. No program of 'equal rights' between women and men is valid unless it takes this fact fully into account" (Apostolic Letter on the Dignity and Vocation of Women, *Mulieris dignitatem* [15 August 1988], no. 18).

[52] See, for example, John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, nos. 47-50; and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* nos. 1954-60.

biological. Hence, that which is most natural is presented by naturalists as that which is also perfective, but—and herein resides its problematic character from my perspective no less than that of Badinter—this perfection is thought of as lying, even in the case of the human being, strictly outside of reason's domain. It is thus argued, for example, that because woman was created with the natural capacity to bear and educate children, she is likewise endowed with a sort of maternal instinct, by which is meant that she possesses a natural propensity, or weight, drawing her irresistibly towards mothering as toward her own perfection, not unlike a planet which is naturally brought into orbit around a sun. Given the complete absence of rational choice in this account, it is hardly surprising that feminists would object to such an idea. As for Badinter, she rightfully insists that "a woman can be 'normal' without being a mother, and that not every mother has an irresistible impulse to care for the child born to her."[53]

As a case in point, Badinter points to the recent and ever-growing phenomenon today—corresponding to women's new power to refuse maternity—of the "childfree"[54] as distinct from the "childless":[55] those who seek to be "free" of children and the responsibilities of maternity in favor of "conjugal and professional satisfactions."[56] She underscores the childfree lifestyle as also

[53] Badinter, "Avant-Propos," 9: "une femme peut être 'normale' sans être mère, et que toute mère n'a pas une pulsion irrésistible à s'occuper de l'enfant qui lui est né." (Again, this preface does not exist in the English translation, *Mother Love*).

[54] See Badinter, *The Conflict*, 18-21, 124-26, 141, 143, 153 (*Le Conflit*, 24, 31ff., 182-84, 210, 213, 229). See also Laura S. Scott, *Two Is Enough: A Couple's Guide to Living Childless by Choice* (Berkley, Calif.: Seal Press, 2009); Corinne Maier, *No Kids: 40 Good Reasons Not to Have Children*, trans. Patrick Watson (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd.); Jeanne Safer, *Beyond Motherhood: Choosing a Life without Children* (New York: Pocket Books, 1996); Susan S. Lang, *Women without Children: The Reasons, The Rewards, The Regrets* (Holbrook, Mass.: Adams Media Corporation, 1991); Elaine Tyler May, *Barren in the Promised Land: Childless Americans and the Pursuit of Happiness* (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press, 1995); and Irene Reti, ed., *Childless by Choice: A Feminist Anthology* (Santa Cruz, Calif.: HerBooks, 1992).

[55] Badinter explains that in France, for example, one third of women without children claim to have made a deliberate choice. See *The Conflict*, 124 (*Le Conflit*, 182).

[56] I have purposefully altered the published translation more accurately to refer to the original text. Badinter does not address "familial" satisfactions, as her translator proposes (cf. *The Conflict*, 144), but "conjugal ones" ("Les satisfactions conjugales et professionelles" [*Le*

better for children by rehearsing in gory detail the sorry fate of infant French children whose apathetic mothers left them to die with wet nurses. Contemporary readers cannot help but be reminded of similar atrocities in our own day, not the least of which is abortion.[57] Badinter recounts these examples to defend her claim that the natural desire for maternity is "natural" only in the sense of being a biological impulse overlaid by a social construct, not as a reliable guide to fulfillment (either for women or for children). However, the empirically observable phenomenon of child neglect need not imply that an objectively "good" maternal instinct is merely an illusion. Hence, according to a Thomistic natural-law perspective, for example, human beings are capable of choosing among desires and prioritizing them according to any number of factors, orientations, or mindsets: including both the authentically fulfilling orientation to love and the dehumanizing orientation to sin (as seen in the case of child neglect).[58]

Indeed, the human person does share various appetites, inclinations, or desires with the animals and even with lesser beings, such that we might distinguish three orders of natural inclinations:[59] those we share with beings without sense knowledge (such as the inclination to preserve our own being and thus to ward off danger), those we share with other animals (such as sexual reproduction and the raising of offspring), and those proper to us as rational beings (such as knowing the truth about God and living in society). Yet reason is said to govern them all,[60]

Conflit, 215]).

[57] As anthropologist Sarah Blaffer Hrdy reasons: "If women instinctively love their babies, why have so many women across cultures and through history directly or indirectly contributed to their deaths? Why do so many mothers around the world discriminate among their own infants—for example, feeding a son but starving a daughter?" (*Mother Nature: Maternal Instincts and How They Shape the Human Species* [New York: Ballantine Books, 1999], xviii).

[58] Such, in other words, is what Daphne de Marneffe rightfully refers to as "the whole complicated arena of mothers' competing desires" (De Marneffe, *Maternal Desire*, 5).

[59] See Aquinas, *STh* I-II, q. 94, a. 2.

[60] See ibid., ad 3.

without thereby usurping the Creator's jurisdiction, of course.[61] Reason governs the other natural inclinations by way of the specifically rational appetite of the will—"rational" because it is naturally inclined to that which the intellect presents as true and thus good[62]—whereby we naturally desire our own perfection, which is none other, St. Thomas teaches, than our happiness.[63] Reason, after all, is capable of discerning among the various goods to which the will is drawn.

Like St. Thomas, Badinter holds that human beings should act responsibly. For Badinter, however, women are responsible in their choices concerning motherhood by giving primacy to themselves and their most fundamental desire for a pleasurable life. In particular, a woman acts most rationally when she subverts her merely biological "desire" for motherhood (which animals also share) in favor of her more authentically human desire to live in society: indeed, to be active in the world and out of the house where she is the so-called slave of her children. By contrast, while St. Thomas would certainly favor following rational inclinations over merely biological impulses, he would also contend that practices intrinsic to mothering (the sexual act, bearing and raising children) are always undertaken by human beings as rational

[61] See *STh* I-II, q. 6, a. 1, ad 3. Just as reason cannot control involuntary biological functions, so also it cannot determine the natural orientation of the rational appetite: man cannot do otherwise than will his own happiness. All in being "mistress of its act" (*domina sui actus*)—in contrast to that "which is determinate to one thing" (*determinata ad unum*) (*STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 5)—the human will "tends naturally [and necessarily] to its last end; for every man naturally wills happiness: and all other desires are caused by this natural desire; since whatever a man wills he wills on account of the end" (*STh* I, q. 60, a. 2: "Unde voluntas naturaliter tendit in suum finem ultimum. Omnis enim homo naturaliter vult beatitudinem; et ex hac naturali voluntate causantur omnes aliae voluntates, cum quidquid homo vult, velit propter finem"). See also *STh* I-II, q. 91, a. 2, ad 2. For a thorough development of this thesis in St. Thomas's teaching, see David M. Gallagher, "Desire for Beatitude and Love of Friendship in Thomas Aquinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 58 (1996), 1-47.

[62] See *STh* I-II, q. 17, a. 5; q. 10, a. 1.

[63] *STh* I, q. 62, a. 1: "By the name of beatitude is understood the ultimate perfection of rational or of intellectual nature; and hence it is that it is naturally desired, since everything naturally desires its ultimate perfection" ("nomine beatitudine intelligitur ultima perfectio rationalis seu intellectualis naturae: et inde est quod naturaliter desideratur, quia unumquodque naturaliter desiderat suam ultimam perfectionem"). See also *STh* I-II, q. 10, a. 1, ad. 1; and I, q. 60, a. 3.

agents: hence the practice of mothering is always, at least in part, a rational activity.

Many contemporary women tend to agree with St. Thomas. Contra Badinter, it is hardly the biological act of engendering life that most women have in mind when they speak of a maternal desire; nor is it a simple desire for sex.[64] Nor does one commonly understand by maternal desire—indeed, the thought is almost ridiculous—the desire to contribute to population growth, to do one's part for the preservation of the species, nor even—at least not in most cases—to preserve the family name, its "blood," or its properties. There is something far more human, as it were, in this desire: something which, to be sure, most women—at least those who admit to having it—understand as contributing to their personal happiness or fulfillment, but only secondarily, or consequently. The proper object of this desire is not—and here I beg to differ with Badinter—a woman's happiness, nor even her pleasure (though there may be a correspondence between this and the proper object).[65] Rather the proper object of this desire is a child, or children.[66] Thus I return to the question: why would anyone choose to be a mother, if not for love?

III. Motherhood: What Does Love Have To Do With It?

In responding to this important question, one might first of all grant to Badinter that women might well, in fact, be duped into

[64] De Marneffe puts it in rather matter-of-fact terms when she writes: "As common wisdom would have it, 'mother' and 'desire' do not belong in the same phrase. Desire, we've been told, is about sex. Motherhood, we've been told, is about practically everything but sex" (ibid.).

[65] As de Marneffe puts it well: "Many mothers feel torn up inside being apart from their babies and children many hours a day, yet they feel realistic or mature when they are able to suppress those feelings. The terms of the discussion don't admit the possibility that pleasure is a reliable guide, or that desire tells us anything about truth" (*Maternal Desire*, 13).

[66] Marie-Joseph Nicolas has good reason to argue, with reference to Thomas Aquinas, that "the intention of nature in human sexuality is not like that of animal sexuality to safeguard the species: it is to procreate a human person who is significant in him- or herself (*etiam individua sunt de principali intentione naturae*), and consequently to lead him or her to full stature and autonomy by means of education" (Marie-Joseph Nicolas, "L'Idée de nature dans la pensée de saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue thomiste* 74 [1974], 533-90, at 571. Cf. *STh* I, q. 98, a. 1.

mothering by way of guilt bound up with social constraints and expectations, which have, often enough, been presented in the form of moral obligation. This is obviously what neither she nor I have in mind by a *free* choice for motherhood. One might further object to my question ("Why would anyone *choose* to be a mother if not for love?") that it is impossible to speak of love in the case of desire, precisely because maternal desire precedes the fact of being a mother. "Desire," as St. Thomas appropriately notes, "implies the real absence of the beloved,"[67] but in the case at hand the beloved (one's future son or daughter) is not only absent, but is also unable to present him- or herself as the object of a desire. The very question being entertained, after all (beside that of whether we naturally seek the good of our children—already born—over our own good), is whether or not women naturally desire to call children into existence in cooperation with the Creator. How, indeed, can one love children that exist only within one's imagination?

This very objection serves as a helpful introduction to my response to the previous question: Whether women naturally desire to procreate. Precisely by invoking love as a motivation for motherhood, I have in mind a classic understanding of love, such that its object (in this case the child) is present not only as the fruit (or *end*) of desire, but also as its inception, as that which gives birth to desire.[68] "The end corresponds with the principle,"[69] St. Thomas reasons, because the good (the object of our desires) "has the aspect of an end."[70] It is, in other words, that which desire seeks as its goal. Indeed, as Jan Aertsen explains, "A movement towards an end is only possible when the terminus in some way

[67] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologica* I-II, q. 28, a. 1, ad. 1.

[68] See, for example, H. D. Simonin, "Autour de la solution thomiste du probléme de l'amour," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen age* 6 (1931) (Paris: Vrin, 1932): 174-274.

[69] Cf. *STh* I-II, q. 2, a. 5, ad 3: "Quia finis respondet principio." Cf. , I-II, q. 26, a. 2; q. 1, a. 4.

[70] *STh* I-II, q. 25, a. 2: "Bonum autem habet rationem finis." See also part II ("La doctrine de l'amour et la causalité finale") of Simonin, "Autour de la solution thomiste du problème de l'amour," 199-245.

determines the movement."[71] Hence, there is a certain "beginning of the end" (*inchoatio finis*),[72] or an orientation, which may be said somehow to determine the movement towards the end within the subject who desires it. Or to put it another way, underlying every natural desire is a certain "anticipatory unity"[73] or affinity[74]—what St. Thomas calls "connaturality"[75]—between a nature and its object or the end (the good)[76] towards which it tends. This is not to say that desires are simply subjective—determined by the subject—for it is rather the object of our desire (the good or the beloved) which is said to be its cause.[77] The beloved object or the beloved person—whether present or absent, whether existential or imaginary—causes the inclinations we refer to as desire by arousing an affection towards itself (or, in the case of a person, toward her- or himself), which St. Thomas calls love (*amor*) or complacency (*complacentia*).[78] And indeed, as rational creatures, we most especially act *for* ends, or on account of our desires: we will (and thus we choose) to be united to that which we love. Hence we know from experience the truth of St. Thomas's insight, "love precedes desire."[79] Or as Pieper very aptly puts it:

[71] Jan Aertsen, *Nature and Creature: Thomas Aquinas's Way of Thought* (Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1988), 343. Hence, even though an end is rightly considered *last* in the order of execution (whence its name), it is *first* in the order of intention. See *STh* I-II, q. 25, a. 1.

[72] The reference here is to Aquinas, *De Veritate*, q. 14, a. 2.

[73] Aertsen, *Nature and Creature*, 343. See also *STh* I-II, q. 28, a. 1.

[74] Love, in other words, supposes a certain likeness in virtue of which the beloved may be considered another "self." See, for example, *STh* I, q. 60, a. 4. Or, as Pieper explains with regard to the etymological development of the term, "love includes and is based upon a preexistent relation between the lover and the beloved" ("On Love," 159).

[75] Literally, that which is in accord, or agreement, with (*con*) nature. See, for example, *STh* I-II, q. 26, a. 2, corp. and ad 3.

[76] "The good has been well defined as that at which all things aim" (Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.1.1094a1-3). "It is clear that the good has the nature of an end" (*STh* I, q. 103, a. 2: "Manifestum est enim quod bonum habet rationem finis").

[77] See, for example, *STh* I-II, q. 27, a. 1.

[78] See *STh* I-II, q. 23, a. 4, where it is argued that "good causes, in the appetitive power, a certain inclination, aptitude or connaturalness in respect of good: and this belongs to the passion of love" ("Bonum ergo primo in potentia appetitiva causat quamdam inclinationem, seu aptitudinem, seu connaturalitatem ad bonum, quod pertinet ad passionem amoris"). See also *STh* I-II, q. 28, a. 2.

[79] *STh* I-II, q. 25, a. 2 ("amor praecedit desiderium"). See also *STh* I-II, q. 28, a. 1.

[L]ove is the underlying principle of willing and comes first both in temporal succession and order of rank. Not only . . . is love by its nature the earliest act of will,[80] and not only is every impulse of the will derived from love,[81] but love also inspires, as the *principium,* that is, as the immanent source, all specific decisions and keeps them in motion.[82]

As for the case at hand—that of the "love" that women might be said to have not only for the children they already have but also and even for still unconceived children—we might thus distinguish between the "real union" (*secundum rem*) of the lover and the beloved (woman and child) and the "union of affection" (*secundum affectum*),[83] arising from a perception of unity between the object loved (the child, in this case) and the lover (the woman longing to be a mother), which gives rise to (maternal) desire.

Such a "union of affection" has the particular advantage of answering to the objection that the idea of maternal desire violates a woman's dignity by way of biological reduction. Indeed, far from arguing for a biological impulse or a physical suitability for motherhood, this understanding of desire as arising out of love bespeaks the rational nature of a woman, for it implies not only her power of volition, but also her intellectual powers of understanding and imagination—powers that she, of course, shares with man. On the other hand, one might object that while this solution would thus save a woman's dignity, it hardly saves the dignity of the child, who is apparently instrumentalized

[80] See *STh* I, q. 20, a. 1.

[81] See *STh* I, q. 60, prol.; I, q. 20; and *ScG* I, c. 4.

[82] Pieper, "On Love," 166. Similarly, Servais Pinckaers argues: "The first movement of the 'appetite,' which is at the origin of all other movements and remains constantly present in them, is love, which we can define as a direct and simple delight in the object perceived and known as good (this object and its good can obviously be a person, as when one says: this or this person gives me joy, intrigues me, touches me, etc.). Different species of love correspond with different species of desire" (Servais Pinckaers, "The Natural Desire to See God," *Nova et Vetera* 8, Eng. edition [2010]: 627-46, at 639).

[83] *STh* I-II, q. 28, a. 1. Saint Thomas reasons, more specifically, that "when we love a thing, by desiring it, we apprehend it as belonging to our well-being. In like manner when a man loves another with the love of friendship, he wills good to him, just as he wills good to himself: wherefore he apprehends him as his other self" ("cum enim aliquis amat aliquid, quasi concupiscens illud, apprehendit illud quasi pertinens ad suum bene esse. Similiter cum aliquis amat aliquem amore amicitiae, vult ei bonum, sicut et sibi vult bonum; unde apprehendit eum ut alterum se").

thereby, for he is thus invited into this world as the object of his mother's dreams or of her project for self-fulfillment. Hence beyond the question of maternal desire, we find ourselves faced with the still more important question of love itself.

IV. Love as the Power of Affirmation

What, then, we might ask, is love, *qua* human, and even *qua* maternal? What do we mean when we speak of this "commonsense" notion of maternal love which—although it inevitably conjures up many happy, if not idealistic, pictures in the minds of even those who have known unhappy childhoods; whence Badinter's insistence upon the term "myth"—is not so easily defined? All too often we are tempted to save love from instinct by presenting it as an act of the will, by which we mean a choice or a decision, an engagement, even an effort. In short, it is presented as an active power, whence the term *will-power*. Almost entirely lost to this discourse—unless, of course, we are addressing erotic or sexual love—is the ancient idea of love as a *passion*, and thus as largely receptive (and thus passive) with regard to its object, the beloved. In this sense, love is better understood, as Pieper has fittingly argued, as "something that comes over us and happens to us like an enchantment."[84] He thus has good reason to ask: "Who, strictly speaking, is the active subject when someone 'pleases' us or when we find someone 'enchanting'?"[85]

To be sure, a mother's love is inevitably characterized by what Pieper admits as likewise proper to love, namely, "self-forgetful surrender and giving that precisely 'does not seek its own advantage'."[86] From this perspective, it is obvious that a woman's love for her child will be largely one sided for a good number of years. Love in the passive sense of enchantment, however, is reciprocated much sooner, even within the first months of a child's life, as Hans Urs von Balthasar explains in image form:

[84] Pieper, "On Love," 163.
[85] Ibid., 153.
[86] Ibid., 163.

After a mother has smiled at her child for many days and weeks, she finally receives her child's smile in response. She has awakened love in the heart of her child, and as the child awakens to love, it also awakens to knowledge: the initially empty-sense impressions gather meaningfully around the core of the Thou.[87]

If a smile of delight can "produce" a smile of delight in return, this, I would like to suggest, is merely the effect or recognition of a certain "connaturality" between a mother and child, a fittingness or a suitable communion[88] (animals, for example, do not smile), which is simply given at the outset and not created by human willing. The will's role, in this case, is precisely that of affirmation, or consent, which Pieper insists is just as proper to the will as the more common understanding of the act of "deciding in favor of actions on the basis of motives." In the first case, the will's act is better expressed as "agreement, assenting, consenting, applauding, affirming, praising, glorifying and hailing."[89] Indeed, far from exercising objective neutrality, the will is thus "touched" (or "bent"), as it were, by the objective goodness of the beloved person or object precisely because—and with this insight we return to the idea of connaturality, proportionality, correspondence, or suitedness (*convenientia*) between a nature and its inclination—"love not only yields and creates unity" but also *presupposes* unity,[90] a unity that is, as it were, simply given. In other words—it bears repeating—before we consider the real union of lovers (or, in the case at hand, mother and child, although the same reasoning could be used with regard to father and child) which gives rise to joy or pleasure, we might address that affective union which St. Thomas calls love (*amor*) and which he further defines as "complacency in good" (*complacentia boni*), consisting in "an aptitude or proportion of the appetite to the

[87] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Love Alone Is Credible*, trans. by David C. Schindler (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 76.

[88] See, on this subject, chapter 3 ("La similitude cause de l'amour") of H. D. Simonin, "Autour de la solution thomiste du problème de l'amour," 246-70.

[89] Pieper, "On Love," 164.

[90] Ibid., 159.

good"[91] in virtue of which one is already in some sense united to that which (or to the one whom) one is thus inclined—for one loves his like.[92] This means, as Michael Sherwin explains, that before love is a principle of action, it is "a response to goodness,"[93] particularly in the form of "a pleasant affective affinity"[94] that St. Thomas calls *complacentia* (literally, "with pleasing assent": *cum* + *placentia*). Or, as Pieper would have it, such is the spontaneous awareness of goodness that naturally affirms, "It's good that you exist; it's good that you are in this world!"[95]

With this beautiful insight we return to the earlier objection concerning maternal desire: how can one love, with a spontaneous, affirming love, a child who does not yet (and perhaps never will) exist? The answer is also supplied by Pieper, who recognizes in these words of delight ("It's good that you exist!") "a continuation and in a certain sense even a perfecting of what was begun in the course of creation,"[96] when, that it is to say, God saw what he had created and proclaimed it "good" (cf. Gen 1:9, 12, 18, 21, 25) and even "very good" (Gen 1:31).[97] In other words, the fundamental affirmation "It's good that you exist," is,

[91] *STh* I-II, q. 25, a. 2: "Ipsa autem aptitudo sive proprotio apetitus ad bonum est amor, qui nihil aliud est quam complacentia boni." See also *STh* I-II, q. 26, a. 2; and q. 28, a. 1, corp and ad 2. Pieper, in his etymological study of the term *love* in various languages, points to "a long suspected and almost consciously known sematic element: that 'love' includes and is based upon a preexistent relation between lover and beloved" (Pieper, "On Love," 159). It is thus not surprising that A. N. Williams recognizes as a "basic assumption" undergirding all of St. Thomas's thought about charity "the Platonic insight that love implies a kind of likeness" (A. N. Williams, *The Ground of Union: Deification in Aquinas and Palamas* [New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999], 75).

[92] See, for example, *STh* I, q. 60, a. 4; I-II, q. 27, a. 1; and q. 63, a. 2.

[93] See Michael S. Sherwin, "Aquinas, Augustine, and the Medieval Scholastic Crisis concerning Charity," in *Aquinas the Augustinian*, ed. Michael Dauphinais, Barry David, and Matthew Levering (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 181-204, at 199; and idem, *By Knowledge & By Love: Charity and Knowledge in the Moral Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), especially 63-118.

[94] "This affinity," Sherwin specifies, is "the aptitude, inclination, or proportion existing in the appetite for the loved object" (*By Knowledge & By Love,* 70).

[95] Pieper, "On Love," 164.

[96] Ibid., 172.

[97] See ibid., 177, 178.

Pieper explains, "an imitation of the divine creative act by virtue of which the human being . . . exists," and is "simultaneously 'good', that is, lovable."[98]

In thus addressing the creative power of our love, Pieper has in mind the good that it calls forth from the heart of the beloved, such that he or she might thereby recognize his or her own intrinsic goodness and act accordingly,[99] even to the extent of loving in return (to echo Balthasar's insight). In the case at hand, however—that of women drawn to motherhood—it is particularly appropriate to call upon the creative power of human love as cooperating (by way of procreation) in God's own creative work. To be sure, there is an important principle that we cannot violate in our analogy between divine love and human love: unlike the human will which is moved by the good pre-existing in things, the divine will actually creates the good in things and persons.[100] Hence, no woman should mislead herself into thinking that she is

[98] Ibid., 274.

[99] Helpful in understanding this is another image from Balthasar: "Love is creative for the fellow man; it produces an image of him with which the beloved would not have credited himself, and when love is genuine and faithful it gives him the power to come closer to this image or make himself like it. He does not want to disappoint; he wants to show himself grateful that someone takes him so seriously and expects so much of him" (Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Convergences: To the Source of Christian Mystery,* trans. E. A. Nelson [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983], 128-29). Similarly, John Paul II argues in his commentary of Ephesians 5, "The good that the one who loves creates with his love in the beloved is like a test of that same love and its measure" (General Audience of September 1, 1982; in John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. and ed. Michael Waldstein [Boston: Pauline Books, 2006], 484).

