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"*TOLLE ME ET REDIME TE*": ANSELM ON THE JUSTICE AND MERCY OF GOD

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I

JUSTICE AND MERCY we are apt to think of as opposites. Our inclination in thought and speech to play the two off against one another can take many forms. Of these perhaps the most obvious is the thought that mercy begins where justice ends, in the sense that mercy by its very nature not only goes beyond justice, but sets aside the demands of justice. Mercy, moreover, is closely tied to forgiveness. We are likely to think of the person who shows mercy as the one who forgives a wrong rather than demanding justice. Mercy so understood is the readiness to overlook or let go of what justice rightly requires, in particular to forgo the recompense or penalty to which one could, in strict justice, lay claim.

It is not hard to think of cases in everyday life where this way of disjoining mercy and justice seems entirely in order. A teenager rear-ends my new car in traffic, apologizes in tears, and begs me not to report the accident to her insurance company or call the police. I am entitled to do both, and if I decide to do neither, it seems like an act of mercy precisely because I did not seek the justice that was mine by right. One might think it unwise of me to show mercy in such a situation, but that is beside the point. The logic of the matter is the same either way: to have mercy is to forgo just recompense or penalty, and to seek justice is to forsake the path of mercy.

Not only in everyday life do we think of justice and mercy in this disjunctive way. We do so in religion, in fact especially there, and surely, we might suppose, with good reason. Consider Jesus' parable of the unforgiving servant in Matthew 18, or as it is also called, the parable of the pitiless debtor (in the *Jerusalem Bible*, for example). A king's servant, owing vastly more than he could ever hope to repay, faces the inexorable consequences of justice: the loss of his goods, his home, and even his wife and family. He begs the king for mercy and receives the forgiveness of his whole debt. The forgiven servant, though, begins rounding up his fellow servants, and mercilessly demanding the full repayment of the relatively minute sums they owe him. Now at the king's command the full force of justice descends, without mercy, on the unforgiving servant. The king hands him over to "the torturers" (Matt 18:34) until the whole debt is repaid—which is to say, forever. Jesus makes quite explicit the already unmistakable lesson: "So will my heavenly Father do to you, if each one of you does not forgive his brother from your hearts" (Matt 18:35). The point is not simply to warn us against hard-hearted and "pharisaical" dealings with our neighbors, when we fail to allow mercy to hold sway over the requirements of justice. The parable warns just by teaching how God deals with us: in sheer undeserved mercy, forgiving what his justice could rightly demand and what we could never hope to pay. He expects us to do the same.

It may seem surprising, then, that the New Testament can also speak of the forgiveness of sins as an unqualified work of divine justice. This comes through with particular clarity in the Epistle to the Romans. According to Paul, the gospel reveals "the justice of God" (Rom 1:17). The tradition of rendering *dikaiosune* in English as "righteousness" may somewhat obscure the connection between God's justice and his forgiveness here, but to medieval Western Christians it could not have been more obvious that Paul was talking about justice, since the Vulgate consistently translates *dikaiosune* simply as "justice," *iustitia*. In Jesus Christ the *iustitia Dei* is manifested apart from the law (Rom 3:21). God "proposed" Jesus Christ as a propitiation, precisely "in order to show his justice, by overlooking the sins

of the past" (*ad ostensionem iustitiae suae, cum praetermisisset praecedentia delicta* [Rom 3:25]). Here it is clearly an act of divine justice to "overlook"—that is, forgive—sins through faith in the blood of Christ; mercy is nowhere invoked. Paul underlines the point. God was patient with us during the long past time of sin "in order to show his justice at this time, to show that he himself is just, and makes just the one who *ex fide est Iesu*," who lives by faith in Christ (Rom 3:26). There is no need for mercy to step in and make up for what justice cannot or will not do. In Christ God's justice does everything needed for our salvation, including what elsewhere seems like the special work of divine mercy, the forgiveness of sins.

II

From the beginning, then, Christians have had deep scriptural warrant not to see justice and mercy as opposites, especially when each of the two is said of God. The question is exactly how to understand the harmony and coherence of the two when each is seen as a divine attribute or characteristic. The problem is pressing because not only our everyday habits of thought and speech, but even the teaching of Jesus, seem to present justice and mercy as alternatives between which a choice must be made, rather than as harmonious aspects of one and the same action or choice.

Anselm confronts this problem directly in *Proslogion* IX-XI. He aims to show, in the language of the Psalms, "that 'all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth' [Ps. 24:10 (Vg.)] and at the same time that 'the Lord is just in all his ways' [Ps. 144:17 (Vg.)]."[1] The problem is likely to be intuitively obvious. We could spell it out a bit by saying that we want to understand how Scripture can apply the universal quantifier "all" (*universae*

[1] *Proslogion* (hereafter *Pros.*) 11, in *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia*, ed. F. S. Schmitt, O.S.B. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson, 1946-61), vol. 1, p. 109.15-16: "Vere igitur »universae viae domini misericordia et veritas«, et tamen »iustus dominus in omnibus viis suis«." All translations are my own. The best English version of the treatises of Anselm under discussion here is by Thomas Williams, *Anselm: Basic Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007).

[Ps. 24:10]; *in omnibus* [Ps. 144:17]) to the "ways" or actions of God in both cases, when it comes, that is, to both mercy and justice. Scripture, Anselm observes, evidently treats the mercy and justice of God not as opposites, but as coextensive, in the sense that, for anything to count as a divine action, that action must be both fully merciful and fully just. God's mercy extends as far as his justice, and his justice as far as his mercy. There is no divine action that is more merciful than it is just, and no divine action that is more just than it is merciful, let alone any divine action that is merciful instead of being just, or conversely. The problem, Anselm knows, is to understand the way Scripture speaks about God's justice and mercy—to understand how what Scripture teaches is the case, can be the case.

The issue that presents to Anselm the problem of justice and mercy is, as one might expect, the forgiveness of sins. Among the scripturally salient actions of God is forgiveness, by which God grants eternal salvation to sinners. To forgive sins is clearly an act of mercy. More than that, though, it is an act by which God spares from eternal misery those who have, in justice, merited such misery. In forgiving sins God spares, in other words, those whom he could, without any injustice, not spare, or condemn. Here the opposition of mercy to justice that we want to avoid, the thought that mercy is not coextensive with justice but goes beyond it, clearly comes into view.

But appearances are deceptive. If we recall, Anselm argues, that God, whatever else he may be, is *id quo maius cogitari nequit*, that than which a greater cannot be conceived, the seeming conflict between mercy and justice vanishes.[2] A justice that can only condemn the sinner because of his sin—a justice that can only condemn, and cannot spare, the unjust—is less than a justice that is able not only to condemn, but to forgive the unjust his injustice. Such an unforgiving justice cannot,

[2] Formatively introduced by Anselm in *Pros.* 2: "Et quidem credimus te esse aliquid quo nihil maius cogitari possit" (Schmitt, ed., 1:101.4-5). Similar formulas (though not the use to which Anselm puts the idea in the *Proslogion*) may already be found in *Monologion* 15 and 80, and these in turn have a background in Augustine and Boethius, among others; see the passages cited by Schmitt, 1:102.

therefore, be the justice of God. A justice that is at the same time merciful is greater, precisely more *just*, than one that lacks mercy. Just such a forgiving justice must be the justice of God, a justice coextensive with mercy.

It may help us see the matter more clearly to recall that in employing his potent formula for what God is, Anselm regularly substitutes "better" (*melior*) for "greater" (*maius*).[3] God is, in effect, "that than which a better cannot be conceived." In exactly this way Anselm bids to exhibit the perfect harmony of God's justice and his mercy. He places both on the scale of goodness, and finds that a merciful justice is better than even the best and purest justice without mercy, and (though this side of the matter is less plain in the *Proslogion*) that a just mercy is better than even the best mercy without justice. The mercy of God must therefore extend exactly as far as his justice. Otherwise it would not be the justice of God at all, since we could conceive of a better justice, namely, one that was more merciful. Thus Anselm reasons with God in prayer:

> For though you are completely and supremely just, yet you are kind even to those who are evil, because you are completely and supremely good. For you would be less good, if you were not kind to any evildoer. For one is better who is good to both the good and the evil than who is good only to the good.[4]

The goodness of God is thus the conceptual bond that harmonizes God's justice and mercy, somewhat as a major third harmonizes, makes a major chord, out of what would otherwise simply be two discrete notes, the tonic and the dominant. The major third exhibits features of the tonic and the dominant that we would not otherwise hear; it brings out the true depth of their harmony. The goodness of God does the same, in our

[3] E.g., *Pros.* 3: "Si enim aliqua mens posset cogitare aliquid melius te"; *Pros.* 5: "Tu es itaque iustus, verax, beatus, et quidquid melius est esse quam non esse" (Schmitt, ed., 1:103.4-5; 104.15-16).

[4] *Pros.* 9: "Nam cum totus et summe iustus sis, tamen idcirco etiam malis benignus es, quia totus summe bonus es. Minus namque bonus esses, si nulli malo esses benignus. Melior est enim qui et bonis et malis bonus est, quam qui bonis tantum est bonus" (Schmitt, ed., 1:107.6-10).

understanding, for God's justice and mercy. Anselm writes: "If you are merciful because you are supremely good, and you are not supremely good except because you are supremely just, then truly you are merciful because you are supremely just." To this he adds, tellingly, "Help me, O just and merciful God . . . to understand what I say."[5]

Anselm's argument about justice and mercy in the *Proslogion* is essentially complete at this point. He has shown that divine mercy and justice have to have precisely the same reach. Mercy cannot exceed justice, nor justice mercy (though this latter, again, is secondary in the *Proslogion*). He arrives at this conclusion by way of the formula: God is that than which a better cannot be thought; and he evidently takes the application of this formula to be intuitively obvious when it comes to the matter at hand. That a justice which forgives those who have no right of their own to forgiveness is better, more good, than a justice which does not is a claim for which he makes no further argument in the *Proslogion*. If we accept that as obvious, then it is easy to see that divine justice must be of this very sort.

Yet Anselm seems less than completely satisfied that he has made this claim transparent. He sprinkles chapter 9 of the *Proslogion* with hesitations of the kind to which I have already alluded: help me to understand what I have just said; "We see the source of your mercy, but it is not clear to us. We know whence the river [of your mercy] flows, but we do not see the fount from which it is born"; "if this is so, O Lord, if this is so, teach me how it is so."[6] The root of Anselm's hesitation is, I think, not hard to discern. What he has shown, at best, is *that* a justice which forgives is better, and so more suitable to God, than a justice which does not forgive, but only punishes, the unjust. But he has not shown *why* it is better. As he openly grants, he has offered no *ratio*, let alone a necessary or

[5] *Pros*. 9: "Nempe si misericors es quia es summe bonus, et summe bonus non es nisi quia es summe iustus: vere idcirco es misericors, quia summe iustus es. Adiuva me, iuste et misericors deus . . . ut intelligam quod dico" (Schmitt, ed., 1:108.5-9).

[6] "[V]idetur unde sis misericors, et non pervidetur. Cernitur unde flumen manat, et non perspicitur fons unde nascatur" (Schmitt, ed., 1:107.14-16); "Si sic est, domine, si sic est, doce me quomodo est" (ibid., 1:108.11).

compelling *ratio*, for the claim on which his argument turns, that a forgiving justice is better than a justice without forgiveness. "It is from the plenitude of goodness that you are kind to sinners, yet the reason why you are lies hidden in the highest reaches of goodness."[7] Even if we accept that merciful justice is better than justice wanting mercy, as Anselm clearly thinks we should, we lack the *intellectus* that is his constant aim. As Anselm puts it to God, we still seek an understanding, supplied by reasons, of "how your mercy is not absent from your justice, although it is necessary to believe [that it is not]."[8]

In chapters 10 and 11 of the *Proslogion*, Anselm raises some further questions about the coherence of God's mercy and justice, which have the effect of probing the adequacy of the solution he has tentatively offered in chapter 9. His argument has shown that God can spare the wicked in full justice, indeed that if he could not spare them he would be less than fully just. Yet it remains the case that God can, in full justice, also punish the wicked. In fact any of us who are spared must recognize that we are precisely those whom God could justly destroy.[9] A justice which only spared, and never punished, the unjust would be less good than a justice which both spared and punished, and therefore cannot be the justice of God. Making good on this last claim is the main burden of *Proslogion* 11.[10] So Anselm naturally asks, "How is it both just for you to punish the wicked and just for you to spare the wicked?"[11]

[7] "Nam et de plenitudine bonitatis est quia peccatoribus tuis pius es, et in altitudine bonitatis latet qua ratione hoc es" (Schmitt, ed., 1:107.16-18).

[8] "quomodo misericordia tua non absit a tua iustitia, necessarium tamen est credere" (Schmitt, ed., 1:108.3-4).

[9] "[S]alvando nos quos iuste perderes" ("in saving us whom you might justly destroy" [*Pros*. 11 (Schmitt, ed., 1:109.3)]).

[10] See, e.g., Schmitt, ed., 1:109.11-12: "It is certainly just that you be so just that you cannot be thought to be more just. But you would not at all be just in this way if you rendered only good things to those who are good, and not evil things to those who are evil" ("Justum quippe est te sic esse iustum, ut iustior nequeas cogitari. Quod nequaquam esses, si tantum bonis bona, et non malis mala redderes").

[11] *Pros*. 10 (Schmitt, ed., 1:108.24-25): "Quomodo ergo et iustum est ut malos punias, et iustum est ut malis parcas?"

In chapter 10 Anselm briefly considers what was for him, in essence, Augustine's answer to this question. He knew numerous texts of Augustine that seem to say, in one way or another, that when God forgives sinners whom he could justly condemn, his undeserved goodness and mercy are at work, and when he gives sinners the condemnation they have earned, his richly deserved justice is at work. These texts became a standard jumping-off point in later Scholastic treatments of God's justice and mercy, especially in commentaries on book IV, distinction 46 of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, though whether they represent Augustine's settled view of the matter is open to question. For Anselm, in any case, this clearly will not do. The faith we want to understand teaches that *all* the ways of the Lord are mercy *and* justice, not some mercy and some justice. Moreover the argument Anselm has already made based on God's goodness yields an *intellectus* of just this point, at least to the extent of showing that forgiving sinners must be an act of God's justice and not only of his mercy.[12]

We have made, it seems, even less progress than we initially thought. Now we know that when God spares and forgives the wicked, divine justice is at work as well as divine mercy, yet when God condemns and punishes the wicked, divine justice is equally at work (how mercy is at work in this same condemnation, as presumably it must be, is not a question Anselm raises here). But why God justly punishes some whom he might mercifully save without any compromise to his supreme justice, and yet justly saves others whom he might destroy without any compromise to his supreme mercy, remains opaque. Still less do we have an answer to the question with which we were left at the end of chapter 9. *How* is it not only merciful, but just, for

[12] Another argument is also in play here, viz., that God cannot be understood to forgive with respect to or by way of his own goodness, while he condemns with respect to our demerits, so that in judgment or condemnation we feel the effect of his justice without there being a genuine act of justice on God's part (cf. *Pros.* 10 [Schmitt, ed., 1:108.27ff.]). The justice which condemns must be every bit as much a divine attribute and action as the mercy, and precisely thereby, as Anselm has argued, the justice, which forgives.

God to forgive the wicked, whom—as we now know—he might with equal justice decline to forgive?

In fact, Anselm here appeals to another Augustinian idea: the inscrutability of God's predestinating will: "We can find no reason that allows us to grasp why, among men who are equally evil, you save some and not others."[13] In order to uphold the claim that the salvation and the damnation of sinners are equally just on God's part, Anselm evidently embraces a candid voluntarism, indeed of a quite radical kind. "What you will is alone just, and what you do not will is not just."[14] Whatever the merits of this move, it effectively draws a halt to the *intellectus fidei*. At least when it comes to the salvation and the perishing of sinners, we can give no reason for what God wills, and as a result we cannot understand it: no *ratio*, no *intellectus*. Even less can we understand the justice of God. We believe that God's will is always just, but the most we can say about his justice is that it has precisely the same reach as what he wills. We can assign no reason for what he wills; even less, then, can we find a reason that grasps his justice. We seem to be back were we started, believing that God justly spares the wicked, but not understanding why or how.

III

Among its manifold aims, *Cur Deus homo* intends, I think, to answer the question left open at the end of *Proslogion* 11. Some 20 years elapse between the *Proslogion* and *Cur Deus homo*, and in that time Anselm hits on a way to attain the *intellectus* still absent in the earlier work. He finds, that is, a way of understanding how for God the forgiveness of sins is not only supremely merciful but supremely just, and of how wholly undeserved mercy to sinners fully enacts or embodies precisely the justice of God. *Cur Deus homo* bids to make good

[13] "illud certe nulla ratione comprehendi potest, cur de similibus malis hos magis salves quam illos" (*Pros*. 11 [Schmitt, ed., 1:109.21-23]).

[14] "Nam id solum iustum est quod vis, et non iustum quod non vis" (*Pros*. 11 [Schmitt, ed., 1:109.18-19]).

theologically, at this most difficult point, on the scriptural intuition that all the ways of the Lord are mercy and justice—to provide a satisfying intellectual "why," a *ratio*, for what faith never doubts is so. In the process he also proposes an answer to the related question, consigned in the *Proslogion* to God's inscrutable will, as to why God justly punishes some sinners when he mercifully saves others.

Early in *Cur Deus homo*, Anselm touches on a question that, as Khaled Anatolios has described, the Church Fathers contemplated in elaborate detail.[15] Why did God, if he was going to salvage human beings, go to the length of the Virgin's womb and the cross of Calvary, when he could have accomplished the same objective by a mere act of will? As unbelievers who deride the Christian faith do not tire of pointing out, Boso observes, this seems remarkably unwise.[16] We rightly regard the man as foolish who does with great effort what he could equally well do by an effortless act of will. All the more do we attribute unwisdom to God when we say that he did such unseemly things when he might have obtained the same result in another way. That God might have acted otherwise in delivering humanity from sin seems obvious, since every creature is wholly subject to his will.[17]

At this point Anselm might have picked up the suggestion of *Proslogion* 11 and said that wisdom is whatever God wills, in the same manner as justice is whatever God wills. God has

[15] See Khaled Anatolios, "Creation and Salvation in St. Athanasius of Alexandria," in Matthew Baker, Seraphim Danckaert, and Nicholas Marinides, eds., *On the Tree of the Cross: Georges Florovsky and the Patristic Doctrine of Atonement* (Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Seminary Press, 2016), 59-72.

[16] *Cur Deus homo* I, c. 6 (Schmitt, ed., 2:54.3-5; 55.8-9): "Aut si fatemini quia potuit, sed non voluit nisi hoc modo: quomodo sapientem illum potestis ostendere, quem sine ulla ratione tam indecentia velle pati asseritis? . . . Haec nobis infideles obicere posse videntur" ("If you say that [God] was able [to act otherwise], but did not will to act except in this way, how can you show him to be wise whom you assert willed to suffer such indecencies without any reason? . . . Unbelievers seem to be able to make these objections against us.").

[17] "All these excuses that you introduce," says the unbelieving objector, "concern matters that depend on God's will" ("Omnia haec quae obtenditis, in eius voluntate consistent" [*Cur Deus homo* I, c. 6 (Schmitt, ed., 2:54.5-6)]).

willed to deliver us from sin in this way, so it must be wise, indeed supremely wise, for God to act in this manner, and there's an end of it. In *Cur Deus homo*, though, Anselm takes a different course. Following patristic antecedent, at least in this respect, he declines to equate wisdom with what God wills. Our notion of God's wisdom, more precisely, cannot be reduced to "whatever God wills."

Rather, our concept of God's wisdom must have some discreet content of its own, whatever that may turn out to be. We can certainly grant that whatever God in fact wills is supremely wise. Since "God's wisdom" is not, however, simply coextensive with "whatever God wills," we can begin to attain some understanding of what God in fact wills—we can begin to grasp *why* he wills it—if we can see how what he in fact wills is more wise than various alternatives that were also in his power to will. If we can come up with an exhaustive inventory of these alternatives, we will see how what God has in fact willed is supremely wise, how it was the wisest course of action genuinely possible for God, in light of God's wisdom. We will have supplied what Anselm calls a "necessary reason" for divine action.

By refusing to treat "God's wisdom" as coextensive with "what God wills," Anselm clearly conceives of wisdom as a limiting factor or a constraint on what God wills—not, of course, a causal constraint, but a conceptual constraint. Here too, I think, he is in line with patristic antecedents. We can hope to offer reasons for what God wills precisely because we can conceive of God's wisdom as assigning a limit to what he can will. If our concept of God's wisdom has no content discreet from "whatever God wills," the giving of reasons for what God wills cannot even get started. This discreet content to the concept of wisdom, the surplus, as it were, in the notion of wisdom beyond a mere list of the things God has done, enables us to say why one course of action might be wiser than another, and so to begin giving reasons for, and thus understanding, the things God has actually done. We can begin to supply the needed content to our concept of wisdom by carefully applying the thought that God is that than which a greater, or better,

cannot be conceived. This is exactly what Anselm does, especially in *Cur Deus homo*, for the notion of divine justice. In an elaborate way it too serves as an explanatory constraint, allowing us to say why God wills to forgive sins.

Although it is an oversimplification, it is nonetheless not wrong, I think, to see the *Proslogion* as oriented toward understanding the mercy of God's justice, while *Cur Deus homo*, conversely, aims to understand the justice of God's mercy. The latter task proves to be considerably more complex than the former. Anselm proceeds, to the consternation of his interlocutor Boso, by thinking through the stringency of God's justice to the point where "the mercy of God and the hope of man evidently come to nothing."[18] Yet as it turns out, the most exacting justice, the justice that alone befits God, is at the same time that mercy than which a greater cannot be conceived.

Anselm's argument to this conclusion is far too involved for me to analyze fully here. It will have to suffice to underline a few points that bear with particular clarity on the question how God can justly spare the wicked.

First of all, Anselm is quite clear that justice, like wisdom, cannot be equated with whatever God actually wills. "God is so free," Boso avers, "that nothing is right [=just] or fitting save what he wills"—exactly what Anselm himself had said in *Proslogion* 11.[19] Not so fast, Anselm now insists. We can say that what God wills is just, but "this must not be understood such that if God were to will something unfitting, it would be just because he willed it. For it does not follow that if God wills to lie, it is just to lie, but, rather, that what wills to lie is not God."[20] Only what is fitting for God to will can be just for God

[18] "Sed ex his omnibus videtur misericordia dei et spes hominis perire" (*Cur Deus homo* I, c. 23 [Schmitt, ed., 2:91.27-28]); cf. *Cur Deus homo* I, c. 24 (Schmitt, ed., 2:94.9).

[19] "nihil sit rectum aut decens nisi quod ipse vult" (*Cur Deus homo* I, c. 12 [Schmitt, ed., 2:70.8]).

[20] "Quod autem dicitur quia quod vult iustum est, et quod non vult non est iustum, non ita intelligendum est ut, si deus velit quodlibet inconveniens, iustum sit, quia ipse vult. Non enim sequitur: si deus vult mentiri, iustum esse mentiri; sed potius deum illum non esse" (*Cur Deus homo* I, c. 12 [Schmitt, ed., 2:70.15-18]).

to will, and so God's justice, by way of the rightness and fittingness that must belong to justice, has to be one of the conceptual constraints on God's will. "It is true to say, 'If God wills it, it is just,' only concerning those things it is not unfitting for God to will."[21]

This already disposes effectively of the suggestion, so attractive to contemporary Christians, that God can perfectly well forgive sins by sheer mercy, that is, by a sheer act of will, without requiring either just compensation from the sinner or just punishment of the sinner (though Anselm offers a number of further arguments against this suggestion).[22] The thought of a God who freely forgives sins *sola misericordia*, by mercy alone, without bothering over considerations of justice, rightness, fittingness, and so forth is markedly voluntarist, to a far greater degree than Anselm is willing to embrace by this point in his reflection on the mercy of God. In the end, Anselm argues, it turns out that that such a God is not even truly merciful, with, that is, the mercy than which a greater cannot be conceived.

A second decisive point. That God will not forgive sins by mercy alone stems, in the end, not from his justice towards us but from his justice towards himself. That what he does to enact his own supreme justice also works justice for us is, as it were, a byproduct of his justice toward himself—a secondary consequence of that supreme justice, though a necessary one. "It is necessary that either the honor taken away be repaid or penalty follow. Otherwise God . . . will not be just to himself."[23] The debt we sinners justly owe to God, Anselm has by this point argued, we lack the resources to pay. We ourselves are responsible, by our voluntary sin, for our inability to render to God what we owe him. Perhaps, Boso desperately suggests, God

[21] "Itaque de illis tantum verum est dicere: si deus hoc vult, iustum est, quae deum velle non est inconveniens" (*Cur Deus homo* I, c. 12 [Schmitt, ed., 2:70.24-26]).

[22] Cf. *Cur Deus homo* I, c. 12 (Schmitt, ed., 2:69.8-9): "Let us see whether it is fitting for God to forgive sins by mercy alone, without any repayment of the honor that has been withdrawn from him" ("[V]ideamus utrum sola misericordia, sine omni solutione ablati sibi honoris deceat deum peccatum dimittere").

[23] "Necesse est ergo, ut aut ablatus honor solvatur aut poena sequatur. Alioquin . . . sibi deus ipsi iustus non erit" (*Cur Deus homo* I, c. 13 [Schmitt, ed., 2:71.24-25).

will generously ignore our debt simply because he knows we cannot pay it. But this is to say that God's mercy comes down either to his inability to get what he is in justice owed, or his unwillingness to expect justice toward himself. "This kind of divine mercy," Anselm replies, "is too greatly contrary to God's justice"; indeed, "it is a mockery to ascribe such mercy to God." Instead "we have to look for another kind of divine mercy besides this."[24]

Anselm's seemingly relentless insistence on the exacting stringency of God's justice has put off many of his modern interpreters. Far from causing the mercy of God to vanish, though, this stringent reflection is just what brings true divine mercy, the mercy than which a greater cannot be conceived, clearly into view. While fallen creatures inevitably lack the resources to make an offering to God equal to what they owe, God himself can and does give us creatures the ability to make this offering, and pay our own debt.

For Anselm, of course, this can happen only through the incarnation of God the Son, who on the cross gives to the Father what alone can satisfy the requirements of divine justice. Becoming our flesh and freely accepting a death he did not owe, the incarnate God makes a human offering to the Father of an infinitely valuable gift, the total reality of his not only sinless, but divine, person—"the payment" (*pretium*), as Anselm puts it, "greater than every debt."[25] For our purposes, though, the decisive point is that in giving fallen humanity the resources with which to pay its debt and make satisfaction to him, God acts in supreme and strict justice precisely toward himself. He gives the creature the wherewithal to offer him freely and completely what he is, in justice, due. This is supreme mercy, and it is exactly what supreme justice demands.

[24] "huiusmodi misericordia dei nimis est contraria iustitiae illius" (*Cur Deus homo* I, c. 24 [Schmitt, ed., 2:93.25]); "derisio est, ut talis misericordia deo attribuatur" (ibid. [Schmitt, ed., 2:93.20]); "B. Aliam misericordiam dei video esse quaerendam quam istam" (ibid. [Schmitt, ed., 2:93.29]). On the issues discussed in this paragraph, see Bruce D. Marshall, "Debt, Punishment, and Payment: A Meditation on the Cross, in Light of St. Anselm," *Nova et vetera* (Eng. ed.) 9, no. 1 (2011): 163-81.

[25] "[P]retium maius omni debito" (*Cur Deus homo* II, c. 20 [Schmitt, ed., 2:132.5]).

In the last analysis the satisfaction for sin made by the God-man is not an exaction from us that God requires, but a donation to us that God gives. Or more precisely, by thinking through to the end what divine justice requires or exacts, we are led to see that divine justice, than which a greater cannot be conceived, takes the form of the donation of the incarnate and crucified Son. Because God justly exacts, he donates. And by his gift we not only do justice to him, we thereby act justly ourselves. We are, in precisely the sense of Romans 3 and Galatians 2, justified. Our justice is his gift to us, the mercy he has on us simply by being just to himself.