[100] *STh* I, q. 20, a. 2: "Hence, since to love anything is nothing else than to will good to that thing, it is manifest that God loves everything that exists. Yet not as we love. Because since our will is not the cause of the goodness of things, but is moved by it as by its object, our love, whereby we will good to anything, is not the cause of its goodness; but conversely its goodness, whether real or imaginary, calls forth our love, by which we will that it should preserve the good it has, and receive besides the good it has not, and to this end we direct our actions: whereas the love of God infuses and creates goodness" ("Unde, cum amare nihil aliud sit quam velle bonum alicui, manifestum est quod Deus omnia quae sunt, amat; non tamen eo modo sicut nos. Quia enim voluntas nostra non est causa bonitatis rerum, sed ab ea movetur sicut ab objecto; amor noster, quo bonum alicui volumus, non est causa bonitatis ipsius; sed e converso bonitas ejus, vel vera, vel aestimata, provacat amorem, quo ei volumus et bonum conservari quod habet, et addi quod non babet; et ut ad hoc operemur. Sed amor Dei est infundens et creans bonitatem in rebus"). See also *STh* I-II, q. 110, a. 1; and Aquinas, *In Ioan.* V, lect. 3 (753).

capable of actually creating the good in children: hers is the role of *pro*-creation (*cooperation* with God's creative work). This means, however, that she is not simply endowed with the bodily capacity passively to receive life within herself, as it is planted (as it were) therein by the Creator. Rather, she is also and most especially endowed with the particular rational capacity, which she shares with man, willingly to choose life. This involves not only that she pose no obstacle to the development of a new life within her, but that far more positively—and with far more dignity—she might actually delight in her child's conception, proclaiming in echo of the Creator: "It's good that you exist! How marvelous that you are in this world!"

V. Love and Self-Fulfillment

This (Pieperian) presentation of love has the particular advantage of pointing to the intrinsic goodness of the beloved (the child, in this case) rather than the desirability of any number of his or her specific traits or usefulness. Surely each of us desires to be affirmed in this way rather than to be "loved" instrumentally or by way of obligation or even duty. The real lover cannot, of course, give answer to the question, "Why do you love me?," for in so doing he or she risks admitting to having instrumentalized the beloved. Furthermore, just as the human will is not sovereign in determining good, we ourselves are not, as Pieper rightly insists, "'sovereign' in love."[101] It is not our love that makes anyone or even anything lovable. Rather, our love is an estimation of the beloved's intrinsic goodness.

Beyond this significant advantage of conceiving of love as affirmation, moreover, lies the unity that is thereby implied between self-love or fulfillment and authentic love of the other: a point that is, of course, of no small importance in addressing Badinter's concern. She assumes—precisely by exposing the shocking egoism of women throughout four centuries of French culture whenever such egoism was socially permissible—that she has *de*

[101] Pieper, "On Love," 220.

facto destroyed not only the "myth" of maternal instinct[102] but also the idea that a woman might be "naturally" fulfilled by motherhood. If women seek to be mothers, Badinter argues, this has nothing to do with nature, nor with natural inclination, but rather with sociocultural pressures arising from an ideal wherein motherhood is esteemed a woman's duty or honor. Or, when these pressures are lacking—as follows the swing of the pendulum—motherhood is chosen for simple egotistical reasons, such that pleasure or some sort of self-fulfillment is sought therein. Hence in our time, for example, Badinter says, "The individualism and hedonism that are hallmarks of our culture have become the primary motivations for having children, but also sometimes the reason not to."[103]

In response—or as a counterargument—we might again call upon Pieper's important insights, developed largely in opposition to a certain Protestant presentation of love (by Anders Nygren,[104] for example), wherein self-love and authentic love of the other are thought to be in radical opposition.[105] When love is conceived in the sense in which it was described above as consent, approval, or affirmation, Pieper reasons, joy and happiness are rightly conceived as "our response to partaking of something we love; and if loving, simple approval, is something beloved in itself—then it must likewise be true that our desire for happiness can be satisfied precisely by such affirmation directed toward another, that is, by 'unselfish' love."[106] In short, "no gulf" separates the giving sort of love from the affirming sort of love.[107] Indeed, "the longing for fulfilled existence" is presented by Pieper as "actually

[102] See *supra* n. 12.

[103] Badinter, *The Conflict*, 2 (*Le Conflit*, 10).

[104] See Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros,* trans. Philip S. Watson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

[105] Kerr has good reason to note that "some philosophers, in the van of virtue ethics, notably Bernard Williams and Martha Craven Nussbaum, think that, in rejecting Kantian duty-for-duty's-sake ethics, they are rejecting Christian ethics as such" (*After Aquinas,* 116).

[106] Pieper, "On Love," 241.

[107] Ibid., 242.

and legitimately the root of all love."[108] This longing is, he maintains, "simply the elemental dynamics of our being itself, set in motion by the act that created us."[109] Hence, the desire for happiness "is not only 'in order' but is the indispensable beginning of all perfection in love."[110] Or as Marie-Joseph Nicolas would have it: "Pleasure, joy, life's spontaneity are absolutely not to be rejected, but on the contrary [to be encouraged], because they are the sign of the accomplishment of nature, of God's creation."[111]

From this perspective, a woman can, as it were, have her cake and eat it too. There need be no disparity between her authentic joy in mothering and her authentic love of her child or children, nor between the happiness that comes from loving her child and her own authentic self-fulfillment.[112] The point is well made by Badinter that we ought in no way to belittle the very real sacrifices that are entailed in mothering—whence the validity of her argument for lightening the load by bottles, daycare, disposable diapers, and/or devoted fathers. But this does not necessarily lead

[108] Ibid., 208. What is framed here as a statement is presented by Pieper in the form of a rhetorical question. Hence, the more straightforward formulation: "Need-love, whose goal is its own fulfillment, is also the nucleus and the beginning of all our loving" (ibid., 222).

[109] Ibid., 222.

[110] Ibid., 223. For a very thorough treatment of this theme from an ethical perspective, see Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*; idem, *The Pursuit of Happiness – God's Way: Living the Beatitudes,* trans. Sr. Mary Thomas Noble (Staten Island, N.Y.: St. Pauls, 1998). See also Plé, *Par devoir ou par plaisir*; David M. Gallagher, "Desire for Beatitude and Love of Friendship in Thomas Aquinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 58 (1996): 1-47; idem, "Goodness and Moral Goodness"; Craig Steven Titus, *Resilience and the Virtue of Fortitude: Aquinas in Dialogue with the Psychosocial Sciences* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), especially 98ff.; Michael Sherwin, "Happiness and Its Discontents"; Nicholas E. Lombardo, *The Logic of Desire: Aquinas on Emotion* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011); and Denis J. M. Bradley, *Aquinas on the Twofold Human Good. Reason and Human Happiness in Aquinas's Moral Science* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997), who argues that the will is "the secondary source of natural law" (323). "For Aquinas, the natural law has an intellectual and an appetitive source, and although the latter is secondary and subordinate, both sources must be kept clearly in view" (ibid., 325).

[111] Nicolas, "L'Idée de nature dans la pensée de saint Thomas d'Aquin," 569.

[112] A similar point is made by Marie-Joseph Nicolas with regard to human sexuality: "that which is properly human in sexuality, that which surpasses the 'generic,' animal, end of procreation, is not only that of making of 'procreation' a personal act and one aiming at the person, but of thereby realizing oneself and one's couple: secondary but specifically human ends" (ibid., 572).

to her conclusion that satisfaction in mothering requires a decision based upon a good calculation of costs and benefits from the outset.[113] We can, furthermore, applaud her contesting of the Rousseauian vision of woman—to the extent that her representation of his thought is true—as "by definition masochistic."[114] And we can only abhor the idea that the meaning of a woman's existence lies in self-abnegation rather than self-fulfillment, as Badinter maintains was rampant throughout much of the history of France:

> In this sacrifice of self, woman found her reason for being and her pleasure. The mother was indeed a masochist. Later, the religious aspect of her role would receive greater emphasis but this time in an attempt to cast light on the difficulties women regularly encounter. Good mothers didn't just magically materialize at society's bidding. An entire spirtual and Chrisitian set of values paved the way to her acceptance of self-sacrifice, which in turn elevated the good mother above her spontaneously selfish human condition. The enormous effort required to overcome her flawed state made a saint of her.[115]

If, on the contrary, the human (and not merely the feminine!) way to perfection is the way of love with all its sacrifices and pains, then this, St. Thomas and Pieper suggest, is only because the joy of love itself allows us to endure them. What is primary, then, is not "to give until it hurts,"[116] as Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta often suggested, not even for the Christian. Rather, as Pieper would have it, the lover "does after all attain his own, the reward of love."[117] For the Christian, this necessarily entails the joy of having obtained the pearl of great price, which more than merits its price. Indeed, *even* in the case of the supernatural love of

[113] See, e.g., Badinter, *The Conflict*, 14 (*Le Conflit,* 25).

[114] Badinter, *Mother Love,* 232 (*L'Amour en plus*, 319).

[115] Badinter, *Mother Love,* 232, 235 (*L'Amour en plus,* 318-19).

[116] See, for example, Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, "Address to the National Prayer Breakfast" (Washington D.C., 3 February 1994), published in *Crisis* (March 1994), 17-19; and in Matthew Levering, ed., *On Marriage and Family: Classic and Contemporary Texts* (Lahnam, Md.: Rowman & Littlefild, 2005).

[117] Pieper, "On Love," 244-45.

charity, it is not sacrifice that comes first, Pieper suggests, but the joy that comes from being loved and of loving in return.[118]

This joy of loving and of loving in return points to a final consideration, which will push our conclusion beyond resolving the conflict between personal fulfillment and love—or, as Badinter puts it, between "the woman" and "the mother." When we speak of love returned—as in the case of a child smiling back at his or her mother—we have passed beyond the domain of personal perfection. In precisely this example, we might speak of love as perfective not only of the lover, but of the beloved as well. Pieper does not hesitate, in fact, to address this mystery in terms of a continuation of the work of creation, when God proclaimed all that he had called into existence "good" and even "very good."[119] By this the renowned German philosopher means more than that the Creator has equipped us with an intrinsic dynamism in the form of certain natural inclinations, causing us to desire what is good and thus perfective of us (whence the Thomistic teaching that the process of creation is not completed until we have effectively returned [*reditus*] to God, perfected in virtue).[120] Pieper admits (with reference to Plato) that the lover is "more divine"[121] than the beloved, but he also insists that "to be capable of loving without being dependent on being loved in return" is "a divine privilege."[122] As for us, precisely as creatures—and human creatures at that:

> [W]hat we need over and above sheer existence is: to be loved by another person. That is an astonishing fact when we consider it closely. Being created by God

[118] Pieper argues, in fact, that love "'by nature,' that is, 'by virtue of creation'" is "so closely interwoven" with the supernatural love of charity that "the seam can scarcely be detected. Or at least it cannot so long as all three impulses, that which springs from nature, that which springs from ethical freedom and that which springs from grace are in harmony with one another. If you row your boat in the same direction as the wind is driving it—how are you to distinguish between the motion that is caused by your own efforts and what is caused by the wind?" (ibid., 242). See also ibid., 260, 277, 280.

[119] See ibid., 172.

[120] See *ScG* III, c. 20; *STh* I, q. 6, a. 3; and Oliva Blanchette, "The Logic of Perfection in Aquinas," in Gallagher, ed., *Thomas Aquinas and His Legacy*, 107-30.

[121] The reference is to Plato, *Symposium* 180b.

[122] Pieper, "On Love," 184.

actually does not suffice, it would seem; the fact of creation needs continuation and perfection by the creative power of human love.[123]

This statement—astonishing indeed—requires that this creative power lies uniquely in affirmation. The moment we begin to think that our love has the power of rendering the beloved lovable, we have *de facto* ceased loving, for at that moment we have ceased affirming the beloved in the depths of his or her being, precisely as he or she *is*. "Love is not love, which alters when it alteration finds. Or bends with the remover to remove," Shakespeare rightly insists. "O no! It is an ever-fixed mark / That looks on tempests and is never shaken."[124]

Such is the Pieperian notion of love—and that of all true lovers, Shakespeare suggests—and such, sadly, is also what Badinter's argument ultimately calls into question. By denying women's natural affections for their children, she is not simply intervening—with good reason!—to prevent the sacrifice of women to either the "goddess" of Mother Nature or the whims of social expectations. By arguing that love is not spontaneously called forth from a mother's heart for her child, Badinter is calling into question the very foundation of the argument upon which might effectively be obtained not only these good and righteous objectives (of preventing either form of the unjust sacrifice of women), but also the Pieperian objective of preventing an inhumane division between self-love and an authentic love of the other, and even—and still more importantly—between the inalienable dignity of every human person and the natural human love which spontaneously affirms it as such. The only human love that is truly "creative" in the Pieperian sense of the term is a love that is *responsive*. Any other human "love" is destructive.

[123] Ibid., 174. Interestingly enough, Badinter admits to the same when she argues (in *The Conflict*, 168-69): "Contrary to the claims of naturalism, love is not a given, not a mother's for a child, nor the child's for its parents, who might find themselves enfeebled and alone in old age with no recompense for their sacrifice." And she adds in the French edition the key phrase, which is left out of the English translation: "In fact, one cannot give what one has not received" ("En effet, on ne peut donner que ce que l'on a reçu" [Badinter, *Le Conflit*, 253]).

[124] William Shakespeare, Sonnet 116.

Such is the fundamental choice before every woman: a choice far more significant than that posed by Badinter of a woman's identity as woman or as mother. It is the choice of what meaning she will give to love; for as Pieper (with reference to St. Augustine of Hippo)[125] put it so well, "whether for good or evil, each man lives by his love. It is his love and it alone that must be 'in order' for the person as a whole to be 'right' and good."[126] This choice also implicates the choice of our alliance with the independent and essentially egotistical mindset of Elisabeth Badinter, or with Mother Nature, or still, and more properly, with God, our Father-Creator.[127]

[125] Augustin, *Contra Faustum* 5.10 (Migne, *PL* 42:228): "quia ex amore suo quisque vivit, vel bene vel male."

[126] Pieper, "On Love," 166.

[127] I wish to express my thanks to an anonymous reader of *The Thomist* for his or her excellent suggestions for improvement.

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INTENTIONAL BEING, NATURAL BEING, AND THE FIRST-PERSON PERSPECTIVE IN THOMAS AQUINAS

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A FAMILIAR NOTION in the contemporary philosophy of mind is that of intentionality. There are several versions of it, but generally the idea is that a mental action always has an object—it bears upon something—and that, in a sense, the object is always "contained" in the action itself.[1] Normally, of course, the object is distinct from the action, neither identical with it nor even a part of it. But the object is contained in the action in the sense that the action issues from its agent with a fully determinate relation or "reference" to the object built into it. Unlike a nonmental or "physical" action, such as heating something, a mental action does not consist in affecting or influencing its object. It does not, so to speak, pass from the agent into the object. The relation of a physical action to its object, such as that of heating to what is heated, is rendered fully determinate only insofar as the action is received by the object and brought to completion in it. For this reason, the object of a physical action cannot be identified merely by looking at the action as it issues from the agent. One must look outside the agent, to see what it is that is acted upon. But a mental action, immediately upon issuing

[1] By "the action itself" I mean the action considered according as it proceeds from its agent. This fits with how Thomas Aquinas interprets action. Thus, "action, insofar as it is action, is signified as from an agent" (I *Sent.*, d. 32, q. 1, a. 1 [*Scriptum super libros Sententiarum,* ed. P. Mandonnet and M. Moos (Paris: Lethielleux, 1929-37)]); "action, according to its own concept, proceeds from an agent" (*STh* II-II, q. 59, a. 3); "action is considered as issuing from an agent" (*STh* III, q. 13, a. 1, ad 2). Translations of passages from Thomas in this essay are mine.

from its agent, is already complete and has the full determination of its object. Hence it is not necessary, nor even quite appropriate, to look outside the agent in order to identify the action's object. The proper display of a mental action's object, as such, belongs to the action itself. We might say that, in order to identify the object, we have to take the viewpoint of the action's own subject, the "perspective of the acting person" (or the acting animal, if indeed beasts also engage in such actions). That is, we have to focus on what belongs to the action just insofar as it proceeds from its agent.

The notion of intentionality is usually traced to Franz Brentano. His fullest expression for it is "the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object."[2] By "inexistence," he means simply "existence in."[3] "Intentional" he treats as somehow equivalent to "mental." Evidently, for Brentano, only mental actions have objects existing in them in this way. As for "mental," he uses it to cover not only cognitive actions, such as "presentation" and judgment, but also appetitive actions, such as love, hate, and desire. As a briefer equivalent to "intentional inexistence of an object," Brentano offers the expression "immanent objectivity."

Brentano ascribes the notion of intentionality to "the Scholastics." I assume he means to include Thomas Aquinas. In fact the notion can be found in several contemporary authors who draw upon Thomas.[4] These usually tailor it to what we could call a "realist" account of cognition. In saying that a cognitive action's object exists in the action "intentionally," they mean that the

[2] "Every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the Scholastics of the Middle Ages called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and what we might call, though not wholly unambiguously, reference to a content, direction toward an object (which is not to be understood here as meaning a thing), or immanent objectivity. Every mental phenomenon includes something as object within itself, although they do not all do so in the same way. In presentation, something is presented, in judgement something is affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired and so on" (Franz Brentano, *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint*, 2d ed. [London: Routledge, 1995], 88).

[3] And not "nonexistence." See Barry Smith, *Austrian Philosophy* (LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court, 1994), 40.

[4] Among these are Peter Geach, Yves Simon, Robert Pasnau, and John Haldane. For bibliography, see the important article by Robbie Moser, "Thomas Aquinas, *Esse Intentionale*, and the Cognitive as Such," *Review of Metaphysics* 64 (2011): 763-88, esp. 764-765 n. 3.

action refers, not to the object's existence "in the mind," but to its existence in itself, "outside" the mind.[5] This, existence outside the mind, is typically called "natural" existence.

Here I wish to offer three considerations about Thomas's own thought in this area. First, I argue that what he calls "intentional existence," *esse intentionale*, is actually quite different from what is now called "intentionality." It is simply a certain mode of existence of forms. Second, I call attention to the fact that, for Thomas, cognitive existence—the existence by virtue of which something is known—is not always *esse intentionale*; sometimes it is what he calls "natural existence," *esse naturale*. In this case, it is *esse naturale* that is *in* the knower. Finally, I look at Thomas's application of this point to human self-knowledge, and I suggest that it highlights and helps to account for an interesting feature of the unique, "first-person" perspective that each of us has on himself, namely, that having this perspective does not entail attributing to oneself some proper quality or set of qualities that distinguishes oneself from all others.

I. *Esse intentionale* with or without Intentionality

Thomas uses the expression *esse intentionale*—or some equivalent, for instance, *esse intentionis* or *per modum intentionis*—in a good number of places. He opposes this *esse* to what he calls *esse naturale*. As we shall see, it plays an important role in his account of cognition. He also relates it to appetitive acts, inasmuch as these depend upon cognition.[6] But what he means by it is in fact very different from Brentano's "intentional inexistence."

Before trying to explain the difference, I must stress that this consideration is strictly terminological. I do not at all mean to say that there is nothing like Brentano's "intentional inexistence" in Thomas's thought. I am only saying that it is not what Thomas means by *esse intentionale*. Indeed, Brentano's other expression, "immanent objectivity," seems to match fairly well with things that Thomas says about cognitive and appetitive action. Thomas holds

[5] See Moser, "*Esse Intentionale*," 765-66.

[6] See *De Verit*., q. 22, a. 3, obj. 4 and ad 4.

that such action "remains in" (*manet in*) its agent rather than passing into something else that is acted upon, and that the action's object must in some way be in the agent as well. For the object of an action is what properly determines the action's kind. It is the action's immediate formal principle. It cannot be entirely separate from the action. If the action passes outside the agent, that which is its object can be entirely outside him. But if the action remains in the agent, that which is its object can function *as* its object only by somehow existing in the agent. Thomas explains:

> the object stands differently in action that remains in the agent and in action that passes into some exterior thing. For in action that passes into something exterior, the object or matter into which the act passes is separated from the agent, as the thing heated from the heater, and the thing built from the builder. But in action that remains in the agent, for the action to proceed, the object must be united to the agent, as the sensible thing must be united to the sense-power in order that it actually sense. And the object united to the power is related to this sort of action in the same way as the form that is the principle of action in other agencies; for, as heat is the formal principle of heating in fire, so the species of the thing seen is the formal principle of sight in the eye.[7]

I think we could very well call this a version of "immanent objectivity."[8]

Now, historically, the idea that the object of knowledge exists in the knower far predates Scholasticism and Thomas. It even predates Aristotle. As Aristotle informs us, many of his predecessors held that what a knower knows must somehow exist in the knower.[9] Where Aristotle thinks he improves upon them is in the account of how this is so. He distinguishes very sharply between the way in which the object exists in the knower and the

[7] *STh* I, q. 56, a. 1. See *STh* I, q. 14, a. 2; q. 54, a. 1, ad 3.

[8] In its details, however, it may differ notably from Brentano's. See the magisterial study by Juan José Sanguineti, "La especie cognitiva en Tomás de Aquino," *Tópicos* 40 (2011): 74. On Brentano and realism, see T. Crane, "Brentano's Concept of Intentional Inexistence," in *The Austrian Contribution to Analytic Philosophy*, ed. M. Textor (New York: Routledge, 2006), 20-35. On contrasts between modern positions on intentionality and the relevant medieval doctrines, particularly Thomas's and John Buridan's, see the very illuminating article by Gyula Klima, "Three Myths of Intentionality vs. Some Medieval Philosophers," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 21 (2013): 359-76.

[9] The idea being that "like is known by like." See Aristotle, *De anima* 1.2, esp. 405b13-23.

way in which it exists in itself. For example, in the case of sensation he holds that, in itself, the object sensed is a form existing "in matter," but in the sentient subject, that form exists somehow "without the matter."[10] At least as Thomas reads it, this does not mean that the form appears to the sentient subject as though it existed without the matter. Rather, the form existing in the subject without the matter functions as that by which the subject senses the form as it exists in itself, in its matter. That is, Thomas's Aristotle is a cognitive "realist."

As far as I know, Aristotle has no expression equivalent to Thomas's *esse intentionale*. I will say something about this expression's origin later. But what I first wish to observe is that what Thomas means by it is not the sheer fact of the object's existence in the knower, its being "contained" or "referred to" by the act of knowing. When he does apply the expression to objects of knowledge, he is saying something about the way in which they exist in the knower, just as Aristotle is when he speaks of forms existing in the knower without matter. However, in order to understand what Thomas is saying about this, and how it relates to what Aristotle says, we should first take stock of the fact that, for Thomas, the expression *esse intentionale* does not mean something strictly proper to cognitive acts, or even to immanent actions generally. For he attributes *esse intentionale*, not only to forms existing in things that have immanent actions, but also to forms existing in things that do not.[11]

In particular, Thomas finds forms existing with *esse intentionale* in things that mediate the action of one thing upon another, that is, things that function as instruments of transitive actions. Such action consists in the transmission of some form from one thing to another. When it is carried out through an instrument, the form somehow "passes through" the instrument. As it does so, the way in which it exists in the instrument is what

[10] *De anima* 2.12.424a17-25. Regarding both sense and intellect, see *De anima* 3.8.431b27-432a1.

[11] Moser, "*Esse Intentionale*," 769-74, brings this point out strongly.

Thomas calls *esse intentionale*.[12] He opposes this to what he calls *esse naturale*.[13] For instance, according to Thomas's theory of animal generation, the form that is transmitted in the generative action—some kind of animal soul—exists in the principal agent, which is an adult male animal, with *esse naturale*. But the action is carried out through an instrument, namely, the male semen, and in the semen the form exists as an *intentio*.[14] Obviously the semen has no cognitive or appetitive action—no immanent action at all. Like many instruments, it has only transitive action, action that consists in acting upon something outside it.