Thus, I think, we should interpret the climax of *Cur Deus homo* in book II, chapter 20. Though the mercy of God seemed to vanish behind his justice and our sin, Anselm concludes, we have in fact found how great this mercy really is, and in the process found the lucid harmony of divine mercy and justice that seemed to elude us in the *Proslogion*. God's mercy now shows itself to be in such harmony with his justice

> that a greater or more just mercy cannot be conceived. . . . For what could be understood to be more merciful than when God the Father says to the sinner, condemned to eternal torments and having no resources to redeem himself from them, "Receive my only-begotten and give him for yourself," and when the Son himself says, "Take me, and redeem yourself"? For they say as much when they call us and draw us to the Christian faith.[26]

IV

We may perhaps miss how truly radical Anselm's solution to the problem posed by the *Proslogion* here appears to be. He has so rigorously applied the idea that God is that than which a greater cannot be conceived to the divine justice and mercy that the cross now seems necessary for God, at least given the fact of

[26] "[N]ec maior nec iustior [misericordia] cogitari possit. Nempe quid misericordius intelligi valet, quam cum peccatori tormentis aeternis damnato et unde se redimat non habenti deus pater dicit: accipe unigenitum meum et da pro te; et ipse filius: tolle me et redime te? Quasi enim hoc dicunt, quando nos ad Christianam fidem vocant et trahunt" (*Cur Deus homo* II, c. 20 [Schmitt, ed., 2:131.29-132.4]).

human sin. It turns out that only in virtue of what happens on the cross are God's justice and mercy alike *id quo maius cogitari nequit*, and in that way perfectly harmonious. Without the cross, in other words, God's justice and mercy would not be truly divine; we could think of a greater justice and mercy. A more forceful solution to the problem of the *Proslogion* would be hard to imagine. It is precisely the cross of which we must think if we are to think of *id quo maius cogitari nequit*—if we are to think of God.

There is surely something stirring about the idea that when we think through the event of the cross we see into the innermost depths of God, indeed that in grasping the event of the cross we grasp the very act or event of God's own being, what it is to be that than which a greater cannot be conceived: the crucified. Thoughts of this sort have attracted some of Anselm's most vigorous contemporary interpreters, such as the French Jesuit Michel Corbin, who see in Anselm a profound and meticulous version of needed insights lost on his medieval successors, and only now being recovered by Catholic theologians.[27]

However great their regard for Anselm, though, medieval theologians were virtually unanimous in thinking that by the end of *Cur Deus homo* he had solved the *Proslogion*'s problem all too well. In his craving for "necessary reasons," Anselm

[27] See, inter alia, the essays "Justice et miséricorde: Le sens de l'unique argument de *Proslogion*," and "Intercession et satisfaction: Lecture des chapitres XIX et XX du *Cur Deus Homo*," in Michel Corbin, *La Pâque de Dieu: Quatre études sur S. Anselme de Cantorbéry* (Paris: Cerf, 1997), 15-102; 169-254. Commenting on the uniquely divine mercy of *Cur Deus homo* 2.20, than which a more just cannot be conceived, Corbin writes: "What could be more clear than that such mercy has always coincided with the event of the glorious cross, as the donation by God 'of his own Son' (Rom. 8:32)" ("Qu'une telle miséricorde ait toujours coincide avec l'Événement de la Croix glorieuse, comme donation par Dieu de 'son propre Fils' . . . quoi de plus clair"); "It is thanks to these lines [in *Cur Deus homo* 2.20] that we have been able to identify the 'something' that is God . . . not at all with an imaginary infinite, but with *this unique* event [viz., the cross], which is the source beyond which we can place neither our thought nor our will" ("C'est grâce à elles que nous avons pu identifier le *Quelque chose* qu'est Dieu . . . non point à quelque imaginaire Infini, mais à *cet* Événement *unique*, qui est la Source au-dessus de laquelle nous ne pouvons placer ni notre pensée ni notre vouloir") (ibid., 85).

seems to have turned the cross into something God must do. Constrained by his own justice and mercy, God evidently has no alternative, at least under the conditions of sin, but to send the Son to be incarnate in the Virgin's womb and to die on the cross. Given his premises and the way his argument unfolds, so most medieval theologians maintained, no amount of dialectical ingenuity on the part of Anselm or his interpreters will be able to rescue him from this manifestly unacceptable conclusion.

It is striking to observe how the alternative of punishment for sin, without any satisfaction for sin, fades away as *Cur Deus homo* moves along. Throughout book I, it seems clear that both punishment and satisfaction are possible, and divine justice could accept either. But when Anselm goes on to argue in book II, chapter 4 that God has an obligation to complete what he began in making human nature for blessedness (lest he do the unfitting, and thereby act unjustly toward himself), the possibility of a real alternative to satisfaction is less clear. And when he concludes (in book II, chap. 20) by saying that the justice which, in mercy, gives the human creature a superabundant resource to redeem itself—precisely as opposed to punishing the creature—is alone that justice than which a greater cannot be conceived, he seems to have ruled out not only punishment, but any alternative to the satisfaction of the cross, as a real possibility for God.

With that, not God's justice and mercy, but his freedom, seems to vanish. As Boso does not fail to note, if God in Christ is not just to us "by the liberty of his choice," we owe him no thanks for his justice.[28] We rightly withhold praise and gratitude from an agent whose act, no matter how beneficial to us, is inevitable for him, and not freely undertaken. On Anselm's own grounds the justice and mercy at work on the cross seem to lose the value that makes them worthy of the highest praise if they are necessary, in the sense of being inevitable, for God. While he appears rigorously to have shown the concord of God's justice and mercy with one another, he has failed to harmonize

[28] "[N]on ex libertate arbitrii iustus erit. Quae igitur gratia illi pro iustitia sua debebitur?" (*Cur Deus homo* II, c. 10 [Schmitt, ed., 2:107.12-13]).

the freedom of God with either justice or mercy, and so, one may suppose, has not really reconciled justice and mercy either.

In light of this basic worry, medieval theologians almost always argue that the incarnation and the cross are necessary only in a deliberately qualified sense, and not in the strict or unqualified sense for which Anselm seems to argue. Incarnation and cross are necessary only conditionally, *ex suppositione*, as Aquinas puts it.[29] Once God has freely decided to deal with sin by enabling and accepting satisfaction for it, Anselm's logic applies, and we can see how, under these contingent conditions, the incarnation and the cross are necessary. But they are not inevitable for God. Precisely because God has (or perhaps better, did have) real alternatives to satisfaction, we can regard

[29] *STh* III, q. 46, a. 1; cf. q. 46, a. 2, ad 3. Aquinas does not here mention Anselm explicitly. He does at one point in the *Scriptum* on the *Sentences* when treating the same issues, and suggests, implausibly, that Anselm agrees with him. When Anselm says there is no other way for us to be saved, Aquinas argues, "he is speaking of what is possible for us given what God has decided to do" ("Anselmus loquitur quantum est ex parte nostra, supposita Dei ordinatione" [III *Sent*., d. 20, a. 4, qcla. 2, ad 2 (ed. M. F. Moos [Paris: Lethielleux, 1933], 623)]).

John Duns Scotus, by contrast, offers a detailed presentation and criticism of Anselm's argument in *Cur Deus homo*, which he had evidently worked over with care. "These things I have correctly gathered, so far as I was able, from what he says" ("Haec veraciter, ut potui, ex dictis eius college" [*Lectura* III, d. 20, q. un., no. 25 (*B. Ioannis Duns Scoti Opera Omnia*, vol. 21 [Vatican City: Typis Vaticanis, 2004], 48.191)]). With regard to the sense in which it is "necessary" for the restoration of humanity that Christ suffer and die, Scotus argues for the same position that Aquinas had already articulated in a more cursory way. "There is no other necessity that Christ the man redeem man by [his] death than the necessity of the consequence, given, that is, the assumption that [God] had ordered things so as to redeem man in this way" ("[N]on est alia necessitas quod Christus-homo redimat hominem per mortem nisi necessitas consequentiae, posito scilicet quod sic ordinaverat ipsum redimere" [ibid., no. 28 (Vatican ed., 48.201-3)])." That God has willed to redeem us, and to redeem us in this way, are alike "simply contingent" ("simpliciter contingenia" [ibid. (Vatican ed., 48.208)]), though given these divine decisions, it is necessary that we be restored, and be restored in no other way. Scotus is quite clear that he disagrees with Anselm, though he grants that Anselm can be "saved" in just the way Aquinas also supposed: "If we want to save Anselm, we can say that his arguments work given what God has decided to do, namely that he has ordained that man will be redeemed in this way" ("Si autem volumus salvare Anselmum, possumus dicere quod rationes suae procedunt supposita divina ordinatione quod sic ordinaverit hominem redimi" [ibid., no. 39 (Vatican ed., 52.304-5)])."

the incarnation and the cross as what he has freely decided to do, rather than as what he must do.

Anselm addresses this objection directly in some much-discussed passages on freedom and necessity in book II of *Cur Deus homo*. The basic idea, already introduced and defended in his *De libertate arbitrii*, is that choice between alternatives, while frequently a feature of the situations in which free agents act, is not essential to freedom. Freedom is in essence the ability to will or act on what is good and right, and to do what is beneficial for the sake of what is good and right. True freedom is thus the ability to do what is excellent, and not the ability to choose between alternatives. This must be the case, because there are divine and human acts that we rightly regard as free, indeed supremely free, but in which there is no choice between alternatives.[30]

Perhaps the most obvious instance, for Anselm, is the enjoyment of beatitude by both God and the blessed. Surely this is a free act on the part of God and the blessed, indeed the perfection of their freedom, at least in the case of the created agent. But beatitude cannot be lost, certainly not by God, but also not by the creatures who have attained it. We can hardly think of the blessed as constantly considering, and by a deliberate effort of will rejecting, sinful acts—of being able to sin (Augustine's *posse peccare*) but continually managing not to sin.[31] That is our situation *in via*, not theirs *in patria*. If beatitude is at once a free act and one about which those who enjoy it have no choice, then having alternatives cannot be essential to freedom. It must suffice for freedom that the free agent is not coerced or compelled, whether by external or internal forces, to act as he does, but instead acts with spontaneous delight in the

[30] See esp. *Cur Deus homo* II, c. 5 (Schmitt, ed., 2:99-100); c. 17 (Schmitt, ed., 2:122-26); cf. *De libertate arbitrii* 1 (Schmitt, ed., 1:207-8).

[31] *De libertate arbitrii* 1: "Since divine free will and the free will of the good angels is not able to sin, 'to be able to sin' does not belong to the definition of freedom of will. Therefore the capacity to sin is neither freedom nor a part of freedom" ("Quoniam ergo liberum arbitrium divinum et bonorum angelorum peccare non potest, non pertinet ad definitionem libertatis arbitrii 'posse peccare.' Denique nec libertas nec pars libertatis est potestas peccandi" [Schmitt, ed., 1:208.9-11; cf. 1:207.11-13]).

deed. An act can be truly free, yet at the same time necessary (that is, inevitable), as long as there is no coercion involved. When freedom is understood in this way, we can say that God acts with supreme freedom when he sees to it that the creature makes satisfaction to him for sin, even though this act alone is compatible with his supreme justice and mercy.

Whether and under what conditions an act can be both free and necessary was extensively mooted in the Middle Ages, and remains so today. I will not pursue that matter here, but will close by recalling a question posed by the *Proslogion* to which, as yet, we have no answer. We have seen how it is not only supremely merciful, but supremely just, for God to spare sinners on account of the superabundant satisfaction offered by Christ. How then does it remain just for God to condemn sinners whom he might in mercy save? In fact it might seem as though God must now save all sinners, and not only some, just because the infinite value of the good offered to him by Christ immeasurably outweighs the evil of all human sin.

Near the end of *Cur Deus homo* (in book II, chap. 19) Anselm makes a remarkably strong distinction between the satisfaction accomplished by Christ and the salvation of sinners. What the incarnate Son has done in his life and death more than suffices to repair the damage done to God's creation by human sin. The cross justly restores, indeed far more than restores, the order, beauty, and rightness of creation and of its relationship to God. All this—everything, in a sense—has already been accomplished, yet why the Son's satisfaction should result in the salvation of sinners is not yet in view. It might in fact seem superfluous. God's justice has been fully realized once the incarnate Son's measureless offering has been made, and has been accepted by the Father. Our salvation can add nothing to the infinite worth of Christ's gift, and so can add nothing to the enactment of God's justice.

Yet God does owe the incarnate Son a reward (*merces*), a just repayment (*retributio*) for the immeasurable good that the Son has done.[32] The Son himself lacks nothing and owes nothing, so

[32] See Schmitt, ed., 2:130.18 (*merces*); 2:130.5, 7, 15, 28 (*retributio*).

he cannot himself receive the reward. Yet the Father must in justice give it, and so must give it to whomever the Son wills that it be given. "It is both just and necessary for the Father to pay it to the one to whom the Son wills to give it."[33] As we have seen, God is just first of all to himself. Therefore the Father is just not first of all toward us, but toward his Son, and his justice to the Son is at the same time the Son's mercy toward us—our salvation.

The Son does not, however, give this gift arbitrarily, saving some and withholding salvation from others by inscrutable turnings of divine mercy and justice. As Anselm repeatedly insists in *Cur Deus homo* II, chapters 18-20, the incarnate Son gives the salvation won by his satisfaction to those who imitate him and follow his example, to those who in their own small way do what he has already done to perfection on the cross. His superabundant satisfaction becomes ours, it becomes our salvation, when we offer him to the Father for our sins—surely an allusion to the Eucharistic sacrifice. "Take me, and redeem yourself."

When it comes to our salvation the justice and mercy of God, than which a greater cannot be conceived, is not only the Son's satisfaction, but his gift to us of freely making that satisfaction our own in love and obedience. God does not simply spare some in mercy and in justice pass others by. He does not leave us spectators to our own salvation (or the lack of it), bystanders to a drama in which we have no role. In supreme mercy and justice he enables us to be nothing less than agents of our own salvation, sharers in the satisfaction already and abundantly accomplished by Christ.

[33] "Immo et iustum et necessarium intelligo, ut cui voluerit dare filius, a patre reddatur" (*Cur Deus homo* II, c. 19 [Schmitt, ed., 2:130.25-26).

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THE PROTREPTIC OF *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE* I-II, QQ.1-5

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WHAT IS HAPPINESS? What is the best and happiest life that a human being can live? On what sort of good would a life like that be founded? What other goods would it require? Or is happiness even something that creatures like us in a world like ours should hope to achieve? Modern readers have been ineluctably struck by how nearly Thomas Aquinas's answers to these questions resemble those of Aristotle. It is not difficult to see why. The sheer frequency of citations to the *Nicomachean Ethics* in *Summa theologiae* I-II, questions 1-5—Thomas's so-called "treatise on happiness"—indicates that Thomas himself saw some semblance of Aristotle's account of the human good in his own considered view on the subject. It would be foolish to deny those Aristotelian semblances. Nor do I need to rehearse here all the ways those semblances can deceive.[1] A single example will suffice.

Contemporary exegetes remain intractably divided over what Aristotelian happiness (*eudaemonia*) entails. One camp argues that Aristotle identifies human happiness exclusively with the exercise of the virtue of wisdom (*sophia*)—specifically, in divine

[1] See Mark D. Jordan, *The Alleged Aristotelianism of Thomas Aquinas*, Etienne Gilson Series 15 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1992), rev. and repr. in Mark D. Jordan, *Rewritten Theology: Aquinas after His Readers* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 60-88. A brief account of some of the philosophical concerns behind modern preoccupations with Thomas's "Aristotelianism" can be found in Wayne J. Hankey, "Pope Leo's Purposes and St Thomas's Platonism," in *S. Tommaso nella storia del pensiero: Atti dell VIII Congresso Tomistico Internationale*, vol. 8 and Studi Tomistici 17 (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1982), 39-43.

contemplation (*theôria*).[2] A second contends that happiness consists in an "inclusive end" composed of *theôria*, the moral virtues, and various "exterior goods," such as honor, wealth, and leisure.[3] Significantly, many of Thomas's contemporary readers purport to find something like the second, inclusivist account of happiness (*beatitudo*) in the treatise on happiness.[4]

[2] See, for example, René A. Gauthier and Jean Y. Jolif, *L'Éthique à Nicomaque: Introduction, traduction et commentaire*, Aristote: Traductions et Études (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1958); Thomas Nagel, "Aristotle on Eudaimonia," *Phronesis* 17 (1972): 252-59; Anthony Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics: A Study of the Relationship between the Eudemian and Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978); Robert Heinaman, "Eudaimonia and Self-Sufficiency in the Nicomachean Ethics," *Phronesis* 33 (1987): 31-53; Richard Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989); Kenny, *Aristotle on the Perfect Life* (Oxford University Press, 1992); John Cooper, "Plato and Aristotle on 'Finality' and '(Self-) Sufficiency," in *Knowledge, Nature, and the Good* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Gabriel Richardson Lear, *Happiness and the Highest Good* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004). Cf. David Charles, "Aristotle on Well-Being and Intellectual Contemplation," *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 73 (1999): 205-23; Dominic Scott, "Aristotle on Well-Being and Intellectual Contemplation," *Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume* 73 (1999): 225-42; Stephen S. Bush, "Divine and Human Happiness in *Nicomachean Ethics,*" *Philosophical Review* 117 (2008): 49-75.

[3] See, for example, W. F. R. Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's Ethics," *Philosophy* 40 (1965): 277-95; John Cooper, *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), 99; Daniel Devereux, "Aristotle on Active and Contemplative Lives," *Philosophy Research Archives* 3 (1977): 834-44; David Keyt, "Intellectualism in Aristotle," *Paideia* (1978): 138-57; J. L. Ackrill, "Aristotle on Eudaimonia," in *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, ed. A. Rorty (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1980), 15-33; A. W. Price, "Aristotle's Ethical Holism," *Mind* 89 (1980): 338-52; Martha Nussbaum, "Aristotle," in *Ancient Writers* 1, ed. T. James Luce (New York: Scribner, 1982), 377-416; T. H. Irwin, "Permanent Happiness: Aristotle and Solon," in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 3, ed. Julia Annas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 89-124; J. Whiting, "Human Nature and Intellectualism in Aristotle," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 68 (1986): 70-95; Sarah Broadie, *Ethics with Aristotle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[4] This reading especially predominates in contemporary Anglophone scholarship. See for example Ralph McInerny, *Aquinas on Human Action: A Theory of Practice* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1992), 32; McInerny, *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 42; David M. Gallagher, "Desire for Beatitude and Love of Friendship in Thomas Aquinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 58 (1996): 1-47; John Finnis, *Aquinas: Moral, Political, and Legal Theory*, Founders of Modern

But such readings face a crucial problem. According to Thomas, Aristotle's view more nearly resembles the exclusivist account: commenting on book X of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Thomas thus notes that "contemplative activity clearly belongs to the intellect according to its proper virtue—namely, wisdom. . . . And that happiness consists in such an activity seems to agree both with the things said in *Ethics* I and indeed with the truth itself."[5] The ironies that follow are delicious. When contemporary readers insist upon the "Aristotelian" character of Thomas's notion of happiness, they ascribe to him a view that Thomas himself took Aristotle to deny. Consequently, the extent of Thomas's debt to the *Ethics* is made to depend on the extent to which he alledgedly misread it.[6]

Political and Social Thought (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 85-86; Colleen McCluskey, "Happiness and Freedom in Aquinas's Theory of Action," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 9 (2000): 72; Jean Porter, *Nature as Reason: A Thomistic Theory of the Natural Law* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004), 81; Don Adams, "Aquinas on Aristotle on Happiness," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 1 (1991): 98-118, at 99. One notable exception to the standard reading is Anthony Kenny, "Aquinas on Aristotelian Happiness," in *Aquinas's Moral Theory: Essays in Honor of Norman Kretzmann*, ed. Scott MacDonald and Eleonore Stump (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999), 15-27. Cf. Wolfgang Kluxen, *Philosophische Ethik bei Thomas von Aquin* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1998), 124-44; Eberhard Schockenhoff, *Bonum Hominis: Die anthropologischen und theologischen Grundlagen der Tugendethik des Thomas von Aquin*, Tübinger Theologische Studien 28 (Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald-Verlag, 1987), 83-85; Hermann Kleber, *Glück als Lebensziel: Untersuchungen zur Philosophie des Glücks bei Thomas von Aquin* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1988), 196-200; Christian Trottmann, *La vision béatifique: Des disputes scholastiques à sa définition par Benoît XII* (Rome: Ecole française de Rome, 1995), 257.

[5] X *Nic. Ethic.* lect. 10 (*Opera omnia iussu impensaque Leonis XIII. P.M.* [Rome: 1882-], vol. 47/2, p. 583): "manifestum est, quod speculativa operatio est intellectus secundum propriam virtutem eius, scilicet . . . sapientiam. . . . Et quod in tali operatione consistat, felicitas, videtur esse consonum eis, quae in primo dicta sunt de felicitate, et etiam ipsi veritati." See also I *Nic. Ethic.*, lect. 4 (Leonine ed., 47/1:14-16); *Tabula libri Ethicorum,* C 244 (Leonine ed., 48:B 84). Here and except as noted, parenthetical citations following medieval textual divisions of Thomas's works designate volume and page number of the Leonine edition.

[6] I assume here the standard chronology of Thomas's works indicated in Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Royal (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 327-61; 424-438; esp., 227, nn. 7-10. I thus reject James Doig's attempt to date books II to VII of the commentary on

Irony has its uses. It can give us new eyes to see. Yet my purpose in what follows is not to show how little questions 1-5 of the *Prima secundae* recall the *Nicomachean Ethics.* I rather want to show how nearly these questions recall one of Thomas's own experiments in sapiental persuasion. I will argue that the immediate textual antecedent to these questions is book III of the *Summa contra Gentiles*. Proceeding on this basis—and by surfacing a dense proliferation of rhetorical figures that modern readers have yet to notice—I will argue that questions 1-5 of the *Prima secundae* comprise a protreptic to the contemplation of God. The aim of protreptic discourse is to turn or convert another toward a specific end. Since, for Thomas, the best and happiest life is principally founded on contemplation, it is especially *this* activity that he urges upon the reader of the *Prima secundae*.

The novelty of this argument invites a number of questions. If these questions comprise a protreptic, how is it meant to succeed? Does Thomas aim to persuade the reader by proposing an end unknown, or by hastening the pursuit of an end already known and already desired? Does the suasion turn on reasoned

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Aristotle's *Ethics* posterior to the *Secunda secundae* of the *Summa theologiae* (James C. Doig, *Aquinas's Philosophical Commentary on the Ethics: A Historical Perspective* [Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001], 109-230) as evidence that in the *Ethics* commentary Thomas aims to articulate his own "moral philosophy" (ibid., xvi; cf. xi-xvii, 109-230). The longstanding consensus regarding the literal or expository purpose of the *Ethics* commentary is well attested. See especially Charles Jourdain, *La philosophie de saint Thomas d'Aquin (*Paris: Hachette, 1858*),* 81-96; Pierre Mandonnet, *Siger de Brabant et "l'averroïsme" au xii^me^ siecle* (Louvain: Institut superieur de philosophe de l'Universite, 1911), 42; Martin Grabmann, "Les commentaires de saint Thomas d'Aquin sur les ouvrages d'Aristote," Annales de l'institut supérieur de philosophie 3 (1914): 231-81; Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle* Ages (London: Sheed & Ward, 1955), 367; Joseph Owens, C.Ss.R., "Aquinas as Aristotelian Commentator," in *St. Thomas Aquinas 1274-1974: Commemorative Studies* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1974), 213-38; Leo Elders, "St. Thomas Aquinas's Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics," in *Autour de saint Thomas d'Aquin; Recueil d'etudes sur sa pensée philosophique et théologique*, vol. 1 (Paris: FAC-éditiones, 1987), 77-122 at 115; Mark D. Jordan, "Thomas Aquinas's Disclaimers in the Aristotelian Commentaries," in *Philosophy and the God of Abraham*: *Essays in Memory of James A. Weisheipl*, O.P., ed. R. James Long (Toronto: Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies*,* 1991), 99-112; Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 1:227-39.

argument alone, or is there also some appeal to the passions? Grappling with these issues will require coming to grips with Thomas's rhetorical inheritance. But I must begin with a more basic question: why does the *Prima secundae* begin with five questions on happiness?

I. The Setting of Questions 1-5 of the *Prima secundae*

The significance of the question must be clarified. The first step toward clarity is to be reminded that these questions are not, in fact, a "Treatise on Happiness." They cannot be, since, contrary to modern editorial impositions, the *Summa* is not divided into *tractationes* or *inquisitiones*. Its *quaestiones* rather coalesce in increasingly expansive dialectical wholes. It follows that questions about the purpose of any of the *Summa*'s wholes cannot be asked well without first knowing what Thomas wants to teach in the whole *Summa*. Some old lessons in this regard bear repeating. Scholars allow that the *Summa* was written to reform the pastoral and practical curricula of Dominican houses and schools.[7] It is in this connection that the *Summa*'s prologue addresses beginners (*incipientes*) in *sacra doctrina*.[8] If Thomas writes not just for any and every beginner, he seems to be especially concerned with the *fratres communes* of the Dominican order—especially with those friars who, unlike Thomas, had not received a university education.[9] If it is for their sake that Thomas forswears "useless questions, articles, and arguments" and "frequent repetition,"[10] it is for their sake, too, that he endeavors to reform the Dominican tendency to

[7] Leonard E. Boyle, O.P., *The Setting of the Summa Theologiae of Saint Thomas* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1982), rev. and repr. in Boyle, "The Setting of the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas-Revisited," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, Moral Traditions Series (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 1-16; M. Michèle Mulchahey, *"First the Bow Is Bent in Study": Dominican Education before 1350* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1998), 278-306 and 314-21; Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas,* 1:142-45. Cf. John I. Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith in Thomas Aquinas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 85-90.

[8] *STh* I, prologus (Leonine ed., 4:5).

[9] Boyle, "The Setting of the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas-Revisited," 8.

[10] *STh* I, prologus (Leonine ed., 4:5).

separate morals from Christian doctrine. The very structure of the *Summa* enacts this reform by expanding, reordering, and relocating a traditional collection of moral topics within the frame of Christian theology.

A comparison of the *Summa* to some of its immediate textual predecessors—such as William of Auxerre's *Summa aurea* and the *Summa theologica* of Alexander of Hales—can illustrate the point. Following the general structure of Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, both of these works append discrete clusters of moral topics to the doctrines of sin and Christ.[11] By contrast, the *Summa* combines and repositions moral topics squarely within the procession and return of creatures to God. The prelude to question 2 of the *Prima pars* alludes to this innovative structure: "in effort to expound this teaching we will first treat God [*STh* I], second, the rational creature's movement toward God [*STh* II], and third, Christ, who, insofar as he is a human being, is our way of tending to God [*STh* III]."[12] Whereas Thomas's predecessors dispersed moral matters across a wide range of doctrines, Thomas gathers them into a single sequence of questions spanning the long *Secunda pars*.

Thomas's relocation of morals within the structure of the *Summa* was novel.[13] His reordering of those topics was altogether odd. This, too, can be quickly seen against the

[11] See for example Peter Lombard, *Sententiae in IV libris distinctae* II, dd. 24-34 and III, dd. 34-40 (3d rev. ed. [Rome: Editiones collegii s. Bonaventurae ad claras aquas, 1971]: 1/2:450-539 and 2:190-229); William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea* II, tr. 12-25 and III, tr. 10-55 (ed. Jean Ribaillier, Spicilegium Bonaventurianum, vols. 16-20 [Paris: Editions du centre national de la recherche scientifique; Rome: Editiones collegii s. Bonaventurae ad claras aquas, 1980-87], 2:357-713 and 3:112-1068); Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologica* II, qq. 26-60 and III, qq. 61-68 (ed. the Fathers of the Collegium S. Bonaventurae [Ad claras aquas (Quaracchi): Ex typographia collegi s. Bonaventurae, 1924], 4/2:314-939 and 949-1111.

[12] *STh* I, q. 2, pro. (Leonine ed., 4:27).

[13] The novelty of the *Summa*'s structure has been discussed elsewhere. See for example Roger Guindon, O.M.I., *Béatitude et théologie morale chez saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Les publications seriées de l'université d'Ottawa, vol. 50 (Montreal: Éditions de l'université d'Ottawa, 1956), 17-114; Ignatius Theodore Eschmann, O.P., *The Ethics of Saint Thomas Aquinas: Two Courses*, ed. Edward A. Synan, Etienne Gilson Series 20; Studies in Medieval and Moral Teaching 1 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1997), 24-30; Jordan, *Rewritten Theology*, 126-35.

backdrop of one of the *Summa*'s textual antecedents, his own *Scriptum* on the *Sentences*. In accordance with Scholastic convention, Thomas attaches to the penultimate distinction of the Lombard's final book five long questions on "happiness," the "vision of God," its "delight," "dowries" (*dotis*), and "treasures" (*aureoli*).[14] At the beginning of the *Prima secundae* he eschews this conventional division; instead, he composes five comparatively brief questions on "the final end in general (q. 1) and "happiness" (qq. 2-5)—specifically, "in what it consists" (q. 2) "what it is" (qq. 3-4), and "how we can pursue it" (q. 5).[15] The division of these questions is unprecedented in medieval theology. Their order with respect to other moral topics is moreover peculiar.[16] Admittedly, it was not unusual for medieval works of moral philosophy to begin with an account of the good in general. Nor was it unusual to find treatments of human happiness in theological discussions of the "last things."[17] But crucially, Thomas breaks with both of these conventions: the *Secunda pars* begins (rather than ends) with an urgent search for the human good (rather than the good in general). This, too, was new—so much so that the substance of

[14] See IV *Sent.*, d. 49, qq. 1-5 (*Sancti Thomae Aquinatis angelici ordinis predicatorum Opera omnia ad fidem optimarum editionem accurate recognita* [Parma: Typis Petri Fiaccadori, 1857], 7: 1167-244).