How do *esse naturale* and *esse intentionale* differ from each other? They differ as complete and incomplete. In the male generator, the form (the soul) exists with the full or complete being that is proper to it. It makes the male to have the full perfection proportioned to such a form: for instance, the very perfection of being such an animal, and also that of having a power to generate other such animals. In the semen, the form does not exist in this way. The semen is not an animal at all, or even (in Thomas's view) part of one. Nor does it have the power to initiate the production of another animal. It is only the instrument of such production, like a carpenter's saw.[15] It does not have its own soul. It only has an *intentio* of the soul of the generator. We might say that it has "soul-information."[16] The information is "encoded" in it, as image-information is encoded in a computer disk, making the disk an instrument by which the image can be reproduced.

To be sure, through the semen, the form is received into the material provided by the female, and in that material it has *esse naturale*—that is, it constitutes another such animal, the offspring.

[12] See, for example, IV *Sent*., d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, qc. 2, co. and ad 4; d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, qc. 4, co. and ad 1; d. 5, q. 2, a. 2, qc. 2, co.; *De Pot*., q. 3, a. 7, ad 7; q. 3, a. 11, ad 14; *De Unione Verbi*, a. 5, ad 12.

[13] Other expressions for *esse naturale*, said as opposed to *esse intentionale*, are *esse naturae* and *esse ratum* (and/or *fixum*) *in natura*; also *esse reale* (twice: *STh* I, q, 57, a. 1, ad 2; *Q.D. De Anima*, a. 2).

[14] See *De Malo*, q. 4, a. 1, ad 16.

[15] For the comparison with the saw, see *STh* I, q. 118, a. 1, ad 3.

[16] I take the terminology of "information" and "encoding" from Klima, "Three Myths of Intentionality."

But this is possible only because the material provided by the female is apt to receive the form in this way. And this is because the female too has the form with *esse naturale*, making her to be such an animal, with her own generative power—the power to produce material apt for receiving the form in that way.

A special case of instruments are the media of sensation.[17] Acts of sensation presuppose the transmission of the sensible form to the sense organ, by way of a medium. The form exists in the sensible thing with *esse naturale*. By existing in this way, it makes the sensible thing to *be* such, and to be able to initiate the transmission of that form to other things. For instance, the form of green in the grass makes the grass be green and be able to transmit that form to the eye—not immediately, of course, but through something transparent, such as the air. But in the air the form of green exists only with *esse intentionale*. The air conveys the form to the eye, but the air is not green, and it cannot initiate the transmission of that form. It is only an instrument of such transmission.

What is special about this case is that the way in which the form comes to exist in the final recipient, the sense organ, is not *esse naturale*, as it is in the case of the form received by means of the male semen. In the sense organ, the form also exists with *esse intentionale*. The eye that sees green is not thereby green, nor can it initiate the transmission of the form of green to anything else.[18] It does not have green in the full and proper sense, but only an *intentio* of green (*STh* I, q. 78, a. 3). This *intentio* is a sort of likeness of green, but it does not at all "look like" green. This, of course, would be absurd if the *intentio* were the very green that the eye sees. In that case it would have to look green. The eye is not seeing an image or a representation of the green in the grass. It is seeing the green in the grass directly. Its likeness of green is only that *by which* it sees the green in the grass.[19]

[17] See all of the texts cited above, n. 12.

[18] Cf. the example of heat in *De Verit.*, q. 22, a. 12.

[19] *STh* I, q. 85, a. 2. See Sanguineti, "La especie cognitiva," 76. In that article Thomas makes the same point about the "intelligible species"; as Sanguineti says, it is not an "object" (92). Sanguineti rightly insists that generally, "The likeness of the species is neither a picture, nor an image, nor a map, nor a sensible sign, nor a codified version of reality" ("La semejanza

So the form exists both in the sense organ and in the medium with *esse intentionale*. Thomas calls a sensible form existing in this way a "sensible species." Yet, of course, it is only the sense organ that has an immanent action resulting from the sensible species in it, an action of sensation. The medium has only a sort of transitive action, an instrumental one, that of transmitting the species to the organ. The medium does not sense either the sensible thing or the organ to which it is transmitting the thing's form. It does not sense anything at all.

There is a difference between the way the sensible species exists in the medium and the way it exists in the sense organ. However, the difference is not, as one might expect, that the species exists in the organ as Aristotle said—that is, immaterially—and in the medium materially. It exists in both of them immaterially. This may sound odd, since of course the medium is a material thing, a body, for instance air. But then, the organ is a body too. This point should be clarified before looking at the difference between the medium and the organ.

As Thomas reads it, Aristotle's assertion that the form of a sensible thing exists in the sentient subject without the matter does not mean that it exists in no matter whatsoever. After all, Aristotle's own illustration of a form existing without the matter is the shape of a signet-ring impressed in wax. What he means, Thomas says, is that, although the organ is a body, it is not disposed to have the sensible form in the mode in which the sensible thing has it.[20] As we saw, the form has *esse naturale* in the sensible thing but not in the organ.

In the case of the signet-ring and the wax, perhaps the thought is that the ring's matter (the gold or the iron) is so disposed that the shape makes it *be a signet-ring*, whereas the wax is not so disposed. The wax can have the shape, but not in such a way as to be a signet-ring. However, it seems clear that the comparison of the sense-organ with the wax goes only so far. For the shape in the

de la especie no es ni un dibujo, ni una imagen, ni un mapa, ni un signo sensible, ni una versión codificada de la realidad" [94]). However, see below, n. 35.

[20] II *De Anima*, lect. 24 (551-55). Parenthetical numbers in citations of the commentary on *De Anima* refer to paragraph numbers in the Marietti edition.

wax determines the wax in a way that the sensible form in the sense-organ does not determine the organ. The shape in the wax excludes other shapes.[21] The wax cannot have more than one shape at a time. But the eye that has the form of green and is seeing green can also have other forms and be seeing other colors at the same time. It can even see many colors in a single, indivisible act, an act of discriminating those colors.

In view of this feature, Thomas sometimes calls the existence that the forms have in the sense organ *esse spirituale*.[22] He does not mean that they are incorporeal substances.[23] Nor does he mean that they carry no determinate physical or material conditions.[24] However, in a way he does almost mean that they are the "ghosts" of such forms. Like ghosts, they are not "impenetrable" to each other. Although they have the same "contours"—the same *rationes* or formulae—as the forms in the sensible things, in the organ they do not exclude each other. They are not contraries. This is Thomas's very reason for saying that they do not exist in the organ with *esse naturale*. Any form that has *esse naturale* in matter excludes specifically different forms of the same genus altogether. It "fights off" the other forms. The forms exist in the organ only in a weak, "denatured" mode—the mode of *esse intentionale*.[25]

This is also how the forms of the objects of the appetitive acts that follow on sensation exist in their subject. Such acts are principles of motion—motion toward (or away from) the objects in their real existence—but the actions themselves are not

[21] I say "determine" in the sense in which Thomas uses *finitur* and *terminatur* in *STh* I, q. 7, a. 1. Prior to receiving a form, matter is in potency to many forms. But when it receives a form that perfects it, it is thereby limited and bounded. Clearly the wax is limited and bounded by its shape. That shape excludes others. This is not how the sensible form is in the sense-organ.

[22] See, e.g., III *Sent*., d. 15, q. 2, a. 1, qc. 2, co.; *STh* I, q. 78, a. 3; II *De anima*, lect. 24 (Marietti ed., 553).

[23] But see below, n. 38.

[24] That they do carry such conditions is shown by the fact that the organ's power to receive them can be corrupted by the action of objects that are too strong. See II *De anima*, lect. 24 (Marietti ed., 556).

[25] See *In De Sensu et sensato*, tract. 1, lect. 19 (291). Parenthetical numbers in citations of the commentary on *De Sensu et sensato* refer to paragraph numbers in the Marietti edition.

motions, and their formal principles are forms existing in the subject with *esse intentionale*. An animal that desires warmth is not thereby warm, and its desire is not a passage of the form of warmth from one thing to another. The desire is a complete act that remains in the animal. This point further highlights the fact that *esse intentionale* is not the same as "intentionality," but only a principle of it. The intentionalities of perception and desire are not the same. That is, these acts do not relate to their objects in the same way. Not even the perception of something as desirable relates to that thing in the same way as does the desire of that thing; thus, what is said to be "satisfied" by the real possession of the thing is the desire, not the perception. Yet once the thing has been perceived as desirable, its form does not have to take on any new *esse intentionale* in the subject in order for the subject to desire it. The *esse intentionale* that underlies the perception suffices.[26] There is only one *esse intentionale*, but there are two intentionalities. The *esse intentionale* is a principle of both and identical with neither.

What I wish to stress, however, is that Thomas uses these same terms—*intentionale*, as we saw, and also *immateriale* and *spirituale*—to describe the being that the sensible forms have in the sensible media.[27] His reason for doing so is also the same.[28] In the medium, as in the organ, the sensible forms are not contrary to each other. Just as the form of green in an eye that sees green

[26] This point is at least suggested by *STh* I, q. 83, a. 4, ad 3. Thomas says that there is no need to posit an "agent will" and a "possible will" parallel to the agent intellect and the possible intellect, because the intellect itself is the mover—the "agent"—of the will. Since the role of the agent intellect is to make things actually intelligible, what Thomas seems to be saying is that the intellect is what makes things actually willable. In order for something understood to be an object of the will, what is needed is not that it take on a new mode of being beyond the intelligible mode, but simply that it be judged good.

[27] See, e.g., *In De sensu*, tract. 1, lect. 19 (Marietti ed., 291); II *De anima*, lect. 14 (Marietti ed., 418). Moser ("*Esse Intentionale*," 775-80), overlooking the fact that even in the media the form's *esse* is not only *intentionale* but also *immateriale*, supposes that forms get *esse immateriale* only in knowers.

[28] *In De sensu*, tract. 1, lect. 5 (Marietti ed., 62). Here Thomas explains that forms existing with *esse intentionale* do not exclude each other because, on account of its imperfection, this mode of being "approaches" mere being in potency. Potency for one form does not exclude potency for another.

does not prevent the eye from having the form of red and seeing red at the same time, so too the form of green in a medium that transmits it to the eye does not prevent the medium from transmitting the form of red at the same time.[29]

Nevertheless, Thomas does hold that the sensible form is not in the medium in quite the same way as it is in the organ. Its existence in the medium is even more imperfect, for it exists there not only with *esse intentionale* but also as something *fluens*, "flowing" (IV *Sent*., d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, qc. 4). Like the animal form carried by the semen, the sensible form only "passes through" the medium. The existence of the form of green in the air is a sort of motion.[30] It is an "incomplete act." But in the eye, although the form only has "incomplete being," it is at rest. And it functions there as a principle, not of a motion, but of a complete act. This of course is not the act of being green; the eye is not green. That would be *esse naturale*. The complete act is the very action of seeing the green thing.[31] The eye's nature is such that through a form existing in it with *esse intentionale* it produces an action that is not a motion from one thing to another but is complete from the start and remains in the agent.[32]

Perhaps then we should say that the expression *esse intentionale* covers more than one mode of being. It always means a "weak" mode. But it may be either the kinetic mode found in

[29] Nor need they be transmitted by different parts of the medium. Albert the Great offers a proof of this in his *De homine,* q. 21, a. 5 (Borgnet ed., 35:206a). On Albert on sensation, see Lawrence Dewan, O.P., "St. Albert, the Sensibles, and Spiritual Being," in *Albertus Magnus and the Sciences*, ed. James A. Weisheipl (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1980), 291-320 (for the proof about the medium see 294). The whole discussion is pertinent to our topic. Albert already has the terminology of *intentionale* and *spirituale*, and he confines neither to knowers.

[30] So is the existence of the form in the semen and the carpenter's saw: *STh* I, q. 118, a. 1, ad 3.

[31] In a way, Moser is right to say that "*esse intentionale* is brought to its proper full completion and perfection of being in cognition" ("*Esse Intentionale*," 776). But this is not because, as he suggests, it is there brought to immateriality. It is already immaterial in the medium. But it is in movement rather than at rest.

[32] Albert asks why, if the medium has the species intentionally (albeit transitorily), it does not sense (see Dewan, "St. Albert, the Sensibles, and Spiritual Being," 316). His answer is that sensing is not just undergoing but also operating. To smell, for instance, is not merely to undergo, but also to sense and to judge odor.

instruments of transitive acts, or the static mode found in subjects of immanent acts.

In any case, my main point is that what Thomas means by the mere expression *esse intentionale* is not something proper to cognition, or to immanent actions. It is not always even related to such actions. It is simply a certain mode of existence of forms. It belongs both to forms found in things that have immanent acts and to forms found in things that have solely transitive acts. Some of the latter things, such as the media of sensation, are related to cognition. But others, such as animal semen, a carpenter's saw, and so on, have nothing to do with cognition, or with any immanent actions.[33] This is why I say that Thomas's *esse intentionale* is something very different from Brentano's intentional inexistence.[34] There can be *esse intentionale* where there is no intentionality at all, in the modern sense of that term.[35]

[33] Does the form of the bed exist in the carpenter's saw with *esse spirituale*? That seems doubtful. Its existence in the saw seems to be nothing other than the saw's physical, local movement. But the movement is *proportioned* to the form to be given to the wood, and so in a way it has the form's *ratio*. Perhaps, then, we have three sorts of *esse intentionale*: static and spiritual, flowing and spiritual, flowing and physical. (If the form's *esse* is static and physical, then I suppose it would be *naturale*.)

[34] Klima ("Three Myths of Intentionality," 360-64), after characterizing intentionality as "aboutness," argues that for Thomas, to be a form existing with *esse intentionale* is to be "information," and that "information" is indeed "about" something. For example, the sensible species existing in the sensible medium constitutes information about the sensible thing, and it would therefore have intentionality. By contrast, Sanguineti ("La especie cognitiva," 72-73) also calls the species in the medium "information," but he denies intentionality in the medium. I do not think there is any substantive disagreement here, but only a difference in the use of the term "intentionality." Sanguineti, I take it, means that the medium has no immanent action whose object is the sensible thing. It has no intentionality in the sense of "immanent objectivity." This is what I am stressing. Klima is simply giving "intentionality" a broader sense. But it seems to me that Klima is also calling attention to a very important difference between Thomas and a good deal of modern philosophy of mind. Thomas's hylemorphic ontology allows for much more overlap and communication between the "physical" and the "psychic." That in some sense we can ascribe "intentionality" to the sensible medium, as Thomas understands it, is an excellent case in point.

[35] Sanguineti ("La especie cognitiva," 72-73) finds Thomas confused in ascribing *esse intentionale* to the species in the medium, because there is no intentionality (on which see above, n. 34). I think that this would be a confusion only if Thomas's *esse intentionale* meant or implied anything psychic or mental, which it does not. On Thomas's reason for using the terminology of *intentio*, see below, text at n. 38.

II. *ESSE NATURALE* IN THE MIND

Even if this difference in meaning is clear, one might wonder whether, once it is brought to light, it poses any real problem. Does it suggest that, in a Thomistic setting, the term "intentionality" should be set aside in favor of a less potentially confusing expression, for instance, "immanent objectivity"? Or should we not simply explain the difference? After all, the expressions *esse intentionale* and "intentionality" are not quite identical. And assuming that we are in the domain of cognition or of immanent acts—the "philosophy of mind"—is not the similarity between them appropriate, on account of the close relation between the things to which they refer? "Intentionality" refers to the immediately observable fact that immanent acts contain or display their own objects, while *esse intentionale* seems to refer to the precise mode of being of the objects' forms that underlies this phenomenon.

It is worth remarking that, even though what Thomas means by *esse intentionale* is not proper to the cognitive domain, nevertheless, at least etymologically, the expression does point in that direction. Students of medieval thought will be familiar with the use of the word *intentio* in strictly cognitive matters, for instance in the medieval logicians' notions of "first" and "second" intentions. Apparently the word was adopted as the translation of a term in Avicenna that means something like a "meaning" or a "thought."[36] (Thus we speak of an author's "intention.") And Thomas himself seems to think that it was from this use of *intentio* that the term came to be applied to things also existing outside the cognitive domain, on account of a similarity.

[36] See Deborah Black, "Intentionality in Medieval Arabic Philosophy," *Quaestio* 10 (2010): 65-81, esp. 68-71. Notice that, as Black explains, what Avicenna calls an "intention," a *maʿnā*, is something meant or signified, as such; it is neither the sign itself nor the sign's relation to what is signified. Notice too that the word *intentio* was *also* used to translate the Arabic *qaṣd*, which means "purpose," and that this sometimes led to confusion; see ibid., 69 n. 9. As Dewan remarks ("St. Albert, the Sensibles, and Spiritual Being," 293 n. 6) with respect to the doctrine of *esse intentionale*, "It is misleading to put emphasis on the notion of tendency in the etymology of *intentio*."

[T]he *virtus* of an instrument, as such, according as it acts toward an effect beyond what belongs to it according to its nature, is not a complete being having fixed existence in nature, but a certain incomplete being, as is the *virtus* of altering sight that is in the air insofar as it is an instrument moved by an exterior visible; and such beings are customarily called *intentiones*, and they have something like the being that is in the soul, which is diminished being, as is said in *Metaph.* 6.[37]

This is at least a suggestion that the reason why *intentio* is used to mean a form existing with a certain weak mode of being in inanimate things is that this is *like* the typical mode in which things exist "in the soul."[38] So even if *esse intentionale* is found outside the cognitive domain, at least its appellation is more at home there. And as we saw, in a sense even the thing itself is more at home there, being "at rest" and not just "passing through."

Moreover, when the notion of *esse intentionale* is applied to the cognitive domain, it helps to explain the very thing that the contemporary authors who draw on Thomas have in mind when they speak of intentionality, namely, cognitive "realism." Thomas certainly does hold that, although the form of a known object must always exist in the knower, what is primarily known is the object in its natural or real existence, even if this is outside the

[37] IV *Sent*., d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, qc. 2, co. (See also IV *Sent*., d. 44, q. 3 a. 1 qc. 3, co., where Thomas speaks of whiteness being received in the air and the pupil *spiritualiter per modum intentionis cujusdam,* this being *similar* to the soul's reception of the likenesses of things.) The *Metaphysics* reference is 6.4.1027b30-33. As Thomas reads it, what Aristotle is saying there is that being in the sense of truth exists only in the mind, and that it is therefore distinct from what are "properly" beings, the *per se* beings of the categories, which exist outside the mind; see VI *Metaphys*., lect. 4 (1241) (parenthetical numbers in citations of the commentary on the *Metaphysics* refer to paragraph numbers in the Marietti edition). A being "in the mind" is not a being in the full and proper sense, but only an *ens diminutum*.

[38] And only *like* it. I do not think that Thomas is sliding toward "pan-psychism," as Sanguineti suggests ("La especie cognitiva," 72). Of course Sanguineti is right that the physics in Thomas's explanation of the existence of an *intentio spiritualis* in the visible medium is antiquated. It is also true that Thomas regards the action that produces such an *intentio* as a share in the "mode" of "separate"—incorporeal—substances; see *De Pot.,* q. 5, a. 8 (cited by Sanguineti, "La especie cognitiva," 71 n. 9). Nevertheless, in that very place Thomas says that what is in the medium is a mere *likeness* of the *spiritualis intentio* that is received in sense or intellect. (Albert too is clear that "spiritual" here is not to be taken as it is said of the soul; see Dewan, "St. Albert, the Sensibles, and Spiritual Being," 295-96.) As we saw, this likeness is quite definite and specific. It is the absence of contrariety. Besides, Sanguineti himself says that "information" cannot be explained in a "physicalist" way ("La especie cognitiva," 73).

knower. In that case, the form in the knower functions immediately as that by which the outside thing is known.[39] The mere expression *esse intentionale* of course does not signify this function. It hardly could, since it also applies to forms existing in nonknowers. But as applied to knowers, it helps to explain this function. In this respect it even adds something to the notion of the form's existing "spiritually" or "immaterially."[40]

The notion of a form's existing immaterially explains two things. First, it explains why something is *known* through that form at all. To know something is to be able to distinguish it from others, and of course this entails being able to know others too. As we saw, a form's existing "materially" in something excludes other forms. Hence it excludes knowledge altogether. Grass cannot see anything through the form of green in it, not even itself. In order to be able to see itself, it would also have to be able to see other things, so as to be able to distinguish itself from them. Second, a form's existing immaterially explains why something *other* than the knower can be known through it. Insofar as a form exists immaterially, Thomas says, it is "common to many" (*STh* I, q. 7, a. 1). Even an individual form, in an individual subject, is so. Of course it does not exist *in* many, as a universal form does. But if it exists immaterially, then while existing in one, it is also "of" another. It is not "contracted" (ibid.) to what it is in, not "determinately the form of this thing" (ibid.)—not *exclusively* the form of its subject. Indeed, the one species of green in the eye functions both as that by which eye actually sees and as that by which the grass is actually seen. "The sensible in act is the sense in act, and the intelligible in act is the intellect in act."[41] What can know may be other than what can be known, and yet their actuality, *qua* knower and *qua* known, is one. Although it is in only one of them, it is the actuality of both.

[39] See *STh* I, q. 14, a. 6, ad 1. Of course we can also grasp things that have no real being, such as the negations of real beings. But these are secondary.

[40] Thomas frequently uses *both* "immaterial" (or "spiritual") and "intentional" to describe the sensible species, e.g., II *De anima*, lect. 24 (553).

[41] *STh* I, q. 14, a. 2. See *STh* I, q. 55, a. 1, obj. 2 and ad 2; III *De anima*, lect. 9 (724). Also pertinent is *De Verit*., q. 2, a. 2.

We should also keep in mind, however, that a form existing "immaterially" in a knower renders knowable not only something outside the knower, but also the knower himself.[42] To be sure, it does not render him knowable "from the outside," that is, to other knowers; the form of green in the eye does not make the eye look green. But it is a certain actuality of the eye, and it makes the eye perceptible "from the inside." The animal whose eye has the form of green in it immaterially can thereby perceive its eye. Of course this perception is not at all independent of the eye's own perception of something green. What the animal can perceive about its eye is precisely that it is seeing something green. But this raises a question. Why is it that what the form in the eye *first* makes perceptible is something other than the eye? Why does it make the eye itself perceptible only in function of that perception, that is, only as engaged in seeing the green thing? Why does the form function primarily as that by which the grass is perceived, and only secondarily as that by which the eye is perceived? Why does not the animal first know itself as having the form of green, and then know other things by seeing them "in" itself, that is, by taking itself as a "representation" of them?[43]

To this the answer is precisely that the form in the eye only has *esse intentionale*. This is an imperfect *esse* of that form—imperfect according to the measure of the form's own *ratio* or formula. The *esse* that constitutes the form's proportionate perfection and is most connatural or proper to it, according to its *ratio*, is its *esse naturale*. Even when it exists with *esse intentionale*, its *esse naturale* is still its "truest" *esse*. Its *esse intentionale* is secondary, derivative. If what is primarily known through a form existing with *esse intentionale* is what has that form—that is, a form of that same *ratio*—with *esse naturale*, this is simply because what is primarily known through it is what is most proportionate and proper to it.

So there are indeed connections between *esse intentionale* and intentionality, especially as the latter is understood by thinkers drawing on Thomas. Nevertheless, even when the difference in

[42] See III *De anima*, lect. 9 (724); *STh* I, q. 14, a. 2; q. 87, a. 1, ad 3.

[43] This is how God knows other things. See below, n. 54.

meaning is explained, the verbal similarity of the expressions can be a source of confusion regarding Thomas's thought in this area. On his view, there can be cognition without *esse intentionale*. That is, there can be cognitive acts whose formal principles are the forms of their objects existing in the knower, not with *esse intentionale*, but rather with *esse naturale*. And so *esse intentionale*, in Thomas's sense, is not a universal feature of mental objects. It is not a strictly essential condition of the "immanent objectivity" common to all mental acts.[44] It is only essential to certain kinds of them. These are perhaps the kinds that we usually think of, those that regard things "outside" our minds. But *esse intentionale* is not the same as existence "in the mind," not only because it is sometimes found outside the mind, but also because sometimes the existence in the mind of the mental action's object is *esse naturale*. This is my second consideration.

Now, it is already clear that Thomas's *esse naturale* is not simply synonymous with "being outside the mind," since *esse intentionale*, which is opposed to *esse naturale*, is also found outside the mind.[45] As indicated earlier, to say that a form exists in something with *esse naturale* means simply that it makes the thing to *be* in accordance with it, as the form of green makes grass to be green, fully and properly. We might call *esse naturale* the "full-blooded" existence of a form. But a form's existing in a thing with *esse naturale* does not always exclude the thing's exercising an immanent action that has this form, existing in this way, as its immediate formal principle—that is, as that by which the action bears upon its object. This is excluded only when the form's *esse naturale* is in matter, as the form of green is in grass.

Thomas is most explicit about this in his treatment of angelic understanding. An angel of course has his own essential form. Indeed the angel is this very form—a form subsisting in itself, without matter. For this reason, the angel is literally one of a kind.

[44] Here I disagree with Moser, who makes *esse intentionale* essential for cognition: "immateriality alone is not sufficient for cognizance. Rather, to enjoy the representational mode of being unique to cognizance, *esse intentionale* must be rendered immaterial" (Moser, "*Esse Intentionale*," 779).

[45] What is not found outside the mind is *ens rationis*, which Thomas opposes to *ens naturae*; see IV *Metaphys*., lect. 4 (574).

The nature of his kind cannot belong to many individuals, because the form that determines the kind is not received in matter. If it were, there could be many forms determining the same kind, in different parts of matter. Every angel is a form of a different kind. But although it is not in matter, the angel's essential form does not have mere *esse intentionale*. It has *esse naturale*. It makes the angel to be that kind of angel, fully and properly, and able to act accordingly.

Since an angel is totally immaterial, he has no sense-faculties, which exist in bodily organs (*STh* I, q. 54, a. 5). But he does have a kind of intellect, a kind whose operation does not depend on sensation. He does not understand things by abstracting their intelligible species from sense-images. Rather, their species are produced in him by his creator (*STh* I, q. 55, a. 2).

Thomas does hold that the intelligible species by which an angel understands the natures of many things exist in him with mere *esse intentionale*. Of this sort are the species by which he understands the natures proper to material things, whose forms exist with *esse naturale* only in matter.[46] Also of this sort are the species by which he understands the proper natures of other angels.[47] Note that, although the angel's own form exists in him with *esse naturale*, and although he and other angels are in the same genus, his own form does not altogether exclude their forms. Of course their forms cannot exist in him with *esse naturale*. Nature is "determined to one." He cannot properly *be* many kinds of angel. But their forms can exist in him with *esse intentionale*. This is because angelic forms, though in the same genus, differ only as more and less perfect. They are not alien to each other in the way that the forms of different colors are. If an eye's pupil were tinted red, then even if the pupil remained translucent the eye could not receive the form of green; the grass would look reddish. However, the eye could still receive and distinguish other shades of red, lighter or darker. Angelic forms are like distinct shades of the same color. Each angelic kind is a distinct grade of

[46] *STh* I, q. 57, a. 1, ad 2. Here he uses *reale* rather than *naturale*, but it is the same; see *STh* I, q. 56, a. 2.

[47] *STh* I, q. 56, a. 2, ad 3. See also *Q.D. De Spirit. creat*., a. 1, ad 11.

the same nature, intellectual nature, and their affinity with each other makes it possible for each to receive the others' forms.[48]

But an angel's understanding is not confined to *other* things. He understands himself too. He knows his own essence. In fact his essence is his understanding's primary and most connatural object.[49] And the form by which he understands his essence, the formal principle through which his essence is the object of his understanding, is the very form that *is* his essence, his own substance.[50] His essential form does not have to take on any new existence in him in order to function as a principle of his understanding. It does not have to exist in him with *esse intentionale*. The angel's form, existing with *esse naturale*, functions both as his essence—that is, as the formal principle of his substantial act of being—and as the intelligible species, the formal principle, of his act of understanding himself. To be sure, these are distinct functions of this form, and its proportions to them, the *rationes* according to which it exercises them, are not the same (*STh* I, q. 54, a. 2, ad 2). But it is the very same instance of the form, existing with *esse naturale*, that exercises both functions.

What the angel understands through this individual form is itself an individual—the angel himself. His individuality is no obstacle to his being actually intelligible to himself, *through* himself. If bodily individuals are not actually intelligible through themselves, this is because their individuality's first intrinsic principle is matter (*STh* I, q. 56, a. 1, ad 2). But the angel's form is individual *per se*, and this form, existing immaterially with *esse*

[48] See *STh* I, q. 56, a. 2, ad 1; cf. *STh* I, q. 50, a. 4, ad 1.

[49] See *STh* I, q. 87, a. 3. I use the term "object"; see *STh* I, q. 56, a. 1. Nowadays "object" is often understood in such a way that one can speak of treating someone "as an object," which would be opposed to treating him "as a subject," that is, as a person. The angel certainly knows himself to be a person. But in Thomas's lexicon, he is still an "object" of that knowledge; he is what the knowledge is knowledge of. An "object" of knowledge need neither be, nor be known "as," anything distinct from the knower, let alone as "sub-personal." (On the term "object," see Sanguineti, "La especie cognitiva," 87.)

[50] See, e.g., *STh* I, q. 56, a. 1; q. 87, a. 1, ad 2; *De Verit.*, q. 8, a. 6, in fine co.; *ScG* II, c. 98 (ed. P. Marc, C. Pera, P. Caramello [Turin: Marietti, 1961-67]), par. 2 (*Seipsam quidem . . .*) and par. 19 (*Et hoc quidem oportet . . .*).

naturale, also exists with *esse intelligibile* (*STh* I, q. 56, a. 2). These are one *esse*.[51]

It is interesting to observe that, on Thomas's view, the angel's natural form serves not only as the formal principle by which the angel understands himself, but also as that by which he has a general and confused understanding of other things. In the very act of understanding what he is, the angel also understands generally what a being is, what a substance is, and what an angel is. For his nature has all of these features, and his intellect can distinguish them. The reason why he has the forms of other things existing in him with *esse intentionale* is that, without these, he cannot have specific or proper knowledge of those things. The proper features of other things, those which distinguish them from him and from each other, are not found in his own natural form. He is, after all, only a finite being, with a finite form that determines him to a particular species of a particular genus. He is not God.[52]

God of course understands himself, and he does so through his own essential form, existing in its own *esse naturale*.[53] Moreover, there is no real distinction between the act of being that he has through his form and the act of understanding that he has through it. Indeed there is no real distinction between the form itself and either of these acts. God's form is itself a pure act of being, one that subsists in itself and is not received in something else, not

[51] As Sanguineti says ("La especie cognitiva," 83), here we have an identification of natural being and cognitive being.

[52] See *STh* I, q. 55, a. 1, co. and ad 3; *Sc*G II, c. 98, par. 9 (*Hoc autem sic . . .*). Cf. *STh* I, q. 87, a. 1.

[53] "So because God is at the extreme of separation from matter, being altogether immune from all potentiality, it follows that he is maximally knowing and maximally knowable; whence, insofar as his nature has existence in a real way, the feature of knowability belongs to it" ("Quia igitur Deus est in fine separationis a materia, cum ab omni potentialitate sit penitus immunis; relinquitur quod ipse est maxime cognoscitivus, et maxime cognoscibilis; unde eius natura secundum hoc quod habet esse realiter, secundum hoc competit ei ratio cognoscibilitatis" [*De Verit.*, q. 2, a. 2]). See *ScG* I, c. 47, par. 5 (*Adhuc. Omne quod est . . .*). This does not exclude his knowing through an "intelligible species"; rather, he functions as his own species. See *STh* I, q. 14, a. 2; q. 14, a. 5, ad 3. In general, "Non . . . oportet quod species qua intelligitur, sit aliud ab eo quod intelligitur" (*De Verit.*, q. 10, a. 8, ad 12). Not all cognitive species—formal principles of cognition—exist with mere *esse intentionale*.

even in a distinct subsistent form, let alone in a composite of form and matter. For this reason, his form is an utterly infinite act. It contains all of the forms and perfections of all things, even the proper and distinctive ones. Naturally it does not contain them in the way that the things themselves do. It does not make God to *be* each of these things, in the proper and truest sense (*STh* I, q. 18, a. 4, ad 3). The forms of other things do not exist in God with their own *esse naturale*. Nevertheless, neither do they exist in him with mere *esse intentionale*. They exist in him with *his* own *esse naturale*. By knowing his own simple form, in and through its own *esse naturale*, God knows everything there is to know about each and every thing.[54] His knowledge is maximal, because he is maximally immaterial.[55]

In short, not only is *esse intentionale* found outside cognitive things, it is not strictly essential to cognition, even of things outside the knower. A form existing with *esse naturale* can function by itself as a formal principle of understanding, insofar as its *esse naturale* is also *immateriale*. What is strictly essential to cognition is immateriality. Thomas holds that cognition is quite directly in function of immateriality.[56]

Hence it does seem to me that, in a Thomistic setting, the term "intentionality" can be a source of confusion. Not only does it not mean what *esse intentionale* means, and not only is *esse intentionale* found where there is no intentionality, but also there is intentionality—that is, operation with intrinsic reference to its object—where there is no *esse intentionale*. This is the case when

[54] What God primarily knows is not those things but himself, he being what his form is "primarily" the form of, according to its natural being (cf. above, text at n. 43). See I *Sent*., d. 35, q. 1, a. 2. Only secondarily is his form the form, i.e., the exemplar, of others, inasmuch as these have some deficient likeness of it. That is, God knows other things by knowing himself as their representation. His form constitutes "information" about them. But this information is in him according to a being that is stronger, not weaker, than the *esse naturale* of the things themselves.

[55] See *De Verit*., q. 2, a. 2; *ScG* I, c. 47; *STh* I, q. 14, a. 1.

[56] See, e.g., *De Verit*., q. 2, a. 2; *STh* I, q. 14, a. 1; q. 84, a. 2. (For a striking application of this doctrine, see *STh* III, q. 75, a. 6.) Even the form in the sensible medium, being immaterial, is in a way "cognitive," inasmuch as it is ordered toward cognition. Evidently it is less cognitive than is the form in the sense-organ; but then, in a way, it is also more "material," insofar as it is "in motion."

the object itself exists in the agent with *esse naturale* and functions as the action's immediate formal principle by virtue of that same existence. *Esse intentionale* is required only when the action's object does not exist in the agent in this way.

This is not merely a terminological issue. Even though, as I said earlier, the notion of *esse intentionale* is very pertinent to Thomas's cognitive "realism," it is so only as regards the knowledge of things whose real existence is "outside the mind." To make all knowledge a function of *esse intentionale* would almost be to place the mind itself "outside reality," to give it a "view from nowhere."[57] It would at least be to say that the mind can study itself only by somehow standing outside itself and working with a bloodless, ghostly likeness of itself. But Thomas, citing Augustine, says decidedly otherwise. "'Let the mind seek, not to perceive itself, as though it were absent, but, as present, to discern itself'; that is, to know its difference from other things, which is to know its whatness and nature" (*STh* I, q. 87, a. 1).

III. *Esse intentionale, Esse naturale,* and the First-Person Perspective

This last quotation is not from Thomas's discussion of angels—who naturally understand their minds perfectly and need not seek to "discern" them—but from his discussion of how the human mind or the human soul knows itself. In the course of this discussion it becomes clear that, even in our case, there is such a thing as knowing something in and through its own *esse naturale*. I would like to suggest that what Thomas says about this has an interesting bearing on the philosophy of human self-consciousness. This is my third consideration.

Thomas holds that the human soul, like an angel, is a subsistent form. Unlike an angel, however, it is not a complete substance in itself. It is essentially the formal part of a bodily, material substance. So long as it exists in matter, its essence is not actually

[57] "The intellect can be considered in two ways: in one way, according as the intellect is apprehensive of universal being and truth; in another way, according as it is a certain reality and a particular power having a determinate act" (*STh* I, q. 82, a. 4, ad 1).

intelligible through itself, any more than other forms existing in matter are. To be sure, unlike subhuman forms, it does have powers that directly inhere, not in matter, but in the soul itself—the powers of intellect and will. However, not even these powers are actually intelligible immediately through themselves, because in themselves they are only in potency. Even the agent intellect, which is an active power and so a sort of actuality in its own right, is not actually intelligible through itself. This is because what it is properly the actuality of—that which is in act by virtue of it—are the intelligibles that are abstracted from matter (*STh* I, q. 87, a. 1, ad 2). Thus the primary and connatural object of the human mind is not its own essence, as is that of an angel's mind. It is essence abstracted from matter—bodily essence, conveyed to the mind by the senses. Such essence exists in the mind, not in itself or with its own *esse naturale*, but in a likeness, an intelligible species that has only *esse intentionale*.

As soon as our mind has understood some bodily nature, however, it also has something existing in it with *esse naturale* that is both in act and immaterial, namely, its very action of understanding. And it immediately perceives that action. No process of making the action actually intelligible is needed, as it is with material things, whose sensible forms must be received immaterially through a medium, and whose intelligible forms must be abstracted from phantasms. The immediate experience of one's own act of understanding is an instance of what is nowadays called "consciousness."[58] Thomas posits both sensitive and intellectual consciousness.[59] Here I will mainly consider his view of human intellectual consciousness.

For the sake of illustration, let us suppose that someone understands *what an apple is*, the essence of apples. Now, since being understood by us is not at all essential to apples, nor even a proper perfection of them, the understanding of what an apple is does not strictly include any grasp of that very act of understanding. The mind's perception of that act is thus another,

[58] Regarding the word "experience," see *STh* I, q. 112, a. 5, ad 1.

[59] Sensitive consciousness is one of the functions of the "common sense"; see *STh* I, q. 78, a. 4, ad 2.

subsequent act (*STh* I, q. 87, a. 3, co. and ad 2). Nevertheless, in order for that act to be perceived (with intellectual perception), no distinct species of it, existing with mere *esse intentionale*, need be produced in the mind.[60] The act of understanding what an apple is functions through itself, in its own *esse naturale*, as the immediate principle of the perception of that act. Of course it does not do so without the species of its own object (what an apple is) existing with *esse intentionale*. In the perception of the act, the species too is perceived. But the act is perceived through itself, not through a distinct species or likeness of it.

Now, although the action of understanding what an apple is bears on its object as it is in itself or in its *esse naturale* and not on the species of it existing in the mind,[61] it does so in a universal way.[62] It is not determined to any individual apple, because the species that is its principle is a likeness abstracted from individuating matter. In itself, however, this action of understanding is individual, and it is perceived in its individuality (*STh* I, q. 87, a. 1). This again is because it is not *per se* in matter (*STh* I, q. 86, a. 1, ad 3). Yet neither is it perceived as though it were something existing separately or by itself. In perceiving it, the person also perceives that of which it is the act, its subject. That is, he perceives himself—not of course in just any way, but precisely as engaged in that act, and also as having in himself whatever it takes to do so, whatever it is that constitutes his "intellectual soul" or his "human mind."

At the same time, this perception is very confused. It is not a clear, distinct grasp of *what* he is, or of what his soul is, or even what his act of understanding an apple is. "Discerning" these

[60] In this, intellect differs from sensation. The act of an exterior sense is not perceived by the exterior sense itself, since it is the act of a bodily organ, and a body cannot act upon itself. It is perceived by the common sense, which is in a different organ. No medium is required, but the common sense has to take on the *intentio* of the act apprehended. See *STh* I, q. 78, a. 4, ad 2; *STh* I, q. 87, a. 3, ad 3.

[61] Again, see *STh* I, q. 85, a. 2; also III *De Anima.*, lect. 8 (718).

[62] Things do not exist in themselves universally. That we understand them universally, however, does not mean that we (mistakenly) think that they exist universally; and neither does it mean that we think of the likenesses of them existing in our minds. It means that we think of them in themselves, but somewhat indeterminately. The universality is accidental to what is determinately understood about them. See *STh* I, q. 85, a. 2, ad 2.

things, understanding what they are and exactly how they differ from other things, requires a "diligent and subtle inquiry" (*STh* I, q. 87, a. 1). This, I suppose, is because that original act of understanding does not present the subject, or the soul, or even itself, in an absolute way, just in themselves. It presents them only together with its own object, which is the nature of something sensible and bodily. As it turns out, the human mind's nature is very different from a nature of this sort. Yet precisely because natures of this sort are its primary objects, it must discern its difference from them *in* how it bears upon them.[63] That is not easy.

However, this confusion in one's immediate perception of one's act of understanding what an apple is obviously does not amount to a sheer identification of the act with its object. Even if the nature of the difference is unclear, no one thinks his act of understanding what an apple is *is* an apple—though it somehow has the form of apple in it. Only a philosopher could ever think that in order to know apples it is necessary to be one. We all know that the *esse naturale* of apples is not the *esse naturale* of our own acts of understanding them. A sign of this is that perceiving the understanding of what an apple is does not satisfy the desire to have one.[64] We perceive the act of understanding what an apple is to be a real, full-blooded act of understanding, and to be or to have in it only the "ghost" of an apple. We perceive the *esse naturale* of apples to be outside our minds.

Now, on Thomas's view, our perception of our own mental acts, in their *esse naturale*, plays a very important role in our lives. Thomas often refers to a passage from the discussion of friendship in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which he glosses as follows.

> In sensing that we sense and understanding that we understand, we sense and understand that we exist. For . . . the existence and life of a man is chiefly sensing and understanding. But that someone perceives himself to live is among the

[63] See *De Verit.*, q. 10, a. 8, ad sed contra 1.

[64] See *De Verit.*, q. 22, a. 3, obj. 4 and ad 4.

things that are intrinsically pleasant; for . . . to live is naturally good, and that someone perceives the good to exist in himself is pleasant.[65]

Clearly he is talking about perceiving our sensing and understanding in their *esse naturale*. It is this that is good—desirable—and gives pleasure when its presence in oneself is perceived.

But the *Ethics* passage does not finish here. What Aristotle wants to bring out is the importance of also perceiving the presence of these things in one's friends. Thomas glosses:

And . . . a virtuous man relates to his friend as to himself, because his friend is in a way another self. . . . Hence just as someone delights in his existence and life by perceiving it, so too, in order to delight in his friend, he must at the same time perceive him to exist. But this happens by living with him in the communication of conversations and considerations of the mind.[66]

Friends resemble each other in their "mental acts," their thoughts and affections, which are their "lives." This resemblance is what makes each "another self" to the other. And they exercise their friendship in sharing their lives—their thoughts and affections—with each other. Each delights in the other when he perceives the existence of his own thoughts and affections in the other—the real existence of them, their *esse naturale*.

However, it is of course not quite right to say that a friend sees "his own" thoughts in his friend. A friend, however intimate, is only "another" self. Even if, in a sense, one sees oneself in one's friend, it is only in a sense. Each friend may perceive that the other's thoughts and affections are just like his own, but neither thinks that the other's are simply identical with his own, the very same individual acts. Each can still distinguish between his own acts and those of his friend. But what exactly does the perception of this distinction consist in? The acts are similar. They have the same "content," the same objects. They are acts of the same kind,

[65] IX *Nic. Ethic.*, lect. 11 (1908) (parenthetical numbers in citations of the commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* refer to paragraph numbers in the Marietti edition). See also *De Verit.*, q. 10, a. 8; this article resembles and is some respects more complete than *STh* I, q. 87, a. 1. On the perception of one's own acts of will, see III *Sent.*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 2, ad 3; *STh* I, q. 87, a. 4; *STh* I-II, q. 112, a. 5, ad 1.

[66] IX *Nic. Ethic.*, lect. 11 (1909-10) (reading *simul* [ed. Leonine] for *simpliciter* in 1909).

just as their subjects are substances of the same kind. The distinction between oneself and one's friend is not like the distinction between one angel and another, a distinction of kind. A person can understand that there is another act of understanding just like his own act, existing outside his own mind; not in matter, like the nature of an apple, but in another mind, one just like his own. Yet if he knows that act, it must somehow exist in his own mind too. Both are in his mind, and yet he knows very well which one is his. By virtue of what does he know it?

We may be tempted to say that he knows it by his senses. He knows that his friend's mental acts are somehow attached to his friend's bodily members, which his senses perceive to be distinct from his own members. He knows that he and his friend cannot have the same individual thoughts in the same way he knows that they cannot eat the same individual apple. But this answer is inadequate. It may account for the distinction between the thoughts,[67] but it does not account for his perception of his own thoughts as *his*. For it does not account for his perception of his own body as his. Imagine a group of three friends. Each may distinguish between the other two by the sensible diversity of their bodily members. But if we say that he distinguishes them from himself in that way, there is still the question of how he knows which members are his. What does his perception of his members as his consist in? Does it not consist in somehow perceiving their uniquely intimate relation, their immediate instrumentality, to his immanent actions? As the *Ethics* passage suggests, the perception of one's body is only secondary in the perception of oneself. What is primary is the perception of one's vital, immanent actions. This already includes a perception of oneself as their subject. The perception of one's members as parts of oneself presupposes it.

Perhaps another tempting approach would be to say that each one *knows*, or even *sees*—with intellectual "vision"[68]—the

[67] The so-called Latin Averroists held that there cannot be many acts of understanding bearing upon the same object—many acts of the same kind—because, being immaterial, they have nothing to distinguish them. For Thomas's response to this, see *De Unitate intellectus contra Averroistas*, c. 5; also *ScG* II, c. 75; and *STh* I, q. 76, a. 2, esp. ad 3 and ad 4.

[68] See *STh* I, q. 57, a. 1, ad 2.

existence of his own thoughts and affections, whereas he only *believes* the existence of his friend's, and that he perceives this difference. But it is not correct to say that we can only believe the existence of others' immanent acts, or that such acts can be "seen" only "from the inside." If we say this, then we must also say that we can only believe the existence of the *natures* of other things, which are also "inside" them. If we can see that something has a certain nature, for instance that of an apple, then we can also sometimes see that other people have certain desires and certain thoughts. A wife might *know*, not just believe, that her husband is thinking of or desiring an apple, and this no matter what he says about it. She may know it by his very denial of it. She "sees inside" him. Yet she in no way confuses his thought and desire of an apple with her own. One can very well take the perspective of the acting person without taking the person in question to be oneself.

The "perspective of the acting person" on immanent actions is not, in fact, exactly the same as what would properly be called the "first-person perspective," that is, the unique perspective that each person has on his or her own actions. To take the perspective of the acting person means simply to consider how the actions are in themselves, as proceeding from and resting in the agent. If this were the same as the first-person perspective, then there could be no science of ethics. Ethics considers voluntary actions from the perspective of the acting person. But it does so with a universal consideration, not as any person's in particular, let alone as precisely the ethician's own. These actions are no more his own than they are another's.[69]

[69] In a striking passage of the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle remarks that although we desire perception and knowledge "in themselves," this does not mean that what we desire is, as it were, a Platonic Idea. "Indeed perception itself and knowledge itself are the things most desirable for each individually. . . . But now if one were to separate and posit knowledge itself and its negation (though this, it is true, is obscure in the written account, but it may be observed in experience), there would be no difference between knowledge itself and another person's knowing instead of oneself; but that is like another person's living instead of oneself, whereas one's own perceiving and knowing is reasonably more desirable" (Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics* 7.12.1244b27-34 [Aristotle, *The Athenian Constitution, The Eudemian Ethics, On Virtues and Vices*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.,: Harvard University Press, 1935), 437-39, with modifications]).