[15] See *STh* I-II, q. 1, pro.; and q. 2, pro. (Leonine ed., 6:6, 17).

[16] At least many of the *quaestiones*, *articuli*, and *quaestiunculae* in IV *Sent.,* d. 49, q. 1, aa. 1-4 and q. 5, aa. 1-3 borrow topical headings from prior commentaries or theological works well known to thirteenth-century Parisian schools. Compare especially IV *Sent.*, d. 49, q. 1, aa. 1-4 and q. 5, aa. 1-3 to Bonaventure, *Commentaria in quatuor libros sententiarum* IV, d. 49, p. 1, a. 1, qq. 1-6 and p. 2., a. 2, qq. 1-4 (*Doctoris seraphici S. Bonaventura opera omnia*, ed. the Fathers of the Collegium S. Bonaventurae [Ad claras aquas (Quaracchi): Ex typographia collegi s. Bonaventurae, 1881-1902]: 4:999-1035). Cf. Albert the Great, *Super IV Sententiarum*, d. 49, B., aa. 6-7 (*Opera Omnia,* ed. August Borgnet [Paris: Vivès, 1894], 30:672-79).

[17] See for example Albert the Great, *Summa de bono* tr. 1, q.1, aa. 1–10 (*Opera omnia ad fidem codicum manuscriptorum edenda*, ed. Institutum Albertus Magnus Coloniense [Munster: Aschendorff, 1951-], 28:1–21). Cf. Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono,* q. 4 (ed. Nicolaus Wicki, Corpus philosophorum mediiaevi 2 [Bern: Francke, 1985], 1:20-22). See also Peter Lombard, *Sententiae* IV, d. 49 (Quaracchi ed., 4:547-53); Bonaventure, *Brevoloquium* p. 7, c. 7 (Quaracchi ed., 5:281-91); William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea* IV, tr. 18, c. 3, qq. 1-3 (Ribaillier, ed., 4:490-526).

these five questions cannot be understood well without first puzzling over location. That is the sense of the question I mean to pose: why does the *Prima secundae* begin with five questions on happiness?

Most studies of the "treatise on happiness" never ask this question; scholars tend to assume that Thomas writes the treatise for the sole purpose of making known what human happiness is. But that cannot be right. Readers of the *Prima secundae* are expected to have already worked through arguments on the nature of happiness in the *Prima pars*—and not just once but twice: first, in the discourse on divine perfection, which culminates in a single question on the happiness of God (*STh* I, q. 26);[18] and again some thirty questions later in the discussion of angels in glory (q. 62). Both of these inquiries touch not only upon the nature of divine and angelic happiness, but also upon the nature of happiness more generally. Thus, readers of the *Prima secundae* are expected already to know that "the word 'happiness' [*beatitudo*] designates the final perfection of a rational or intellectual nature"—that is, the "intellectual activity" by which a human being or an angel can be united to God, the "thing itself" (*ipsa res*) to which all of creation is ordered.[19] Then, too, readers are expected already to know that human happiness is twofold. The first sort of happiness—which "we look forward to in the future, whereby 'we shall see God as he is'"—is "beyond the nature of every created intellect" and requires "the infusion of a gracious light."[20] The second sort, by contrast, can be gained in this life through "the most perfect human contemplation . . . of the best intelligible object, God" insofar as "many and more excellent of his effects are demonstrated to us, and insofar as we attribute to him some things known by divine revelation—say, that God is

[18] See Wayne J. Hankey, *God in Himself: Aquinas' Doctrine of God as Expounded in the Summa Theologiae* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 111-14.

[19] *STh* I, q. 26, a. 3, ad. 2 (Leonine ed., 4:304); q. 26, a. 2 (Leonine ed., 4:302); q. 62, a. 1 (Leonine ed., 5:110).

[20] *STh* I, q. 62, a. 1 (Leonine ed., 5:110); q. 12, a. 13, corp. and ad 1 (Leonine ed., 4:137-38). See *STh* I, q. 12, a. 4 (Leonine ed., 4:120-21).

Three and One."[21] If readers of the *Prima secundae* can be expected already to know all of this, then they can also be expected to know that such happiness secondarily includes the exercise of practical reason. For how else could the human good be said to approximate God's "governance of the universe"?[22]

The preceding paragraph demonstrates just how much of the character of the human good Thomas expects readers of the *Prima secundae* already to grasp. It is true that the first five questions recollect and refine the schematic remarks on human happiness scattered throughout the *Prima pars*. But these addenda can hardly be said to warrant forty elaborate articles (which Thomas has rather curiously divided symmetrically into five groups of eight—a point discussed below). So the search continues. What is the purpose of these first five questions? Why does Thomas begin the *Prima secundae* as he does?

I. T. Eschmann made a good suggestion over sixty years ago in a lecture course at the Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies. Eschmann emphasized that the *Summa*'s several prologues and preambles hold the keys to the principles governing its structure. With respect to the first five questions of the *Prima secundae*, Eschmann put great weight on the preamble to question 1. To quote Eschmann's translation of the passage, Thomas notes that

> in this matter we shall consider first the final end of human life [I-II, qq. 1-5]; and secondly, those things by means of which a human being may advance towards this end, or stray from the path [I-II, qq. 6-114; II-II, qq. 1-189]: for from the end we should grasp the characters [*rationes*] of those things which are ordered to the end. And since the final end of human life is said to be happiness, we must consider the final end in general and happiness.[23]

The bracketed citations in Eschmann's translation are mine, not his. I have inserted them to help illustrate the significance of the preamble as Eschmann understood it. "[T]he first five Questions of the *Prima secundae,*" writes Eschmann,

[21] *STh* I, q. 62, a. 1 (Leonine ed., 5:110); q. 12, a. 13, ad 1 (Leonine ed., 4:137-38).
[22] *STh* I, q. 26, a. 4 (Leonine ed., 4:304).
[23] *STh* I-II, q. 1, pro. (Leonine ed., 6:6).

are thus a sort of foundation, of "first philosophy," or *proto-philosophia*, with respect to the whole of [*Summa*] II. This whole treatise of the II Part is about human acts. The preamble of such a treatise is the doctrine of beatitude, that is, about the end of those acts.[24]

According to Eschmann, the beginning of the *Prima secundae* is a first demonstration of the end toward which all of the acts analyzed in the *Secunda pars* must aim. These five questions are in other words a kind of *proto-philosophia* (to borrow Eschmann's term) after the manner of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* XII: they invoke the highest being who is said to move all other beings by being sought as the highest good.

Eschmann's suggestion plausibly amplifies without embellishing what the preamble to question 1 plainly says: because "the final end of human life is said to be happiness," the *Secunda pars* is first and foremost concerned with "the things by means of which a human being may advance towards this end": actions (qq. 6-21), passions (qq. 22-48), and their principles—namely, virtues (qq. 49-67), law (qq. 90-108), and grace (qq. 109-114). Yet, because "the characters" (*rationes*) of things ordered to an end can only be grasped in light of the character of the end itself,[25] the *Prima secundae* must first treat happiness. "For 'happiness' [*beatitude*] names the final end."[26]

At last, we have a partial answer to the question of why the *Prima secundae* begins with a discourse on happiness. Yet, several puzzles remain. It is one thing to explain the location of these questions; it is quite another to explain their content, namely, the pedagogical decisions they enact. Why, in a work that promises to avoid faulty repetition, does Thomas belabor a topic already sketched throughout the course of the *Prima pars*? A survey of recent efforts to expound the first five questions of the *Prima secundae* suggests that there are more pressing and perplexing questions still. Some readers worry that Thomas traverses long and pointless digressions—dialectical excurses

[24] Eschmann, *Ethics of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 38.

[25] *STh* I-II, q. 1, pro. (Leonine ed., 6:6). See also *STh* I-II, q. 49, a. 1, pro. (Leonine ed., 6:390) and q. 90, a. 1, pro. (Leonine ed., 7:149).

[26] *STh* I-II, q. 2, a. 1, pro. (Leonine ed., 6:17).

which, from a logical standpoint, seem to be specious or misplaced.[27] Others conclude that Thomas seems needlessly to multiply arguments, giving three where one might be sufficient. Accusing him of excessive "abstractness" and of omitting crucial premises, others contend that Thomas does not say enough.[28] The lengths to which some readers have gone to dispatch these difficulties shows how serious they take them to be. Some have taken it upon themselves to revise Thomas's arguments.[29] But most have elected simply to hover over the text from a height where its difficulties cannot be seen.[30]

[27] See for example the discussion of *STh* I-II, q. 1 in J. Ramirez, *De hominis beatitudine: Tractatus theologicus ad 1-2 Summa theologiae (qq. 1-5)* (Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones cientifices, 1942-47). Cf. Eschmann, *Ethics of Saint Thomas Aquinas,* 41: "if Ramirez's hypothesis is true, [q. 1, aa. 2-3] must be considered an excursion, even an undue interruption of the reasoning." See also Eschmann's assessment of q. 1, a. 4, ad 4 ("[t]his Argument, in the midst of a fundamental discussion in ethics, is very specious" [ibid., 102]); q. 1, a. 7 ("[n]othing is particularly noteworthy about the Responses [in q. 1, a. 7]" [ibid., 147]); q. 1, a. 8 ("Saint Thomas is unable to prove his thesis here [in *STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 8] save by anticipating a thesis" [ibid., 148]); see also Eschmann's critique of Ramirez apropos q. 1, a. 5 (ibid., 112-13).

[28] For charges of abstractness, see for example McInerny, *Aquinas on Human Action*, 28. For criticisms of the "argument" of *Summa* I-II, q. 1, a. 4, see for example G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1957), section 21. See also McInerny, *Aquinas on Human Action,* 28, 31; Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, 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), 74.

[29] Scott MacDonald, "Ultimate Ends in Practical Reasoning: Aquinas's Aristotelian Moral Psychology and Anscombe's Fallacy," *The Philosophical Review* 100 (1991): 31-66 severs *STh* I-II, q. 1 from qq. 2-5, ignores q. 1, aa. 2, 3, 8, and introduces foreign distinctions (e.g., "weak" and "strong" final ends) in order to defend the cogency of what MacDonald takes to be the "argument" of q. 1. Cf. Georg Wieland, "Happiness (Ia-IIae, qq. 1-5)," trans. Grant Kaplan, in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope, Moral Traditions Series (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 57-68, at 58-59, where *STh* I-II, q. 1 is said to proceed by "a formal line of argument" in which series of "analytical connections between actions and ends" lead to further "theses," in preparation for q. 2, in which this purely formal argument is then "complemented with a substantive, material explanation" (58-59). Cf. Kleber, *Glück als Lebensziel,* 196-200.

[30] See for example 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), which reconstructs Thomas's account of

It would be possible to show that the anxieties which motivate both of these strategies stem from false assumptions about the purpose of these questions. I want to pursue a different tack. More concretely, I want to propose a reading of these questions that seeks less to explain than to dissolve their alleged defects. In what follows, I will argue that Thomas's rhetorical purpose in these questions is not merely demonstrative but also and more basically hortatory and persuasive. It follows that the digressions, flourishes, and infelicities that have so troubled modern readers are neither failures of reason nor disputative construction; they are rhetorical devices for hastening the reader's pursuit of the activity upon which the best and happiest life is chiefly founded. To say this is to say that the first five questions of the *Prima secundae* comprise a protreptic to happiness—an exhortation to the contemplation of God. To begin showing this I need first to establish that Thomas grasps the necessity of moral persuasion in *sacra doctrina*.

II. Rhetorical Inheritance

The *protreptikos*, *exhortatio,* or, as it was sometimes called, the *parainetikos*, was conceived in antiquity as a persuasion to the study and practice of a particular art, science, or skill. From the fourth century B.C., philosophic protreptics had the specific aim of converting students to the love of wisdom. Because wisdom is a contested concept, students had to be won for a particular notion of wisdom as conceived by a particular school

happiness almost exclusively from the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* and the *Summa contra Gentiles,* with supplementary material drawn from the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, *Super Boetium De Trinitate,* and *Quaestiones disputatae de virtutibus in communi.* Of the fifty-one pages listed in the index to this volume which purport to treat Thomas's notion of *beatitudo* or *felicitas*, only twelve reference *STh* I-II, qq. 1-5 as texts for comparison—leaving long stretches of articles (q. 1, aa. 2-3, 7-8; q. 2, aa. 1-4; q. 4, aa. 1-8) to the side. The attention paid to *STh* I-II, qq. 1-5 in one representative rejoinder to Bradley's volume is thinner still. See Lawrence Feingold, *The Natural Desire to See God according to St. Thomas Aquinas and His Interpreters* (Naples, Fla.: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2010), which omits discussion of partial or entire questions (q. 1, aa. 1-7; q. 2, aa. 1-8; q. 3, aa. 1, 3-4; q. 4, aa. 1-8; q. 5, aa. 1-2).

and its corresponding form of life.[31] Unsurprisingly, then, we know of protreptics written by Platonists, Peripatetics, Stoics, Epicureans, and others besides.[32] Protreptic discourse could assume any number of literary forms, but dialogue (e.g., pseudo-Plato's *Clitophon*, Plato's *Alcibiades* I, *Phaedo, Euthydemus*), epistle (e.g., Epicurus's third letter to Menoeceus, the ninetieth of Seneca's *Moral Letters*, Porphyry's *Letter to Marcella*) and anthology (e.g., Iamblichus's *Protreptic*) are especially well attested.[33] One does not have to circumscribe these texts within a stable "genre" to notice their family resemblances:[34] each presupposes that moral inquiry must begin with persuasion, that moral persuasion is always already entangled with competing accounts of the human good, and that the character of such persuasion must foreshadow the character of the inquiry it enjoins. Furthermore, each of these texts deploys various rhetorical devices for hastening the reader's pursuit of wisdom as understood in accordance with a specific conception of the human good.[35]

[31] See James Henderson Collins III, *Exhortations to Philosophy: The Protreptics of Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 17-18; see also Mark D. Jordan, "Ancient Philosophic Protreptic and the Problem of Persuasive Genres," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 4 (1986): 309-33 at 309.

[32] See Dirk M. Schenkeveld, "Philosophical Prose," in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period (330 B.C. - A.D. 400),* ed. Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997), 195-264 at 204.

[33] The list is exemplary, not exhaustive. For further examples see Jordan, "Ancient Philosophic Protreptic and the Problem of Persuasive Genres," 310-14; Schenkeveld, "Philosophical Prose," 204-13. A still very useful survey of ancient philosophic protreptic can be found in Paul Hartlich, "De exhortationem a Graecis Romanisque scriptarum historia et indole," (Leipzig: I.B. Hirschfeld, 1889), 209-300. See also T. C. Burgess, *Epideictic Literature,* Studies in Classical Philosophy 3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1902), 229-31 for a general survey.

[34] The difficulties encountered in the definition of persuasive genres are described in Henderson Collins III, *Exhortations to Philosophy*, 17ff.; Jordan, "Ancient Philosophic Protreptic and the Problem of Persuasive Genres," 327-33; S. R. Slings, "Protreptic in Ancient Theories of Philosophical Literature," in J. R. Abbenes, S. R. Slings and I. Smiter, eds., *Greek Rhetoric after Aristotle: A Collection of Papers in Honour of D.M. Schenkeveld* (Amsterdam: Free University Press, 1995), 173-92.

[35] See for example the rhetorical analysis of Epicurus's third letter in Schenkeveld, "Philosophical Prose," 206-9.

Of course, Thomas knew very few of the ancient works that might be called protreptics. He might have read Aristippus of Cantania's twelfth-century translation of the *Phaedo*,[36] but this can be doubted.[37] Nor, obviously, was the lost *Hortensius* among the Ciceronian works that Thomas inherited.[38] However, he was intimately familiar with Christian transformations of ancient philosophic protreptic—not, it seems, Clement of Alexandria's *Protreptic*, Tatian's *To the Greeks*, or Gregory of Nyssa's *On Virginity*, but perhaps Hilary of Poitiers's *On the Trinity,*[39] probably Augustine's *Against the Academicians* and *Confessions,*[40] and most certainly Boethius's *Consolation of*

[36] The availability of Plato's works in the medieval Latin West is discussed in Stephen Gersh, "The Medieval Legacy from Ancient Platonism," in *The Platonic Tradition in the Middle Ages: A Doxographic Approach*, ed. Stephen Gersh and M. J. F. M. Hoenen (New York: W. de Gruyter, 2002), 3-30, at 12. Cf. Raymond Kilbansky, *The Continuity of the Platonic Tradition during the Middle Ages*, Outlines of a *Corpus Platonicum Medii Aevi* (London: The Warburg Institute, 1939), 27-28.

[37] See R. J. Henle, *Saint Thomas and Platonism: A Study of the "Plato" and "Platonici" Texts in the Writings of Saint Thomas* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1956), xxi; and Wayne J. Hankey, "Aquinas and the Platonists," in Gersh and Hoenen, eds., *Platonic Tradition in the Middle Ages,* 279-324, at 281.

[38] See Clemens Vansteenkiste, "Cicerone nell'opera di S. Tommaso," *Angelicum* 36 (1964): 343-82, at 378-79, which concludes that Thomas had direct knowledge of *Somnium Scipionis*, *De naturam deorum, Paradoxa, Disputationes Tuscalanae*, *De officiis, De inventione*, and the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. See also John O. Ward, "The Medieval and Early Renaissance Study of Cicero's De inventione and the Rhetorica ad Herennium: Commentaries and Contexts" in *The Rhetoric of Cicero in Its Medieval and Early Renaissance Commentary Tradition*, ed. Virginia Cox and John O. Ward, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 2 (Boston: Brill, 2006), 43.

[39] See Joseph Wawrykow, "The Summa Contra Gentiles Reconsidered: On the Contribution of the de Trinitate of Hilary of Poitiers," *The Thomist* 58 (1994): 617-34, esp. at 626. Cf. Jordan, *Rewritten Theology*, 107. The *Consolation*'s availability in the thirteenth-century Latin West is attested in Noel Harold Kaylor and Philip Edward Phillips, eds., *A Companion to Boethius in the Middle Ages* (Boston: Brill, 2012).

[40] The persuasive character of Augustine's *Confessions* is discussed in Erich Feldman, "Confessiones" in *Augustinus-Lexikon,* ed. Cornelius P. Mayer et al. (Basel: Schwabe, 1994), 1:1134-93, at 1116-67; Cornelius P. Mayer, "Die Confessiones des Aurelius Augustinus: Eine philosophisch-theologische Werbeschrift (Protreptikos) für Christliche Spiritualität," *Theologie und Glaube* 88 (1998): 285-303, at 288-89; Annemaré Kotzé, *Augustine's Confessions: Communicative Purpose and Audience*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 71 (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

Philosophy. Thomas also had more recent examples of exhortations to Christian wisdom, such as Hugh of St. Victor's *Didascalicon,* Richard of St. Victor's *Mystical Ark,* and William of Auvergne's *On the Universe* (to name only a few examples).[41] Yet even if Thomas's knowledge of each of these texts were beyond dispute (it is not), it would still be necessary to show that he explicitly recognizes their hortatory purpose (he does not). How, then, can it be shown that Thomas grasps the necessity of persuasion in *sacra doctrina*? A surplus of evidence from Thomas's works can be adduced in order to convince.

Thomas's rhetorical competence is apparent throughout his corpus. He knows that "rhetoric is a science by which a man is able to persuade,"[42] and his knowledge of its technical requirements suggests a sustained interest in the rhetorical manuals used in thirteenth-century schools.[43] In an early example from the *Scriptum,* Thomas notes that an introduction (*exordium*) should render one's audience "attentive, receptive, and well-disposed." Citing Cicero, Thomas goes on to show how the last of these rhetorical effects is sometimes accomplished through

[41] Thomas's intimate familiarity with Richard of St. Victor's *Mystical Ark* is evident in *STh* II-II, q. 180 (Leonine ed., 10:424-34).

[42] *STh* I-II, q. 27, a. 2 ad 2 (Leonine ed., 6:193). Cf. III *Sent.*, d. 33, q. 3, a. 1, qcla. 4 (*Scriptum super Sententiis magistri Petri Lombardi,* ed. M. F. Moos, O.P. [Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1933], 3:1078); *Contra impugnantes*, c. 12, §2 (Leonine ed., 41:A135); I *Nic. Ethic.*, lect. 3 (Leonine ed., 47/1:12); see also *Super I Cor.*, c. 1, lect. 3 (ed. Raphael Cai, O.P. [Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1953], 1:240-41).

[43] For the "causes" (*genera causarum*) of rhetoric, see for example IV *Sent.,* d. 16, q. 3, a. 1, qcla. 1 ad 1 (Parma ed., 7: 760); cf. I *Nic. Ethic.*, lect. 18 (Leonine ed., 47/1:66). For its "offices," *STh* II-II, q. 177, a. 1, obj. 1 (Leonine ed., 10:414); and *Contra impug.,* c. 12, §2 (Leonine ed., 41:A135-36). For its "canons" (e.g., *elocutio*), *In De div. nom.*, pro. (*In librum Beati Dionysii De diviniis nominibus expositio,* ed. C. Pera, P. Caramello, and C. Mazzantini [Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1950], 1); and *Super Psalmo,* c. 18 (*S. Thomae Aquinatis Opera omnia,* ed. Roberto Busa [Stuttgart-Bad Canstatt: Fromman-Holzboog, 1980], 6:72). For its figures (e.g., e*nthymema*, *exemplum, coniectura, contentio*) I *Post. Anal.*, lect. 1 (Leonine ed., 1*/2:9); *STh* II-II, q. 38, a. 1 (Leonine ed., 8:303); q. 48, a. 1 (Leonine ed., 8:366); q. 49, a. 4, ad 3 (Leonine ed., 8:370). See also James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1974), esp. 89-134 and 269-356; Mulchahey, *"First the Bow Is Bent in Study,"* 400-479.

prayer.[44] Another example is the Ciceronian analysis of style in the much later *Commentary on the Psalms*. Thomas remarks that "there are three manners of speaking," namely, "the low," "the colorful," and "the merely ornate. The first," he continues, "is for teaching; the second, for persuading; the third for delighting. And the Apostles spoke in each of these ways."[45] These remarks make plain Thomas's judgment that the use of rhetoric in *sacra doctrina* is consonant with the apostle's manner of teaching.[46] In point of fact, in the *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* he insists that although no Christian teacher should "take eloquent wisdom as the main source of his teaching," a Christian teacher may "*use* eloquent wisdom" so long as he proceeds from "the true foundation of faith."[47] Putting the point more strongly in his *Apology for the Religious Orders*, Thomas insists that a Christian teacher simply *must* make use of rhetoric if he wishes to move others to act: "when urging someone to act, an eloquent teacher must not only teach in order to instruct and delight in order to captivate, but also persuade in order to convince."[48]

This last citation hails from one of Thomas's most personal works. In it, he advances a passionate defense of his way of life and manner of preaching. A vowed member of the Order of Preachers, Thomas does wish to move others to action. And at times this wish is clearly manifested on the surface of the works he writes. Perhaps the most striking instance is found in the prelude attached to the *Exposition of Boethius's De hebdomadi-*

[44] IV *Sent.,* d. 15, q. 4, a. 3, qcla. 2. (Moos, ed., 7:742). Cf. Cicero, *De Inventione* I, 15.22 (ed. H. M Hubbell [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1949], 44-66). See also *Super Matt.*, c. 6, lect. 3 (ed. Raphael Cai, O.P [Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1951], 90).

[45] *Super Psalmo* 18 (Busa, ed., 6:72). Cf. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* IV, 8.11-12.15 (trans. Harry Caplan [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1954], 252-62).

[46] For the dangers of rhetoric (e.g., public display of vanity, deception), see *Super I Cor.* 1:3 (Cai, ed., 240-44); *Contra impug.,* c. 12, §§1-3 (Leonine ed., 41:A134-37). See also *STh* I-II, q. 7, a. 4, ad 3 (Leonine ed., 6:67).

[47] *Super I Cor.* 1.3 (Cai, ed., 240).

[48] *Contra impug.*, c. 12, §2 (Leonine ed., 41:A135-36), paraphrasing Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* 4.

bus. Significantly, Thomas explicitly refers to the prelude as an "exhortation" (*exhortatio*).

> *"First run into your house, and there call them in, and there play and work out your conceptions,"* Ecclesiasticus 33[:15-16]. . . . in the words proposed, the sage calls one back to oneself saying, "*First run into your own house*"—that is, away from exterior things you should carefully retire to your own mind. . . . And therefore he adds, *"and there call them in"*—that is . . . gather together your whole attention . . . *"and there play."* Here one must consider that the contemplation of wisdom is suitably compared to play on two counts. . . . First, because play is delightful and the contemplation of wisdom possesses maximum delight. . . . Second, because things done in play are not ordered to anything else, but are sought for their own sake. . . . And therefore Divine Wisdom compares her delight to play in Proverbs 8[:30]: *"I was delighted everyday playing before Him."* Hence here is also added, *"and there work out your conceptions,"* through which, namely, a human being grasps the knowledge of truth. Boethius, therefore, following this exhortation [*huius exhortationis spectator*], has made for us a book about his own conceptions.[49]

Thomas's prelude to the *Exposition* may be called a protreptic or exhortation to Christian wisdom. What does this exhortation urge? An activity. Precisely which activity does it recommend? Contemplation. But how should one contemplate? Thomas gives specific instructions. Recollect yourself, gather your attention, and then—casting aside concern for exterior things—begin to "work out your own conceptions." Do this for its own sake, says Thomas, since contemplation is the maximally delightful human activity. But what should one contemplate? Readers of *On the Hebdomads* can begin with Boethius's conceptions—a series of "principles" (*principia*), "terms" (*terminos*), and "rules" (*regulas*) from which he has traced a route to the highest good.[50]

The prelude to the *Exposition* is perhaps Thomas's most transparent protreptic invention. It is also his shortest and least ambitious. There is a body of scholarship that convincingly shows that the *Summa contra Gentiles* is best understood as a protreptic to Christian wisdom.[51] Of course, the *Summa*

[49] *Expositio libri Boetii De ebdomadibus,* I (Leonine ed., 50:267-68).

[50] Ibid. (Leonine ed., 50:269). See also ibid., III-V (Leonine ed., 50:275-82).

[51] See Mark D. Jordan, "The Protreptic Structure of the Summa Contra Gentiles," *The Thomist* 50 (1986): 173-209, rev. and repr. in "The Protreptic of *Against the Gentiles*," in *Rewritten Theology*, 89-115. Joseph Wawrykow, "The Summa Contra

theologiae differs from the *Summa contra Gentiles* in audience, scope, and intention. Nevertheless, a comparison of several parallel passages will show that the beginning of the *Prima secundae* retains the *Summa contra Gentiles*' protreptic motivation. The best way to see this connection is to begin with the prologue to the *Prima secundae*. I will consider its dense concatenation of rhetorical figures before comparing the persuasive structures of the *Summa contra Gentiles*, book III, chapters 1-163 to that of questions 1-5 of the *Prima secundae*.

III. The Protreptic of *Summa* I-II, qq. 1-5

The first indication of the persuasive purpose of these five questions is found in the prologue to the *Prima secundae.*

[A] Quia, sicut Damascenus dicit, homo factus ad imaginem Dei dicitur, secundum quod per imaginem significatur intellectuale et arbitrio liberum et per se potestativum; postquam praedictum est de exemplari, [B] scilicet de Deo, et de his quae processerunt ex divina potestate secundum eius voluntatem; [A´] restat ut consideremus de eius imagine, idest de homine, secundum quod et ipse est suorum operum principium, quasi liberum arbitrium habens et suorum operum potestatem.[52]

The prologue displays several curious features. In both its content and in its brevity, it differs from the prologues to the *Prima pars, Secunda secundae,* and *Tertia pars*. It contains no *divisio* or *ordo procedendi*—something that Thomas only pro-

Gentiles Reconsidered: On the Contribution of the de Trinitate of Hilary of Poitiers," *The Thomist* 58 (1994): 617-34; Thomas S. Hibbs, *Dialectic and Narrative in Aquinas: An Interpretation of the Summa Contra Gentiles* (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995). An alternative account of *Against the Gentiles*'s persuasive character can be found in Guy H. Allard, "Le 'Contra Gentiles' et le modèle rhétorique," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 30 (1974): 237-50. Cf. Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 1:104-7.

[52] *STh* I-II, prol. (Leonine ed., 6:5): "Since, as Damascene says, human beings are said to be made in the image of God, insofar as image implies intelligence and free-will and self-power; after we have treated the exemplar, God, and those things that proceed from divine power according to his will; it remains for us to consider his image, the human being, insofar as he too is the principle of his actions, as having free-will and self-power." I have retained the Latin in the body of the text to facilitate its rhetorical analysis.

vides after questions 1-5, in the *prooemium* to question 6—and it is not so much a statement of the *Prima secundae*'s subject matter as a brief meditation on a lofty theme. This is the first curious feature of the prologue. The second is its style. Whereas the prologues to the *Prima pars, Secunda secundae,* and *Tertia pars* are written in unremarkable if not plain Scholastic prose, here we find a single sentence composed in a colorful, high-flown style.[53] There is an ornate yet smooth arrangement of rhetorical figures: polyptoton is high, antimetabole and epistrophe are frequent, and its clauses are chiastically disposed.[54] Thus, the middle clause [B] speaks of God—the unrepeatable and so unrepeated *Exemplum*—whereas the first clause is echoed in the last: [A] "human beings are said to be made in the image of God [*homo factus ad imaginem Dei dicitur*]" and so have "intelligence, free-will, and self-power [*intellectuale et arbitrio liberum et per se potestativum*]." And again in the final clause we read that [A´] ". . . God's image, which is the human being, as being the principle of his actions and having free-will and power over his actions [*eius imagine, idest de homine, secundum quod et ipse est suorum operum principium, quasi liberum arbitrium habens et suorum operum potestatem*]." Polyptoton, antimetabole, epistrophe, and chiasm—together, these figures of symmetry lend the prologue a special beauty that is very uncharacteristic of the *Summa*'s otherwise spartan prose. Nor we may dismiss the concurrence of these figures as

[53] In the prologue to the *Prima pars,* Thomas pledges to write "as plainly [*dilucide*] as the subject matter will allow" (*STh* I, prol. [Leonine ed., 4:5]).

[54] Each of these rhetorical figures are treated in works with which Thomas was certainly familiar. For polyptoton, the repetition of a word by different grammatical case or by cognate, see "homo"/"homine"; "imaginem"/"imagine"; "arbitrio liberum"/"voluntatem"/"liberum arbitrium"; "potestativum"/"potestate/potestatem" (cf. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* 1.36.17 [ed. W. M. Lindsay, Scriptorum classicorum bibliotheca Oxoniensis 20 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1911), 66-67]). For antimetabole or *commutatio*—the repetition of words in successive clauses but in reverse grammatical order—and epistrophe or *conversio*—ending a series of lines, clauses, etc. with the same word or words—see "[A] . . . arbitrio liberum et per se potestativum; [B] . . . potestate secundum eius voluntatem; [A´] . . . liberum arbitrium habens et suorum operum potestatem" (cf. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.28.39 and 4.13.19 [Caplan, trans., 325-27 and 277-82]).

the mere product of chance or unconscious deliberation. How is a reader supposed to make sense of this idiosyncrasy?

The answer points once more to Thomas's specifically Dominican form of life. The prologue to the *Prima secundae* more nearly resembles a *prothema* to a thirteenth-century *sermo moderna* than an *accessus* to a moral treatise. To say this is to say that the prologue functions in this context as an *exordium* to a decidedly persuasive discourse. Its purpose is to make the reader attentive, receptive, and well-disposed to the suasion that follows.[55] It does this by appealing not only to the rational but also to the affective capacities of the reader. Quite apart from its ornate style, the prologue reminds one that the reader—the *imago dei*—is in possession of the powers and capacities to pursue God, the one in whose image the reader has been made.[56] The beauty of the prologue enhances this mnemonic effect by capturing the reader's attention: for beauty elicits love (*amor*), love elicits delight (*delectatio*), and together these passions—as Thomas will later argue—make us ready to listen[57] and "to investigate from within each thing that belongs to the good loved."[58]

[55] Cf. Thomas of Chobham, *Summa de arte praedicandi* VII.1: "Some preachers call their prologue a *prothema*, because . . . before they proceed with the main theme, they lay out a brief theme before the main one, and thus earn the goodwill of their audience, preparing them to pay attention and to be ready to learn" (ed. Franco Morenzoni [Turnhout: Brepols, 1988], 265). A brief discussion of the structure of Thomas's university sermons can be found in Mark-Robin Hoogland, C.P., "Introduction" in Thomas Aquinas, *The Academic Sermons*, The Fathers of the Church, Mediaeval Continuation 11 (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 8-10.

[56] Thomas also knows that a reader may be captivated by appeals to his or her own dignity. See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.4.6-7.11 (Caplan, trans., 10-22); Cicero, *De inventione* 1.15.20-18.26 (ed. H. M Hubbell [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1949]); Cicero, *De oratore,* 2.78.315-80.325 (ed. E. W. Sutton [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1942], 336-442).

[57] *STh* I-II, q. 33, a. 3 (Leonine ed., 6:233); cf. q. 33, a. 1, ad 2 (Leonine ed., 6:231). On the relation between beauty and love, see *STh* q. 27, a. 1, ad 1 (Leonine ed., 6:192). On the relation between love and delight, see *STh* I-II, q. 25 (Leonine ed., 6:183-87); q. 27, a. 4 (Leonine ed., 6:195-96); q. 28, a. 6 (Leonine ed., 6:202).

[58] *STh* I-II, q. 28, a. 2 (Leonine ed., 6:198-99); cf. q. 28, a. 3 (Leonine ed., 6:199-200).

If this argument, that the prologue to the *Prima secundae* is an *exordium* to a persuasive discourse, is correct, then we should not be surprised to find rhetorical figures saturating every aspect of the five questions that follow. And indeed we do. The significance of these protreptic details comes into focus against the backdrop of the structure of these five questions which, I can now show, replicates the hortatory structure of book III of the *Summa contra Gentiles*. In his groundbreaking work on the *Summa contra Gentiles*, Mark Jordan has shown that

> [t]he argument [of *Contra Gentiles* 3] rises from a general assertion of teleological order (1–16), through the thesis that God is the end of all creatures and of intellectual substances particularly (17–26), to a comparison of contemplation with all other possible claimants to human happiness (27–47). Thomas ends the sequence by representing the contemplation of God in beatitude, which is both heaven and the fulfillment of philosophic longing for unfettered contemplation (48–63; compare 41–44).[59]

The below diagram shows that a nearly duplicate structure may be seen in the first five questions of the *Prima secundae.* The parallels are striking.

General explication of the teleological order	*ScG* III, cc. 1-16	*STh* I-II, q. 1, aa. 1-7
Thesis that God is the end of all creatures	*ScG* III, cc. 17-26	*STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 8
Comparison of contemplation of God with rival claimants to happiness	*ScG* III, cc. 27-47	*STh* I-II, qq. 2-3
Representation of contemplation of God in perfect happiness	*ScG* III, cc. 48-63	*STh* I-II, q. 4
Assurance that the end can be grasped	*ScG* III, cc. 63-163	*STh* I-II, q. 5

As in chapters 1-16 of book III of the *Summa contra Gentiles*, the argument of questions 1-5 of the *Prima secundae* rises from a general explication of the teleological order (q. 1, aa. 1-7),

[59] Jordan, *Rewritten Theology*, 109.

through the claim that God is the end of all creatures (q. 1, a. 8). Only now, the claim of chapters 1-27 of in the *Summa contra Gentiles*—namely, that God is the final end of all "intellectual substances"—is more sharply focused on just the *imago dei.*[60] From here the ascent continues much as it does in chapter 27 and the following in the *Summa contra Gentiles*: a stepwise analysis of rival claimants to human happiness terminates in an account of perfect happiness, the contemplation of God in heaven (qq. 2-3). Here, Thomas also includes a string of arguments to clarify the nature of the activity by which the reader can begin participating in the happiness of heaven even now. It "consists first and principally in contemplation, but secondarily in the activity of the practical intellect, ordering human actions and passions."[61]

Like its antecedent, the sequence in the *Prima secundae* concludes with an evocative description of heavenly contemplation and the delight, virtue, and friendships it will entail (q. 4).

The ascent of questions 1-4 ends here; the protreptic does not. Much as in chapters 63-163 of the *Summa contra Gentiles*, Thomas undertakes to assure the reader that the distant end proposed can actually be achieved. In the *Summa contra Gentiles*, such assurance proceeds by reminding the reader of divine providence.[62] By contrast, readers of the *Prima secundae* are expected to have just received this assurance in the teaching on divine government that concludes the *Prima pars* (*STh* I, qq. 103-19). Thomas reminds the reader that God sustains human beings—each one—all children of Adam but also siblings of the Virgin Mother in whom Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit.[63] Capitulating this Christological peroration, question 5 of the *Prima secundae* reminds that—despite the hard knocks of misfortune, ignorance, suffering, and sin (q. 5, aa. 1-4)—human beings can be "turned to God" (*converti ad Deum*

[60] *STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 8 (Leonine ed., 6:16).
[61] *STh* I-II, q 3, a. 5 (Leonine ed., 6:31).
[62] See Jordan, *Rewritten Theology*, 109.
[63] *STh* I, q. 119, a. 2, ad 4 (Leonine ed., 5:576).

[q. 5, aa. 5-7])[64] through "justifying grace" (*gratiam iustificantem*)—"the principle of movement that tends towards happiness" which comes to sinners through "Christ, who is both God and man."[65]

The hortatory structure of these first five questions is itself a device of persuasion. It also contains several additional features of both classical and Christian protreptic. Perhaps the most telling example is the *synkrisis* of questions 2 and 3. A *synkrisis* is a traditional rhetorical device used in agonistic comparisons for the purpose of assigning praise or blame.[66] Thomas's use of the device here harkens back to the *Summa contra Gentiles*. In the first book (c. 5), he makes explicit what ancient philosophic protreptics tend to assume: philosophers must lure students away from sensual pleasures toward the "much sweeter" delights of active and contemplative virtue. Somewhat later, in book III, chapters 27-44, he acknowledges that a teacher of Christian wisdom must also compete for students' attention. For this reason, he gives arguments to rule out the possibility that happiness might consist not only in sensual pleasures, but also in honors, political power, the liberal arts, and even in the exercise of the moral virtues.[67]

The *synkrisis* of question 2 of the *Prima secundae* is at once more compressed and comprehensive than that of book III of the *Summa contra Gentiles*.[68] The arguments of question 2 purport to show that happiness consists neither in *bona exteriora* (e.g., wealth, honor, fame, power), nor in *bona corporalia* (e.g., health, sensual pleasure), nor even in *bona*

[64] *STh* I-II, q. 5, a. 5, ad 1 and 2 (Leonine ed., 6:51-52).

[65] *STh* I-II, q. 5, a. 7, corp. and ad 2-3 (Leonine ed., 6:53). Cf. *STh* I-II, q. 5, a. 3 (Leonine ed., 6:49). The theme of divine providence recurs throughout the protreptic. See for example *STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 2, ad 3 (Leonine ed., 6:9); q. 1, a. 4, ad 1 (Leonine ed., 6:12); q. 1, a. 8, obj. 3 (Leonine ed., 6:16); q. 2, a. 8, ad 2 (Leonine ed., 6:24-25); q. 5, a. 6, obj. 1 (Leonine ed., 6:52).

[66] For the tradition of *synkrises* in antiquity, see Friedrich Focke, "Synkrisis," *Hermes* 58 (1923): 327-68.

[67] *ScG* III, cc. 7-36 (*Liber de veritate catholicae Fidei contra errores infidelium seu Summa contra Gentiles*, ed. P. Marc, C. Pera, P. Caramello [Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1961], 3:9-109). See also Jordan, *Rewritten Theology*, 109-10.

[68] *STh* I-II, q. 2, a. 7, obj. 3 and ad 3 (Leonine ed., 6:23-24).

animae (e.g., virtues and virtuous acts). For "nothing," as Thomas notes, "can lull the human will, except the universal good, which cannot be found in any created thing, but only in God."[69] On this basis, question 3 extends the *synkrisis* by targeting seemingly more plausible accounts of happiness. That happiness might, say, consist more in habit than in act (a. 2), more in an act of will than of intellect (a. 4), more in metaphysics than in contemplation (a. 6), more in the contemplation of angels than of God (a. 7) may ring hollow to modern readers. However, it is well to remember that these were actual views competing for the allegiance of actual students in thirteenth-century schools.[70] For Thomas, the possibility that a student might be more swayed by one or more rival accounts of happiness was very real. His criticism of those rival accounts is also a form of *synkrisis*, and it recalls the critique of rival schools in ancient philosophy.[71] Of course, Thomas knows that a teacher can only protect students from error by proposing "certain aids or tools" by which they can proceed from things known in general to more particular knowledge still.[72] The philosophical vocabulary deployed throughout the *synkrisis* helps to accelerate this movement by furnishing conceptual tools for distinguishing the "object and cause of happiness" (*beatitudinis obiectum et causa*) from its

[69] *STh* I-II, q. 2, a. 8 (Leonine ed., 6:24).

[70] Cf. Bonaventure, IV *Sent.*, d. 49, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 5 (Quaracchi ed., 4 1001): "created happiness . . . is principally said to be a habit" ("beatitudo creata . . . principalius dicit *habitum*); John of Peckham, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (*Ioannis Pecham Quodlibeta quatuor*, ed. F. Delorme and G. Etzkorn [Grottaferatta: Collegio s. Bonaventura, padri editori di Quaracchi, 1989], 16): "I say that happiness principally consists in an act of the will" ("Dico quod beatitudo consistit principalius in actu voluntatis"). See also more generally Edouard-Henri Wéber, *Dialogue et dissensions entre saint Bonaventure et saint Thomas d'Aquin à Paris, 1252-1273*, Bibliothèque Thomiste 41 (Paris: J. Vrin, 1974). A discussion of philosophical conceptions of happiness held by various *aristae* in the Parisian arts faculty of the 1260s can be found in Carlos Steel, "Medieval Philosophy: An Impossible Project? Thomas Aquinas and the Averroistic ideal of Happiness," *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 26 (1998): 152-74. See also more generally *Vie active et vie vontemplative au Moyen Âge et au seuil de la Renaissance*, ed. Christiane Trottmann (Rome: École francaise de Rome, 2009).

[71] Jordan, *Rewritten Theology*, 110.

[72] *STh* I, q. 117, a. 1, obj. 3 and ad 3 (Leonine ed., 5:557-58).

"essence" (*essentia beatitudinis*) and "essential accident" (*per se accidens*).

Many other persuasive devices follow the *synkrises* of questions 2 and 3—not least the vivid description of perfect happiness in question 4. The purpose of vivid description (*descriptio*) is to enhance a reader's visualization of a particular scene.[73] By concatenating Augustinian images of resurrected bodies, Thomas uses this traditional rhetorical device to stir the reader's desire for the rest of eternal contemplation:

> Augustine says in the *Literal Commentary on Genesis* 12 that . . . "when this body will no longer be natural, but spiritual, then will it be equaled to the angels, and that will be its glory, which erstwhile was its burden." Consequently, because from the happiness of the soul there will be an overflow into the body, so that this too will obtain its perfection. Hence Augustine says in the *Letter to Dioscorus* that "God gave the soul such a powerful nature that from its exceeding fullness of happiness the vigor of incorruption overflows into the lower nature."[74]

> according to Augustine in *On the Sermon on the Mount* . . . a heaven raised on the height of spiritual goods . . . will be appointed to the blessed—not as a need of happiness, but by reason of a certain fitness and adornment.[75]

> spiritual creatures receive no other interior aid to happiness than the eternity, truth, and charity of the Creator. If, however, they can be said to be helped from without, perhaps it is only by this: they see one another and rejoice in their fellowship in God.[76]

The first passage evokes the embodied pleasure of resurrected bodies engaged in contemplation. The second vivifies this scene with a depiction of those same bodies luxuriating in the beauty of the new creation. Finally, with a surprising evocation of

[73] See for example Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 8.3.61-72 (ed. Donald A. Russell [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001], 374-80). Cf. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.39.51 (Caplan, trans., 360-62).

[74] *STh* I-II, q. 4, a. 6 (Leonine ed., 6:44). Following Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 12.35 and *Epistula* 118.

[75] *STh* I-II, q. 4, a. 7, ad 3 (Leonine ed., 6:45); following Augustine, *De sermo Domino in monte* 1.5.

[76] *STh,* I-II, q. 4, a. 8 (Leonine ed., 6:46). Following Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 8.25.

resurrected friendship, the third passage serves to quicken the reader's desire for heavenly leisure. A detailed consideration of question 4 would show that these images serve neither to supply premises nor to stipulate doctrines. We cannot, for that reason, dismiss them as "mere ornaments" or illogical digressions.[77] Thomas rather includes them in order to fortify the reader's desire for the end they so vividly describe. Crucially, such fortification is grounded throughout the protreptic of these questions by rousing clusters of *synonymia*—yet another persuasive device.[78] God, says Thomas, is "the First Good," "the Universal Good," "the Universal Font of Goodness," "the Infinite and Perfect Good," "the Uncreated Good," "the Highest Good," "the Good of all Good," the "Unchangeable Good," the "Infinite Good Itself" and "the Good of All Good" and "the Highest Font of Goodness."[79] Could anything be more desirable?

The protreptic character of these first five questions of the *Prima secundae* can be further seen in a number of less obvious rhetorical figures. Thomas's subtle use of *consummatio*—the constellation of multiple arguments for a single point—helps to show how just one of the alleged defects of these questions dissolves once seen through the lens of protreptic motivation.[80]

Consider once more the *synkrisis* of question 2, article 4 of the *Prima secundae*, where Thomas gives two arguments to

[77] Cf. Georg von Hertling, "Augustinus Zitate bei Thomas von Aquin," in *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 4 (1914): 535-602.

[78] Cf. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.28.38 (Caplan, trans., 325).

[79] For "primum bonum," see *STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 4, ad 1 (Leonine ed., 6:12); for "bonum universum," q. 2, a. 8 (Leonine ed., 6:24); for "bonum increatum," q. 3, a. 1 (Leonine ed., 6:26); q. 3, a. 2, ad 4 (Leonine ed., 6:27); q. 3, a. 3 (Leonine ed., 6:28); for "ipsum universalem fontem boni" and "infinitum et perfectum bonum," q. 2, a. 8, ad 1 (Leonine ed., 6:24); for "summum bonum," q. 3, a. 1, obj. 2 (Leonine ed., 6: 26); q. 4, a. 1 (Leonine ed., 6:37); q. 5, a. 2 (Leonine ed., 6:48); for "ipsum bonum infinitum" and "bonum omnis boni," q. 5, a. 2, ad 3 (Leonine ed., 6:48); for "summo fonte bonorum," q. 4, a. 8, ad 2 (Leonine ed., 6:46). For "incommutabile bonum," q. 1, a. 7. obj. 1 (Leonine ed., 6:15).

[80] For additional instances of *consummatio* (cf. Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 9.2.103 [Russell, ed., 92) in the context of *Summa* I-II, qq. 1-5, see *STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 5 (Leonine ed., 6:13); q. 1, a. 6 (Leonine ed., 6:14); q. 2, a. 5 (Leonine ed., 6:21); q. 3, a. 5 (Leonine ed., 6:31); q. 4, a. 5 (Leonine ed., 6:42); q. 5, a. 1 (Leonine ed., 6:47).

show that happiness cannot consist in power. To these arguments, he then adds four more "general arguments" (*generales rationes*) to show that happiness cannot consist in any exterior good whatsoever. All told, he thus gives no fewer than six arguments against the view that happiness consists in power. Yet it seems that the last of his *generales rationes* might have sufficed: happiness, Thomas argues, is a perfect and, therefore, permanent good to which human beings are naturally ordered by their own "interior principles," namely, intellect and will; by contrast, riches, honor, glory, fame, and power all depend on "exterior causes," and more often than not they follow from fortune. "Hence," Thomas concludes, "it is clear that happiness in nowise consists in the foregoing goods."[81] The argument is decisive. Why, then, does Thomas advance no fewer than six arguments when just this one might do? The reason is that he wants to lure his readers away from the goods that might distract from the pursuit of the Final End—and because those unconvinced by one argument might be better won over by another.[82] This point raises a larger question about how Thomas takes the protreptic to succeed. To conclude, I will briefly address this question by uncovering a final piece of protreptic evidence.

CONCLUSION

I noted above that Thomas writes for beginners in *sacra doctrina*—especially for Dominican beginners whom he likens to "little ones in Christ."[83] I then argued that the *Prima secundae* addresses itself to beginners whom Thomas expects to be already schooled in the *Prima pars*, readers whom he expects to know at least partly—and thus at least partly to desire—the end that the first five questions of the *Prima secundae* enjoin. The strategy of the protreptic is carefully adapted to its intended audience. It thus aims not so much to elicit a new desire as to strengthen a desire already admitted (and, long

[81] *STh* I-II, q. 2, a. 4 (Leonine ed., 6:20).
[82] Cf. Jordan, *Rewritten Theology*, 113.
[83] *STh* I, prol. (Leonine ed., 4:5).

before that, already implanted and nourished by God).[84] The means for achieving this fortification of desire may be summarized as follows. First, the protreptic seeks to assure the reader that happiness can be reached. Second, it seeks to fortify the reader's desire for this end by advancing an evocative clarification of the *ratio beatitudinis*. Third, because this desire must be converted into lived action, the protreptic extols the activity by which the happiness of heaven can be pursued here and now: contemplation. This points to the fourth and most decisive feature of the protreptic, namely, the allusions to divine grace. The allusions are necessary because Christians confess that the power through which God can be known and loved is always already a divine gift.

Of course, the final success of this protreptic depends upon the reader's ability to recollect what it proposes. This points to a final rhetorical figure which—as far as I am aware—has so far escaped the commentators on the *Summa*. Questions 1-5 of the *Prima secundae* exhibit a chiastic structure, one that ascends and descends through a tripartition of created goods from the *imago dei* to its *Exemplum* to the *imago dei*:

A	*STh* q. 1, aa. 1-8	*Imago Dei*	[8]
B	*STh* q. 2, aa. 1-4	*Bona Exteriora*	[4]
C	*STh* q. 2, aa. 5-6	*Bona Corporalia*	[2]
D	*STh* q. 2, aa. 7-8	*Bona Animae*	[2]
E	*STh* q. 3, aa. 1-8	*Bonum Increatum*	[8]
D´	*STh* q. 4, aa. 1-4	*Bona Animae*	[4]
C´	*STh* q. 4, aa. 5-6	*Bona Corporalia*	[2]
B´	*STh* q. 4, aa. 7-8	*Bona Exteriora*	[2]
A´	*STh* q. 5, aa. 1-8	*Imago Dei*	[8][85]

[84] Cf. *STh* I-II, q. 1, a. 1 (Leonine ed., 6:6); q. 1, a. 2, ad 2-3 (Leonine ed., 6:9); q. 1, aa. 3-8 (Leonine ed., 10-16); q. 2, a. 7 (Leonine ed., 6:23); q. 3, a. 1, obj. 3 (Leonine ed., 6:26); q. 3, a. 6, ad 2 (Leonine ed., 6:32); q. 3, a. 8 (Leonine ed., 6:35-36); q. 5, a. 8 (Leonine ed.,: 6:54).

[85] The letters on the left-hand side of the diagram (A-B-C-D-E-D´-C´-B´-A´) represent chiastic rings of thematically grouped articles, which are designated by the numbers on the right-hand side of the diagram (8-4-2-2-8-4-2-2-8). B, for example comprises 4 articles (*STh* I-II, q. 2, aa. 1-4) thematically centered on *bona exteriora*, whereas as B´ comprises 2 articles (*STh* I-II, q. 4, aa. 7-8) centered on *bona exteriora*. The chiastic structure (A-B-C-D-E-D´-C´-B´-A´) thus coordinates with the recurring

Thomas subtly hints at this chiastic structure in the response to the third objection in question 2, article 7. In the briefest of passing comments, he retrospectively discloses that the whole of question 2 is thematically arranged according to a tripartite division of created goods: *bona exteriora* (B: q. 2, aa. 1-4), *bona corporalia* (C: q. 2, aa. 2-6), and *bona animae* (D: q. 2, aa. 7-8).[86] On this basis, a reader can later discover that the same tripartite division structures (in descending order) the articles of question 4: Thomas elaborates the *bona animae* (D´: q. 4, aa. 1-4), *bona corporalia* (C´: q. 4, aa. 5-6), and *bona exteriora* (B´: q. 4, aa. 7-8) that happiness requires. At the center of this ascending and descending pattern is question 3, a single sequence of articles terminating in the vision of the *Increatum Bonum*. In turn, questions 2-4 are flanked by questions 1 and 5, both of which center on the *imago dei* who—by intellect and will—can achieve union with God. Lest we doubt the existence of this chiastic structure, it should be noted that the number of thematically clustered articles grouped under the chiasm's rings (A-B-C-D-E-D´-C´-B´-A´) exhibits the numerological pattern 8-4-2-2-8-4-2-2-8. The coincidence of these patterns is too elegant to be contrived.

But for what is the chiasm intended? How is it meant to serve the protreptic purpose of the beginning of the *Prima secundae*? Such questions invite investigation beyond the scope of this essay, but I may close with an initial hypothesis. It seems most plausible that Thomas intended the chiastic structure of these questions to facilitate contemplation on their subject

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numerological pattern (8-4-2-2-8-4-2-2-8). I leave aside here the significance of the question of numerological significance (a common feature of ancient and medieval Latin literature), but see Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, new ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2013), 501-10.

[86] See *STh* I-II, q. 2, a. 7, obj. 3 and ad 3 (Leonine ed., 6:23). Thomas notes the tripartition of goods in I *Nic. Ethic.*, lect. 12 (Leonine ed., 47/1:124), though he might have encountered it in any number of sources, such as Augsutine, *De civitate Dei* 10.4. See Joseph A. Clair, "Discerning the Good in the Letters and Sermons of Augustine," (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2013), which suggests that the tripartition is specifically though not exclusively Platonic (see, for example, *Laws* 743e; *Republic.* 357b-358a; *Philebus* 48a, 66a-67b; *Phaedo* 63e-69e [cited in ibid., 18 n. 38]).

matter.[87] Elsewhere he notes that recollection requires "a starting point," since "human beings, by a certain roving of the mind, pass from one thing to another by reason of likeness, or contrariety, or closeness." For example, from "air," Thomas notes, one might recall "moisture, because air is moist, and from moisture one reaches a recollection of autumn, which is obtained by reason of contrariety (because this season is cold and dry)."[88] By the same token, a chiastically arranged sequence of questions can furnish any number of *principia* for recollecting arguments, distinctions, and images for contemplation. That Thomas would dispose the arguments of these questions in this manner also shows protreptic motivation. A teacher who has traced a route to the Highest Good wants that route to be remembered.[89]

[87] The cultivation of *memoria* in medieval academic culture is discussed in Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[88] *In De memoria et reminiscencia*, lect. 6 (Leonine ed., 45/2:125).

[89] My thanks go to the Saint Thomas Aquinas Institute for Theology and Culture, University of Fribourg, and to the Fulbright Foundation for the support which enabled me to prepare this article. I would also like to express gratitude to colleagues at Blackfriars Hall, University of Oxford and at the Yale Center for Faith and Culture for opportunities to present some of the arguments presented here.

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REREADING ROBERT GROSSETESTE ON THE *RATIO INCARNATIONIS*: DEDUCTIVE STRATEGIES IN *DE CESSATIONE LEGALIUM* III

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IN OXFORD, sometime between 1230 and 1235, Robert Grosseteste produced *De cessatione legalium*.[1] The argument of the text is notoriously complex. Richard Dales and Edward King, editors of the critical edition, observe that it "is difficult to summarize because the arguments, complex in themselves, are further obfuscated by the circular and tangential conventions of the author's style."[2] Indeed, Grosseteste's arguments often seem disorganized.

> (Grosseteste) was not by nature a systematic thinker any more than he was by nature a tidy organizer of material from the past. His strength lay in discovering areas of knowledge to which he could make a new contribution. Having done this, he was content to leave it to others to go further if they could, while he passed on to the next problem.[3]

[1] Robert Grosseteste, *On the Cessation of the Laws*, trans. Stephen M. Hildebrand, The Fathers of the Church Mediaeval Continuation 13 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 15-16. Unless otherwise noted, English translations are taken from this text; the Latin text comes from Robert Grosseteste, *De cessatione legalium*, ed. Richard C. Dales and Edward B. King, Auctores Britannici Medii Aevi 7 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[2] Grosseteste, *De cess. legal.* (Dales and King, eds., xv).

[3] R. W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 46.

But instances should not be predetermined by impressions. As Stephen Hildebrand has shown, if the argument of *De cessatione legalium* lacks the organizational transparency of Grosseteste's Parisian counterparts, it is not so bewildering as Dales and King suggest:

> Grosseteste's argument . . . is both coherent and comprehensive; it is not haphazard but deliberate and purposeful, even if sometimes circuitous. His great achievement is to clarify the larger theological contexts in which one must view the difficult question of the relation between the Old and New Testaments.[4]

The most commented-on arguments of *De cessatione legalium* are the opening paragraphs of book III. There Grosseteste argues that God would have become human, even if humanity had not fallen. Typically, these paragraphs are read as a series of loosely related arguments united by their conclusion that the Incarnation would have occurred, even if the Fall had not. The analytical reading I undertake here shows a greater unity in these passages than previously observed, as it will be seen that Grosseteste employs two basic strategies of argumentation here. Moreover, I will suggest that such an analytical reading is helpful for bringing the arguments of *De cessatione legalium* into conversation with later debates over the *ratio incarnationis* at Paris. This latter point will be illustrated by a brief look at St. Thomas Aquinas's arguments on the *ratio incarnationis* in the *Scriptum* and the *Summa theologiae*.[5]

I. *De cessatione legalium*

In the first chapter of *De cessatione legalium*, Grosseteste specifies the argument he will overturn: "There were many in the primitive Church who asserted that the sacraments of the Old Law together with the sacraments of the New Law must be observed and that there could be no salvation without observing

[4] Grosseteste, *On the Cessation of the Laws*, 16-17.