It is true that, even if we can sometimes "see" another person's thought, we are not seeing it directly.[70] We are not "watching" it proceed from his mind. Rather, we see it just as we see the nature of an apple—by seeing some sensible effect of it. We see it "in" its effect.[71] But seeing my own thoughts directly cannot, by itself, be what makes them seem to be my own. I also see the red of an apple directly—not by seeing some effect of it—but I do not therefore think that my eye is red. I only think it is seeing red. This act of seeing does somehow have the form of red in it, and when I perceive the act, I do somehow perceive the form of red in it too. But I also perceive that the form is not in it as it is in the apple.

With my mind's eye, I see that my friend understands what an apple is. I also see that I understand what an apple is. Both acts of understanding are "in my mind." They have the same object, the same "contents." They are the same in kind. But mine is in my mind with its own *esse naturale*. That of my friend is in my mind only with *esse intentionale*.

This is important: even if apples cannot exist in the mind with *esse naturale*, acts of understanding can exist in the mind with *esse intentionale*. For instance, suppose that someone does not understand what an apple is, but he desires to. In order to desire such understanding, he must have some notion of it. In his notion of it, the understanding—or more precisely, a likeness of it—exists with *esse intentionale*. A likeness of it can also exist in his mind with *esse intentionale* even after he has really achieved it. Once he perceives his own real act of understanding what an apple is, he can retain the memory of it. With this he can recall the fact that he has understood what an apple is, which is not quite the same as simply recalling what an apple is.[72] In his memory, that past act of understanding has only *esse intentionale*. From perceiving his act

[70] Thomas seems to hold that angels can show their thoughts directly to each other: *STh* I, q. 107, a. 1.

[71] See *STh* I, q. 57, a. 4. This can be seeing it, not just reasoning to it; see *STh* I, q. 94, a. 1, ad 3 (cf. *STh* I, q. 56, a. 3). "The human body is the best picture of the human soul" (Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, 3d ed. [New York: MacMillan, 1968], II, iv, 178e).

[72] See *STh* I, q. 79, a. 6, ad 2.

of understanding he can also go on to form a general concept, of *such* an act, taken universally. What that concept is a concept of exists in the concept with *esse intentionale*.[73] And he can apply this concept to the judgment of other people's acts of understanding what an apple is. When he judges that another person has such an act, a likeness of the other's act also exists in his mind. But it does so only with *esse intentionale*, just in the way that the form of one angel exists in another angel's mind.

If he knows the other's act to be the other's, distinct from his own, is it not because in some way he perceives the difference between the *esse intentionale* of such an act and its *esse naturale*? In knowing the other's act, he is knowing it in the *esse naturale* that it has in the other's mind. That is, he knows that the other's act *is* such an act, fully and truly. But he knows that act *through* a likeness of it in his own mind, where it has only *esse intentionale*. By contrast, he knows his own act through itself, by virtue of its own *esse naturale*. He may be unable to articulate the difference in how he knows them, but somehow he does perceive it.

The only actions that are present to someone by virtue of themselves are his own. And in some way he knows this. I would suggest that this is how we fundamentally know that our actions are ours. Or better, if indeed it is by perceiving these actions that we know we exist, then this is what we primarily *mean* by saying that they are ours. Of actions so perceived, it can make no sense to ask whose they are—as it could make sense, for instance, upon seeing a foot moving, to ask whose foot it is, even if in fact it is one's own. What a person first and immediately takes to be himself, at any given moment, is the source and subject of those

[73] See *Compendium theologiae*, c. 41. Nevertheless a concept is not the same as an intelligible species, just as an image formed in the imagination is not the same as a sensible species. On this see Sanguineti, "La especie cognitiva," 95-99. Even though a concept and an image are that by which something is known, they are so by being directly known themselves; what they are the concept or the image of is known "in" them. See *STh* I, q. 85, a. 2, ad 3; *De Verit*., q. 10, a. 8, ad s.c. 2. The concept, unlike the intelligible species, is an *intentio intellecta*: *ScG* I, c. 53, par. 4 (*Haec autem intentio . . .*). We might say that concepts "represent" things, although Thomas says that the intelligible species too is *repraesentativa* of things (*STh* I, q. 85, a. 1, ad 3). Evidently he does not mean, as we probably would, that it "stands for" the things. He simply means that, through it, things are present to the mind.

actions that at that moment happen to be presenting themselves to him through themselves and not through their mere ghosts. They are presenting *him* to himself, simply by presenting themselves to him in this way. What shows them to be his is not their content or *ratio*, their "shape." That could belong to acts just like them, in someone else—or to their ghosts.

In other words, what is uppermost or most formal in a human person's saying or thinking "myself" is not a description or a characterization. It is not an identikit, physical or mental. In one's most fundamental self-perception, it is not something *about* what is perceived that shows it to be oneself, some unique mark that distinguishes oneself from everything else. Unlike an angel, a human person can perceive himself as himself and as distinct from others without having any notion—even a false one—of a quality or a set of qualities that is proper to himself or that differentiates him from others. He can be "in touch" with himself and yet be, as it were, nothing but a question to himself. Adapting Augustine's phrase a little, we could say, "Let each person seek, not to perceive himself, as though he were absent, but, as present, to discern himself." I think this is true, and I think Thomas's understanding and use of the distinction between *esse intentionale* and *esse naturale* helps to account for it.[74]

[74] My thanks to Steven Jensen, Gyula Klima, and an anonymous reviewer for helpful comments on a draft of this essay.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Perspective of Morality: Philosophical Foundations of Thomistic Virtue Ethics. By MARTIN RHONHEIMER. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011. Pp. 496 $40.00 (paper) ISBN: 978-0-8132-1799-4.

A version of this book came out in its original language, German, in 2001, but it was first published in Italian in 1994. The German version contained additions to the Italian and this English version contains additions to the German in which Fr. Rhonheimer answers his critics and discusses other literature that has appeared in the last ten years or so. The book is intelligent, well-researched, interesting and informative, although (as I shall seek to demonstrate) it is not without its flaws. Rhonheimer does a very good job of positioning himself with respect to other authors, especially—but by no means exclusively—authors writing in German. He often brings in Immanuel Kant, for instance, and he engages in frequent (and fruitful) polemic with various consequentialists, including such classical figures as David Hume but also representatives of the proportionalist school in contemporary moral theology. He also makes good and enlightening use of contemporary philosophers such as Julia Annas, Elizabeth Anscombe, Wolfgang Kluxen, and Robert Spaemann.

The book comprises five chapters, plus a lengthy introduction and brief epilogue. The first chapter situates ethics within the context of other philosophical disciplines and discusses also the role of God in ethics. With respect to the latter issue, Rhonheimer contrasts his own approach with that of Kant. Chapter 2 is on "human action and the question of happiness." It is one of the best in the book, especially for its depiction, in very precise terms, of Thomas Aquinas's use of Aristotle's various levels of happiness. Chapter 3 is on "moral actions and practical reasoning." Nearly a hundred pages in length, it sets out the action theory behind the often controversial theses for which Rhonheimer has become known over the past two decades. Chapter 4 is on the moral virtues and is largely devoted to expounding Aristotle's understanding of the same. Chapter 5 is entitled "structures of rationality." In it, Rhonheimer discusses such general topics as the nature of moral principles and their ordering, but also more concrete issues or cases, such as that in which the life of both mother and child will be lost if an abortion is not performed but, if it is performed, the mother will live.

Although chapter 2 is one of the best in the book, it is not without its problems. I would like to examine one such now, since the corresponding position informs Rhonheimer's entire moral theory (and certainly this book). At one point, he argues that, although metaphysically man's "ultimate goal" is God himself, "this is not at all the perspective of practical philosophy" (67). He draws upon the Aristotelian distinction, employed by Thomas in question 1, article 8 of the *Prima Secundae*, between two "aspects under which we can speak of 'end'" (or *finis*): the *finis cuius* and the *finis quo*, the first (according to Rhonheimer's interpretation) being metaphysical, the second practical and human. It is well worth noting that, in both the Italian and the German versions of the book, Rhonheimer says that this pair should be translated as "the end *of* something" and "the end *for* something" ("il fine *di* qualcosa" / "il fine *per* qualcosa"; "Ziel *von* etwas" / "Ziel *für* etwas"—emphasis in the originals). He goes so far as to argue that Thomas ought to have used the expression *finis cui* rather than *finis quo*, since the former is a better rendering of Aristotle's *to en hôi* (*De anima* 1.4.415b3 and 21), which might be translated "that to the advantage of which." A translator's note in this new English version argues, however, that we should stick with *finis quo*—which is, after all, what Thomas wrote—and translate the *quo* as a dative of instrument: "that through which we acquire [the end]" (66 n. 48).

Despite this revised translation, Rhonheimer's more general position remains the same, that is to say, that Thomas separates the metaphysical aspect from the practical. We read: "It is at least conceivable that the orientation of the human being toward God, in terms of the metaphysics of being, may in fact find expression, not in the way that God is an object of some human activity (e.g., knowing or loving), but rather in the way of some other activity, *through which*, or *by way of which* man glorifies God." (Actually, in the German, this emphasis is not present, nor is the specification "or *by way of which*": Rhonheimer's point is simply that there is another activity through which man glorifies God.) A sentence later, he continues: "If God were also the *finis quo* of man, meaning the goal *through which* for the human being, then what is specific to man would have to consist in the fact that God Himself could become the object of his activity! But there must be some *human activity* that relates to God. And it would have to be shown to be that very thing that alone can rationally be sought for its own sake" (67-68, emphasis and exclamation in the English translation). Rhonheimer goes on to argue that Thomas does show this. So, despite the revised (and improved) translation of *finis quo*, of which he is presumably aware, Rhonheimer continues to hold that the "ultimate goal" *qua* metaphysical is quite distinct from the same goal *qua* practical and human, the latter being "that very thing that alone can rationally be sought for its own sake." This means, as he says, that God is not "an object of some human activity (e.g., knowing or loving)."

In order to understand the *finis cuius* / *finis quo* distinction, it is reasonable to turn to the above-mentioned article, in which it is introduced. There the question is whether nonrational creatures are oriented toward the same ultimate end as man is. Thomas replies that, if one considers the end as the *finis cuius*—that is to

say, the thing (*res*) in which the intelligibility of the good is found—the answer is yes: all creatures are oriented toward the same ultimate end, God (*qua* thing in which the intelligibility of the good is found). But if one considers the end as the *finis quo*—that is to say, the use or the attainment of that very thing (*illius rei*)—then not all creatures share in the man's ultimate end since they are not oriented toward it in the same way: they do not achieve their end—the same end as man's—by knowing and loving God. So, whether one speaks of the *finis cuius* or the *finis quo*, the ultimate end is one and the same: God. The difference in our speaking of the end concerns only how this object is attained. If it is appropriate to specify the way in which God constitutes the ultimate object of a creature's actions, one can do this.

The *finis cuius* / *finis quo* distinction is nothing so exalted as the distinction between natural theology (metaphysics) and human practical reason. Thomas illustrates it with an example from the field of physics. The end of a heavy body can be described either as a lower place or as *to be* in a lower place. The object—the lower place—is part of both expressions: the difference is only that in the second ("to be in a lower place") the intelligible context within which it is an object is specified. In most cases to make this specification is to repeat oneself. A man running out the back door of his house might be asked: "What do you seek?" And he might answer: "My dog: to get my dog." This is simple reiteration, without further significance. But sometimes—when, for instance, a philosopher is contrasting the various contexts within which an object might be an object—the reiteration has significance. Although nonrational creatures and men are both oriented toward the same ultimate end (God), nonrational creatures do not attain this end by knowing and loving God, which (as Thomas tells us) is a rational creature's way of reaching God. So, in answer to the question, "What do you seek?" the reiteration "God: to know and love God" has significance, even though both parts of the answer say essentially the same thing.

We find an exactly parallel problem in Rhonheimer's action theory, put forward especially in chapters 3 and 5. The position in question is part of his attempt to show that the object of a human action is never a physical thing. He writes at one point: "If the action 'doing p,' for example, means 'killing x,' the object or 'content' of 'doing p' is not 'x' but 'killing x. . . .' The object of an action, as paradoxical as it may sound, is this action itself" (142). It is not only paradoxical but it leads to an infinite regress, for it amounts to saying that "killing x" means "killing [killing x]," which means "killing [killing [killing x]]," and so on. But Rhonheimer thinks that if he can show that the full description of a human act involves nothing outside the action itself, then he can also show that ethics need not take into account the physical structure of human actions. To cite the difficult case mentioned above, if the situation is one in which the life of both mother and fetus will be lost if an abortion is not performed but, if it is, the mother will live, ethics need not worry that the solution involves performing a lethal action (such as crushing the fetus's skull) upon that physical object. "At the most, all that could be objected to such an action with its consequence of death for the embryo or fetus," writes Rhonheimer, "is that the killing here is direct,

that is, *physically* direct. But that alone is still not a morally relevant viewpoint" (394, emphasis in original).

Rhonheimer claims to find support for this position in Thomas. "[O]bjects of human acts," he says, "are not 'things' (as in *res aliena*, 'a thing which belongs to another person'), but the whole so-called exterior act (e.g., *subtrahere rem alienam*, 'taking away something which belongs to another person')" (152). Thomas does employ such expressions as *subtrahere rem alienam* when referring to the object of the human act of stealing (see, e.g., *De Malo*, q. 2, a. 4, ad 5; *STh* I-II, q. 18, a. 2; q. 18, a. 5, ad 2) but he is not at all reluctant to refer to the object simply as a thing (*res*). In question 18, article 2 of the *Prima Secundae*, for instance, in his reply to the first objection, he speaks of the objects of certain bad human actions as *res exteriores*; and in question 2 of *De Malo* (a. 7, ad 8) he says quite plainly that "a thing belonging to another (*res aliena*) is the proper object of a theft, giving it its species." The relationship between "taking away something which belongs to another" and "thing which belongs to another" is precisely the relationship we saw above between the description of a heavy-body-in-motion's object as "to be in a lower place" and as "a lower place" (*STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 8). The former expressions—*subtrahere rem alienam* and *esse in loco inferiori*—indicate also the context within which the objects are objects. No one engaged in the debate about Thomas's action theory denies that the objects of human acts must be understood within their proper and practical context ("from the perspective of the active person"): an object is a *finis quo*. But, supposing that the action is one that has as its object a physical thing and not something nonphysical such as a way of thinking (that I, let us say, am seeking to change), that object is the same physical object that exists in the external world as a *res exterior*.

As I suggested above, this book is well worth reading—or better, it is well worth studying. In doing so one will learn a great deal, for Rhonheimer has read extensively in both the primary and the secondary literature. But one should also remain circumspect. Key arguments are tendentious, and the direction in which they tend is, in my opinion, the wrong one.

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Market Complicity and Christian Ethics. By ALBINO BARRERA Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. 324. $88.00 (cloth). ISBN: 978-1-107-00315-6.

By his previous writing Barrera has established himself as one of the important voices in theological ethical reflection upon economic life. In addition to his productivity—this is his fifth book—there is the quality of his writing: lucid

prose, well-plotted presentation, balanced judgment, and courtesy in treatment of others' work. All of these qualities are on display once again in this most recent book.

Readers of Barrera's earlier work know that he is adept at interdisciplinary work, bringing economics and theological ethics into fruitful dialogue. With this volume he brings a third scholarly discipline into the conversation: legal philosophy, particularly tort theory. He does not simply resort to this new area of study in a few passing references, but integrates it fully into a sustained argument about moral liability for harms, intended and unintended.

The book is composed of ten chapters constituting three parts. The subject matter is a probing inquiry into three questions: Why may we be held morally responsible for incidental harms brought about through free market activities? How can we determine when cooperation in bringing about harms is permissible or blameworthy? And what is the degree of liability that can be assessed in order to bring about a lessening of the harms?

In an introduction that could serve as a model for what an author should do at the outset of a book, Barrera presents his subject and then explains how he will proceed to develop his argument throughout the volume. He also states why the book's topic is timely, and what he hopes to contribute with his volume. The timeliness of the topic can be grasped by the challenge of globalization. "On the one hand, globalization has made us ever more interdependent, better informed, and more capable of providing mutual assistance." On the other hand, globalization "has made the chain of causation much more intricate. . . . It has become increasingly difficult to individuate culpability for communal faults" (4).

Barrera believes his book makes a contribution to both the economic and the ethical literature on complicity—clarifying why some cooperative activity is blameworthy, how accumulative economic harms occur, and how individuals can think about their obligations to remedy such harms. He does this by developing an analytical framework for both understanding the different forms of economic complicity and morally assessing such behavior. Throughout the volume Barrera writes with painstaking precision, carefully building his argument, often repeating for the reader the steps he has taken along the way. His approach and style does run the risk of causing tedium for some readers, but this is not a book aimed at undergraduates or the general reader.

In part 1, composed of chapters 1 through 4, Barrera begins to set forth his thesis by employing insights from moral theology (principles of cooperation and double effect), legal theory (doctrine of complicity), and philosophy to explain what he means by complicity in economic wrongdoing. After the initial chapter he devotes the remaining three chapters of this part to explicating precisely the object of complicity (complicity in what?), the basis for ascribing accountability (why is there culpability?), and the subject of accountability (who is liable?).

To answer each one of the questions, Barrera must resolve a particular corresponding problem: the issue of accumulative harms can obscure what action causes the harm; the problem of overdetermination, refers to a "superfluity of causes, none of which is individually sufficient or even necessary for the occurrence of the harm," thus making it seem as if no particular actor is

blameworthy (49); and the challenge of interdependent economic agency renders the determination of any particular individual's obligation hard to discern.

By the end of part 1, therefore, Barrera has identified the "conceptual tools" (91) he believes to be necessary for determining complicity in economic wrongdoing. He has also clarified the major difficulties so as adequately to answer each of the three questions posed by his theory. He ends by providing an extensive four-page "diagnostic framework of analysis" that will be employed throughout the coming chapters (92-95). This framework has been assembled from his synthesis of the insights offered by moral theology, legal theory, social philosophy, and economics.

Part 2, chapters 5through 8, is an application of his proposed approach to four different forms that complicity may take in market behavior. Each chapter is structured around the three questions of the object, the basis, and the subject of complicity in wrongdoing. Chapters 5 and 6 take up what Barrera calls "hard complicity." These are cases where the harm is preventable. For example, in chapter 5 the case of providing support to a system of oppressive sweatshop factories is studied. Answering what the harm is and why it is wrong may be easy in this case. Yet the exact nature of one's complicity in enabling the harm of such oppressive labor varies by degree. The consumer at the distant end of a production line who buys the sweatshop's goods is a participant in the wrongdoing but in a very different way from that of the owner of the sweatshop, or the labor recruiter for the factory. The salesperson in a retail store that markets the sweatshop products is in a different position from the policymaker who advocates free-trade agreements without adequate labor regulation over sweatshops. Barrera delineates the various ways in which people may be complicit and what their role morally obliges them to do in response.

Chapter 6 returns to an important topic that Barrera has treated in previous publications: market externalities. Here he is specifically interested in those unintended negative consequences that markets produce due to accumulative effects and that require extra-market intervention to rectify. Throughout the chapter he examines individual acts that may be "generally-but-not-necessarily-harmful" in themselves, yet that cumulatively are certainly harmful, for example, overly indulgent consumption or disproportionate pollution. Barrera then turns his attention to what individuals complicit in such accumulated harms are obliged to do.

The last two chapters of part 2 deal with "soft complicity." The topics here are material cooperation in activities that are not harmful in themselves but that accumulatively may still bring about significant harm to others. Barrera argues in these chapters that the moral obligation is not to desist in market behavior but to be prepared to support actions that ameliorate the harm caused by one's distant material cooperation. Chapter 7 addresses market externalities such as job losses in the United States due to fair-trade agreements with less-developed nations that may require assistance in the form of job training, unemployment insurance, and other measures. In chapter 8 Barrera looks at the problem of larger institutions and market practices that cause harm but that are unavoidable if the market is to function. The theological category commonly employed to name this reality is social or structural sin. Barrera seeks to analyze the question

of complicity in such sin and what it demands of us by way of mitigation or elimination of the harms caused.

The final two chapters make up part 3 of this scholarly treatise. The author offers a synthesis and summary of his work by outlining a theology of economic responsibility and demonstrating how his conclusions offer deeper insight into the Christian moral tradition's way of thinking about blameworthy material cooperation. In these final chapters Barrera is writing explicitly as a theologian, and he makes a good case for the strengths and limitations of the Christian tradition's approach to material cooperation. The result is a thoughtfully argued proposal for an approach to material cooperation that is more detailed and precise than the traditional categories of proximate-remote and mediate-immediate. Put simply, Barrera works with the moral tradition he has inherited but enriches it by his employment of parallel insights from other disciplines.

One concern about Barrera's theological ethics, both in this and previous volumes, is his somewhat restrictive treatment of the tradition. There is little employment of classical Reformation thought (Lutheran or Calvinist) and he assumes the Aristotelian-Thomistic framework to be the proper foundation for Christian ethics. In short, Barrera too easily assumes that Thomistic ethics can be equated with Christian ethics, with the addition of a few references to evangelical Protestants. In fairness, he does briefly survey a variety of contemporary statements on the economy by Christian churches, but there is no serious examination of the Christian tradition beyond a fairly standard Thomism.

There are a few other curiosities to be noted. In Barrera's initial discussion of ethical models in chapter 1 he treats teleological and deontological theories. Given his careful presentation in part 3 of the topic of economic responsibility, where he relies on philosopher Hans Jonas and theologian William Schweiker, it seems odd that he gives no attention to the relational-responsible model of ethics at the outset of the book.

One further point is the author's treatment of the principle of double effect, which plays an important role throughout much of the book. In a volume that has an impressive bibliography and substantial reference notes there is literally no note of the significant debate among moral theologians in recent decades surrounding the proper understanding of that principle.

These points, however, should not be understood as challenging the author's accomplishment. Barrera has provided us with a valuable book. It is a wonderful illustration of how serious ethical engagement with market economics need not descend into the sort of partisan pandering that some Catholic authors have succumbed to in their defenses of or attacks on the market. Barrera has written a book that enlightens, not incites; it is a very fine achievement.

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The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere. By JUDITH BUTLER, JÜRGEN HABERMAS, CHARLES TAYLOR, and CORNEL WEST. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011. Pp. 128. $19.50 (paper). ISBN: 978-0-231-15646-2.

One might anticipate that a book entitled *The Power of Religion in the Public Square*, had it been published fifty or even twenty-five years ago, would be a mostly defensive, populist polemic against the increasing, antireligious secularism of the political culture, with the author a nonacademic, devout, conservative Christian. It is a sign of how drastically the intellectual climate has changed that in 2011 some of the most sophisticated and earnest critics of antireligious secularization and proponents of a religion-with-a-public-face are secularist academics, many of them nonreligious. One of the leading public institutions in "post-secular" thought (to use a term Jürgen Habermas favors) is the Social Science Research Council located in Manhattan. This book is a transcript of a SSRC event that included four lectures of and numerous discussions between Charles Taylor, Jürgen Habermas, Judith Butler, and Cornell West.

What these four thinkers have in common, in spite of their significantly different beliefs, is a rejection of the "old" Enlightenment "narrative of secularization," in which religion was to wither away after first being privatized, depoliticized, irrationalized, and subjectivized. With the evident and widespread resurgence and vibrancy of religious belief and practice in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries (Western Europe, perhaps, excluded), this simplistic and anachronistic narrative has lost its credibility; and a more sophisticated, nuanced, and religion-friendly account of secularization emerged in the last half of the twentieth century, exemplified in works such as Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* (1981), Jürgen Habermas's *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989), Jose Cassanova's *Public Religions in the Modern World* (1994), Talal Asad's *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (2003), and Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age* (2007).