[5] *Ratio incarnationis* is ordinarily translated "motive" or "reason for the Incarnation." I have retained the Latin, to preserve the ambiguity of the term *ratio*.

them."[6] In part I, he recites and rebuts several arguments in support of these "many in the primitive Church." He then turns to Christology for a "slightly greater way of beginning."[7] Though the assertion is somewhat cryptic, his procedure is not. Grosseteste returns to the Garden of Eden in order to narrate salvation history, and to locate the law and Christ in that grand narrative.

Grosseteste first establishes the need for both natural and positive law in every state of the rational creature.[8] He then recounts the Fall of both angels and humans, drawing attention to the character of their temptation and failure.[9] This brings him to an important conclusion:

> It is clear, therefore, from the fact that man sinned, that there ought to be both the faith which was believed and the law which was upheld. But when man had broken the natural and positive law by sinning, and the same positive law before him, that is, of not eating the fruit, now was not law to him, because he was not in its power, another positive law would be uselessly given to him, unless first he was proven again in the observation of the natural law.[10]

Thus God left humanity to the natural law for some time, until the gift of the positive law might "be added for the fullness of obedience."[11] That positive law was given, initially, to Noah and Abraham. However, due to sin, ignorance, and the growing

[6] *De cess. legal.*, I.1.1 (Dales and King, eds., 7, ll. 1-3): "Fuerunt plurimi in primitiva ecclesia qui astruerent sacramenta veteris legis simul cum sacramentis nove legis observanda esse nec sine illorum observacione salutem esse."

[7] *De cess. legal.*, I.4.1 (Dales and King, eds., 17, ll. 4-5): "paulo altius exordiendum."

[8] *De cess. legal.*, I.4-5. As Grossesteste observes in 5.7, this would include a fitting reception of the positive law for angels as well as humans.

[9] *De cess. legal.*, I.6.

[10] *De cess. legal.*, I.6.19 (Dales and King, eds., 34, ll. 2-7): "Liquet igitur quod ex quo homo peccavit oportuit esse et fidem que crederetur et legem que servaretur. Sed cum homo prevaricatus fuit peccando tam legem naturalem quam positivam, ipsaque lex prius illi positiva, scilicet de non edendo pomo, iam non fuit illi lex, quia non erat in eius potestate, frustra daretur ei lex aliqua alia positiva, donec prius iterum probaretur in observatione legis naturalis."

[11] *De cess. legal.*, I.7.1 (Dales and King, eds., 34, l. 10): "ad plenitudinem obediencie adderetur."

weakness of memory, by the time of Moses it was necessary for God to convert the positive law into a written law.[12]

Grosseteste recasts his narrative with a four-person headship typology at *De cessatione legalium* I.8.[13] He considers "the human race, as it were, in four persons": (1) natural Adam, (2) fallen Adam, (3) Satan, and (4) Christ. All of humanity shares in the first two, insofar as all men are (1) naturally begotten from Adam and (2) originally vitiated in him. The final two, however, distinguish two bodies according to their heads.[14] In the third are "all the guilty and those finally great sinners," for whom Satan is and will be the head.[15] In union with him they will all be cast into hell. Conversely, Christ and his body, the Church, form the other race of humanity. All these together will be granted final glory.

These four persons bear four distinct relations to various kinds of law. The typology allows Grosseteste to specify the nature and possibility of the cessation of (some) law in the coming of Christ. To the first person (natural Adam) was given the natural law and the positive law ("Do not eat"), but not the written law. For the second person (fallen Adam), the natural law remains and the positive law stands until that obligation is removed, but now the written law is conferred in order to overcome ignorance. The third person remains under the natural, positive, and written laws, although they are given in vain as Satan and those united to him as their head do not fulfill the obligations of the law. Finally, those who are united to Christ as their head receive Christ's liberation and redemption, whereby they are freed from the obligation to the positive law as well as the (former) written law. Instead, they are given a new written law. For Grosseteste, it is worth noting that

[12] *De cess. legal.*, I.7.

[13] Grosseteste's four persons appear later, in the fourteenth century, in John Wyclif's *De veritate sacrae scripturae* III, 28. Wyclif lauds and recalls the *dominus Lincolniensis* on the question of the cessation of the law, and follows Grosseteste in treating standard Christological *quaestiones* in this context, albeit in a way distinctive to Wyclif.

[14] Grosseteste apparently has Augustine's *De civitate Dei* in mind.

[15] *De cess. legal.*, I.8.1 (Dales and King, eds., 38, ll. 19-20): "Tercia vero persona est omnes criminosi et maxime finaliter peccatores cum capite suo diabolo."

liberation and redemption are effected, specifically, through Christ's Passion:

> Redemption and liberation through the Passion of Christ was rightly given to the person whom we call Adam the transgressor, that is, fallen Adam together with the human race sinning in him in the beginning. This redemption and liberation were so given that, freed from the pit of sin, Adam may pass over into the person whose head is Christ.[16]

The four-person typology demonstrates the prominence the unitive effects of the Incarnation have in Grosseteste's theology. As we will see, these unitive effects are central to his reflection on the *ratio incarnationis* in book III.

The remainder of book I of *De cessatione legalium* supplies scriptural evidence for the cessation of the ritual law—the positive, written law of the Old Testament (I.11). Satisfied with his case on this point, Grosseteste shows that Jesus is the Christ promised by that law in book II. The text moves through a standard series of topics in Christology, insofar as those topics are anticipated in the Old Testament. The particular time of the Incarnation is treated as an extended reflection on Daniel 9. The Passion is considered in connection with Isaiah 52-53. Taken together, book II produces a familiar description of the coming Messiah: the Messiah brings blessing by freedom from sin and guilt (II.2.1; 3.1-2); is both divine and human (II.2.2-6; 3.3); free from the stain of sin (II.3.4-6); from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Jesse, and David (II.3.7-13); born of a virgin in Bethlehem (II.3.13-14), would suffer insult, injury, and violent death to free people from sin and punishment (II.4-6); and born in the time of Herod (II.7). Grosseteste sums this all up in one paragraph:

> (Christ) is the greatest and best man, without any sin or lie, decendant from Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Jesse, and David, who unifies all the nations in a harmonious way of life by a most equitable justice, who rules over

[16] *De cess. legal.*, I.8.4 (Dales and King, eds., 40, ll. 8-12): "Redemptio vero et liberacio per Christi passionem proprie data est illi persone quam nominavimus Adam prevaricatorem, id est Ade lapso, cum humano genere in eo originaliter peccante, ut per redemptionem liberata a peccati fovea, transeat in personam cuius capud est Christus."

all and has dominion without end, who was conceived and born of a virgin, who is perfect from his conception in wisdom and virtue, who was born in Bethlehem when the leadership and principate of the Jews failed, dispirited by insults and despised, who suffered and was killed in the way that Isaiah and the Psalmist describe at the time Gabriel announced to the prophet Daniel, a time which history has shown to be during the reign of Tiberius Caesar. But it is impossible that all these things come together in any man but the Lord Jesus, son of Mary.[17]

This is the context for Grosseteste's famous reflection on the *ratio incarnationis*. Book III takes up a parallel set of Christological issues, but with the addition of rational demonstrations. For instance, he supplies five arguments to prove that the appropriate place of Christ's ministry was Jerusalem (III.3.1-4). *De cessatione legalium* III.4 gives a litany of arguments for the timing of Christ's advent, all from reason.

The parallelism between books II and III of *De cessatione legalium*, distinguished by the kinds of demonstration supplied (the former from the text of the Old Testament, the latter from reason), support Hildebrand's suggestion that *De cessatione legalium* "is not haphazard but deliberate and purposeful."[18] Grosseteste's extended reflection on the *ratio incarnationis*, therefore, serves the larger argument of *De cessatione legalium* as a rational demonstration of the appropriateness of Christ's Incarnation to fulfill the divine will from eternity. Accordingly, book III's reflection on the *ratio incarnationis* extends Grosseteste's argument, begun in book II, that Jesus is the Christ promised in the Old Testament. Moreover, it exhibits the many unions effected by the Incarnation, in keeping with the

[17] *De cess. legal.*, II.9.3 (Dales and King, eds., 116, ll. 13-24): "illum Deum, saltim concedet quod sit maximus et optimus hominum, sine omni peccato et mendacio, descendens de Abraham per Ysaac et Iacob et Iudam et Iesse et David, adunans omnes naciones in unam morum concordiam equissima iusticia, super omnes regnans et dominans sine termino, conceptus et natus de virgine, perfectus a conceptu sapientia et virtute, natus in Bethlehem deficiente ducatu et principatu Iudeorum contumeliis affectus et despectus, passus et occisus per modum quem describunt Ysayas et psalmista, et illo tempore quo Gabriel angelus nunciavit Danieli prophete quod tempus secundum hystorias convincitur esse, regnante Tiberio Cesare. Sed hec omnia impossibile est convenire in alio homine quam in Domino Ihesu, filio Marie."

[18] Grosseteste, *On the Cessation of the Laws*, 16-17.

four-person, headship typology of book I. The *ratio incarnationis* arises at this juncture as a means for Grosseteste to expand his argument for Christ as the one who brings to cessation the positive law and the former written law.

II. "That God Would Have Become Human, Even If Humanity Had Not Fallen"

The opening paragraphs of book III, on "whether God would have become human, even if humanity had not fallen," are notably obscure. Grosseteste presents a series of arguments which are "numerous (he gives nineteen in all), extensive, and often interconnected."[19] At points he briefly sketches an argument and then proceeds to another, more detailed argument, only to return to the initial argument. The peculiarity of the organization has led his modern interpreters to group and synthesize the various arguments. Several proposals emerge. Where James McEvoy finds five "considerations," Dominic Unger sees ten arguments.[20] James Ginther, similar to McEvoy, rehearses five arguments, although there are important differences in the details.[21]

As the readers observe, Grosseteste's arguments "that God would have become human, even if humanity had not fallen" are diverse, perhaps even randomly arranged. *De cessatione legalium* III.1 gives the impression Grosseteste was collating a litany of arguments as they occurred to him, or he recalled them, with little concern for their interrelationship. This characteristic of the text leads many to conclude that *De cessatione legalium* III.1 is a loosely related series of arguments:

[19] James McEvoy, "The Absolute Predestination of Christ in the Theology of Robert Grosseteste," in *Robert Grosseteste: Exegete and Philosopher* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Variorum, 1994), 213.

[20] Ibid., 213-17; Dominic Unger, "Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln (1235-1253) on the Reasons for the Incarnation," *Franciscan Studies* 16 (1956): 26-34. Technically, Unger finds nine arguments in *De cessatione legalium*, and a tenth in the sermon *Exiit edictum*.

[21] James R. Ginther, *Master of the Sacred Page: A Study of the Theology of Robert Grosseteste, ca. 1229/30-1235* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 130-37.

"[Grosseteste] presents [his arguments] in no particular order."[22] Lest this be considered a weakness, "[the arguments] can, however, be synthesized . . . indeed they gain thereby in intelligibility and cumulative force."[23] Thus, several readings of *De cessatione legalium* III.1 have emerged which reorganize and group the various elements into more consistent, developed, and distinct arguments.

McEvoy's reading has been the most influential. He groups the nineteen or so arguments into five thematic "considerations." For example, the first consideration runs as follows: since God is the highest good and the highest good would actualize the best possible created effect, and since the Incarnation is the best possible created effect, then God, in virtue of being the highest good, would actualize the Incarnation in a world without sin. This may be called the "highest good" consideration. McEvoy derives this consideration by synthesizing the arguments at paragraphs 3 and 4 with paragraphs 8 and 9. Paragraphs 5 through 7, on the other hand, express another consideration for McEvoy. Here Grossetesteste argues that humanity's capacity for union with God cannot be contingent upon the existence of sin. This may be called the "independent of sin" consideration. Thus, we have two considerations distinguished according to their primary themes—the highest good and independence from sin, respectively.

Unger and Ginther diverge from McEvoy's reading on the organization of paragraphs 3 through 9. Both Unger and Ginther recognize that Grosseteste does not consider an independent thematic consideration in paragraphs 5 through 7. Rather, these paragraphs develop an objection which contributes to the argument begun in paragraphs 3 and 4. And yet, both Unger and Ginther find other thematic groupings in paragraphs 8 and 9. For Unger, paragraphs 3 through 8 form a single argument, but paragraph 9 presents a second argument, grounded in divine generosity rather than divine goodness. Ginther, on the other hand, distinguishes paragraphs 3 through

[22] McEvoy, "Absolute Predestination of Christ," 213.
[23] Ibid.

7 from 8 and 9: the former focus upon the divine goodness, the latter upon the glory granted creation by the Incarnation.

The reading which follows is more analytic than those currently offered. Thus, it makes several important contributions: (1) a precise exposition of Grosseteste's *mode* of argumentation, (2) a clear presentation of deductive forms of Grosseteste's arguments, and (3) insight into the place of *De cessatione legalium* III.1 in emerging thirteenth-century debates over the *ratio incarnationis*.

III. The Divine Attributes Strategy

Grosseteste thinks we can supply reasons for the Incarnation that are prior to the redemption from sin. That is, those reasons would still obtain in possible worlds without the Fall.[24] For the sake of precision, the analysis that follows will refer to several sets of possible worlds. The analysis is intentionally rudimentary, so that the concepts employed are both (1) serviceable for refining our analysis and (2) understandable to the lay reader.

Let us distinguish between four sets of possible worlds: W, F, I, X. The set of worlds in W (hereafter W-worlds) are all possible worlds (including our own) with both the Fall and the Incarnation. The set of F-worlds are all possible worlds with the Fall and without the Incarnation. The set of I-worlds are all possible worlds without the Fall and with the Incarnation. The set of X-worlds are all possible worlds without the Fall or the Incarnation.

[24] "Prior" here means priority of the divine volition for Incarnation over the divine volition for redemption, such that the former volition would be elicited independent of whether or not the latter volition were. I am not the first person to introduce possible worlds semantics into analysis of the *ratio incarnationis*; see R. Trent Pomplun, "The Immaculate World: Predestination and Passibility in Contemporary Scotism," *Modern Theology* 30 (2014): 544f. See also William Marshner, "A Critique of Marian Counterfactual Formulae: A Report of Results," *Marian Studies* 30 (1979): 108-39. For a very basic orientation to set theory, which will suffice for our purposes, see part I of David Papineau, *Philosophical Devices: Proofs, Probabilities, Possibilities, and Sets* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Readers with some philosophical training will inquire what sort of possibility is intended—logical, causal, or another. At this point, it is best simply to stipulate the relevant sense of possibility intended: we are concerned with the set of possible worlds that could be created by a God who possesses the character Grosseteste assumes or ascribes to him. We will call this *Grossetestean* possibility, a species of something like theological possibility.

Having stated his question as well as the conclusion for which he will be arguing in paragraphs 1-2, the litany of Grosseteste's arguments proceeds with *De cessatione legalium* III.1.3. The first argument begins from several Anselmian assertions: "God is supreme power, wisdom, and goodness, and he is better than can be thought."[25] Grosseteste infers that God's supremacy requires that any created potency for good must be actualized, lest God be less than supremely good and generous: "For if the universe were capable of some degree of goodness which he did not pour into it, he would not be supremely generous and so not supremely good."[26]

Grosseteste draws a further, comparative implication; goodness exerts itself not only for benefit, but for the *greater* benefit. Hence, he reiterates, "supreme goodness pours in as great a good as it is capable of."[27] It is a Platonic rendition of the earlier principle, which we can restate as follows: if x is some good, and our W-world is capable of x, then x will be actualized. While Grosseteste is consistent in applying this principle, he astutely observes a relevant distinction between two classes of capacity: capacity *simpliciter* and conditional capacity. If our W-world's capacity for the Incarnation has the Fall as a necessary condition (a conditional capacity for the Incarnation), then possible worlds in which there is no Fall will lack the Incarnation. I-worlds will be Grossetesteanly impos-

[25] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.3 (Dales and King, eds., 120, ll. 2-3): "Deus est summa potentia et sapientia et bonitas et magis bonus quam etiam possit excogitari."

[26] Ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 120, ll. 5-7): "Si enim ipsa esset capabilis aliquante bonitatis quam ipse illi non influeret, non esset summe largus et ita nec summe bonus."

[27] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.4 (Dales and King, eds., 120, ll. 11-12): "Summa igitur bonitas tantum bonum influit universitati quanti boni ipsa est capax."

sible. If, on the other hand, our W-world has a capacity *simpliciter* for the Incarnation, then the Incarnation might still occur in worlds without the Fall. I-worlds will be Grossetesteanly possible. In fact, given Grosseteste's application of the aforementioned supreme goodness premise, it seems necessary that worlds without the Fall will be I-worlds.

In the four paragraphs which follow (5-8), Grosseteste gives a series of arguments in favor of our W-world's capacity for the Incarnation *simpliciter*. He begins by clarifying the capacity at stake: it is a capacity of human nature for personal (i.e., hypostatic) union with the divine nature.[28] Next, he distinguishes human nature prior to the Fall from human nature subsequent to the Fall in terms of corruption: prior to the Fall was an incorrupt human nature, subsequent to the Fall a corrupt human nature. He then takes from the Lombard an account of the hypostatic union as union "to the flesh through the mediation of the intellect."[29] Having clarified the relevant capacity, he then specifies what it would mean for that capacity to be conditional upon the Fall: either (a) the soul is more assumable given the corruption of sin or (b) the intellect is more united to the flesh given the corruption of sin. He argues that (b) is impossible insofar as the union of intellect with flesh is greater preceding the corruption of sin, since the intellect shares its eternity (i.e., possibility for not dying) with the flesh.[30]

Paragraphs 5 and 6 refute option (a). Beginning from the metaphysical premise that "everything that is understood is either essence or the defection or negation of essence," Grosseteste further clarifies the corruption of sin: it is a defection, or privation, of essence.[31] Moreover, given the same

[28] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.5.

[29] Ibid. ((Dales and King, eds., 120, ll. 27-28): "Unitum est carni per medium intellectum Verbum Dei." Peter Lombard, *Sentences* 3.2. *N.b.* Grosseteste uses *intellectum* and *anima* interchangeably here, which I will imitate by using "intellect" and "soul" interchangeably in my discussion of this argument.

[30] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.5 (Dales and King, eds., 121, ll. 3-4): "sed tanto fortiorem habuit unicionem quanto possibilitas non moriendi distat a necessitate moriendi."

[31] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.6 (Dales and King, eds., 121, ll. 7-8): "Preterea, utraque corrupcio tam culpe quam pene non est essentia, sed essentie defectio."

premise, it must be that the capacity for personal union with the divine nature is an essence (rather than a defection of essence). Thus by substitution we can say:

The corruption of sin is the cause of personal union with the divine nature.
Everything understood is a defection of essence or an essence.
A defection of essence is the cause of an essence.

This conclusion, Grosseteste contends, is absurd, and so it must be that our W-world's capacity for the Incarnation is a capacity *simpliciter*. Since our W-world's capacity for the Incarnation *simpliciter* is (by definition) independent of the Fall, and the capacity for the Incarnation *simpliciter* is a good, the Incarnation must be actualized in all possible worlds, lest God be less than supremely good (see *De cess. legal.* III.1.3). Thus, the set of Grossetesteanly possible worlds without the Fall will include the Incarnation, and so X-worlds (without the Fall or the Incarnation) are impossible.

Grosseteste produces a second, related argument in support of our W-world's capacity for the Incarnation *simpliciter*, this time in the form of a *reductio*. Suppose that our W-world's capacity for the Incarnation is conditional on the Fall. It follows that if humanity had not fallen, God would not have become incarnate.[32] Possible X-worlds will obtain. But our W-world is a more glorious, and therefore better, world than any X-world because our W-world contains a creature worthy of adoration while all X-worlds possess no such creature. Since (1) "the glory of being worshipped incomparably exceeds every created glory" and (2) "the whole of creation was glorified in the flesh assumed by the Word; it was . . . on fire with the divinity of the Word that assumed it," our W-world is inestimably better than any X-world.[33] However, given the premise at *De cessatione*

[32] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.8 (Dales and King, eds., 121, ll. 19-20): "Ad hec ponamus quod homo lapsus non esset neque Deus homo esset."

[33] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.8 (Dales and King, eds., 121, l. 33–122, l. 1): "gloriositas adorabilitatis incomparabiliter excedit omnem aliam gloriositatem creature"; ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 122, ll. 8-10): "sic est universitas creature magis glorificata in carne assumpta a Verbo, ut ita dicam, ignita divinitate Verbi assumentis."

legalium III.1.4 that "supreme goodness pours in as great a good as it is capable of," if we continue to hold that X-worlds are possible, we reach the absurd conclusion that X-worlds are possible worlds which are impossibly actual because they are inestimably worse than our W-world, which is to say a possible world is impossible.[34] *Reductio ad absurdum*.

In paragraph 9, Grosseteste gives a parallel argument to that formulated in paragraphs 3 and 4 and defended in paragraphs 5-8. God is supremely generous and therefore supremely lacking in envy.[35] Thus, God "creates every kind of creature that can exist."[36] In support of this latter principle, we are given the aforementioned deductive argument from the divine generosity as well as an *a posteriori* argument from the evidence of creation: we see that God has actualized even the most insignificant of possible things, such as insects or reptiles.[37] In light of this empirical observation, Grosseteste then poses the question: "[If] God does not omit the nature of the insect lest the whole of creation be imperfect and less honorable, would He omit Christ, the greatest honor for all creation?"[38] The answer is, of course, no.

These arguments all deploy a common strategy: they move from the attribution of some divine perfection to the conclusion

[34] This is a slight expansion of Grosseteste's argument, which simply concludes that one must think (1) that God would have become human even if humanity had not fallen or (2) this world is inestimably better as a result of the Fall. However, the latter possibility, by implication, is an impossibility for the reasons adumbrated above.

[35] Grosseteste's argument recalls Plato's *Timaeus* 29E: "Now why did he who framed this whole universe of becoming frame it? Let us state the reason why: He was good, and one who is good can never become jealous of anything. And so, being free of jealousy, he wanted everything to become as much like himself as was possible." Plato, "Timaeus," in *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper, trans. Donald J. Zeyl (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Company, 1997), 1236.

[36] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.9 (Dales and King, eds., 122, l. 19): "[Deus] creat omnes species creaturarum quas possibile est esse."

[37] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.9 (Dales and King, eds., 122, ll. 21-22): "nec etiam naturam vermiculi aut alicuiusmodi muscarum vel reptilium relinquit non creatam."

[38] Ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 122, ll. 25-27): "Non omittit naturam vermiculi ne sit universitas imperfecta et minus decora, et omitteret Christum, universitatis decus maximum?"

that a particular effect would be necessary in possible worlds without the Fall. We can express the basic strategy in four propositions:

(1) The Incarnation is possible.
(2) The Incarnation does not have sin as a necessary condition (a capacity *simpliciter*).
(3) There is some divine attribute *y* which supplies a reason for the Incarnation.
(4) Even in possible worlds without sin, *y* supplies a reason for the Incarnation.[39]

Grosseteste's arguments across *De cessatione legalium* III.1, 3-9 utilize this basic strategy. Different values are substituted for *y*—goodness, glory, generosity—but all variants are deductive arguments for the same conclusion: even in a possible world without sin, God has a reason for the Incarnation, and so there is Incarnation. Or, in terms of our possible worlds: X-worlds are Grossetesteanly impossible. This, in Grosseteste's idiom, is sufficient to guarantee the conclusion that "if Adam had not sinned, God would become incarnate."[40] This argumentative strategy may be called the divine attributes strategy.

IV. The Created Effects Strategy

Paragraphs 10-30 present a greater challenge to our analysis of Grosseteste's argumentative strategies in *De cessatione legalium* III.1. These sections are the primary locus of disagreement in the secondary literature with regard to Grosseteste's organization of his various themes.[41]

[39] It should be noted that there is an unstated assumption along the following lines: "If God has a reason for actualizing *x*, then *x*." Grosseteste seems to assume this to be the case, but this assumption is questioned by theologians at Paris in the thirteenth century.

[40] I have intentionally left this inference open in my analysis of the argument, as Grosseteste's presumption will be the very point at which St. Thomas and others will object.

[41] Ginther, *Master of the Sacred Page*, 132-41; McEvoy, "The Absolute Predestination of Christ," 214-17; Unger, "Robert Grosseteste on the Reasons for the Incarnation," 25-32.

McEvoy's treatment, the most influential, passes over paragraph 10 and moves straight into paragraphs 11-15. Unger connects paragraph 10 with paragraphs 18 and 19 on the unity of the Church in Christ's headship. McEvoy observes that paragraphs 11-15 are linked to paragraphs 16-17 and 22-24 as arguments for justification and redemption as "independent needs of man."[42] Ginther, who gives the most unified treatment of *De cessatione legalium* III.1, links 10-15 with 16-19 (and presumably 20-21, although this is not explicit), all of which are unified under the themes of justification and sanctification (or adoption). And yet, while all agree that paragraphs 22-24 form a unit, as do 25-29, these are treated as two unrelated arguments, both of which are unrelated to the preceding arguments of paragraphs 10-21. Only Ginther suggests an overarching unity in Grosseteste's treatise, although the nature of that unity is not apparent.[43]

In sum, paragraphs 10-30 have largely been read as a reflection of the unsystematic character of Grosseteste's mind. And yet, several textual clues suggest such a strategic unity across these paragraphs.

First, in paragraph 10 Grosseteste states: "If there were no [Incarnation] . . . the Church would be headless and so would humanity." This twofold division of Christ's headship (of the Church and of humanity) is underscored by the iteration of Christ's dual headship in paragraphs 16, 17, 22, and 25. If we follow this recurring suggestion, we discover that the ensuing arguments can be divided into two groups: those having to do with Christ's headship of the Church, or what we will call "goods of supernatural headship," and those having to do with Christ's headship of humanity (and by extension all of creation), which we will call "goods of natural headship." So we have two subdivisions of the text: paragraphs 11-24 on the goods of supernatural headship achieved by the Incarnation, and paragraphs 25-29 on the goods of natural headship achieved by the Incarnation.

[42] McEvoy, "The Absolute Predestination of Christ," 214.

[43] Ginther, *Master of the Sacred Page*, esp. 135-36.

Second, there are movements internal to the subdivisions into goods of supernatural and natural headship. Among the supernatural goods, Grosseteste moves with the order of salvation from justification (paras. 11-15), to adoption (paras. 16-17), to union with the Church (paras. 18-21), and finally to beatitude (paras. 22-24). Among the natural goods, he moves through elevating degrees of union, from an argument for humanity as the microcosmic principle of the unity of creation (paras. 25-27), to the God-man as the union between creature and Creator (para. 28).

Third, in paragraphs 11-15 Grosseteste analyzes the sentence "The suffering God-man justifies fallen humanity." These paragraphs are the longest argument he gives for a particular created effect as a reason for the Incarnation. The logic of that argument is transferable to all the goods specified in ensuing arguments, both for goods of supernatural headship and for goods of natural headship.

In keeping with these textual clues, the subsequent analysis moves from the semantic analysis of paragraphs 11-15 to the treatment of goods of supernatural and natural headship of paragraphs 16-30.[44]

A) Paragraphs 11-15: Semantic Analysis

As noted above, Grosseteste gives a semantic analysis, in paragraphs 11-15, of the proposition:

3.1 The suffering God-man justifies fallen humanity.[45]

He supplies two axioms: "the cause is precisely proportionate to the effect,"[46] and "there is always a single cause."[47] The implica-

[44] Paragraph 30 is a bit oddly located, insofar as it returns to the order of grace and the union effected in the sacrament of the Eucharist. However, this could be attributed to the fact that the paragraph is chiefly comprised of an extended citation from Radbertus, which reiterates several key arguments from paragraphs 16-21. The passage is unique in form as an extended citation, and therefore is something of an addendum.