While secularization is an overwhelmingly evident phenomenon in the West, it is a notoriously difficult one to capture intellectually—theologically, philosophically, sociologically—as well as to accommodate politically. The sociologist José Cassanova regards the more ideologically neutral term *differentiation* as a more helpful, less polemical way to understand secularization: "The core and the central thesis of the theory of secularization is the conceptualization of the process of societal modernization as a process of functional differentiation and emancipation of the secular spheres—primarily the state, the economy, and science—from the religious sphere and the concomitant differentiation and specialization of religion within its own newly found religious sphere" (José Cassanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994], 19).

In *A Secular Age*, the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor describes what has taken place since roughly 1500 as more of a replacement of one "constellation

of understandings" with another on the level of the "background culture," than a simple "subtraction" of the "real" secular from an "unreal" religious overlay:

> We have undergone a change in our condition, involving both an alteration of the structures we live within, and our way of imaging these structures. This is something we all share, regardless of our differences in outlook. But this cannot be captured in terms of a decline and marginalization of religion. What we share is what I have been calling "the immanent frame"; the different structures we live in: scientific, social, technological, and so on, constitute such a frame in that they are part of a "natural," or "this worldly" order which can be understood in its own terms, without reference to the "supernatural" or "transcendent." (Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* [Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2007], 594)

The first essay, by Habermas, "The Political: The Rational Meaning of a Questionable Inheritance of Political Theology," reads as a warning against the resurgence of political theology in the wake of the apparent withering away of "the political" due to the globalization, bureaucratization, and marketization of the public sphere: "'The political' has been transformed into the code of a self-maintaining administrative subsystem, so that democracy is in danger of becoming a mere façade, which the executive agencies turn toward their helpless clients" (16). Habermas decries this transformation, but is wary of the project to return "the political" to a prominent metaphysical or theological place as articulated by such authors as Carl Schmitt, Hannah Arendt, and Leo Strauss. Habermas is insistent that philosophy and theology are no longer capable, if they ever were, of serving as ontological or epistemic foundations for the political. As Habermas explains, the premodern meaning of the political, to which we can never return, was "the symbolic order of the collective self-representation of political communities in the mirror image of rulers whose authority is legitimated by some sacred power" (18). The pertinent question for Habermas is what happens to the political when its authority and legitimacy change from a transcendent to an immanent source, that is, from the sacred to the profane. In the absence of a robust, communal, public belief in a transcendent or even philosophical ground for political order, will the normative fruits of the "linguification of the sacred," such as the "inviolability of human dignity," wither away along with the political itself? Habermas contends that the political, and the normative public values embedded in it, can be sustained, and only sustained, through a properly instituted "discourse ethics" and "ideal speech situation": "Democratic legitimacy is the only one available today. The idea of replacing it or complementing it by some presumably 'deeper' grounding of the constitution in a generally binding way amounts to obscurantism" (24). To close his lecture, he advocates the Rawlsian proposal of the "public use of reason," in which theological discourse is rendered political through a process of translation, as an

alternative to the more traditional and, for Habermas, both dangerous and outdated, political theology.

Charles Taylor's concern in "Why We Need a Radical Redefinition of Secularism" is that, though democracies must be secular—that is, with coercion of belief forbidden, no particular religion or belief system given a privileged status, and all spiritual families heard in public discourse—this does not mean that "pure reason" can serve as a foundation. For Taylor, as for Alasdair MacIntyre and the Radical Orthodoxy movement, "there is no such set of timeless principles that can be determined, at least in the detail they must be for a given political system, by pure reason alone" (35). Taylor sees in Rawls and Habermas an improper "fixation on religion" (40) that singles out religious discourse as in peculiar need of translation into the "neutral" discourse of public reason; in truth, all intellectual discourses, even "secular"ones such as Kantianism, Marxism, and utilitarianism, are particularist and tradition-constituted, and thus in need of translation to serve as a foundation for legitimate, consensual political and legal action. Taylor thinks that neither Habermas nor Rawls understands the true normative basis for the secular state: "They seem to reserve a special status for nonreligiously informed Reason (let's call this 'reason alone'), as though a. the latter were able to resolve certain moral-political issues in a way that can satisfy any honest, unconfused thinker and b. where religiously based conclusions will always be dubious and in the end only convincing to people who have already accepted the dogmas in question" (53).

Taylor is doubtful that Rawls's overlapping consensus or Habermas's discourse ethic can effectively ground the political, for both presuppose an overly optimistic and tendentious view of secular reason derived from what he calls the "myth of the Enlightenment" (52). Essentially, the myth obscures the personal and confessional character of intellectual commitment. Taylor's concern is that putting religious discourse through the filter of "secular reason" is bound to dilute it of its power.

Judith Butler's lecture, "Is Judaism Zionism," begins with an aside, though a profound one, in which she suggests that the very framework of public discussion in America regarding the "religious" and "the secular" is based upon the Protestant injunction to privatize religion, and therefore is situated within a particular religious worldview. Her great ability to get underneath a discussion, as it were, to detect any hidden ideological constrictions is apparent here and in her main concern in the lecture: to apply theory to practice to help solve a contemporary problem involving religion and public life: "when public criticism of Israeli state violence is taken to be anti-Semitic or anti-Jewish" (72-73). Butler introduces the term "cohabitation" as a way of defusing the politicized discourse and to propose an alternative to both truly anti-Semitic criticism of Jews and Zionist rationalization of state violence and discrimination against Palestinians: "Cohabitation forms the ethical basis for a public critique of those forms of state violence that seek to produce and maintain the Jewish character of the state through the radical disenfranchisement and decimation of its minority, through occupation, assault, or legal restriction. These are attacks on a subjugated

minority, but they are also attacks on the value of cohabitation" (76). "Those with whom we cohabit the earth are given to us, prior to choice, and so prior to any social or political contracts we might enter through deliberate volition" (83). Cohabitation is a value to which Jews have privileged access due to their intimate, historic experience of exile. The Nazis rejected cohabitation, as Arendt shows in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, because they wanted to have complete control over those with whom they shared their land. Butler's essay is profound and is an extremely helpful intervention into a stalemated discourse. It is an antidote to the propaganda that characterizes Israeli terrorism as "necessary for Israel's survival against its neighboring enemies" and Palestinian terrorism as some sort of just and necessary retaliation. Rather, as Butler says, "it may be that the very possibility of ethical relation depends upon a certain condition of dispossession from national modes of belonging, a dispossession that characterizes our relationality from the start, and so the possibility of any ethical relation" (88).

The last lecture, by Cornell West, is neither a theoretical enquiry about nor a practical application of the power of religion in the public sphere; it is rather a performance of the very title of the book. Cornell preaches and teaches in the mode of prophetic witness, synthesizing many of the themes discussed in the previous lectures but ultimately employing their theoretical discourse for urgently spiritual purposes. It would be impossible to summarize the symphonic content of this sermon of West—"a blues man in the life of the mind, a jazz man in the world of ideas" (93)—for it simply must be read; but perhaps the reaction of Habermas, a known atheist, is sufficiently suggestive: "I will come back to translation, but let me first express that I feel that I am in a double bind after listening to Cornell West. Only a few hundred meters up from Wall Street here, we hear not someone talking about prophetic speech, but performing it in some way—namely, in a kind of moving rhetoric to which the only possible response would be to stand up and to change one's life. So just to continue academic discourse is somehow ridiculous" (114). There you have it: the power of religion in the public sphere.

What these four thinkers have in common besides their rejection of antireligious secularism and what Taylor calls "exclusive humanism" is an acceptance of and firm commitment to the fundamental principles and ethos of secular liberal democracy, which is summed up nicely by Mark Lilla, quoted in Charles Taylor's lecture: "the liberation, isolation , and clarification of distinctively political questions, apart from speculations about the divine nexus." He continues: "Politics became, intellectually speaking, its own realm deserving independent investigation and serving the limited aim of providing the peace and plenty necessary for human dignity. That was the Great Separation" (51). For these four scholars, as well as virtually all of the scholars in contemporary academia, the depoliticizaton of the sacred or the desacralization of the political, that is, the rise of the secular public sphere and the religious pluralism that both prompted and ensued from it, is a nonnegotiable, positive, and irreversible event. In other words, they ignore the question of whether political power can indeed be separated from the sacred. Thomas Molnar, the conservative Hungarian

political philosopher, however, has posed it: "Can a community exist without the sacred component, by the mere power of rational decisions and intellectual discourse?" (Thomas Molnar, *Twin Powers: Politics and the Sacred* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988], 137). And Romano Guardini describes a very different conception of the power of religion in the public sphere from these four scholars:

> The law of the state is more than a set of rules governing human behavior; behind it exists something untouchable, and when a law is broken it makes its impact on the conscience of man. Social order is more than a warrant against friction, than a guarantee for the free exercise of communal life; behind it stands something which makes an injury against society a crime. The religious dimension of law suffuses the entire moral order. It gives to ethical action, that is action necessary for the very existence of man, its own proper norms, which it executes from without and without pressure. Only the religious element of law guarantees the unity and cooperation of the whole order of human behavior. (Romano Guardini, *The End of the Modern World* [Wilmington, Del.: Intercollegiate Studies Institute Press, 2001], 180)

As Pope John Paul II often reiterated, the face of Jesus Christ is the only true mirror in which man can fully and accurately contemplate and comprehend his own nature and destiny; thus, only therein can he discern the moral values and goods most perfective of himself and the political order. However, the desacralized, religiously pluralistic, secular state supposes that authentic political peace is possible without the majority of citizens' spiritual rebirth through baptism and the infusion of sanctifying grace that comes primarily through the Church's sacraments—and without the formal guidance of the Catholic Church on fundamental moral and political issues. For St. Augustine, true peace and goodness was just not possible outside the society of Christian believers, as is suggested in *De civitate Dei* in which Augustine judged the "peace" of Rome, the exemplar of the "city of man," no peace at all in comparison to the true social peace that can only come from social obedience to Christ in the city of God. Finally, Leo XII teaches us:

> But, as no society can hold together unless some one be over all, directing all to strive earnestly for the common good, every body politic must have a ruling authority, and this authority, no less than society itself, has its source in nature, and has, consequently, God for its Author. Hence, it follows that all public power must proceed from God. For God alone is the true and supreme Lord of the world. Everything, without exception, must be subject to Him, and must serve him, so that whosoever holds the right to govern holds it from

> one sole and single source, namely, God, the sovereign Ruler of all. "There is no power but from God." (*Immortale Dei*, 3)

Thus, a compelling argument, grounded in the Magisterium, Scripture, and Tradition, can be made that the real "power of religion in the public sphere" must be a *sacred* power.

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The Social Mission of the U.S. Catholic Church: A Theological Perspective. By CHARLES E. CURRAN. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010. Pp. xii+196. $26.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1-589-01743-6.

Curran's latest book is written from the perspective of a theologian convinced that theologians and indeed all Catholics have a right to dissent from noninfallible teachings of the "hierarchical" magisterium. It is informative but marred by grave misinterpretations of the documents of Vatican Council II, the teaching of St. Thomas on moral absolutes, and other matters.

The first two chapters (1-40) concern the historical context of the Church's social mission from colonial days through the mid-twentieth century. During that period the primary concern of bishops was to care for Catholics and, after independence, to show that Catholics, particularly the immigrants who poured into this country during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were patriotic Americans. Tensions between Catholics and the majority Protestant Churches eased after the election of John F. Kennedy as the first Catholic president in 1960, the papacy of John XXIII, Vatican Council II's *Declaration on Religious Liberty*, and the writings of John Courtney Murray, S.J. Chapter 2 also describes the development and growth of a Catholic school system, Catholic charities, and Catholic hospitals.

In chapter 3, Curran's concern is to show the difference between pre- and post-Vatican II ecclesiology. Much said here is true, for example, the insistence that all men, and not just an elite few, are called to sanctity (42). In considering "aspects of morality with differing levels of certitude" Curran distinguishes between primary precepts of natural law (e.g., good is to be done and evil avoided) and specific moral norms. He claims that one passage in St. Thomas (*STh* I-II, q. 94, a. 4) demonstrates that Aquinas denied that any specific moral norms (e.g., that deposits should be returned) are absolutely binding (50). He also claims that since Vatican Council II "a new dimension of the catholicity of the Church . . . emerged in the form of dissent from noninfallible hierarchical

teachings . . . [and] the majority of Catholic theologians have recognized the legitimacy of dissent on this issue" (53).

In chapter 4 Curran takes up "Vatican II and a New Understanding of the Social Mission." Here again much of what is said is true. The social mission before Vatican II was twofold: divinization and humanization, a distinction that separated the spiritual and the temporal and was the basis for distinguishing the role of the clergy and religious (divinization) and that of the laity (humanization). In the post-Vatican II period the social mission sees these two dimensions as integrally related (57-59). Vatican II abandoned the rigid distinction between natural law (dealing with the temporal and material) and the new law of love or grace (dealing with the eternal and spiritual) and instead insisted on the unity of the moral life as fulfilling one's vocation to bring Christ to the world (58-60).

Chapter 5 centers on the development of the Catholic Health Association (CHA), Catholic Charities, and the Catholic Worker Movement after Vatican II. The CHA is intimately involved in the work of the many U.S. Catholic hospitals. They are to act in accord with the U.S. bishops' *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services* (ERD). The latest edition(s) of the ERD contain directives requiring that these services not provide contraception (sterilization) and abortion. Curran notes that there has been heated debate regarding these directives between theologians who claim the right to dissent from noninfallible "hierarchical" teaching and those who deny this right. But "in practice arrangements have often been made for some way to provide these services [abortion and sterilization]" (88).

Catholic Charities is more closely related to the local bishop than is the CHA. In the post-Vatican II Church this arrangement has created severe tensions since the government (state or local) has begun ordering Catholic Charities either to facilitate "services" deemed intrinsically evil by the Church (e.g., providing contraceptives to poor people, arranging adoption of children by same-sex couples) or else to forgo acceptance of public funds and refuse help for couples seeking to adopt a child. This has led to serious problems because many laity involved in Catholic Charities dissent from the bishops' teaching regarding these issues (91-92). The Catholic Worker Movement has also been affected by post-Vatican II tensions. Many involved in the movement no longer view its identity as a "Catholic" movement to be essential, whereas some, like its founder Dorothy Day, want it to maintain a strong Catholic identity and to support the moral teachings of the Church on such issues as contraception, abortion, and so on (92-96).

Chapter 7 (125-42) first focuses on challenges in carrying out the most important social mission of the Church, that is, "the formation, education, and motivation of all Catholics to work in their daily lives and activities for the common good of society" (125). Of importance here are Curran's claims (1) that the broad consultative process that the U.S. bishops began in developing pastoral letters after Vatican II was abandoned when the bishops tried to write a pastoral letter on women in the Church and discovered that the chief obstacle in writing it was opposition between official Vatican teaching (=hierarchical magisterium)

and the practice and beliefs of many American women (e.g., those advocating ordination of women), and (2) that "under the papacy of John Paul II the Church became more centralized, [and] the local churches were downplayed" (130).

This chapter then takes up social-mission roles and ecclesiological tensions (142-49). Curran sees a profound difference between St. Thomas's understanding of the role of civil law and that found in Vatican II's Decree on Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*). According to Curran, "In the Thomistic approach the state intervenes for the common good, whereas in the religious freedom approach the state intervenes for public order. Public order is more limited than the common good. . . . Public order is the end of the state and is the criterion that justifies the intervention of the coercive force of the law" (146-47). In *Evangelium Vitae* John Paul II unfortunately "followed the Thomistic approach" according to which "civil law should prohibit abortion" (147).

Chapter 8 focuses on the U.S. bishops' opposition to the abortion liberty granted to women by *Roe v. Wade*. Curran says that the bishops, particularly through their committee for pro-life activities, have consistently condemned abortion and called for a reversal of *Roe v. Wade*; nonetheless, they have said repeatedly that abortion is not the only important life issue and have refused, as a body, to deny communion to those many Catholic legislators, principally in the Democratic party, who consistently vote to defend a woman's right to abortion. He applies the "freedom of religion approach" to the role of civil law to the abortion issue. Although arguments to condemn abortion could be made with this approach, Curran thinks that even a person who believes that human personal life begins with conception could oppose overturning *Roe v. Wade* because in a pluralistic society like ours, where people strongly disagree over this matter, "one should follow the presumption in favor of the freedom of the individual" (173).

In what follows I would like to highlight three problems with the book. First, Curran always calls the magisterium of the pope and bishops the "hierarchical" magisterium and in other writings contrasts this with the magisterium of theologians and of the faithful, claiming that "dissent" from the "noninfallible" teachings of the "hierarchical magisterium" is frequently justified. This is *not* the teaching of Vatican II. For instance, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) declared that "the office the Lord confided to Peter alone, as first of the apostles, is a permanent one" and that the same is true of the office given to the apostles of shepherding the Church, an office "destined to be exercised without interruption by the sacred order of bishops." It thus taught that "the bishops have by divine institution, taken the place of the apostles as pastors in the Church, in such wise that whoever listens to them is listening to Christ and whoever despises them despises Christ and him who sent Christ (Lk 10:16)" (*LG* 20). This magisterium, invested in the pope and bishops in union with him (cf. *LG* 22), at times proposes truths of faith and morals infallibly, with the assurance that truths so proposed are absolutely irreformable and must be received by the faithful with the assent of faith. At other times this magisterium proposes these truths *authoritatively* (=Curran's "noninfallible" teachings). Regarding these *Lumen Gentium* declares:

> Bishops who teach in communion with the Roman Pontiff are to be revered by all as witnesses of divine and Catholic truth; the faithful, for their part, are obliged to submit to their bishops' decision, made in the name of Christ, in matters of faith and morals, and to adhere to it with a ready and respectful allegiance of mind [*religioso obsequio*]. This loyal submission of the will and intellect [*Hoc vero voluntatis et intellectus obsequium*—note that submission of *will* is put before submission of intellect] must be given, in a special way, to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff, even when he does not speak *ex cathedra*. (*LG* 25)

Curran's constant claim in many of his works (e.g., *Loyal Dissent*) is that dissent from such "noninfallible" teachings is legitimate and that Catholics are at liberty to substitute the teaching of theologians for that of the "hierarchical" magisterium. This is false. Three Council Fathers asked what one (say, a learned person) ought to do if he cannot give internal assent (*interne assentire non potest*). In order to reply, the Theological Commission of the Council consulted approved theological treatises (*Acta Synodalia Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani Secundi,* III/8 [Romae: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1976) no. 159, p. 88]). If such treatises are examined we discover, as several scholars have shown, that the approved pre-Vatican treatises on ecclesiology never justified dissent but spoke rather of "withholding" or "suspending" assent, something much different from dissent (see Francisco Sullivan, S.J., *De Ecclesia*, vol. 1, *Quaestiones Fundamentalis Theologiae* [Apud Aedes Pontificiae Universitatis Gregorianae, 1963, 354]; I. Salaverri, S. I., *De Ecclesia Christi,* in *Sacrae Theologiae Fundamentalis,* vol. 1, *Theologia Fundamentalis*, ed. 5 [Madrid: B.A.C., 1952], p. 708, no. 689).

Curran completely ignores the following text of *Lumen Gentium* which lays down conditions under which bishops united to the pope can teach truths of faith and morals *infallibly*:

> Although the bishops, taken individually, do not enjoy the privilege of infallibility, they do, however, proclaim infallibly the doctrine of Christ on the following conditions: namely, when, even though dispersed throughout the world but preserving for all that amongst themselves and with Peter's successor the bond of communion, in their authoritative teaching concerning matters of faith and morals, they are in agreement that a particular teaching is to be held definitively and absolutely. (*LG* 25)

In *Evangelium Vitae* (1995), Pope John Paul II made it clear that the *ordinary* and *universal* magisterium has infallibly proposed the truth of three specific moral norms: (1) "the direct and voluntary killing of an innocent human being is always

gravely immoral" (*EV* 57); (2) "direct abortion, that is, abortion willed either as an end or as a means is always gravely immoral" (*EV* 62); (3) "euthanasia is a grave violation of the law of God" (*EV* 65). At the end of the texts in these numbers he explicitly refers in a footnote to the text of *Lumen Gentium* cited above regarding the conditions when bishops united to the pope can teach truths infallibly by the universal and ordinary exercise of their magisterium. He also emphasizes that he wrote that document only after consulting bishops throughout the world.

Regarding the legitimacy of theological dissent, Curran's advice runs counter to that of St. Thomas Aquinas, who wrote: "We must abide by the pope's judgment rather than by the opinion of any theologian, however well versed he may be in the divine Scriptures."

Second, Curran claims that the Declaration on Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis Humanae*) rejects the Thomistic criterion that civil law must protect the common good and makes the criterion instead the respect for public order. Moreover, he claims that the public order is "less restrictive" than the common good, valuing individual freedom more highly. This is a grave misreading of the document.

The primacy of the *common good* in shaping the duties of civil authority is at the heart of *Dignitatis Humanae's* conception of State authority (in this section I refer to the Latin text of this document). The document teaches plainly that "the civil power [*potestas civilis*] [has as its] proper end [*finis proprius*] care for the temporal common good [*bonum commune temporae curare*] (*DH* 3). It defines the common good (*bonum commune*) as the "sum of those conditions of social living which enable people to attain their own perfection more fully and easily [*summa earum vitae socialis condiciones, quibus homines suam ipsorum perfectionem possunt plenius atque expeditius consequi*]" (*DH* 6). It "consists chiefly in the safeguarding of the rights [*iura*] and duties [*officia*] of the human person" (ibid.), and among these rights is the right of innocent persons not to be killed intentionally.

More could be said regarding the teaching of this document on the centrality of the common good. Further details are given in part IV of my and E. Christian Brugger's review essay, "John Paul II's Moral Theology on Trial: A Reply to Charles Curran," *The Thomist* 69 (2005), 279-312.

The third problem has to do with Curran's presentation of St. Thomas's teaching on absolute or unexceptional moral norms. On the basis of one text (*STh* I-II, q. 94, a. 4) Curran concludes that St. Thomas, while acknowledging the universality of such propositions as "good is to be done and evil avoided," taught that no specific moral norms are universal, that is, always true. The text cited gives the example of returning items we have borrowed to their owners, and the norm requiring this does admit of exceptions precisely because not all specific moral norms are absolute or unexceptional.

But St. Thomas clearly taught that many specific moral norms are absolute, without any exceptions. Several well-researched studies demonstrate this, among them Patrick Lee's "The Permanence of the Ten Commandments: St. Thomas and His Modern Critics," *Theological Studies* 42 (1981) 422-44; John Finnis,

"Object and Intention in Moral Judgment according to St. Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist* 65 (2001): 1-44; and John Michael McDermott, S.J., "Charles Curran's Moral Theory: Foundational and Sexual Ethics," *Anthropotes* 23 (2007) 167-225. Curran totally ignores these and other relevant studies. Moreover, he ignores a very simple passage from St. Thomas's *De Malo,* q. 15, a. 1, ad 15. There, St. Thomas replies to an objection posed by a commentator on Aristotle known as the "Old Scholiast" that adultery (sexual union with the tyrant's wife) is morally permissible when done to save a nation from tyranny, by declaring: "the Commentator is not to be followed in this; one ought not commit adultery for the sake of any good whatsoever." Curran likewise ignores the following texts in St. Thomas's *Quaestiones Quodlibetales* IX, q. 7, a. 2: "There are some [*quaedam*] actions that have a deformity inseparably attached to them, like fornication, adultery and the like, that can never be done rightly" (*Quaedam enim sunt quae habent deformitatem inseperabiliter annexam, ut fornicatio, adulterium, et alia huiusmodi, quae nullo modo bene fieri possunt*).

In this and other writings Curran surveys a wide range of literature relevant to the subject matter of his work. Unfortunately, he is quite selective in the literature he chooses to survey; he steadfastly ignores important studies criticizing his understanding of the documents of Vatican Council II, Pope John Paul II, and other documents of the ecclesial magisterium. The central arguments he advances to support his interpretations are fundamentally the same arguments he used in the late 1960s and 1970s. It is unfortunate, but he fails to take seriously—or for that matter even to acknowledge the existence of—competent scholarly studies that examine his own views carefully, compare them with the magisterial documents in question, and conclude that he has managed gravely to misinterpret them.