[45] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.11 (Dales and King, eds., 123, ll. 13-14): "Deus-homo passus per se iustificat hominem lapsum."

tion for 3.1 is twofold. First, there exists some perfect correspondence between each term in the subject and object of 3.1. Second, the cause of a particular good (i.e., justification) in our world will be the cause of that good in other possible worlds. Given this rule, Grosseteste poses the following question: if we are seeking to reformulate 3.1 for those possible worlds in which the Fall does not obtain, what is precisely proportionate (or corresponds, *correspondeat*) to "fallen"? He considers two options: either (A) "suffering" is precisely proportionate to "fallen," or else (B) "suffering man" is precisely proportionate to "fallen." If option A is correct, then we will revise 3.1 for worlds without the Fall as follows:

3.2 The God-man justifies humanity.

Alternatively, on option B, 3.1 is revised as follows:

3.3 God justifies humanity.

Now that he has clarified the possible analyses of 3.1 without "fallen" to 3.2 (option A) or 3.3 (option B), Grosseteste proceeds to supply an argument in support of 3.2 and against 3.3 in paragraphs 13-15. In support of 3.2 over against 3.3, he begins with appeals to authority. First he cites 1 Corinthians 1:30: "[Jesus Christ] became [*factus est*] for us wisdom from God, justice to you and holiness and redemption." As Grosseteste notes, Christ confers justice "by his becoming," *factus est*, which is to say by his humanity. Second, Romans 5:19 asserts, "by one (man's) obedience, the many will be made righteous." As obedience can only be said of Christ's human will, it must be that Christ's humanity is involved in the justification of humanity.

Having made his case that 3.2 is warranted by Scripture, Grosseteste expands the object of the assertion:

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[46] Ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 123, l. 14): "est hec precise conproportionata causa huic effectui."

[47] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.12 (Dales and King, eds., 123, l. 27): "semper unica est causa."

3.4 The God-man justifies rational creatures.

Once again, he turns first to authority, in this case to Dionysius the Areopagite's *Celestial Hierarchy* 7. Dionysius's text itself is rather convoluted:

> [The superior intelligences] are contemplative also because they have been allowed to enter into communion with Jesus not by means of the holy images, reflecting the likeness of God's working in forms, but by truly coming close to him in a primary participation in the knowledge of the divine lights working out of him. To be like God is their special gift and, to the extent that it is allowed them, they share, with a primordial power, in his divine activities and his loving virtue.[48]

Grosseteste, following the *versio Eriugena*, renders the final passage "because the divine likeness has been given to them substantially, these kind share, as much as is possible in their preoperative power, in the same deiformity and human virtues." While the *Celestial Hierarchy* is obscure, Grosseteste's conclusion could not be clearer. Even the superior intelligences, the highest rational[49] creatures—cherubim and seraphim—which surround the throne of God in endless praise and contemplation, are justified by the God-man. Their God-likeness is given in virtue of their sharing in the "deiformity and *human virtues*" of Christ, the God-man. Thus, on authority, we conclude 3.4, and, *a fortiori,* affirm 3.2 and deny 3.3.

Immediately, however, there is a problem with our assertion 3.4, "The God-man justifies rational creatures." While Grosseteste takes it that he has established that Christ's humanity is in some manner the cause of justification in every justified rational creature, the question remains as to the sense in which that humanity causes justification, as well as its relation to God's

[48] *Celestial Hierarchy* 7.208C.32-40; text taken from Colm Luibhéid and Paul Rorem, trans., *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 163-64.

[49] Grosseteste refers to both humans and angels as rational creatures in *De cess. legal.* III.1.13-14. Whereas Thomas Aquinas distinguishes between humans and angels, the latter being strictly speaking intellectual rather than rational, Grosseteste makes no such distinction here.

causality in justification. If "the formation of justice always happens in one way, because the cause of one thing is always one,"[50] it remains to be shown how the two (divinity and humanity) are involved in producing the single effect. This, Grosseteste holds, is given in the formula "justice always and simply descends from God through Christ, the God-man, into every rational creature who is made just." Thus, in two ways over the course of paragraphs 13 and 14 Grosseteste refines 3.2 (option A): (1) the God-man justifies not only humanity, but all rational creatures, and (2) the God-man is involved in this justification, "always and simply," as the one *through* whom justice descends to rational creatures, while God is the one *from* whom justice descends. So, we can finally render Grosseteste's overarching assertion as follows (with a revision from active to passive voice):

3.5 Always and simply, rational creatures are justified *through* the God-man.

Grosseteste returns to his original semantic analysis of 3.1: "The suffering God-man justifies fallen humanity." He has offered support of his position that "suffering" corresponds to "fallen" such that, in those possible worlds in which there is no Fall, proposition 3.2, "The God-man justifies humanity," remains true. If so, for these worlds which resemble our own insofar as God wills the justification of humanity, there must be a God-man. Therefore, they will be I-worlds—with the Incarnation and without the Fall. But the entire argument will dissolve if Grosseteste cannot supply an account of his position that "suffering" corresponds to "fallen," which we have called option A, and, conversely, that "suffering man" cannot correspond to "fallen," or option B.

Paragraph 15 works out this final issue of the semantic analysis of 3.1. Grosseteste's argument is extremely terse, but analysis shows that the basic strategy is a kind of *reductio*. Assuming option B and 3.3 are true, without any mediation

[50] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.14 (Dales and King, eds., 124, ll. 26-27): "Quapropter si iusticie informacio uno modo semper fit, quia unius semper una est causa."

(*absque mediacione*) through the God-man, then we must tell a story about the Incarnation in the *de facto* order that does not violate 3.3, "God justifies humanity." We will have to answer the following question: If not for justification, why did God become incarnate? Grosseteste considers one alternative: to satisfy by passion. "The Passion of Jesus Christ is satisfaction for our offenses."[51] For the sake of simplicity, we can state:

3.11 Jesus Christ satisfies by his Passion (i.e., suffering).[52]

By "Jesus Christ," Grosseteste designates the humanity assumed by the Son in the Incarnation, distinct from the divinity which is the sole cause of justification (there is no *through*-ness involved). This analysis provides an account of what it means for "suffering man" to correspond to "fallen" in 3.1.

Grosseteste's *reductio* runs as follows. If the Passion of Jesus Christ is the proper and proportionate cause of satisfaction, and God the proper and proportionate cause of justification, then it seems to follow that "the humanity of Jesus Christ [is] only materially necessary for the Passion, that is, it would exist only so that God the Son could suffer in it and by his Passion make satisfaction for the offense of the human race. But this does not seem fitting."[53] Once again, Grosseteste is terse, but the argument is not difficult to tease out. If the only purpose we can assign to the Son's assumption of a human nature is to suffer and die, then, it seems, God creates some creature (Christ's human nature) for the sole purpose of its suffering. This result,

[51] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.15 (Dales and King, eds., 125, l. 9): "Item, passio Ihesu Christi est satisfactio pro nostro delicto."

[52] Presumably, underlying the assertion is Grosseteste's acceptance of the argument of Anselm's *Cur Deus homo* 2.1-11 that only the God-man can offer satisfaction. In this case, the Son would take on humanity only in order to die to give satisfaction for our offenses.

[53] Ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 125, ll. 12-17): "Si igitur ponamus Deum precisam causam et comproporcionatam absque mediacione aliqua iustificationi, et passionem satisfactioni, humanitas Ihesu Christi solumodo erit materialis necessitas ad passionem, ideo videlicet solum existens ut Deus Filius in ea posset pati, et passione sua pro delicto humani generis satisfacere. Quod non videtur conveniens."

"God creates some creature only so that it can suffer," Grosseteste deems *inconveniens*.

Paragraphs 11-15 develop a semantic analysis that sketches a form of argument Grosseteste will reuse in subsequent paragraphs. Some good *x* (e.g., the infusion of justice) has for its cause the God-man as the means of mediation: "*x* is *from* God *through* the God-man." That is, the Incarnation is a necessary condition of *x*. Moreover, since *x* is not conditional upon the Fall (lest *inconvenientia* ensue), then the assertion holds in possible worlds without the Fall, and so I-worlds are Grossetesteanly possible, and X-worlds are not.

B) Paragraphs 16-30: Created Effects

What follows in paragraphs 16-30 is a series of arguments which work from the premises and strategies outlined in both paragraphs 3-9 and 11-15. The arguments all gather around a concern over various "unitive" aims of the Incarnation intimated by paragraph 10's language of "headship" and hearkening back to the four-person headship typology of book I. Moreover, they follow the arc of topics summarized in paragraph 10: they move from the order of grace (between Christ and the Church, in the sacrament of marriage, and in beatitude) to the order of nature (among all creatures and between Creator and creation). The way in which the two strategies which precede (in 3-9 and 11-15) are together applied to the subsequent "unitive aims" arguments is rather complicated. Thus, I will withhold analysis of these two strategies and their interrelation in the later arguments until I have given an analytic description of those arguments in this section.

Grosseteste argues, in paragraph 16, that the Incarnation obtains in possible worlds without the Fall because, even without sin, "humanity would have been adopted children of God through grace."[54] Unity of will, the greatest possible union without the Incarnation, is insufficient for adoption. "Rather,

[54] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.16 (Dales and King, eds., 125, ll. 18-19): "homines, ut videtur, fuissent filii Dei adoptivi et per gratiam."

along with [the conformity of will] there is the unity of nature which we share with Christ."[55] This unity of nature requires the Son's taking on of a human nature; that is, it is effected by the Incarnation. "Unless the Son of God were a sharer in our nature, we would not share in his divinity by adoption, nor would we be his brothers or the adopted sons of God the Father."[56] Grosseteste returns to this point later when, considering the Eucharist, he cites Radbertus:[57]

> And Christ is in us today not only by an agreement of wills; rather, he is in us also by nature, just as we are rightly said to remain in him. For if the Word was made flesh, and we truly receive the Word as flesh in the food of the Lord, how is Christ not rightly thought to remain naturally in us, who as God-born-man took the nature of our flesh and made it inseparable from himself, and who added the nature of his own flesh to the nature of eternity under this sacrament of the flesh that we must partake of?[58]

It must be, then, that even in those possible worlds without the Fall, the Incarnation obtains.

Once again, a *reductio* is offered in support of the conclusion. If there were no Incarnation in possible worlds without the Fall, then the unity between God and humanity would simply be the conformity of wills, which only brings friendship

[55] Ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 125, ll. 22-25): "Sed hanc unitatem qua sumus unum vel unus in Christo non facit solum conformitas voluntatis nostre cum voluntate Christi, sed cum hoc etiam unitas nature in qua communicamus cum Christo."

[56] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.17 (Dales and King, eds., 126, ll. 5-7): "Igitur nisi Filius Dei esset particeps nature nostre, nos non essemus per adopcionem participes divinitatis sue, neque fratres eius, neque filii adopcionis Dei Patris."

[57] Grosseteste mistakenly attributes the position, from *On the Body and Blood of the Lord* 9.4, to Rabanus.

[58] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.30 (Dales and King, eds., 132, l. 26-133, l. 3): "Necnon et Christus hodie in nobis non solum per concordiam voluntatis sed etiam per naturam in nobis, sicut et nos in illo recte manere dicitur. Nam si Verbum caro factum est, et nos vere Verbum carnem in cibo dominico sumimus, quomodo Christus in nobis manere naturaliter iure non estimatur, qui et naturam carnis nostre inseparabilem sibi homo natus Deus assumpsit, et naturam carnis sue ad naturam eternitatis sub sacramento hoc nobis communicande carnis admiscuit?"

or servitude.[59] Since this unity is inferior to the unity of adoption, the state of humanity in a sinless world would be worse than in a world with sin. Thus, some possible world with sin is better than a sinless possible world, which is absurd. Moreover, we would have to attribute sin as the cause of adoption, which is to derive an essence from a privation, to use the earlier logic from paragraph 6.

In those possible worlds without the Fall, if there were no Incarnation the Church, as the communion of adopted children, would lack its unity with Christ. "The Church together with the Son of God would not have been one Christ, and so the Church would lack the greatest good."[60] In this case, these worlds would be worse than possible worlds with sin. So, the argument of paragraphs 16-17 is applied in this parallel instance: some possible world with sin is better than a sinless possible world, which is absurd.

God's unitive aims for Christ and the Church are further buttressed by an appeal to Paul's interpretation of Genesis 2:24 in Ephesians 5:32:

> Before his Fall Adam prophesied the marriage of Christ and the Church, saying, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." About this the Apostle says, "This great mystery [*sacramentum*] is of Christ and the Church."[61]

What appears to be a straightforward application of scriptural warrant turns out to express a sacramental argument that inverts a temporal objection Grosseteste raised in paragraph 14. In paragraph 20, he begins with an argument for Adam's prophetic knowledge of the union of Christ and the Church,

[59] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.17 (Dales and King, eds., 126, ll. 10-12): "Sola namque conformitas voluntatum non facit aliquam filiacionem, sed inter pares facit amicitiam et societatem; inter impares vero servitutem obedientem."

[60] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.18 (Dales and King, eds., 126, ll. 24-26): "Maximo itaque bono careret ecclesia nisi peccasset homo, non enim esset unus Christus cum Dei Filio."

[61] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.20 (Dales and King, eds., 127, ll. 3-6): "Item, Adam ante lapsum suum prophetavit matrimonium Christi et ecclesie, dicens: *Quamobrem relinquet homo patrem et matrem et adherebit uxori sue; et erunt duo in carne una*. De quo dicit apostolus: *Sacramentum est hoc magnum in Christo et ecclesia*."

which antedated the Fall. According to Genesis 2, Adam held the belief that Christ would be married to the Church, and therefore believed that Christ would *be*. Thus, "while he knew and believed nothing about the sin of the human race, which was about to happen, he believed in the marriage of Christ and the Church."[62]

This leads into a second argument from the sacrament of marriage. Grosseteste distinguishes between three "indissoluble unions" (*indivisibilis uniones*): (1) the hypostatic union of humanity and divinity in Christ; (2) the sacramental union of Christ and the Church, which is a marital union; and (3) the marital union between a husband and wife.[63] Grosseteste reasons that the first is a condition of the latter two. Unless there is a hypostatic union between humanity and divinity in Christ—unless there is an Incarnation—neither the union of Christ and the Church nor that of marriage will exist. Since the union between a husband and wife would have existed indissolubly even if there were no Fall (lest the sacrament of marriage would have less dignity in a sinless world than it would have in a fallen world), so it must be that even in possible worlds without the Fall the Incarnation would occur both for the union of Christ and the Church, the Church's greatest good, and for the indissolubility of marriage.

As mentioned earlier, something of a transition arises in paragraphs 22–24. Formally, the passage shares with the three arguments immediately preceding (paras. 16-17, 18-19, 20-21) an opening by appeal to authority, in this case to (Pseudo-) Augustine. Pseudo-Augustine, in *On the Spirit and the Soul*, argues that the interior and exterior senses of humanity each have their own distinct objects which bring their perfection in beatitude. The Incarnation perfects both senses in a single object: the God-man.

[62] Ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 127, ll. 13-14): "Nichil igitur de peccato humani generis quod esset futurum sciens vel credens, credidit matrimonium Christi et ecclesie."

[63] The three "indissoluble unions" of paragraph 21 indicate further conceptual scaffolding underlying *De cess. legal.*, III.1.15-21.

For God was made man in order to beatify in himself the whole man, to convert man wholly to him, and to be man's whole delight, because he was seen by the sense of the flesh through flesh, and by the sense of the mind through the contemplation of God.[64]

The existence of the God-man, then, is a necessary condition of the final perfection of humanity in the beatific vision.

Unity remains central to the argument. Grosseteste considers the possibility that a human could be beatified by the mind's contemplation of God (interior sense) while sensing something else with the flesh.[65] Perfect beatitude cannot be had in this way, he argues, insofar as perfect beatitude "demands the conversion of the whole attention of the soul to the highest good."[66] Since perfected humans in a world without the Incarnation would direct the attention of their rational soul to God, the highest good, and their sensitive soul to another, lesser good, it will be a less perfect world than one in which final beatitude has a single object.

Grosseteste extends his argument by appeal to a scriptural vision of the eschaton, at which time

the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ will be manifested . . . as more splendid and beautiful than the sun and every bodily creature, because in comparison with the splendor of the flesh of Christ, the sun will seem not to shine. When it will be glorified, the eye of our flesh will be able to see the splendor and beauty of the flesh of Christ.[67]

[64] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.22 (Dales and King, eds., 128, ll. 10-13): "Propterea enim Deus homo factus est ut totum hominem in se beatificaret et tota conversio hominis esset ad ipsum, et tota dileccio esset in ipso, cum a sensu carnis videretur per carnem, et a sensu mentis per divinitatis contemplacionem."

[65] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.23.

[66] Ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 128, l. 30-129, l. 1): "Nec posset esse sic beatitudo perfecta que exigit tocius intencionis anime in summum bonum conversionem."

[67] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.24 (Dales and King, eds., 129, ll. 4-7): "Ad hec caro Domini Ihesu Christi manifestabitur post resurrectionem splendidior et pulcrior sole et omni corporali creatura, quia camparacione splendoris carnis Christi, nec sol splendere videbitur. Possibilis est autem oculus noster carnalis cum glorificabitur ad visionem splendoris et pulcritudinis carnis Christi."

Two consequences follow for possible worlds without the Incarnation. First, for the human creature, beatitude itself would be a state of unceasing misery. The creature *must* obtain every natural good in its final state, otherwise its final state will retain an unceasing desire for something lacking and will not be at rest. In this case, the exterior sense of the human being must perceive God, otherwise it will desire something greater than that which it obtains. Perception of God by exterior sense is only possible if God is united to a creature possessing a sensible body, a condition satisfied by the God-man.

Second, creation itself obtains an aesthetic perfection by the presence of the God-man. Drawing upon his earlier recitation of John Damascene in *De cessatione legalium* III.1.8, Grosseteste argues that all of creation is perfected in beauty by the presence of the God-man, just as wood enflamed by its union with fire becomes more beautiful in the form of charcoal than it was otherwise. And, if a possible world is more beautiful, just as if it is more good, then it will be actualized by a perfectly good and beautiful God (per paras. 3-9).

This transition to the aesthetic good of creation precedes a final transition in Grosseteste's argument. Whereas the other unitive aims of the Incarnation are goods of supernatural headship—justification, adoption, sacramental union, beatitude—the unitive aims treated in paragraphs 25-29 are goods of natural headship.

The foundational premise is given at paragraph 26. Grosseteste argues, in Platonic fashion, that "because perfection and beauty consist in unity, in greater unity there is greater perfection and beauty."[68] And since, according to Grosseteste, God would actualize the greatest possible perfection, it must be that the greatest possible unity obtains in this world and any other possible worlds that God would choose to actualize (all Grossetesteanly possible worlds).

The question is, what is the greatest possible unity that God could actualize in creation? Grosseteste distinguishes three kinds

[68] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.26 (Dales and King, eds., 130, ll. 7-8): "cum perfeccio et pulchritudo in unitate consistat, et in maiori unitate perfeccio et pulchritudo maior."

of unity: numerical, natural (having the same nature), and generic (occupying the same genus). All created things, which together comprise the universe, occupy the single genus of creatures. However, some unities are "stronger" than others, and generic unity is the weakest. It "has the least true unity."[69] So while generic unity would (and does) satisfy the unity-requirement which is a condition of a "universe," if it is not the greatest possible unity the universe *could* possess, then the universe would be deprived by its Creator of some possible good, which is unbefitting a perfect Creator.

But the unity of the created universe itself is only part of the unity which Grosseteste is seeking. There is another unity: that of Creator with creation. And in this case, generic unity does not obtain, since God does not occupy a common genus with creation.[70]

If, however, there possibly exists some single principle in which both the aforementioned "strongest possible unity of creation" condition is met, and the unity of Creator with creation is effected, then it must be that a perfect God would actualize that possible principle of unity. The God-man, Grosseteste argues, is such a principle of unity. As to the first issue (the unity of the universe itself), Grosseteste advances a microcosmic argument for a natural unity between humans and every other creature. Unlike the angels, humans possess a natural unity with all corporeal natures in virtue of the human body's composition of the elements (i.e., light, heat, humidity, and coldness): "The human body is united, consequently, with all the elemental natures united with the elements themselves." Thus, humanity possesses a natural unity with all corporeal creatures, both those composed of multiple elements and those which are simply one element, such as light. Alternatively, because humanity possesses a rational soul, together with the

[69] Ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 130, l. 2): "genus est unitas est debilissima et minimum habens vere unitatis."

[70] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.27. To this point, we might add, God is not in any genus, as there is no genus-species composition in God if God is perfectly simple. See Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I, q. 3, a. 5.

lower powers (sensitive and vegetative), humans are naturally united to all animate creatures: "The rational soul is also united with the sensible soul of brute animals in the sensitive power, and with the vegetative soul of plants in the vegetative power."[71] To this we can add the human creature's natural union with all intelligent creatures, in virtue of the rational soul. Thus, given humanity's unity with all corporeality and animate beings, a human nature is apt for service as the unifying principle of the universe.

If a human *nature* can unite creation, it cannot serve as the unifying principle of the Creator and creature. As there is no generic unity between the Creator and creature, neither is there any natural unity. Either, then, we must conclude only that the creation of *some* human creature is necessary for Grosseteste's God, or else identify some principle in which both Creator and creation are united. If the latter is possible, it must be actualized by Grosseteste's God. And if the creature in which Creator is united to creation is a human being, in whom all of creation is naturally united, then the greatest possible unity will obtain.[72] This is possible, not by natural union, but by personal (hypostatic) union. As Grosseteste puts it:

> If, then, God should assume man in a *personal* unity, all creation has been led back to the fullness of unity; but if he should not assume man, all creation has not been drawn to the fullness of unity possible for it. If, therefore, we leave aside the Fall of man, it is nonetheless fitting that God assume man into a personal unity, because he could do it and it would not be inappropriate [*nec*

[71] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.27 (Dales and King, eds., 131, ll. 2-4): "Communicat quoque anima rationalis cum anima sensibili brutorum in potentia sensitiva, et cum anima vegetabili plantarum in potentia vegetativa."

[72] Technically, it could be that two distinct principles effect each of these unities—one between Creator and creature, and the other between all of creation. If both of these are possibly actualized by Grosseteste's God, then they would be independent of one another given one condition: they could not possibly be actualized in a single principle. If they could be actualized in a single principle, then the same logic that demanded the actualization of two distinct principles will necessarily lead to the necessity of the actualization of the single principle instead.

deceat] for him to do it; but even more, it would be appropriate [*deceat*], because without this the created universe would lack unity.[73]

Thus, in possible worlds without the Fall, God could assume man (because he has in our W-world), and it would be appropriate (*deceat*) for all the reasons we have shown. And so we can conclude that he would. *Potuit, decuit, ergo facit*.

Grosseteste gives another rendition of these unitive-aims arguments, in this case for the "circular fulfillment" of creation: "if [the Incarnation] were done, all creation would have the fullest and most fitting unity, and through this all natures would be led back into a circular fulfillment."[74] Not only does Christ unite all creation in a natural unity in virtue of being truly human, and the Creator to the creature by a unity of assumption, but Christ further unites the series of human generation in a circular unity. "Seth is from Adam, and Enosh is from Seth . . . and so on in a line descending down to Jesus. And I can turn back and say, Adam is from Jesus, for this man, when Jesus was manifested, created Adam."[75] Thus, Christ unites all of humanity in a circle of human generation. By now the argument for the actualization of this possibility in those worlds will be familiar:

Because, then, it is better that both the created universe and the series of human generation be united in such a circular period than that they be deprived of this union it would be possible for God to perfect them in this

[73] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.28 (Dales and King, eds., 131, ll. 9-15): "Si igitur assumat Deus hominem in unitatem persone, reducta est universitas ad unitatis complementum. Si vero non assumat, nec universitas ad unitatis complementum sibi possibile deducta est. Circumscripto igitur hominis lapsu, nichilominus convenit Deum assumere hominem in unitatem persone, cum et hoc possit facere nec dedeceat ipsum hoc facere; sed multo magis deceat, cum sine hoc careat universitas unitate."

[74] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.28 (Dales and King, eds., 131, ll. 16-18): "Hoc vero facto, habeat universitas plenissimam et decentissimam unitatem, redacteque sint per hoc omnes nature in complementum circulare."

[75] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.29 (Dales and King, eds., 131, ll. 27-30): "Possum enim sic dicere: ex Adam est Seth et ex Seth Enos et ex Enos Cainan, et ita linealiter descendendo usque ad Ihesum. Possumque reflectere et dicere: ex Ihesu Adam; iste enim homo, demonstrato Ihesu, creavit Adam."

way. And that these things are thus perfected seems to be manifest, because it is necessary that the perfection of this sort of circular period exist.[76]

This time, however, he introduces a new theological premise into his argument by appeal to book II, chapter 29 of John Damascene's *De fide orthodoxa*, which Grosseteste renders as follows:

Providence is the will of God, on account of which everything that exists receives fitting direction. But if the will of God is providence, it is altogether necessary according to right reason for everything that happens by providence to be also what is best and what most befits God, so that it could not turn out better.[77]

Here we reach a critical juncture: the intersection of will and nature, in this case implied by reference to the attribute of perfection. This issue will emerge as the critical one for subsequent theologians.

Recalling the sweep of the argument extending across paragraphs 11-30, we can now express a second strategy:

(1) God actualizes some created effect *x* in our W-world.
(2) *x* does not have the Fall as a necessary condition.
(3) If there were no Fall, God would actualize *x*.
(4) *x* has a human nature hypostatically united to a divine person as a necessary condition.
(5) If there were no Fall, there would be a human nature hypostatically united to a divine person (for the sake of *x*).

We may call this argumentative strategy the created effects strategy.

[76] Ibid. (Dales and King, eds., 131, l. 30-132, l. 2): "Cum igitur melius sit tam rerum universitatem quam humane generacionis seriem tali circulacionis periodo uniri quam ista unicione privari, possibile quoque sit et Deum sic perficere. Et ista sic perfici manifestum videtur esse quod huiusmodi circularis periodi perfeccionem necesse sit esse."

[77] *De cess. legal.*, III.1.29 (Dales and King, eds., 132, ll. 2-7): "Ait namque Iohannes Damascenus: 'Providentia est voluntas Dei, propter quam omnia que sunt convenientem deduccionem suscipiunt. Si autem Dei voluntas est providentia, omnino necesse est omnia que providentia fiunt, secundum rectam rationem et optima et Deo decentissima fieri, et ut non est melius fieri.'"

V. THE DEDUCTIVE STRATEGIES AT PARIS

The preceding analysis of Grosseteste's two deductive strategies in *De cessatione legalium* III.1 allows us to isolate with some precision two theological problems which exercised subsequent theologians at Paris, like St. Thomas. We can express these problems in a pair of questions: (1) If the arguments of the divine attributes strategy hold, what sense can be given to "divine freedom"? (2) In light of the created effects strategy, what relation does God's actualizing of x in our W-world have to any other theologically possible world?

These two questions are interrelated; the application of divine actions in our W-world across all or some possible worlds is one way to render an account of divine freedom. Duns Scotus's famous contribution to the *ratio incarnationis* makes this most explicit, as do the subsequent debates between Dominican, Franciscan, and other theologians over the *signa rationis*.

These two interrelated problems arise in Paris as Grossetestean arguments are developed early in the thirteenth century.[78] Similar approaches to Grosseteste's can be observed in both Alexander of Hales and Odo Rigaldi.[79] Later in the thirteenth century, when Thomas takes up the question of the *ratio incarnationis*, he is concerned both (a) to avoid the problems for divine freedom posed by Grossetestean deductive strategies, and (b) to retain certain insights contained within the Grossetestean arguments. Thus, his reflections reflect subtle

[78] It is difficult to discern whether and how the arguments of Grosseteste's *De cessatione legalium* were received at Paris. By "Grossetestean" arguments I mean to denote arguments of the Parisian theologians which employ variations of the divine attributes and created effects strategies, thereby producing similar theological problems for subsequent theologians, such as St. Thomas.

[79] Alexander, *Quaestiones disputatae 'antequam esset frater,'* q. 15, disp. 2, mem. 4; Johannes Bissen, "De Motivo Incarnationis," *Antonianum* 7 (1932): 334-36. Other important arguments on the *ratio incarnationis* in the thirteenth century which reject and/or revise the Grossetestean arguments are developed by Guerric of St.-Quentin, Albert the Great, and, most influentially, St. Bonaventure. A full treatment of St. Thomas's contributions to the *ratio incarnationis*, which is beyond the scope of this article, would need to take into account this broader set of texts and the debates they reflect at Paris in the thirteenth century.

deliberation concerning the Grossetestean deductions; he seeks to block the deductions to preserve freedom, while allowing certain features of the Grossetestean arguments to be re-appropriated without the negative implications for freedom.

This subtlety can be observed in both the early reflections of the *Scriptum* and the mature treatment of the *Summa theologiae*. The concern to preserve divine freedom is at the fore of Thomas's reflections in distinction 1, question 1 of book III of the *Scriptum*. There, Thomas insists that a response to the question can be supplied only by appeal to divine revelation, since "the only one able to answer this question truly is the one who was born and poured out, because he willed it."[80] Rational arguments, like those of Grosseteste, can augment divine revelation by demonstrating the possibility (a. 1) and congruity (a. 2) of the Incarnation. In article 2, Thomas only supplies arguments for the congruity of the Incarnation for the sake of redemption from sin. Furthermore, he strikingly derives these arguments from the attributes of goodness, justice, and wisdom. The same divine attributes used by Grosseteste in *De cessatione legalium* III are deployed by Thomas for the opposite conclusion.