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The Logic of Desire: Aquinas on the Emotions. By NICHOLAS LOMBARDO. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011. Pp. 319. $34.95 (paper). ISBN: 978-0-8132-1797-0.

In this work, Fr. Nicholas Lombardo, O.P., offers a detailed and well-argued retrieval of Thomas Aquinas's understanding of emotion. He accomplishes this through a sustained consideration and critique of the scholarship that has been generated fairly recently concerning this much-neglected area of Thomas's thought, and he does this in dialogue with the contemporary analytical tradition of philosophy and its attention to the phenomenon of emotion. The virtues of

this work are many: careful attention to the distinctions that Thomas makes throughout the whole of his work concerning man's affectivity; the interpretation of this doctrine within the context of Thomas's theological anthropology and ethics; a detailed understanding of the secondary literature concerning this area of Thomas's thought; appropriate attention to and understanding of the state of the problem concerning emotion in modern philosophy; healthy awareness of the peculiar difficulties that this area of thought presents; careful assessment of Thomas's doctrine, particularly where it is found to be lacking; and sound judgment concerning its relevance not only to Thomistic studies but to the wider fields of philosophy and theology. Throughout this reconstruction, Lombardo is careful not to rush to a conclusion concerning what corresponds to the phenomenon of emotion in Thomas's writings, but instead allows his examination of all psychological phenomena that are typically considered to be part of emotion in the modern discussion (as covered in his "Introduction") to guide him in his discernment of what might correspond to emotion in Thomas's work. This constitutes the majority of his study (chaps. 1 through 7), with the final two chapters being devoted to an initial evaluation of what the book discovers to be emotion in Thomas's writings and its application to philosophy and theology.

Chapters 1 and 2 attend to those psychological phenomena in Thomas's works that have commonly been identified with emotion, namely the *passiones animae.* Lombardo finds the identification of *passio* with emotion to be misleading, as Thomas's use of the term, on the one hand, includes phenomena that are not usually considered to be part of emotion (e.g., the *passiones corporalis* like hunger and thirst), and, on the other hand, does not at times encompass those that typically are included (e.g., the *affectus* of the will like love and joy). The passions do not encompass the whole of man's affective life. They do, however, allow an access point to what is essential to man's affectivity. Lombardo is careful to describe the complex appetitive and cognitive dimensions of the *passiones,* specifically, the metaphysics that undergirds Aquinas's anthropology and his understanding of appetite (of which the *passiones* are but one manifestation), the *telos* toward the good and perfective that is implicit in every appetitive event (and thus by consequence in every passion), and the intentionality of the *passiones* that becomes manifest in the detailing of the general structure of sensitive appetition and its specific movements in its dynamic realization (i.e., the eleven *passiones* identified by Aquinas in his *Treatise on the Passions* at *STh* I-II, qq. 22-48). Lombardo ably describes each of the passions—as well as their relationships to and interdependencies upon each other—the consequent interpretative problems that result, and the critiques that Thomas's account of the *passiones* must face.

Chapter 3 considers a neglected area of Thomas's reflections upon man's emotional life, denoted by his use of the language of *affectus.* The language is broad, referring to the complex dynamic that constitutes intellectual appetition, but also at times to the *passiones animae*, as well as to the interplay between intellectual and sensitive appetition. One finds in the secondary literature the presumption that emotion necessarily includes the physiological, making the

passiones the preferred candidate, while the category of *affectus,* understood as denoting the will's movements, is not addressed in a sustained way, as it lacks this seemingly essential corporeal involvement. In a word, in the discussion concerning the emotional life of man the will's movements, being "bloodless," are neglected in preference for the *passiones*, and cognitive elements are then introduced to arrive at something that corresponds to the depth and breadth of emotion as commonly experienced. Many problems arise from this reading, one of which is how to attribute the language of emotion to God and the angels without falling into mere equivocity or metaphor, thus relegating the emotional life to corporeal creatures. Lombardo wisely approaches his retrieval without the presumption that physiological change is essential to emotion; he is guided rather by an attention to the wider category of appetition that allows for an analogous understanding of the emotional life proper to animals, men, angels, and God—as these are all possessed of appetite. This expansion, so to speak, of what is typically included in intellectual appetition is defended in what follows in this chapter and in the remainder of this work. In this chapter, Lombardo shows that the structure and movements of the intellectual appetite and the language used to denote these movements mirror those of sensitive appetition discussed in chapter 2, but in ways in keeping with what is proper to the will's nature, its dynamic and its *telos* (as opposed to that of sensitive appetition). Specifically, the will's movements do not require an accompanying physiological change and are ordered to the good itself, that is to say, to man's beatitude, rather than to some particular instance of good in the world. Thus, one can say that God, angels, and men love and rejoice in analogous ways. The human experience of this is something that, although akin to what God and the angels express, is nonetheless typically influenced by and experienced together with the *passiones animae.* Man's affectivity, then, covers the range of his appetition, from the play of the *passiones* of his sensitive appetite to the movements of the intellectual appetite itself and the compenetration of these in many and varying ways in the dynamic of man's emotional life. This opens up the possibility of bringing a depth and breadth to the description of the *passiones* in the prior chapter without including the cognitive element of emotion as part of its essence (although it is still causally related to its evocation).

Chapter 4 deals with the natural obedience of the passions to reason. This capacity allows them to accept guidance from reason and partake of its life, allowing for the formation of character traits that come to their fruition in virtue (or vice) and the exhibition of virtuous (or vicious) passions. Lombardo ably rehearses the ways in which Thomas details this formation of man's passional life, by a consideration of the material of the *Prima Secundae* culminating, in chapter 5, with an explanation of the action of grace—specifically in light of those marvelous yet strangely neglected questions 68 through 70 that treat of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit and the beatitudes. These, together with the infused virtues, initiate a recovery of that order that was enjoyed in man's affective life in the prelapsarian state. Several important principles are voiced and developed in these two chapters: that the passions are naturally oriented to reason's service;

that reason is not wholly sundered from the passions in the Fall but is able to work in concert with the passions through the influence that it can bring to bear upon the sensitive cognitive powers necessary for passion's evocation; that the passions maintain their essential nature and goodness after the Fall and are thus still oriented toward and still pursue that in which their flourishing consists; that the passions themselves cannot attain to this flourishing, as they have been deprived of the original grace enjoyed before the Fall and have consequently been left to the disorder that afflicts them in this life; that the *habitus* in general, the virtues in particular and the grace that God applies to the reforming of man's affectivity, do no violence to the nature of the passions but attune, form, and draw them toward their flourishing, and are the means whereby unity and peace within man's affectivity are best brought about here and now—something that anticipates the perfection of man's affectivity in the hereafter.

All of these principles (and many others) are drawn together as chapter 6 takes up the details of the flourishing of human affectivity, through an examination of the impact that the theological and cardinal virtues have upon the development and explanation of the dynamic of the Christian life and of mature virtuous affectivity. This maturation is signaled not only by the shift in language away from *passio* to *affectus,* but also by the progress from passions described generally in the *Treatise on the Passions* in the *Prima Secundae* to their full and detailed treatment in light of those virtues central to man's flourishing and ultimate beatitude. Here Lombardo draws the reader's attention at all times to the specific ways that the whole of man's affective life is set right and experienced in its fullness—to the extent that this is possible in this life. It is in Christian revelation and all that is consequent upon the salvific act that the human person, in faith, begins to understand what is truly his end and what will best address and rightly order the very nature of his affectivity. In hope, the human person strives for his end. In charity, he enjoys friendship with God, and the peace and joy that flow from this. All of these graces redound upon his prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, as these not only perfect his intellect, will, and the irascible and concupiscible aspects of his sensitive appetite respectively, but also manifest, when formed in light of the influence of the theological virtues, the most authentic and full experience of his affectivity. This picture comes into even greater clarity by Lombardo's brief consideration of the deformation of man's affectivity by the vices opposed to the theological and cardinal virtues, treated in the *Secunda Secundae.*

This is one part of his book that calls for further development. A more explicit teratology of human affectivity would have brought into greater relief the mechanisms involved in healthy mature human emotion (approaching what is less familiar to us by way of the more familiar), and would have detailed more explicitly the metaphysics but particularly the phenomenology descriptive of the *affectus* of the will. What he presents here is pregnant in its scope, particularly on page 190 where he observes that Thomas's accounts of the vices "read like clinical descriptions of psychological pathologies." This, together with the salutary inspiration he takes from the works of Terruwe and Baars, clearly begs

for further comment. Lastly, Lombardo's detailed discussion in chapter 7 of Christ's affectivity is most welcome, as Christ in his humanity offers to Christians the example of perfect human living, and thus, in light of our interests at present, of what perfect human affectivity should look like, something that Lombardo describes well and in conformity with what he developed in previous chapters.

The last two chapters of this work turn to a "preliminary evaluation" of the affective life of man discerned in the prior chapters, and the application of this doctrine to other disciplines, especially to theology. Lombardo is clear about his attribution of the modern category of emotion to *affectus* as opposed to *passio*. He is also quite clear in asserting that the cognitive element that so many authors attribute to the definition of emotion is mistaken. Lombardo argues that Thomas intends a sharp distinction between cognition and appetition, and that the appetite of man denotes a structure and a dynamic that is descriptive of man's affectivity as a whole—a dynamic that enjoys its own operation and *telos*, is united in operation with the cognitive element, and although guided and molded by it, is nonetheless distinct from it. This argument, in light of the preceding material, is well made and convincing. Lombardo identifies several elements of this doctrine as particularly relevant. First, the rooting of Thomas's account of emotion in the metaphysics of appetite and its fundamental goodness (as described especially in chaps. 4 and 5) offers the Christian an optimism and hope in the soundness of his desire for and striving after his happiness, which in turn redounds upon the nature and dynamic of the entirety of his affectivity. Second, the complexity of man's appetition allows for a way to explain the complexity of his affectivity as it covers the whole range of sensitive and intellectual appetition and the fluidity of their interrelations and interdependencies. Third, a solid understanding of what is proper to both the passions and reason allows for a right conception of their proper interrelations and the manifestations of their respective operations—which makes possible the explanation of the means whereby they come to their optimal functioning through virtue and grace. Fourth, it is helpful to see the clear and profound relationship between Thomas's doctrine of emotion and his ethical teachings. As for the application of Thomas's theory of the emotions to theological concerns, Lombardo states that there are many possibilities, a few of which he develops initially here: the aid that this teaching affords those who practice the discipline of spiritual discernment, especially those who look to St. Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*; a robust and positive understanding of the ascetical practices of the faith; the insight that this doctrine allows those who suffer from inordinate and continuing anger to seek the means whereby forgiveness might be realized and gentleness and clemency experienced; the impact that this doctrine can have upon one's progress in the rhetorical arts of teaching and preaching; and the understanding this doctrine provides concerning the boredom that is the predominant mark of modern man, a phenomenon that corresponds closely, Lombardo argues, to *acedia*.

This book is a fine and much-needed retrieval of what constitutes emotion in the writings of Thomas Aquinas, bringing precision and clarification where it was

previously wanting. At the very least, Lombardo's careful work will demand attention from anyone who writes in this area of Thomas's thought in the future. For this reviewer, the matter of this book has caused him to reconsider his views on the matter, as well as suggesting to him new and promising avenues whereby healthy human affectivity might be achieved.

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The Trinity and Theodicy: The Trinitarian Theology of Von Balthasar and the Problem of Evil. By JACOB H. FRIESENHAHN, Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2011. Pp. 197. $90.00 (cloth). ISBN: 978-1-4094-0801-7.

"To speak of 'theodicy' in Thomism is to use a meaningless expression. There is no such thing as a Thomistic 'justification' of God for having created this universe rather than another one. Being as such is good." So declaims Etienne Gilson in his *Elements of Christian Philosophy* (170). But in this age of aggressive atheism, we seem to be stuck with the task—if not the word—of "justifying the ways of God to man." Gottfried Leibniz, who coined that misleading term, utterly confused matters by introducing *possibility* into God (defined previously as Pure Act). He made that fateful move because he held that God—when faced with the infinite number of possible universes—*had* to create "the best of all possible worlds," for to do otherwise would denigrate God's infinite goodness. But as Gilson pointed out, in his inimitably droll way, Leibniz's argument conflates God's *actual* infinity as Pure Act with the *possible* "finite infinity" of creation (finite because creation is inherently finite, and infinite because of the infinite range of possible universes):

> [O]ne should remember that, since God is infinite, no finite being is such that better finite beings could not be conceived by an infinitely wise and good First Cause. On the contrary, there always is a possible universe better than any conceivable finite universe. Just as, in the case of numbers, there is no absolutely greatest number (since, given any number, the number + 1 always remains possible), so also, however good any finite universe may be, there still would be room for a better one, and so on indefinitely. . . . The doctrine of Thomas Aquinas on this point has been unintentionally summed by a certain Dr. Boteler in *The Compleat Angler* of Izaak Watson. Speaking of strawberries, Dr. Boteler aptly says

> of them: "Doubtless God could have made a better berry; but doubtless He never did." (170-71)

One could of course object that Thomas did, after all, write a large work called *De Malo*, which certainly sounds like a theodicy. But that book is actually a work of moral theology with a brief introduction on the "metaphysics" of evil (insofar as a study of evil as the privation of being can merit being called a metaphysics). Strictly defined, theodicy asks how God's combined omnipotence and goodness can be squared with the existence of evil (with Leibniz arguing that the two poles could be reconciled, and David Hume holding the contrary)—and *that* question is never entertained as such by Thomas, for the very good reason that the terms of the question, as posed, foreclose any plausible answer. The only place where the Common Doctor comes close to addressing the theodicy question as we understand it, and as it has so dominated modern philosophy of religion in the wake of Leibniz and Hume, is early in the *Summa Theologiae*, where he says quite simply and in one sentence: "This is part of the infinite goodness of God, that He should allow evil to exist, and out of it produce good" (*STh* I, q. 2, a. 3, ad 1).

But is it at least permissible to build on that lapidary line and ask *how* God can produce good out of evil? Jacob Friesenhahn thinks we can. Despite the title of the book, which prominently features the dread word, he fully realizes that theodicy as traditionally pursued is a fool's errand. The first half of the book, three chapters out of a total of six, is devoted to proving that point. Given the disrepute into which theodicy has fallen, especially after Voltaire had so effectively mocked Leibniz's phrase "the best of all possible worlds" in his play *Candide*, I think we can agree that the author is arguing with the wind here: Nearly all are now agreed that Leibnizian theodicy is a dead end. Indeed, from the Bible's point of view (the subject of Friesenhahn's chap. 4), there is something alien about theodicy. After all, the Psalmist never takes it upon himself to defend God from atheist charges; still less does he call God's existence into doubt because of the world's tribulations in the manner of Ivan Karamazov. Instead, rather than defend God, he seeks the reverse: the Psalmist calls on God to defend *him*.

The amount of space and attention Friesenhahn devotes to the recognized inadequacies of traditional theodicy is perhaps unfortunate, because he has thereby deprived himself of the space needed to address what is obviously the gravamen of his book: the lack of a Trinitarian "illumination" (not explanation!) of the problem of evil. In the final chapter of the book (at 140), he helpfully cites Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Salvifici Doloris*:

> [E]ven though the victory over sin and death achieved by Christ on His cross and resurrection does not abolish temporal suffering from human life, nor free from suffering the whole historical dimension of human existence, it nevertheless *throws a new light* upon this dimension and upon

> every suffering: the light of salvation. . . . In His suffering, sins are cancelled out precisely because He alone as the only-begotten Son could take them upon Himself, accept them *with that love for the Father which overcomes* the evil of every sin; in a certain sense He annihilates this evil in the spiritual space of the relationship between God and humanity, and fills this space with good. (§§15, 17)

Although he takes his own good time getting to his main point, Friesenhahn argues that the Trinitarian soteriology of Hans Urs von Balthasar is the most helpful for explaining *how*, in the pope's words, "sins are cancelled out" and annihilated "in the spiritual place" between God and humanity. While not inaccurate in his presentation of Balthasar's Trinitarian soteriology, the author is much too sketchy in his not-so-very-detailed exposition. For example, in the single chapter (5) devoted to Balthasar's Trinitarian theology (which is, after all, the subtitle of the book), he veers off into a five-page digression on Jean-Paul Sartre's play *No Exit*; and in the concluding chapter he stops the summation of his argument with a four-page discussion of William Young's popular novel *The Shack*, neither of which treatment gets much beyond a Cliff's Notes plot summary.

Still, Friesenhahn provides enough citations from Balthasar to give at least some inkling of how the latter's Trinitarian theology illuminates the *mysterium iniquitatis*. Almost all the quotations, however, come from volumes 4 and 5 of Balthasar's *Theo-Drama* (*TD*) and none whatever from *Theo-Logic*, which is of obvious relevance to this issue. But what Friesenhahn does cite is indeed illuminating. For one thing, he notes Balthasar's often overlooked reliance on Jacques Maritain, who said in an important article: "Sin 'does' something to God that reaches his divine depths, not by causing him to suffer something caused by the creature, but by causing the creature in its relationship with God to migrate to the side of that unnamed divine perfection, that eternal prototype in him, which in us is pain" ("Ce que le péché 'fait' à Dieu, c'est quelques chose qui touche aux profondeurs de Dieu, non en lui faisant subir quelques effet qui serait produit par la créature, mais en faisant passer celle-ci, dans sa relation à Dieu, du côté de la perfection innominée, éternel exemplaire en lui de ce que la douleur est en nous" [Jacques Maritain, "Quelques réflexions sur le savoir théologique," *Revue Thomiste* 77 (1969): 5-27, at 21]). This Maritainian insight becomes Balthasar's governing methodological principle:

> [T]here is only one way to approach the trinitarian life in God [says Balthasar]: On the basis of what is manifest in God's kenosis in the theology of the covenant—and thence in the theology of the Cross—we must feel our way back into the mystery of the absolute, employing a negative theology that excludes from God all intramundane experience and suffering, while at the same time presupposing that the

> possibility of such experience and suffering—up to and including its christological and trinitarian implications—is grounded in God. To think in such a way is to walk on a knife's edge: it avoids all the fashionable talk of "the pain of God" and yet is bound to say that something happens in God that not only justifies the possibility and actual occurrence of all suffering in the world but also justifies God's sharing in the latter, in which he goes to the length of vicariously taking on man's godlessness. (*TD* 4:324, cited at 151-52)

This position is often falsely conflated with the views of Jürgen Moltmann, but Balthasar takes frequent pains to insist that the similarities between him and the famous Lutheran theologian are merely superficial; and Friesenhahn does a good job in highlighting the crucial differences between them, bringing to the fore such Balthasarian passages as these: "God's love is so complete in itself—he is lover, responding beloved, and union of the fruit of both—that he has need of no extradivine world in order to have something to love" (Balthasar, *Credo*, 22, cited at 136); and: "The Trinity does not hover 'unmoved' above the events of the Cross . . . nor does it get entangled in sin as in a process theology *à la* Moltmann or Hegel, becoming part of a mythology or cosmic tragedy" (*TD* 4:333, cited at 152). Rather: "The ontic possibility for God's self-emptying in the Incarnation and death of Jesus lies in God's eternal self-emptying in the mutual self-surrender of the Persons of the Trinity. Ultimately, the death of Jesus can be understood as a saving event only in the context of events within the Trinity" (*TD* 5:243-44, cited at 145).

Despite these virtues, Friesenhahn's analysis can be quite frustrating at times. For one thing, most of the passages cited above come from the last chapter, so that the reader is left hanging during the preceding analysis in chapter 5, which is supposedly devoted exclusively to an analysis of Balthasar's Trinitarian soteriology. Also, his characterization of Balthasar's theology, while largely sympathetic, can be wildly off-base, even misleading, as where he states that: "Balthasar regards the personal distinction or distance between Father and Son, eternally within the immanent Trinity, as infinite, while the finite distance between God and the world only subsists in this infinite distance. The fallen, sinful world seems paradoxically 'closer' to God than the Son is to the Father given the infinitude of their personal distinction" (119). But the quotation he later adduces to justify that incoherent assertion makes no such claim, which turns Friesenhahn, as it were, into Balthasar's *faux ami*: "[T]he distance between the Persons, *within* the dynamic process of the divine essence, is infinite, to such an extent that everything that unfolds on the plane of finitude can take place only *within* this all-embracing dynamic process" (*TD* 5:245, cited at 142 [emphasis added]). Talk of "distance," in other words, is meant to preserve the relative distinction of persons but is always to be understood as operating inside the essential oneness of the Godhead, a point too often elided in Friesenhahn's analysis.

It has long been recognized that reviewers are often tempted to review not the book in front of them but the book *they* would wish to have written. That conceded, it must be said that Friesenhahn does not really deliver on the promise either of the title or the subtitle: The first three chapters are devoted to theodicy as pursued in analytic philosophy, where the Trinity is barely mentioned; and only in the last two chapters is Balthasar directly treated, and then only sketchily and sometimes quite misleadingly. Often, just when the discussion gets interesting, the author will go off on a tangent, introducing Sartre, popular novels, or the question of animal suffering, which he then drops without further ado.

While Friesenhahn's remarks on Sartre or *The Shack* could easily be relegated to a footnote or an appendix, it was his passing mention of animal suffering that cried out for further analysis. No one doubts that evolution by natural selection (which seems to require animal suffering) raises questions both about original sin and intrinsic biological suffering, on both of which Balthasar had much to say, none of which will strike the reader as remotely fashionable in either the Moltmannian or Teilhardian sense. This is evidenced in a review he once penned of a biography of Teilhard de Chardin, a review usually neglected by Balthasar scholars: "Let us say it outright: evolution is *the* most inappropriate and unhelpful category for explaining *anything* Christian. . . . Prophecy speaks solely of the history of the dealings of the sovereignly free God with free men, a history no one can anticipate and for which no prognosis ever suffices—unless one is willing to extinguish God's Spirit and to reduce man's spirit to a biological phenomenon" ("Die Spiritualität Teilhards de Chardin," *Wort und Wahrheit* 18/5 [1963]: 339-50, at 347, 349 [emphasis added]).

This denial of evolutionary reductionism does not of course simultaneously deny that man is—albeit rational—also an *animal*, that is, a biological phenomenon, subject as all biological beings are to suffering *as* a living, organic being and destined to die. To that extent, evolutionary biology will be relevant to the question of evil and suffering independent of sin. As Thomas Aquinas says: "Necessitas moriendi partim homini est ex natura, partim ex peccato" ("The necessity for man's dying partly derives from nature, partly from sin" [III *Sent*., d. 16, q. 1, a. 1]); and: "Si ad naturam corporis respiciatur, mors naturalis est" ("In regard to the nature of the body, death is natural" [*Comp. Theol.* I, c. 152).

But does that ineluctable biological reality allow us to call animal suffering and death "evil" *in that respect*, even if it be pigeonholed as a "natural" evil? Even when we answer yes to that question, we still must return to Thomas's one-line "theodicy" quoted above: "This is part of the infinite goodness of God, that He should allow evil to exist, and out of it produce good." Balthasar would only add that God produces good out of evil in the Cross of Jesus as a Trinitarian event.

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Known by Nature: Thomas Aquinas on Natural Knowledge of God. By ANNA BONTA MORELAND. New York: Crossroad, 2010. Pp. 207. $22.00 (paper). ISBN: 978-0-8245-2481-4.