A more refined, yet congrous strategy is employed in question 1, articles 1-3, of the *Tertia pars*. Here, Thomas recasts the Grossetestean arguments in the category of *convenientia*. Both the self-communication of the good and the unique unitive work of personal union to a human nature, composed of both soul and flesh, show the fittingness (*convenientia*) of the Incarnation in our world.[81] Likewise, that God became incarnate for the sake of redemption is fitting, which is to say not strictly necessary.[82] Both conclusions, then, are fitting. And so, when Thomas considers Grosseteste's counterfactual—"If humanity had not sinned, would God have become incarnate?"—he dutifully blocks any deduction, Grossetestean or otherwise,

[80] III *Sent.*, d. 1, q. 1, a. 3: "hujus quaestionis veritatem solus ille scire potest qui natus et oblatus est, quia voluit."

[81] *STh* III, q. 1, a. 1.

[82] *STh* III, q. 1, a. 2.

for either response. But he retains the possibility of the Incarnation in worlds without the Fall: "even had sin not existed, God could have become incarnate."[83]

Thomas is not simply expressing a hesitation. His assertion is not simply a concession to his teacher Albert, who favors the opposite response. It is intrinsic to the logic of his conclusion that the question must finally rest in the freedom of the divine will, revealed in Scripture. Thomas's treatment, both in the *Scriptum* and in the *Summa theologiae*, evinces subtle deliberation upon the two problems with the Grossetestean deductions isolated above. The deductions from divine attributes must be blocked to preserve divine freedom, and God must remain free over *x* goods in every possible world.[84]

Our re-reading of *De cessatione legalium* III.1 has allowed us to isolate, with some precision, the Grossetestean problems reflected in Thomas's early and late treatments of the *ratio incarnationis*. Moreover, that larger context suggests a deeper unity between Thomas's treatments of the *ratio incarnationis* in the *Scriptum* and *Summa theologiae* than is sometimes observed.[85]

[83] *STh* III, q. 1, a. 3: "Quamvis potentia Dei ad hoc non limitetur, potuisset enim, etiam peccato non existente, Deus incarnari."

[84] As much is implied by his assertion of the theological possibility of I-worlds (without the Fall and the Incarnation) in both texts.

[85] See, for instance, John Capreolus, *Defensiones* III, d. 1, q. 1, a. 3, ad 1.

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A PRESUMPTUOUS AGE? THE SIN OF PRESUMPTION IN THE *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE* AS A KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THE "AGE OF ENTITLEMENT"

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Of forgiveness be not overconfident,
adding sin upon sin.
Say not: "Great is his mercy;
my many sins he will forgive."
For mercy and anger alike are with him;
upon the wicked alights his wrath.
Delay not your conversion to the Lord,
put it not off from day to day;
For suddenly his wrath flames forth;
at the time of vengeance, you will be destroyed.
Rely not upon deceitful wealth,
for it will be no help on the day of wrath. (Sir 5:5-10)

IN CONVERSATIONS with those engaged in college pastoral ministry, a word I frequently hear spoken with frustration is "entitlement." A recent study claims that we are, in fact, "living in the age of entitlement."[1] While the word is not found in any classical catalogue of vices, I suspect that what we call "entitlement" is the contemporary manifestation of an ancient vice—the sin of presumption. Saint Thomas Aquinas reckoned presumption a particularly serious sin—a sin against

[1] Jean M. Twenge and W. Keith Campbell, *The Narcissism Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement* (New York: Atria Paperbacks, 2013). Prior to Twenge and Campbell's work, the most significant critique of American cultural narcissism comes from Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1978). Lasch covers some of the same ground as Twenge and Campbell, though his critique is more far-ranging and less focused on the theme of entitlement *per se*.

the Holy Spirit—and dedicated two questions of the *Summa theologiae* to its manifestations, but the vice is little discussed in contemporary preaching or scholarship.[2] If, as I am suggesting, entitlement is a contemporary manifestation of presumption, this ancient vice deserves a fresh look.

In the *Summa*, Aquinas approaches presumption from two such different perspectives—as a sin against magnanimity (*STh* II-II, q. 130) and against hope (*STh* II-II, q. 21)—that at times it is not clear whether he is speaking of the same phenomenon. For ease of reference I will call these two different manifestations of presumption "secular" and "theological" presumption respectively, but how precisely they relate to each other is not on the surface clear. How, for example, does an overestimation of oneself lead to an underestimation of God? We will see that Aquinas treats these two types of presumption as distinct, though related, sins. Understanding how secular presumption can—but does not always—lead to theological presumption will require appreciating the distorting effects of these sins on our relationships. In coming to understand what presumption means to Aquinas, I hope we will also begin to see why this vice is particularly prevalent in our own age.

I. Secular Presumption

While presumption first appears in the *Summa* as a sin against hope, Aquinas treats the sin again, somewhat more briefly, in his treatise on fortitude, of which the virtue of magnanimity is a part. Presumption is the first of four sins he lists that are opposed to magnanimity (along with ambition,

[2] A recent essay by David Elliot calls for more attention to worldliness as a threat to hope and identifies presumption and despair as springing from such worldliness. See David Elliot, "The Christian as *Homo Viator*: A Resource in Aquinas for Overcoming 'Worldly Sin and Sorrow'," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 34, no. 2 (2014): 101-21. Presumption is also briefly treated, again as a threat to hope, in Josef Pieper, *Faith, Hope, Love* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012); and Romanus Cessario, "The Theological Virtue of Hope," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Steven Pope (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 232-43. Presumption in its own right has garnered little scholarly attention.

vainglory, and pusillanimity). This "secular presumption" is a more general fault than "theological presumption," so it makes sense to start our exploration with question 130 even if this involves moving backwards in the *Summa*.

To understand presumption, we must first understand what Aquinas means by magnanimity. On the surface, magnanimity might seem a rather dangerous Christian virtue, for Aquinas describes it as the virtue of seeking great honors.[3] To be sure, such honors for Aquinas are always tied to virtue—that which is most worthy of honor—so we could describe magnanimity as striving to be worthy of great honor through great virtue.[4] Aquinas is aware that such emphasis on honor seems to conflict with humility; he even allows that, in a sense, humility and magnanimity pull the subject in opposite directions.[5] We must realize, however, that Aquinas is borrowing the virtue of magnanimity from Aristotle, and, as R. E. Houser has argued, for Aristotle magnanimity is opposed to humility.[6] Mary M. Keys points out the significant ways in which Aquinas's treatment of magnanimity represents a critique and modification of Aristotle's account of the same virtue in the *Nicomachean Ethics*.[7] Aristotle's "magnanimous man," she argues, is averse to being in any sense a debtor to others, seeing this as detracting from his self-sufficiency in virtue.[8] Aristotle's sense of honor bristles at dependency on others. Aquinas, by contrast, undercuts Aristotle's individualistic focus by emphasizing the pursuit of common goods as essential to virtue; common goods by their very nature require the assistance of others. Moreover, Aquinas's understanding of magnanimity is shaped by a strong sense of

[3] *STh* II-II, q. 129, a. 1.

[4] *STh* II-II, q. 129, a. 4.

[5] *STh* II-II, q. 129, a. 1, ad 4.

[6] R. E. Houser, "The Virtue of Courage (IIa IIae, qq. 123-140)," in Pope, ed., *The Ethics of Aquinas*, 310.

[7] Mary M. Keys, "Aquinas and the Challenge of Aristotelian Magnanimity," *History of Political Thought* 24 (2003): 37-65.

[8] Ibid., 43. Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 4.3.1123b-1125a (trans. Martin Ostwald ([Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1999]).

human beings' mutual dependence on each other and on God.[9] Aquinas' treatment of such virtues as religion, piety, and gratitude makes clear that he regards acknowledging our dependence on others—especially those such as our parents and God to whom our debt can never be repaid—as essential to virtue.[10]

For Aquinas, the acknowledgment of such debts is a question of acknowledging reality; this truthful assessment of reality is the common feature holding magnanimity and humility together as complementary.[11] Both depend upon the accurate assessment of our own abilities, though magnanimity helps us to recognize our fullest potential while humility helps us to recognize our limitations and shifts our focus beyond ourselves to God, the source of our gifts.[12] Houser refers to the recognition of our great abilities as divine gifts as the move by which Aquinas "baptizes" Aristotelian magnanimity.[13] Furthermore, as already alluded to, although honor provides the matter for magnanimity, great deeds are the virtue's ends.[14] When honor itself becomes the end—one's reason for striving—we fall into ambition, a sin, like presumption, opposed to magnanimity by way of excess.[15] Aquinas's notion of ambition is more expansive than excess desire for honor, however, for he argues that ambition includes striving to accomplish great deeds that are either not aimed at the good of others or are done without reference to God. Thus, as his account of magnanimity develops, the importance he ascribes to honor is relativized, subordinated to the magnanimous individual's relationships with God and others.

Before turning directly to presumption, it will be helpful also to have in mind some understanding of pusillanimity, another sin opposed to magnanimity, though opposed by way of defect rather than excess. Appreciating what is sinful in pusillanimity

[9] Keys, "Aquinas and the Challenge of Aristotelian Magnanimity," 49.
[10] *STh* II-II, qq. 80, 101, and 106.
[11] Keys, "Aquinas and the Challenge of Aristotelian Magnanimity," 53.
[12] *STh* II-II, q. 129, a. 3, ad 4.
[13] Houser, "The Virtue of Courage," 311. See *STh* II-II, q. 131, a. 1.
[14] *STh* II-II, q. 129, a. 8.
[15] *STh* II-II, q. 131, a. 1.

helps to balance our understanding of magnanimity, allowing us to see why Aquinas went to the trouble of "salvaging" the somewhat problematic Aristotelian virtue rather than simply dropping it from the *Summa*. Pusillanimity amounts to squandering one's gifts and potential. Aquinas illustrates the vice with the biblical parable of the servant who buries the money entrusted to him by his master rather than invest it, earning the master's condemnation (Matt 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27). He goes so far as to declare that pusillanimity is a more serious sin than presumption, for it represents self-satisfaction of a different sort, a point to which we will return when comparing theological and secular presumption.[16] To understand why he thinks pusillanimity is such a grave sin, we should recall the emphasis he places on happiness as the actualization of our potential.[17] Perfection, for Aquinas, consists in actualizing a thing's full potential, so pusillanimity represents the choice of imperfection over perfection. It amounts to the refusal to live fully. That people should desire to attain great virtue is fully consistent with Aquinas's thought. The fact that he cites a gospel parable to explain a sin opposed to magnanimity already implies a connection between magnanimity and the theological virtue of hope, which, as we shall see, deals explicitly with eternal life. Both magnanimous and hopeful people strain upward, a movement undercut by pusillanimity. The pusillanimous reach for less than life's highest good, stopping short of perfection, ultimately settling for less than God.

Eventually I will argue that theological presumption also involves a kind of pusillanimity, but here it should be noted that when Aquinas treats secular presumption he speaks in terms of excess. Unlike ambition and vainglory—which cause us to seek honor and glory as ends in themselves—secular presumption is oriented toward real accomplishments. The ambitious and vainglorious would be happy even with undeserved honor and glory, but the presumptuous person attempts genuine acts of

[16] *STh* II-II, q. 133, a. 2, ad 4.
[17] *STh* I-II, q. 3, a. 2.

virtue. The problem is that presumptuous individuals strive for accomplishments that exceed their actual powers. Even this might not be a problem for Aquinas if such individuals turned to God for assistance; union with God, after all, exceeds our natural capabilities, yet striving for such a spiritual goal is life's highest good. The presumptuous, however, neglect God's assistance when striving for virtue, as if they themselves possessed God's power.[18] Secular presumption's fault lies in the erroneous overestimation of one's own abilities.

Though the question of eternal life is always in the background of Aquinas's ethical thought, when treating secular presumption in question 130 of the *Secunda secundae* he has in mind the overestimation of our abilities in all spheres of life. Presumption can lead to the vices of fearlessness and excess daring, whereby we do not fear those things it is reasonable to fear or we take aggressive risks when it is unreasonable to do so.[19] The presumptuous individual can go wrong in many ways.[20] He could, for example, think he has some quality that in reality he lacks—imagining himself fluent in French only to find himself mute upon stepping off the plane in Paris. Or she could assume that she possesses moral goodness because of some unrelated quality; so the celebrity thinks herself wise just because she is famous. Aquinas suggests that an overreliance on other people's opinions fuels this latter manifestation of presumption. The celebrity whose fame might rest on some genuine talent—acting, say—is asked by the entertainment media for her opinion on the great moral quandaries of the day; even if she has never given such matters much previous thought, she comes to regard her opinion as of great importance simply because she is being asked. Human opinion, Aquinas is acutely aware, is often based on irrational, and sometimes rather superficial, factors. At times, such factors can make the virtues of the presumptuous appear to surpass those of the magnanimous. Aquinas rather wryly observes, however, that while

[18] *STh* II-II, q. 130, a. 1, ad 2 and 3.
[19] *STh* II-II, q. 126, a. 1; and q. 127, a. 2, ad 1.
[20] *STh* II-II, q. 130, a. 2, ad 3.

presumptuous individuals always exceed their own abilities, they suffer no excess of actual accomplishments.[21]

The dynamics of presumption described above seem to me to embody the trend of entitlement so prevalent and troubling today. Psychologists Jean M. Twenge and W. Keith Campbell speak of this trend as an expression of narcissism. They describe narcissism as the "disease of excessive self-admiration" and, in an observation reminiscent of Aquinas, note that while narcissists tend to possess average abilities, they see themselves as fundamentally superior to others.[22] Twenge and Campbell cite studies to show that, contrary to conventional cultural wisdom, high self-esteem does not correspond to increased success academically or professionally, and sometimes actually decreases performance.[23] Their data suggest that in our contemporary celebration of self-esteem we often leave out the element Aquinas sees as the crucial common denominator preventing magnanimity from shriveling into pusillanimity or spilling over into presumption: the truthful assessment of our own abilities. They also suggest the reason why, as Aquinas notes, presumptuous individuals at times *seem* to surpass magnanimous people: those concerned with appearances naturally tend to surpass others in visibility, creating the illusion of success.[24] However, Twenge and Campbell strongly defend the notion that over the long term narcissism hinders rather than boosts actual accomplishment.[25]

[21] *STh* II-II, q. 130, a. 2.

[22] Twenge and Campbell, *Narcissism Epidemic*, 18-19. They distinguish Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD), an extreme and clinically diagnosable version of narcissism, from more widespread narcissistic traits present in our culture at large. While NPD is on the rise—almost one in ten Americans in their twenties has experienced its symptoms—they argue that narcissism as both an individual and a cultural trait has even more dramatically risen (ibid., 2-3, 22-23).

[23] Ibid., 48-51. Twenge and Campbell, to be sure, are not advocating feeling lousy about oneself in their critique of contemporary attitudes surrounding self-esteem. Instead, quite consistently with Thomistic thought, they seem to be critical of seeing feeling good about oneself as an end in itself. They would likely be quite comfortable with the balance Aquinas strikes between magnanimity and humility.

[24] Ibid., 53-54. Cf. *STh* II-II, q. 130, a. 2, ad 3.

[25] Twenge and Campbell, *Narcissism Epidemic*, 42-47.

Twenge and Campbell identify several root causes of the growth in cultural narcissism they claim to trace over the past four decades: parenting techniques, the growth in the celebrity media culture, technological changes that encourage us to put all our life on display, and economic factors—such as easy credit—that encourage overindulgence.[26] Their chapters dealing with each of these areas provide compelling arguments (and amusing examples), but Aquinas's analysis of presumption pushes us to look more deeply still into the spiritual dynamics behind the growth in presumption.[27]

Before addressing theological presumption, however, it is worth returning to Aquinas's observation that the possession of certain types of goods—wealth or status—can lead us to assume that our virtues are greater than they are. While Twenge and Campbell provide a number of cringe-inducing anecdotes involving celebrities from Paris Hilton to Barry Bonds, I would contend that this type of presumption is a temptation for anyone growing up in relatively privileged groups—thus the sense of entitlement observed by campus ministers among their mostly middleclass and upper-middle class students.[28] Aquinas would point to the temptation to imagine that we *deserve* the privileges into which we are born. This sense of entitlement tends to obscure the ways in which one's privileges depend upon the work and sacrifices of other people—one's parents, grandparents, other members of society—and God' grace. While Aquinas's discussion is framed in terms of the individual "presumptuous man," his overall emphasis on the common good and his analysis of the effect of popular opinion on the

[26] Ibid., 73-140.

[27] David Elliot ("The Christian as *Homo Viator*," 108) suggests that the figure of the "self-made man" prominent in some versions of the American mythology may predispose us—perhaps Americans in particular—to secular presumption. I will give Elliot's analysis of worldliness as feeding presumption greater attention when turning to presumption as a sin against hope. In Lasch's critique, the figure of the "self-made man," which once embodied the austere ideals of the Protestant work ethic, has degenerated into therapeutic self-absorption (*Culture of Narcissism*, 52-53, 59-60).

[28] Twenge and Campbell, *Narcissism Epidemic*, see esp. 90-93.

dynamics of presumption hint at a social dimension of the sin.[29] In other words, it seems consistent with Aquinas's thought to argue that whole cultures can become prone to presumption. For example, those from economically more advanced nations might be tempted to imagine that their countries are also more "civilized"—morally advanced—than those of the Third World, conflating wealth with virtue. We can also be tempted into a "myth of progress" that equates technological advancement with moral improvement; we see evidence of such modern presumptuousness in the way in which the adjective "medieval" is frequently used as synonymous with barbarism, though the twentieth century produced Verdun and Auschwitz. While it is impossible in this article to explore all of the ways in which presumption distorts our relationships as individuals and societies, Aquinas's analysis should at least make us aware of the ways in which many of the benefits that characterize modern Western cultures—material prosperity and technological advancement in particular—also make us vulnerable to presumptuous attitudes.

II. Theological Presumption

Perhaps the most distinctive contribution offered by Aquinas's analysis of the phenomenon we are discussing—whether we call it entitlement or presumption—is the emphasis he places on its relationship with our attitudes toward eternal life. A Christian ethics aiming at anything less than eternal life, after all, would make little sense to him. Thus, even when he is treating secular presumption, he is concerned with the sin's spiritual repercussions, as is evident from the fact that he calls even secular presumption a sin.[30] In fact, one could easily make

[29] Aquinas is clear that the happiness of the individual cannot be understood apart from his relationship to "universal happiness" because the individual always exists as part of a larger whole (*STh* II-II, q. 90, a. 2; see also I-II, q. 3, a. 2, ad 2).

[30] The location of secular presumption within the *Summa* also hints at its relevance to the journey toward heaven, for Aquinas places magnanimity and its corresponding vices within his treatise on fortitude. Fortitude, like magnanimity, undergoes significant modification when Aquinas adopts the virtue from Aristotle. Aristotle considers the

the argument that Aquinas is primarily interested in presumption as it pertains to eternal life, for the sin first arises in the *Summa* in the context of hope in eternal life, and there it receives its lengthiest treatment.

Theological presumption is a sin against hope, one of the theological virtues. Aquinas distinguishes the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, which are infused in the soul directly from God, from the natural virtues acquired by habit.[31] Such natural virtues can be acquired by anyone, Christian or non-Christian, while the theological virtues are a gift of God inseparable from Christian revelation.[32] In fact, faith—belief in God and his self-revelation in Christ—is the necessary first step on one's journey to eternal life.[33] Hope, as we shall see, likewise has as its object eternal life.[34] While Aquinas allows that we often hope and pray for goods other than eternal life *per se*, including temporal goods, he says that such secondary goods ought to be hoped for insofar as they pertain to eternal happiness.[35] Finally, charity is the supernatural union with God as our last end.[36] Charity perfects all the other virtues, and without charity even faith and hope would be lifeless.[37] Mortal sin means the loss of charity and, therefore, eternal life, though it does not necessarily entail the loss of the other virtues.[38]

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paradigmatic act of fortitude to be death in battle (*Nic Ethic*. 3.6.1115a.25-30). Aquinas, however, expands the notion of "battle" to include all forms of spiritual combat (*STh* II-II, q. 123, a. 5; q. 124, a. 2). In fact, he replaces death in battle with martyrdom as the paradigmatic act of fortitude (II-II, q. 123; cf. q. 124, a. 2). He even claims the need for supernatural fortitude for perseverance to eternal life, an end that exceeds our natural human capacities (II-II, q. 139, a. 1). I note all of this merely to show that Aquinas's concern with eternal life shines through his treatment of the cardinal virtues.

[31] *STh* I-II, q. 63, a. 2.

[32] *STh* I-II, q. 65, a. 2.

[33] *STh* II-II, q. 2, a. 7; q. 4, a. 1.

[34] *STh* II-II, q. 17, a. 2.

[35] Ibid., ad 2.

[36] *STh* II-II, q. 23, aa. 1 and 7.

[37] *STh* II-II, q. 4, a. 3; II-II, q. 17, a. 8.

[38] *STh* I-II, q. 71, a. 4.

What is most important to understand here is the way that Aquinas sees human life as having basically two possible orientations: the first toward earthly happiness and the second toward eternal, perfect happiness.[39] Pagans, for example, can perform virtuous acts and possess habits of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance; in themselves, however, these virtues are insufficient for the higher good of eternal union with God.[40] They might help to remove potential obstacles to eternal life, but without the addition of the supernatural gift of charity they remain essentially empty containers for true virtue. The infusion of the theological virtues changes the very trajectory of one's life; all of one's actions come to aim at an end beyond this life.[41]

All mortal sin, presumption included, can be thought of as lowering the trajectory of our actions away from the end of eternal life with God. Theological presumption, Aquinas believes, does so by undermining hope. The scholarly attention presumption has thus far received has come mostly in the context of the exploration of the virtue of hope. Josef Pieper and Romanus Cessario, O.P., both emphasize that hope requires an affective movement toward a future good; to be an object of hope such a good must be (1) not yet in our possession and (2) difficult to attain but (3) nonetheless attainable.[42] Aquinas repeatedly uses the word "arduous" to describe the object of hope, implying a sense of sustained struggle to attain hope's end. As we have already seen, for Aquinas, the good at which hope aims is ultimately eternal life. Consequently, as Pieper points out, hope for Aquinas is a resolutely supernatural virtue that makes no sense apart from its reference to Christ.[43] As Cessario elaborates, because of the good at which it aims, hope

[39] *STh* I-II, q. 5, a. 5.

[40] *STh* II-II, q. 23, a. 7.

[41] The supernatural significance one's actions come to attain in virtue of the infusion of charity is described by Aquinas as "merit" (*STh* I-II, q. 114). Pieper succinctly points out that Aquinas's understanding of merit does not entail Pelagianism but presupposes the existence of something that cannot be merited (*Faith, Hope, Love*, 93-94).

[42] Cessario, "Theological Virtue of Hope," 232-33; Pieper, *Faith, Hope, Love*, 125.

[43] Pieper, *Faith, Hope, Love*, 105-6.

makes us realize that we must rely on God; hope's virtuousness consists precisely in its reliance on divine help.[44]

Aquinas distinguishes hope from faith in that while faith allows us to know the truth God has revealed to us—which includes the good of eternal life—hope moves us to attain that good.[45] As Cessario and Pieper point out, both faith and hope pertain to the realization of a future good; therefore, faith and hope do not exist in heaven—though charity does—because the blessed already enjoy the happiness to which faith and hope look forward.[46] This life, however, is characterized by our journey toward the perfected charity of heaven.[47] Cessario and Pieper rightly make much of the movement that is characteristic of such a journey. Aquinas repeatedly uses the word "wayfarer" to describe our state in this world. Such movement is not, obviously, geographical, but consists in our constant transformation as we grow in union with God. Such growth is inseparable from charity, for Aquinas says that acts of charity increase our very capacity for charity.[48] It is worth pausing to appreciate the implications of his vision, the grandeur of his conception of heaven, for he is arguing that salvation means we will not just reach our fullest potential, but that we will exceed it.

Whereas the distinguishing characteristic of sins against faith is the denial of the truth toward which we aim, the distinguishing characteristic of sins against hope is in some way to give up on the journey itself, to call a halt to our transformation. This giving up is most apparent in the first sin against hope Aquinas addresses in the *Summa*: despair. Despair also involves false beliefs, but what is most characteristic of despair is the deficient movement of the appetitive power corresponding to those false beliefs.[49] The false intellect that is a part of despair does not necessarily constitute heresy or

[44] Cessario, "Theological Virtue of Hope," 234-35.
[45] *STh* II-II, q. 17, a. 6.
[46] *STh* II-II, q. 18, a. 2; q. 24, a. 8.
[47] *STh* II-II, q. 24, a. 4.
[48] *STh* II-II, q. 24, a. 6.
[49] *STh* II-II, q. 20, a. 1.

unbelief; the despairing person, it is true, believes that God refuses to pardon his sins but he need not believe that God refuses to pardon sins in general.[50] Aquinas sees the root of despair not in a false doctrine, but in the preference of one's own guilt to God's mercy.[51] Such a perverse choice can arise from many things, from an overindulgence in sensual pleasures leading to sloth to an aberrant sense of pride.[52] The false choice the despairing make can be exacerbated if they choose to fill the void created by the absence of hope with worldly goods.[53] Whatever its origin, despair is a particularly dangerous sin because it precludes the possibility of sin's remedy; the absence of hope negates the will's ability to move one away from evil and toward good.

That despair involves a dearth of hope should be apparent enough, but when it comes to the relationship between presumption and hope, Aquinas's picture becomes more complicated. Following Aristotle, Aquinas typically treats vices as being opposed to their corresponding virtue either by excess or deficiency. As we have already seen, ambition, presumption, and vainglory are opposed to magnanimity by excess, and pusillanimity is opposed by deficiency. Despair is opposed to hope by deficiency, and Aquinas treats presumption as its corresponding opposite. But the correspondence is asymmetrical because he has already argued that it is impossible for hope—or any of the theological virtues—to be excessive.[54]

[50] *STh* II-II, q. 20, a. 2.

[51] Ibid., ad 2.

[52] *STh* II-II, q. 20, a. 4; q. 20, a. 2, ad 2. James Thomson's poem "Once in a Saintly Passion" captures the pride that leads to despair:

> Once in a saintly passion
> I cried with desperate grief,
> "O Lord, my heart is black with guile,
> Of sinners I am chief."
> Then stooped my guardian angel
> And whispered from behind,
> "Vanity, my little man,
> You're nothing of the kind."

[53] *STh* II-II, q. 20, a. 1, ad 1.

[54] *STh* II-II, q. 17, a. 5, ad 2.

Aquinas himself raises this issue in an objection.[55] Significantly, he has preemptively closed off one possible reply to this objection in question 21, article 1 of the *Secunda secundae* by insisting that the presumptuous do indeed trust in God. Each of the three initial objections in this article raises the argument that presumption must go wrong by trusting in something other than God, namely, human power. In fact, having already read question 130, we know that Aquinas speaks of secular presumption in precisely these terms, as an inordinate overconfidence in our own power to the detriment of reliance on God. In the body of his reply to these objections, Aquinas insists he is dealing with two varieties of presumption. Presumption against magnanimity leads us to trust in human power when we should trust in God, but presumption against hope leads us to trust in God—though in the wrong way. This presumption is a more serious offence since it constitutes a sin against the Holy Spirit.[56] Here we might note that the distinction between secular and theological presumption is not reducible to a difference in their objects—that is, that secular presumption aims at secular goods but theological presumption aims at religious goods. It is possible to overestimate one's ability to achieve some religious good, for example by overestimating one's stamina before undertaking a strenuous pilgrimage. Aquinas offers Peter's premature boast that he is willing to suffer with Christ as an example of secular, not theological, presumption; Peter's object is religious, but his error comes from misunderstanding himself, not God.[57]

Sorting out the relationship between the two varieties of presumption is a task to which we will shortly turn, but first we need to be clear about how we can misuse trust in God. We have seen that it is impossible to hope in God too much or too strongly. Instead, Aquinas speaks of inordinate or unbecoming hope.[58] Presumptuous hope is inordinate on our part, but its

[55] *STh* II-II, q. 21, a. 2, obj. 2.
[56] *STh* II-II, q. 21, a. 1, ad 1.
[57] *STh* II-II, q. 130, a. 2, ad 3.
[58] *STh* II-II, q. 21, a. 2, ad 1.

unbecomingness refers to the picture of God it presupposes. What Aquinas is driving at is that theological presumption leads to trust in a false understanding of God. In the *sed contra* of the first article on theological presumption, instead of relying on the lapidary phrase of a recognized authority as he normally does, Aquinas advances an argument of his own: the presumptuous ignore God's justice. Theological presumption comes close to heresy in that it seems to involve the denial—or at least diminishment—of a truth about God, namely, that he is just.[59] The reason Aquinas reckons presumption a sin against hope rather than against faith, however, is that this false belief shapes the movement of the appetites.[60] As with despair, which also involves false beliefs, what distinguishes presumption from merely intellectual error is its effect on one's movement toward eternal life.