Determining whether or not Thomas Aquinas thought that God can be known naturally by humans is a worthwhile endeavor. It not only provides a proper understanding of a principal concern in Aquinas's writings, but also—and, perhaps, more importantly—it prepares for a recovery and revitalization of natural theology in the contemporary milieu. In this monograph, expanded from her dissertation, Anna Bonta Moreland refutes the claims made by postliberal theologians George Lindbeck, Bruce Marshall, and Eugene Rogers that Aquinas denies the possibility of natural knowledge of God, and holds rather that God can be known only by faith. By means of a meticulous and responsible exegesis of Aquinas's writings, Moreland establishes that he did indeed think natural knowledge of God possible for humans even after the Fall. It is beyond the scope of her work to determine whether any arguments Aquinas mounted actually succeed in demonstrating God's existence.

Most historical commentators on Aquinas have not understood him to allege that knowledge of God comes only by faith. The postliberal interpretation was developed in the latter part of the twentieth century and it might appear somewhat preposterous at first glance, since a cursory reading of relevant texts in Aquinas seems to indicate that he thought that such natural knowledge was possible. In chapter 1 of her book, Moreland uncovers the reasons behind the postliberal interpretation through a careful reading of Lindbeck, Marshall, and Rogers on the matter. Her summary is a handy guide to the opinions of these important thinkers, copiously referenced.

All three agree that for Aquinas there is no possibility of natural knowledge of God, strictly speaking. No one can arrive at any knowledge of God apart from grace. Incidentally, this reading of Aquinas squares with the position of Karl Barth. In an early work on the subject ("Discovering Thomas," 1967), Lindbeck notes that Aquinas does not distinguish the first eighteen questions of the *Prima Pars* (even though they employ arguments from natural reason) from his overall project of sacred theology in the *Summa Theologiae* as a whole. In Lindbeck's estimation, Aquinas allows no autonomous role for natural reason when it comes to knowledge of God. Accordingly, Lindbeck interprets the *quinquae viae* as only probable, not demonstrative, arguments in which Aquinas uses Plato and Aristotle much the same way that Barth makes use of Kant.

Solidifying and further developing this position in his later work (*The Nature of Doctrine*, 1984), Lindbeck argues that since the cultural *a priori* framework of different religions definitively shapes the subjectivity of their adherents, thereby giving rise to radically different experiences of God, there can be no knowledge of God available to all. Adopting a "cultural-linguistic approach," he argues that there is no inner experience of God common to all religions and all human beings. Thus, Christian doctrine divorced from its ground in liturgical praxis

affirms nothing directly true or false about reality. For Lindbeck, theology does not deal directly with ontology or truth, but only with second-order discourse.

Expanding on Lindbeck's work, Bruce Marshall contends that, for Aquinas, non-Christian proofs of God's existence do not enable the philosopher to know anything meaningful about God, as such knowledge comes only from the theological virtue of faith ("Aquinas as Postliberal Theologian," 1989). This claim is grounded in his reading of *STh* II-II, q. 2, a. 2, ad 3, where Aquinas argues that unbelievers cannot properly be said to believe in God since "they do not believe that God exists under the conditions that faith determines." Moreland appreciates this line of reasoning as an important challenge, drawn from Aquinas's mature work. She counters it by identifying a distinction Aquinas draws in the same article between what unbelievers are "said" (*dicentur*) to know or believe about God and whether their claims about God are true. He begins his reply to the third objection by saying, "Unbelievers cannot be *said* 'to believe in God' as we understand it *in relation to the act of faith*." Moreland notes that, for Aquinas, there is a considerable difference between acts of knowing and acts of the theological virtue of faith. In this article he is speaking precisely of theological faith and not knowledge. In this light, Marshall's interpretation appears either to conflate knowledge and belief or to ignore their genuine distinction (a point of criticism made by Moreland in her epilogue). In any event, his assessment of Aquinas entirely rules out natural theology, except for Christians. Nevertheless, he considers this to be, for Aquinas (as for Luther), a result of the Fall, prior to which natural reason could have successfully arrived at God.

Finally, Eugene Rogers completes the "Barthian" trajectory of the postliberal interpretation of Aquinas by claiming that knowledge of God comes only through divine revelation (*Thomas Aquinas and Karl Barth*, 1999). To establish this, he reads *STh* I, q. 1, a. 2 and q. 12, a. 13, ad 1 in light of his peculiar interpretation of Aquinas's commentary on Romans 1:20. Rogers argues that, although the discipline of *sacra doctrina* is, for Thomas, a *science*, it is such only as possessed by God and, particularly, by Christ himself. In *STh* II-II, q. 1, a. 5 ("Whether the things of faith can be objects of science"), Aquinas argues that for humans in this life, except for Christ himself, knowledge of God is not possessed by science but by the *habitus* of faith. Interpreting Aquinas on Romans 1:20, Rogers thinks that if human knowledge had not been devastated by sin, natural knowledge would have been redeemed or fulfilled by grace. The Fall renders natural knowledge ineffective and blameworthy, not salvific. Humans cannot be led by reason to live in a good and righteous manner.

Moreland redresses the postliberal interpretation of Aquinas by employing both an historical and a systematic study of judiciously selected texts. To avoid contemporary biases, her historical approach situates those texts within Aquinas's own living tradition in the thirteenth century. To recover his thought on natural knowledge of God systematically, she adapts I. Eschmann's approach to textual analysis by initially examining the presuppositions of the main text and then

analyzing the text itself. Presuppositions include coordinated texts, parallel texts, and writings by other thinkers who influenced Aquinas on the subject.

After her summary of the postliberal interpretation (chap. 1), she organizes her response around the principal text *STh* I, q. 12, a. 12 ("Whether we are able to know God through natural reason in this life"). It is hard to imagine a better text for her project as this article treats the matter at hand directly and expresses Aquinas's mature thought. In chapter 2, she examines "coordinate texts": the prologue to the whole *Summa* and the prologues to *STh* I, qq. 1, 2, and 3. In the process, she discovers that Aquinas explicitly intends to establish for beginners in theology both the existence of God (the subject-matter of sacred theology) by philosophical demonstration (q. 2) and also God's radical distinction from creatures (qq. 3ff.). Simply put, in qq. 2-11 Aquinas demonstrates "an initial, confused natural knowledge of God" (65).

Following a brief survey in chapter 3 of what Aquinas says in *STh* I, q. 12, a. 12 that humans can know naturally in this life about God, in chapter 4 she carefully situates this text within a set of parallel texts that lay the foundation for his mature thought. First, in a precise summary of Aquinas's arguments in I *Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, aa. 1-4 (on natural knowledge of God) and III *Sent.*, d. 27, q. 3, a. 1 ("Whether God is able to be loved immediately through his essence"), Moreland shows that Aquinas certainly thought that natural knowledge of God and his attributes is possible in this life even for sinners. This knowledge is attained in a *quia* demonstration, moving from effects to their first cause, God. Second, in his commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate*, q. 1, a. 2 ("Whether the human mind is able to arrive at a notion of God"), Aquinas argues (based on Rom 1:20) that, while natural knowledge of God is rather difficult to attain, it is not impossible and such knowledge prepares the knower for the fuller understanding of God that comes by faith in divine revelation. He hastens to add that such knowledge poses no dangers to the mysteries of faith. Finally, selections from the *Summa contra Gentiles* (including book I, chaps. 1-9 and passages from books III and IV), again show that he thought natural knowledge of God and God's attributes possible, though difficult, to attain. Moreland perceives in Aquinas's texts a set of arguments establishing that there is an orderly progression of human knowledge of God: from natural reason, enhanced then by grace (specifically by faith in divine revelation), and consummated in glory with the direct, beatific vision of God's essence.

In chapter 5, she conducts a systematic examination of *STh* I, q. 12, a. 12 (where Aquinas cites Romans 1:19 in the *sed contra* as the scriptural warrant for his argument). After ruling out the possibility of *seeing* God directly in this life in a. 11, Aquinas returns in a. 12 to the question of whether God can be *known* naturally in this life. Once again, Aquinas insists that sin does not destroy the natural human capacity to know God. And yet this knowledge, when attained, must remain fragmented and incomplete, as Moreland puts it, "falling short of full disclosure" (126). This limitation is grounded in the finite structure of the human intellect. Moreland enhances her study of a. 12 by examining other

mature texts, including Aquinas's Roman Commentary on Lombard's *Sententiae* (I, q. 3, aa. 1-3) and *STh*, I, q. 13 (on naming God). Crucial to her argument is the analysis of his commentary on Paul's letter to the Romans, chap. 1, lect. 6 (on Rom 1:16-20a) and chap. 1, lect. 7 (Rom 1:20b-25) where Aquinas argues that the philosophers and wise men of the Gentiles knew God by natural reason. By way of minor critique, it might be noted that Moreland could have adduced Aquinas's commentaries on Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, no doubt mature works, in which he interprets Aristotle as demonstrating God's existence by the light of natural reason.

Nonetheless, Moreland provides a robust demonstration that throughout his career Aquinas was remarkably consistent in arguing that (and how) natural knowledge of God is possible for humans, though difficult to achieve and necessarily incomplete. Equipped with this insight, she returns in an epilogue to correct the Barthian interpretation of Lindbeck, Marshall, and Rogers regarding Aquinas on the impossibility of natural knowledge of God. The fact that he integrates the *praeambula fidei*, and natural theology in particular, into his project of *sacra doctrina* in the *Summa Theologiae* does not eviscerate the philosophical character of those arguments. The failure of the pagan philosophers, in Aquinas's estimation, was one not of ignorance but of reverence—they arrived at knowledge of God but failed to worship him accordingly. Put simply, knowledge, for Aquinas, does not have to be salvific to be true.

Moreland's study makes a significant contribution to Christian ecumenical debates and discussions, in particular with respect to the Catholic-Barthian dialogue, yet it also offers further benefits to interreligious dialogue. Her work touches upon human nature, human cognition, and its relation to God. No significant prior studies have accomplished this goal as well as hers, which succeeds in a direct manner with an economy of style that supports her pointed and respectful argumentation. Whether humans can know God naturally makes a difference for a proper understanding of the ultimate end of human life. Is the supernatural end of man something superadded, alien, or violent to humanity or, rather, does it fulfill while simultaneously elevating man beyond merely natural capacities? Moreland's book could easily serve as a supplemental textbook in graduate courses in theology or philosophy.

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Light and Glory: The Transfiguration of Christ in Early Franciscan and Dominican Theology. By Aaron Canty. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011. Pp. xi + 266. $69.95 (cloth). ISBN 978-0-8132-1795-6.

An oft-repeated distinction between Eastern and Western Christian theology has it that Western Christians tend to focus their soteriological reflection upon the Cross and satisfaction, while Eastern Christians tend to emphasize divinization (*theosis*) and thus are more interested in scriptural *loci* such as the Transfiguration. Unfortunately, this distinction is often invoked with a polemical, anti-Western tilt, and, insofar as it implies that the West is one-dimensionally dependent upon a satisfaction model of atonement, has the disadvantage of being untrue or at least overly simple. However, it does seem to be the case, as Aaron Canty tells us in this solid and informative volume, that in the West the Transfiguration attracted not much attention for most of the early medieval period and still less in the later middle ages and early modern periods. For one brief shining moment, it seems, and among a happy, mendicant few, this rich scriptural event attracted attention, and Canty sets for himself the task of offering us a detailed account of this work among Franciscan and Dominican theologians of the early- to mid-thirteenth century. The results in this volume are a valuable reference tool for scholars interested in medieval Christology and soteriology.

This volume appears to be a kind of transfiguration of Canty's doctoral dissertation completed at the University of Notre Dame, and it bears both the virtues and limits of the original genre. The virtues are clear: Canty gives us a patient, thorough examination of seven great theologians' treatments of the Transfiguration in every place they arise. (Hugh of St. Cher, Alexander of Hales, Guerric of St. Quentin, John of La Rochelle, Albert the Great, Bonaventure, and Thomas Aquinas each receive a chapter). The research extends beyond readily available published materials, delving into manuscripts to capture insights from those theologians who have received less treatment (Alexander of Hales and John of La Rochelle). The translations from Latin are solid and readable, with the original Latin provided in the notes. Each chapter gives the reader an exhaustive picture of each mendicant scholar's various explorations in and around the Transfiguration, exploring both exegetical and nonexegetical genres, and examining change, when discernible, across a scholar's career. Canty is sensitive to the ways in which exegetical literature begs to be read in a different light than other Scholastic writing, but he shows clearly that he has the theological and philosophical chops to deal with the substantive metaphysical and epistemological questions with due Scholastic rigor. He treats each text of each scholar in turn, and provides a helpful conclusion in each chapter. The chapters are arranged chronologically, and Canty is interested in exploring relationships between sources— who has taken up what from whom; where Albert the Great, for example, departs from Hugh of St. Cher and brings his own insights to bear. This book is thus an exemplary case of careful, diligent research, and will become

a solid point of reference in studies of medieval Christology or for anyone undertaking to study any of the figures treated herein.

The volume does bear some of the limitations of a dissertation project, however. Missing, at least for this reader, is a wider sweep and perhaps the ambition to explore the significance of this study for historical theology more generally. Why is it, in fact, that the Transfiguration takes on such significance for these few mendicant thinkers, for so brief a time? How does this attention fit with other dimensions of high Scholastic Christology? What factors in Christological reflection specifically, or in the practice of Scholastic theology more generally, after 1280 contribute to dwindling interest in the Transfiguration? Does this attention to the Transfiguration in the thirteenth century contribute to our understanding of the development of doctrine? Such questions (and many more, I am sure) beg to be addressed precisely because Canty has uncovered what seems to be an anomaly in Western medieval theology with such clarity and precision. But the five-page introduction and six-page conclusion can barely gesture at the questions, much less explore answers. This is a classic "forest-for-the-trees" dilemma, but the best works of historical theology are able to see in the detailed examination of the trees some sense of the forest in microcosm. I think, for example, of E. Ann Matter's exploration of Song of Songs commentaries, *The Voice of My Beloved* (University of Pennsylvania, 1990) or John C. Cavadini's *The Last Christology of the West* (University of Pennsylvania, 1993), books that share with Canty's the detailed exploration of particular thinkers and texts, but that always open up to broader implications for both history and theology.

The book does seem to have one undercurrent, due apparently to the fact that Thomas Aquinas treats the Transfiguration in more places and with greater attention than any of the earlier figures. Because of this, the chapter on Thomas is nearly twice as long as any of the earlier studies, and Thomas's treatment tends to come across as the culmination of his predecessors, and surpassing them. Thomas may very well have exceeded his predecessors in this case, but without a broader argument for the difference the whole question makes, such excellence may ring hollow to some. Again, a question begs to be asked: What is it about Thomas's thought that leads him to treat the Transfiguration with such exquisite attention? Canty's approach within this volume shies away from questions like these.

These criticisms, however, are really only intended to reflect on how to make a good book into a great one, and they should not be taken to diminish the quality of work that this scholarship represents. Canty takes his place among other young scholars such as Boyd Taylor Coolman and Gregory LaNave, bringing sound skills as medievalists together with substantial philosophical and theological insight, ushering the contributions of Thomas Aquinas into brighter light precisely in and through careful attention to his predecessors and contemporaries among the mendicant theologians of the thirteenth century.

Typical of products from CUA Press, this book is well put-together and attractively produced. I found few typographical mistakes, and I found the

substantial bibliography helpful, although I could have hoped for an index (2 pp., only proper names) with more detail. Nevertheless, this is and will remain a solid reference work for scholars of Scholastic theology.

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On the Last Day: The Time of the Resurrection of the Dead according to Thomas Aquinas. By BRYAN KROMHOLTZ. Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg, 2010. Pp. 548. 92 CHF (paper). ISBN: 978-2-8271-1683-6.

Kromholtz's thorough study of Aquinas's answer to the question of when the resurrection of the dead occurs is not about our resurrection's calendar date, which Aquinas thinks cannot be predicted or known by us, but how it is positioned in relation to other events such as an individual's death or the general judgment. A principal virtue of Kromholtz's thesis is that what might appear to be a narrow, even peripheral question is shown to be one of considerable range and reach throughout Aquinas's thought. He concludes that, despite the obsolescence of Aquinas's natural science, his philosophy of nature and theology of man within the universe retain enduring insights. Kromholtz draws out these insights against the background of a more recent tendency among theologians (e.g., Rahner, von Balthasar, Greshake) to locate an individual's resurrection at the moment of death, thereby discarding any intermediate state of a disembodied soul. He notes that while some of these theologians were concerned in their theories to protect the unity of the corporeal human being, the notion of "resurrection in death" has been accused of risking an overly individualized and spiritualized understanding of the resurrection.

Ratzinger's criticisms of these more recent tendencies are taken by Kromholtz as an indication that the debate is hardly closed, and this gives him the opportunity to introduce Aquinas into the discussion. Kromholtz shows that, in contrast to these tendencies, Aquinas situated a simultaneous general resurrection temporally relative to events at the end of the world, the return of Christ, and his universal judgment. The reader is left in no doubt from the beginning that the resurrection held chief place in Aquinas's eschatology. With admirable clarity, order, and precision, Kromholtz attains his goal not only of establishing Aquinas's answer to his question but also of exposing its links to Aquinas's theology of the cosmos and of Christ, and to his theological anthropology, collective as well as individual.

The first chapter helpfully reviews relevant background topics in Aquinas's thought, including his teaching on the eschaton, man, death, history, time, and

the resurrection itself. Kromholtz observes how, throughout Aquinas's various works, the resurrection held priority in the structure of his teaching over both the end of the world and the last judgment, a fact explained by the theological importance Aquinas granted to God as the *end* of creatures, especially man. Kromholtz finds in Aquinas an implicit theology of history, with significant temporal elements in his understanding of man and the cosmos. That the question of the time of the resurrection is not alien to Aquinas's thinking Kromholtz shows by briefly summarizing his understanding of eternity, aeviternity, and, temporality.

Chapter 2 offers a full examination of three key texts where Aquinas addresses Kromholtz's question directly (IV *Sent*., d. 43, q. 1, a. 3, qcla. 1; *In Job* 19; and *In Jn* 6, lect. 5). The first is the earliest, from the *Commentary on the Sentences*, and gives the question's most extensive treatment, asking "whether the time of the resurrection ought to be delayed until the end of the world so that all may rise at the same time." Aquinas's answer is that all will rise after Christ, and this will be delayed (with some exceptions) until the end of the world with all rising simultaneously. Much of the corpus is taken up with the relationship between the resurrection and the world's time. The incorruptibility of the body is given as a reason to reject a resurrection before this time's end. Kromholtz underlines the link with Aquinas's theological anthropology: should the resurrection occur before the end, Aquinas thinks, one would have to entertain a corruptible resurrection, as well as the transmigration of souls. The passage from the *Commentary on Job* explains that the resurrection will take place when the motion of the heavenly bodies and thus the change and time arising from it cease. The third passage, which comes from the *Commentary on John*, reflects on why this should be the case and is more anthropocentric than the first. Here it is not so much that the resurrection is delayed until the end of the world as that the end of the world happens when the resurrection does, with cosmic events depending on man's reaching his destiny rather than the other way around.

In subsequent chapters Kromholtz deals with various texts taken from throughout Aquinas's works that touch on the question, which he interprets in the context of the interconnections he has brought to light among different aspects of Aquinas's theology. Chapter 3 explores further the time of the resurrection in the light of the relation between the cosmos and humanity, where humanity is subject to the movements of the celestial bodies, but all things were made for humanity. It is the latter that Kromholtz shows to be primary for Aquinas, who consistently treats the end of the world after the resurrection. What happens to the world is dependent on what happens to humanity. The world is renewed in order to be a fitting dwelling-place for the risen and to provide manifestations of God that can be perceived by their glorified senses, and is renewed in response to humanity's merit and desire.

The same principle of the dependence of the cosmos on humanity can be found in Aquinas's reasoning as to why the motion of the heavens will cease at God's command. He takes the end of this world and its renewal on faith; he refuses to argue for it philosophically on the ground that rest is better than

motion, but seeks theological explanation of what can only be known by faith. Heavenly motion ceases, he reasons, because the generation of food that depends on this motion will no longer be needed by humanity, but principally because the number of the elect will have been achieved such that the generation of human beings themselves caused by heavenly motion will no longer be required. Kromholtz links the finite number of the elect to the theology of providence. Once the movement of the heavens has served this purpose God stops it, and the cosmos is renewed in a way that befits a completed and resurrected humanity, such that both this cessation and this renewal take place because of and at the same time as the general resurrection.

Kromholtz argues that Aquinas's other insights are consistent with this picture. In chapter 4 he adds various results from a consideration of the relationship between Christ and our resurrection. According to Aquinas Christ's resurrection is the instrumental cause of ours, while the principal cause is divine power such that God can bring about our resurrection long after the effect that is its instrumental cause, and this time is chosen according to the disposition of divine wisdom. As far as Christ's own resurrection is concerned, Aquinas takes into account the objections that Christ should have been raised at the same time as us and that he should have been raised immediately at the time of his death. An immediate resurrection at death would, however, have been inadequate for showing the reality of both his death and resurrection: enough time needed to intervene but not too much. The reasons he gives for Christ's resurrection preceding ours also suggest reasons why ours should wait. He was raised earlier because he was not a debtor to death, while we are, and because his resurrection was to lead us to faith, whereas ours is not meant to lead anyone else to faith. A lengthy intervening time between Christ's resurrection and ours also allows there to be more of the elect to share in his resurrection, and for them to be conformed to his suffering and death first. Our resurrection cannot happen until right before the general judgment because there are to be no "early warning signs" of exactly when this judgment will arrive. Christ's own public appearing is a sign that it is he who now brings to perfection the effect of resurrection, which implies a collective simultaneous resurrection.

Chapter 5 concentrates on how the communal and social aspects of Aquinas's teaching are related to simultaneity. For Aquinas it is human *nature* that is restored at the resurrection and not just human individuals, meaning that when it is restored it will be restored for all and at the same time. Since a single human nature applies to all human beings, its restoration is delayed so that it can take place in all together. That it occurs once and for all as the final event of salvation history corresponds to the original creation of the human race and the event of the Fall. The social character of the body also underlines the fittingness of a simultaneous resurrection. For the full realization of a truly general judgment, it must be made known to all. A general resurrection also implies that the saint's joy in it will be the greater for being communal. Kromholtz finds here an undeveloped communal *ecclesial* dimension that invites further attention.

Finally, in chapter 6 Kromholtz treats of questions of individual eschatology, including the measurement of separated souls in different respects by a participated eternity, aeviternity, and a temporal succession distinct from earthly time, as well as Aquinas's change in thinking on the beatitude of separated souls and their beatitude at the resurrection. Kromholtz emphasizes how issues of individual anthropology do not determine Aquinas's answer to the time of the resurrection. Though he treats individual eschatology at some length, the structure of his thought places it firmly in the context of a general resurrection, and he deals with questions of the intermediate state only after considering the resurrection. Kromholtz argues that, on Aquinas's view, the fact that the souls of the saints are separated from the world is a sign of its present need of transformation, which is only temporary. Though the cosmos stands in need of renewal, Aquinas sees it as capable of such renewal. About the world he is neither overly optimistic nor overly pessimistic but strikes a proper balance, discouraging us from thinking it could be perfected by any purely secular means.

Kromholtz thus sees Aquinas as showing the connection between man and the cosmos in a clearer way than have Rahner and others, where there is no state in which the saints await the new heavens and the new earth. Aquinas's connection between the resurrection and the return of Christ is also a theme that Kromholtz says is virtually absent from theologies of "resurrection in death." He is successful in indicating how Aquinas's integrated eschatology compares well with these more recent tendencies that have had the unintended effect of individualizing eschatology at its core, leaving more corporate elements to be added on.

Kromholtz flags up various points for future development, ecclesial and otherwise, which he is well equipped to follow up. A more direct and detailed theological engagement with recent tendencies in eschatology in the light of this study would be most welcome. The popular impact of "resurrection in death" has undoubtedly contributed to a weakening of belief in important aspects of traditional eschatology, such as the intermediate state, as well as to confusion about the relation of the separated soul to time. If this situation could be redressed by the popular impact of the enduring insights of Aquinas's eschatology, a further valuable service would be done in addition to what has already been achieved in this very fine study.

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