The asymmetries in Aquinas's treatment of despair and presumption are noteworthy. The despairing, he says, may still acknowledge that God is merciful in the abstract, though they doubt that his mercy applies in their own particular case. When dealing with presumption, Aquinas focuses immediately on the error the presumptuous make in their understanding of God. This focus seems motivated by the desire to highlight the distinction between secular and theological presumption, underscoring the greater sinfulness of the latter.[61] Secular presumption, Aquinas implies, is not always mortally sinful.[62] We might recall the example of our ersatz francophone, whose presumption makes him look ridiculous when ordering in a French restaurant but does not turn him away from God. Exaggerating our own powers, Aquinas argues, is not as grave an offense as detracting from God's majesty, which one effectively does by "despising" his justice. Aquinas does contend that the failure to acknowledge God's mercy represents an even greater detraction

[59] *STh* II-II, q. 11.
[60] *STh* II-II, q. 21, a. 2; cf. q. 14, a. 2, ad 1.
[61] *STh* II-II, q. 21, a. 1, ad 1.
[62] *STh* II-II, q. 130, a. 2, ad 1.

from God—making despair a graver sin than presumption—but in either case we end up with a diminished image of the Deity.[63]

To summarize thus far, because Aquinas treats theological presumption as a sin directly against God, he does not speak of the possibility of its compatibility with an abstract belief in God's justice as, when treating despair, he allows that the sin is compatible with belief in a generally merciful God. On the other hand, because secular presumption is focused on an exaggerated sense of one's own powers, it does seem compatible with abstract orthodoxy. However, it is easy to see how secular presumption lends itself to theological presumption on a practical level. This is equally the case when we speak of the phenomenon as a social sin. If, as I have suggested, presumption can come to characterize whole cultures and groups, one can see how the collective sense that we are above God's judgment can bleed into at least a practical denial of that judgment altogether. If we are all entitled to God's mercy, divine justice fades away even conceptually. Furthermore, by categorizing presumption as a sin against hope rather than faith, Aquinas emphasizes the practical effects of our beliefs on the appetites and their movements. The precise beliefs of the presumptuous could be formulated in various ways, focusing more on either individuals or the collective, but the essential characteristic of such beliefs is that they cause us to give up striving for conversion.

Aquinas himself describes the misshapen appetites of the presumptuous in slightly different ways, as seeking heavenly glory without merit or pardon without repentance.[64] Whichever emphasis we use, perseverance in sin without the intention of repenting and receiving pardon is for Aquinas the paradigmatic act of presumption. In making this point, he strikes a fairly sympathetic note toward sinners: even those who sin with the intention of eventually giving up their sin and repenting at some future time do not commit presumption.[65] The presumptuous

[63] *STh* II-II, q. 21, a. 2.
[64] *STh* I-II, q. 64, a. 4, ad 3; II-II, q. 14, a. 2.
[65] *STh* II-II, q. 21, a. 2, ad 3.

are only those who intend *never* to give up sinning and still expect to be saved. Leaving the door open even a crack to the possibility of conversion is enough to save one from presumption.

This clement note should not surprise us, for we have already seen that Aquinas is aware of the difficulty of living a life without sin, as is evident from his repeated description of the moral life as arduous. We have seen how commentators on Aquinas's view of hope emphasize his description of our existence in this world as that of a wayfarer, indicating the importance he places on our life as a process of movement and growth in rightness toward God. The process of sanctification itself is important because sanctification implies growth; presumption is deadly because it short-circuits this process. One cannot be converted from one's sins if one denies that they present obstacles to one's salvation. To illustrate the point, we might think of the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14). In Aquinas's terms, only the tax collector seems interested in actualizing his potential—moving from his imperfect state to something better—because the Pharisee is satisfied with himself precisely as he is.

In such self-satisfaction we can see the resemblance of theological presumption to pusillanimity, the moral stinginess that we saw earlier opposes magnanimity by deficiency.[66] The pusillanimous refuse to seek great things; they settle for less than their potential. In a sense, theological presumption also involves settling: for a deficient understanding of eternal life, for virtue's reward without virtue, for forgiveness without a new beginning, for mercy without one's broken relationships being righted, for a heaven in which we are not perfected. Presumption distorts charity because the union with God the presumptuous seek can only be one in which God turns out to be just like us, because we have refused to budge in order to become more like him. The God of the presumptuous, it turns out, is really not all that great.

[66] *STh* II-II, q. 133.

III. The Relationship between Secular and Theological Presumption

By now it should be clear how presumption blocks our path to eternal life, but a few questions remain to be cleared up, chief among them the exact relationship between theological and secular presumption. I have spoken of the sense in which theological presumption resembles pusillanimity in that both involve hoping for too little, but Aquinas argues that secular presumption involves attempting too much. Are we dealing with two distinct phenomena that share the same name? It does seem possible—remembering the overconfident francophone—to be guilty of secular presumption without that fault entailing theological presumption.

The last article of Aquinas's question on theological presumption asks whether vainglory leads to presumption. As we would expect, Aquinas distinguishes the two types of presumption along the lines we have been sketching.[67] Vainglory—the inordinate desire for glory in the eyes of others—leads to a presumption that attempts novelties beyond our power; this phenomenon we have been calling secular presumption. Aquinas says that the second type of presumption, which we recognize as theological, relies inordinately on God's mercy and arises not from vainglory but directly from pride. He adds by way of explanation that by pride he means thinking oneself above the possibility of divine punishment. The difference seems to be one of motive; the vainglorious desire an earthly good—human glory—excessively, but pride is a spiritual sin.[68] Aquinas speaks of pride as coveting our own excellence inordinately. In itself, desiring excellence might not seem to be a problem; we should, after all, desire the highest human good of union with God. When Aquinas deals with pride as the first man's sin, however, we see that the proud desire something more than human excellence; Aquinas speaks of them as desiring a false equality with God and, in phrasing that calls to

[67] *STh* II-II, q. 21, a. 4.
[68] *STh* II-II, q. 163, a. 1; q. 162, a. 8, ad 2.

mind secular presumption, as desiring to obtain happiness by their own natural power.[69] The proud desire excellence in a way that refuses to be subject to God.[70] Attention to the effects our desires have on our relationships helps us to see Aquinas's underlying concerns. Pride is inordinate because it causes us to desire excellence in a way that distorts our relationships, most especially our relationship with God.

Aquinas's entire ethical framework, we must remember, is relational.[71] How we think of ourselves necessarily has a bearing on how we relate to others; thus, even secular presumption, which begins with an overestimation of ourselves, quickly distorts our relationships. As we saw earlier, Aquinas's sense of human interdependence causes him to modify Aristotle's understanding of magnanimity. His belief in creation means that from the first moment of our existence we are in a relationship of dependence on God. Simple justice would require that this relationship be characterized by our gratitude for the unearned blessing of existence.[72] Pride involves a distortion in our way of relating to God at this most fundamental level. This distortion seems to be what distinguishes pride from vainglory and secular presumption. It explains why pride is at the root of all mortally sinful presumption.

Let us then briefly attempt to summarize the relevant distinctions in the relationship between theological and secular presumption. As we have seen, secular presumption can come from a source other than pride, namely, vainglory. Vainglory is not in itself necessarily a mortal sin, though pride is.[73] Because theological presumption is rooted in mortally sinful pride, we

[69] *STh* II-II, q. 162, a. 2.

[70] *STh* II-II, q. 161, a. 5. Reflecting on Aquinas's notion of obedience also helps to reveal the way in which pride and, therefore, presumption undermine charity; for obedience has to do with moving our will in order for it to achieve union with the will of the one we love. Obedience for Aquinas proceeds from charity, and without obedience true charity is not possible (II-II, q. 104, aa. 3 and 4).

[71] The moral virtues, he claims, could also be thought of as the social virtues because they involve our relationships with others (*STh* I-II, q. 61, a. 5). And the theological virtues, of course, bear directly on our relationship with God.

[72] *STh* II-II, q. 122, a. 4.

[73] *STh* II-II, q. 132, a. 3; q. 162, a. 5.

can understand the relationship of secular presumption to theological presumption as akin to that between venial and mortal sin. Secular presumption can remain superficial and passing. Because Aquinas speaks of pride as opposing magnanimity, though not as directly as it opposes humility, he leaves open the possibility that secular presumption can take on a mortally sinful form.[74] In other words, it is possible that one's inflated sense of oneself will cause one to harm others gravely, though this is not necessarily the case. It is also possible that one's inflated understanding of oneself will lead one to take heaven for granted, imagining oneself so loveable that one starts to believe that God is simply unable to go on without one's presence. At this point one has created a codependent deity and fallen into theological presumption. But one could fall into such an error directly from pride, without passing through secular presumption or caring about earthly glory, just as mortal sin is not necessarily, but possibly, preceded by venial sin. Because the attitudes and dispositions involved in secular and theological presumption are similar, we would expect there to be quite a bit of overlap between the two sins in practice. Still, Aquinas makes so many distinctions between them that we must hold that they are not identical; nor can we say, as one might expect upon initially being presented with the problem, that they are precisely the same phenomenon simply viewed from different angles.

IV. Presumption and Entitlement

Twenge and Campbell speak of entitlement as the belief that we deserve special treatment, that we are owed privileges and success because of who we are.[75] If we apply this concept to God and the afterlife, we arrive at Aquinas's theological presumption. Does such theological presumption characterize our own "age of entitlement"? Twenge and Campbell do not directly address this question, but Pieper suggests that the

[74] *STh* II-II, q. 162, a. 1, ad 3.

[75] Twenge and Campbell, *Narcissism Epidemic*, 230-31.

answer is yes. He laments that the last things—death, judgment, heaven, and hell—are not taken seriously today.[76] The lack of attention paid to life after death in his view suggests the attitude that such matters can be taken for granted. Pieper identifies two types of classic presumption at work today. The first he calls bourgeois moralism, which conflates salvation with being a socially acceptable citizen, discounting the need for doctrine or sacraments. The second he identifies with the certainty some Reformation traditions claim to possess as a consequence of having accepted Christ as their personal savior.[77]

David Elliot agrees with Pieper that the afterlife receives inadequate attention today, and he identifies Christian reluctance to talk about the afterlife with the defensiveness many Christians feel in the wake of criticism from Marx, Nietzsche, and others that belief in the life to come is a distraction from the concerns of this world.[78] He rightly rejects this criticism, pointing out that hope in eternal life, properly understood, should free us to act with even greater virtue in this life. He claims that the lack of attention given to the afterlife—and therefore a deficit of hope—leads to worldly despair.[79] In other words, if we have given up hope in the life to come, our focus can only be on worldly goods. Such a shift replaces hope with optimism.[80] Elliot argues that this worldly shift leads to negative consequences in this life as we become more concerned with

[76] Pieper, *Faith, Hope, Love*, 134. Though Pieper's essay was written nearly four decades ago, popular attitudes toward the last things do not seem to have grown noticeably more judicious in the intervening years. Lasch also identifies "the inability 'to take an interest in anything after one's own death'" with the spread of cultural narcissism (Lasch, *Culture of Narcissism*, 188).

[77] Pieper, *Faith, Hope, Love*, 126-27.

[78] Elliot, "The Christian as *Homo Viator*," 101-2.

[79] Ibid., 109-10.

[80] The merely psychological nature of optimism is contrasted with the divine gift of hope by Pope Francis in one of the earliest and most influential interviews of his papacy: Antonio Spadaro, "A Big Heart Open to God," *America* 209 no. 8 (2013): 32. Richard Lennan extensively contrasts a worldly optimism, the borders of which are "coterminous with our capacity to think positively," with the supernatural gift of hope capable of leading to conversion (Richard Lennan, "The Church as a Sacrament of Hope," *Theological Studies* 72 [2011]: 251).

those goods Aquinas identifies with ambition, vainglory, and avarice.[81] We see evidence of such a shift in *The Narcissism Epidemic*. In its effects, Elliot's "optimistic despair" is similar to theological presumption, for in both cases we can safely ignore the judgment promised in Matthew 25. The difference is that theological presumption allows us still to maintain a belief in heaven, though our understanding of heaven may be rather superficial.[82] If we know what to look for, we will find ample evidence of contemporary theological presumption.

In their widely discussed study of the religious lives of American adolescents, sociologists Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton critique the belief system they call "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism."[83] While not an official creed, Moralistic Therapeutic Deism describes the *de facto* beliefs of the majority of American young people regardless of formal religious affiliation.[84] The belief system Smith and Denton describe

[81] Elliot, "The Christian as *Homo Viator*," 110-12.

[82] That Elliot has focused on optimistic despair and I have focused on theological presumption may have something to do with our respective locations, the United Kingdom and United States. My perception is that in Europe explicit atheism and agnosticism are more common—thus the denial of the afterlife altogether—while in the United States religious belief is more explicit, though often superficial. This long-standing critique of American religion finds classic expression in Will Herberg, *Protestant—Catholic—Jew* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

[83] Christian Smith with Melinda Lundquist Denton, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 162-63. Smith and Denton's characterization of this *de facto* contemporary creed is, in my view, particularly trenchant, but their observations are hardly unique. Lasch repeatedly critiques the effects of a prevailing therapeutic outlook on American ethical and religious attitudes. Moralistic Therapeutic Deism also bears a resemblance to "Sheilaism," described in Robert N. Bellah, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2008), 221. "Sheilaism" is the term invented by nurse Sheila Larson to describe her own highly individual belief system; as she puts it, "It's Sheilaism. Just my own little voice. . . . It's just try to love yourself and be gentle with yourself." Bellah notes a general shift toward "therapeutic privatization" at work in American religious attitudes, of which Sheilaism is a rather striking example (ibid., 224). In such radically individualized religion, "God is simply the self magnified" (ibid., 235).

[84] Though their study focuses on teenagers, Smith and Denton argue that Moralistic Therapeutic Deism reflects the beliefs of large numbers of American adults as well (*Soul Searching*, 166).

is a far cry from anything resembling orthodox Christianity.[85] While Aquinas speaks of the goal of human existence in terms of union with God, Moralistic Therapeutic Deists tend to view the goal of life as feeling good about oneself and prefer a distant God who becomes involved in one's life only when needed to resolve problems.[86] Smith and Denton describe the popular vision of God that emerges from their study as a cross between Divine Butler and Cosmic Therapist.[87] In terms of the soteriological question directly at issue in our discussion, heaven seems to be a not terribly arduous goal attained by "good people" when they die.[88] Religious beliefs and practices have little to do with one's destination in the afterlife, and God's moral demands are fairly low.[89] Smith and Denton's conclusions suggest that Pieper's bourgeois moralistic presumption is common today, perhaps even the norm. This conclusion should not surprise us. If Twenge and Campbell's argument is correct and secular presumption characterizes our age, and if the attitudes underlying secular and theological presumption are similar, we would expect to see entitled attitudes spill over into religious beliefs.

In light of all of the above analysis, how do we combat presumption? Twenge and Campbell provide suggestions to fight each of the root causes they identify as feeding narcissism, from adjusting the messages parents send their children—emphasizing relationships instead of uniqueness by, for example, saying, "I love you" instead of "You are special"—to tightening rules for mortgage lending.[90] Pieper recommends recovering a sense of "fear of the Lord," a virtue he argues must not be reduced to mere respect—"wonder and awe," as it is often phrased today—but instead must put our genuine fears and hopes in the right order.[91] Otherwise, he says, we will end up

[85] Ibid., 170-171.

[86] Ibid., 163. For Aquinas's radically different vision, see *STh* II-II, q. 23, a. 1.

[87] Smith and Denton, *Soul Searching*, 165.

[88] Ibid.

[89] In Lasch's analysis, therapeutic religion diminishes the importance of the afterlife because one's goal becomes present psychic security (*Culture of Narcissism*, 7).

[90] Twenge and Campbell, *Narcissism Epidemic*, 193-94, 137-38.

[91] Pieper, *Faith, Hope, Love*, 138, 132.

fearing social disapprobation more than the effects of sin.[92] Elliot lists a number of traditional spiritual "remedies" to worldliness that have value as counterweights to presumption: poverty of spirit, the practice of *memento mori*, meditation on the poverty of Christ, simplicity, and rejoicing in hope.[93]

I would further suggest that some of our pastoral and theological instincts need to be rethought. Contemporary funeral liturgies, for example, might sometimes be confused with canonization Masses, for all the confident declarations that the deceased is now in heaven. Among the more disturbing I have attended was the funeral of a man who had committed suicide in order to avoid what was projected to be a lengthy prison term for assaulting his girlfriend; at the funeral, the priest declared, "Whatever pain he was feeling is now gone, and he is with God." While the priest was motivated by a laudable desire to comfort the man's family, the ethical implications of his statement are troubling, especially since the funeral was on an Indian reservation with one of the highest suicide rates in the world. A related tendency at funeral liturgies and elsewhere is to speak of heaven as "a better place," sometimes without any mention of Christ, or even God, at all. In this vague, non-denominational phrasing, we have evidence of the pusillanimous nature of presumption; we are certain we can achieve heaven because it has become such a bland goal. Perhaps we need to recover something of Aquinas's vision of life as an arduous journey toward a union with God so intense it changes our very capacity to love.

A final question this exploration of presumption raises, perhaps the most provocative of all, has to do with soteriology. In his history of Catholic doctrine on salvation, Francis A. Sullivan, S.J., describes the "presumption of guilt" characteristic of "medieval judgment" giving way to a "presumption of innocence" in more recent Catholic theology.[94] Sullivan regards

[92] Ibid., 133.

[93] Elliot, "The Christian as *Homo Viator*," 113-16.

[94] Francis A. Sullivan, *Salvation outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1992), 202.

this shift as a clear good, but his conclusions have not gone unchallenged.[95] Adding the concerns I have raised about presumption to this discussion will not answer the question of whether our understanding of salvation should be expansive or restrictive—of how narrow the narrow gate actually is (Matt 7:13-14). But it should, I think, introduce a note of caution about salvation optimism. We should ask, for example, how theologies that are optimistic about the possibility of salvation outside the visible Church change the attitudes of those within the Church regarding their own salvation. Do such theologies—and their popular expressions—take adequate account of the danger of presumption? Do they result in a notion of heaven that is vague and insipid? Do they obscure the necessity of conversion and moral growth so central to Aquinas's vision of human life's last end? In the conclusion to his book Sullivan points out that various cultural and historical factors shaped—and limited—theologies of salvation expressed in the medieval period and earlier.[96] Awareness of the dangers of presumption reminds us of the necessity for humility regarding our own cultural limitations and preconceptions. Our wealth and technological advancement may not, in fact, help us to think clearly about our actual merits. Can it be that the comforts of modernity are false guideposts on the wayfarer's journey? In a presumptuous age, has heaven become the final entitlement?

Such questions cannot be answered here, and perhaps they are best left as provocations, intended to trouble. Pondering the possibility of presumption reminds us that sometimes it is salutary to allow oneself to be troubled, that sometimes our salvation can only be worked out with "fear and trembling"

[95] For a recent example of an opposing viewpoint, see Ralph Martin, *Will Many Be Saved? What Vatican II Actually Teaches and Its Implications for the New Evangelization* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012). Martin takes particular aim at the "optimistic" soteriology of Karl Rahner and Hans Urs von Balthasar. The question in dispute in his critique has to do specifically with the question of salvation outside the visible Church. While the questions raised by the sin of presumption are somewhat different, they are nonetheless related, at least at the level of our attitudes.

[96] Sullivan, *Salvation outside the Church?* 201-3.

(Phil 2:12). From the parable of the wise and foolish virgins (Matt 25:1-13) to Jesus' counsel that the Son of Man will return at an unexpected hour (Matt 24:44), the Gospels contain numerous warnings against spiritual complacency. In an age of entitlement, an age abounding in what the Book of Sirach calls "deceitful wealth," perhaps a dose of discomfort is needed to move us from presumption to hope.

BOOK REVIEWS

Dark Passages of the Bible: Engaging Scripture with Benedict XVI & Thomas Aquinas. By MATTHEW J. RAMAGE. Washington, D.C. The Catholic University of America Press, 2013. Pp. viii + 303. $39.95 (paper). ISBN: 978-0-8132-2156-4.

Joseph Ratzinger's famous 1988 Erasmus Lecture, "Biblical Interpretation in Crisis," has become a reference point for many concerned with the state of theology today and compelled by the then cardinal's call for a "criticism of criticism." In the conference following the lecture, Ratzinger expanded on his vision for a new exegetical synthesis that might profitably fuse the patristic/medieval ("Method A") and modern historical-critical ("Method B") methods. This "Method C" exegesis would be receptive to the strengths of both, while keenly cognizant of their shortcomings.

In this revised version of his dissertation, written at Ave Maria University under the direction of Gregory Vall, Matthew Ramage makes a sustained *plaidoyer* for Ratzinger's proposed Method C. For Ramage, the method effectively entails coupling a fundamental commitment to the divine authorship of Scripture with attentiveness to the voice(s) of the human authors. From this theological point of departure, Ramage then endeavors to put the method concretely to the test, confronting head-on a series of "dark passages" that Ratzinger as pope identified in his postsynodal exhortation *Verbum Domini* (§ 42), trying to balance the divine and human aspects that stand in peculiar tension in these texts. Specifically, these problematic passages all rest uneasily with the doctrine of biblical inerrancy—not for the challenge they pose to historical or scientific truths (e.g., evolution) but rather for the way they apparently contradict *theological* propositions about the nature of God, good and evil, and the afterlife. It is the burden of the book to demonstrate that, although at a literal level the presence of false ideas and assumptions about these themes must be honestly recognized, the theological inconcinnity of such texts may be resolved with a proper view of inspiration and divine authorship.

Ramage's exposition of the "dark passages" in his first chapter sets the stage and neatly distinguishes three ranges of texts. First, there are those numerous passages that work with polytheistic assumptions and thus undermine Israel's (and the Church's) understanding of the oneness of God's nature

(e.g., Gen 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; Exod 5:2-3; 20:2-3; Deut 4:7; Ps 86:8; 95:3; 96:4; 97:9; 135:5; 136:2; Isa 6:8). Second, a list of cases is made in which God either himself performs or directly commands evil actions such as the ban (Gen 7:23; Exod 4:24; 12:29; Deut 2:33-34; 7:1-2; 20:16-17; 1 Sam 15:8-9; 2 Kings 19:35; Ezek 20:23-26; cf. Exod 4:21; Judg 9:23; 1 Sam 16:14; 1 Kings 22:19-22; Hosea 13:16; Ps 137:8-9; also Rom 9:18; 11:7-8). Finally, a significant number of Old Testament texts are catalogued in which the reality of life after death goes unrecognized and is even flatly denied (e.g., Isa 26:14; 38:18; Ps 6:4-5; 30:9; 88:3-12; 89:48; Job 7:9; 14:11; 16:22; Sir 17:27-30; 38:16, 20-23; Eccles 3:19-20; 9:5, 10). In each case, Method A exegesis tended to soft-pedal the difficulties, which were more honestly acknowledged by Method B.

Having thus identified the problem ("How can *that* be in the Bible?"), Ramage sets about responding on two levels: first on the order of principle (chaps. 2 through 4), then concretely in addressing each set of passages directly (chaps. 5 and 6).

The theoretical response begins with an extended description of Benedict's Method C proposal, padded with examples of patristic and modern interpretation and an evaluation of their respective strengths and weaknesses. This sets the parameters for a balanced, honest exegesis.

Ramage's critical theoretical move comes not from Benedict and his broad vision, however, but from Aquinas. Calling to his aid the latter's doctrine of "the history of revelation" (92) in *STh* II-II, q. 1, aa. 6-7, and the *Commentary on Hebrews*, Ramage draws attention to the developing character of the articles of faith, already embryonically contained in its full "*substance*" (Heb 11:1) in the imperfectly realized belief of the Old Testament. This developmental perspective permits space for revelation to adapt to believers' waxing capacity to understand through the course of history. Accordingly, the Pauline and later patristic notion of *divine pedagogy* (Gal 3:24), highlighted by Aquinas, becomes the essential leitmotif of Ramage's study and the governing solution he proposes. In a word, to quote Benedict in *Verbum Domini*, "God's plan is manifested *progressively*, and it is accomplished slowly, in *successive stages* and despite human resistance" (§ 42).

Subjoined to this exposition of God's patiently developing exercise of divine pedagogy, Ramage adds a consideration of instrumental human authorship. Here he closely follows the work on inspiration of Pierre Benoit, whose Thomistic paradigm allows a distinction distancing God's authorship—which operates at the level of providence—from the imperfect human ideas contained in many places in the Bible. Moreover, the teleological thrust of inspiration ("the inspiration of scripture and the causality of the church are inseparable . . . the scriptures were inspired *for the church*" [123]) ultimately positions the ecclesial interpreter in such a way that he may view these texts within the broad context of Israel's education.

In specific application, then, to the texts that undermine monotheism, Ramage indicates that it is necessary to appreciate how considerable God's task was in educating his people about his nature. "What many Christians do not realize is that the divine pedagogy of the Old Testament begins at square one with a people who worshiped many gods" (163). A slow "monotheizing" tendency thus arches over the Scriptures and ultimately includes a process of rereading older polytheistic texts in a more mature theological manner, as often in later books and the LXX, for example. At the same time, it must be seen that older texts still struggling free of false perspectives are ordered to nondogmatic ends. Psalm 86:8 ("There is none like you among the gods, O Lord!"), for instance, has the practical end of praising God, not making a judgment about his nature.

Regarding the nature of good and evil, Ramage draws attention to Scripture's deepening insight into the workings of divine causality. "Earlier authors were aware that Yahweh's omnipotence meant that he was ultimately, in some mysterious way, the 'cause' of man's evil deeds, since they knew that man depends on God for everything" (187). Gradually, however, Scripture's expression of this fact allowed more space for a distinction between God's permissive and active will. Connected with this is a growing understanding of the role of Satan in the origin of evil (cf. 2 Sam 24:1 vs. 1 Chron 21:1).

Israel's slow education about the afterlife has its central thrust in an affirmation of the goodness of creation. This meant, in the first place, breaking free of the morbid views of Ancient Near Eastern cultures, overly preoccupied with the other world. This instruction took the form of a negation that resembles a denial. Then, in an "ironic process" (210), Israel was made to learn through Exile that worldly hopes must yet be transcended. In the end, of course, God was preparing Israel for the new revelation of Jesus's Resurrection.

The ecclesial and confidently Catholic orientation of Ramage's whole project is manifest not only in the book's heavy dependence upon the thought of the pope emeritus and the theology of Aquinas and his interpreters. Magisterial teaching as such—notably the all-important principles of interpretation in the Second Vatican Council's *Dei Verbum* 12—carries authoritative weight in the text. In this regard, it is important to understand at the outset that this book is an apologetic effort aimed at defending and clarifying Church teaching, not biblical exegesis and not speculative theology. Ramage himself expresses his hope that readers might finish the book "better able to see the reasonableness of Catholic magisterial teaching on the inspiration and inerrancy of scripture" (274).

It is encouraging, naturally, to see such serious focus on the exegetical protocols of *Dei Verbum* 12. For all practical purposes, the council's directive here—that after investigating the original intention of the human authors, "no less serious attention" must be given to the content and unity of the Scriptures, the Tradition of the whole Church, and the analogy of faith—was

an ordinance delivered stillborn to the world of Catholic exegesis. There is much promise in highlighting divine pedagogy as a controlled paradigm for taking into account the "content and unity" of the entire canon. Indeed, this could be a real theological contribution to the (insufficient) canonical criticism pioneered by Brevard Childs.

If Ramage's book makes a useful contribution, promises to serve well as an introduction to the issues, and commendably defends the reasonableness of the Church's vision, the shorter version of his argument in the English Edition of the journal *Nova et Vetera* might make scholars already familiar with this terrain (undoubtedly a smaller number than would be healthy) question whether Ramage has not perhaps written an article squeezed into a book. There is, indeed, a book-report quality to the work and a huge reliance on arguments from authority (appealing to both ecclesial and academic magisteria), which seems surprising for a doctoral dissertation. Not that there is not ample material here for serious work and argumentation! The question remains, however, whether challenging issues like the ban have been adequately addressed without some deeper exploration into the mechanics of authorial intention than Ramage offers. Above all, though, one senses the need for a deeper engagement with the actual texts.

This is a significant point. From the perspective of an exegete, Ramage's attention to biblical material, while an important effort to confront the typically abstract discussions of inspiration with concrete scriptural problems, is disappointing. Generally, texts are simply registered in catena fashion, without any interpretative effort or sustained reflection (the chapter on the afterlife is the strongest, but still quite superficial). Moreover, the so-called New Atheists, a group of polemical hacks, are regularly taken as the representative voice of biblical scholarship, while major experts who have touched these sensitive topics are never mentioned. It would have been illuminating, for instance, to see some wrestling with Mark Smith's brilliant and provocative reconstructions of the genesis of Israelite "monotheism" (a term he finds misleading and disputes as fundamentally a rhetorical trope) or an attempt to address John Barton's apophatic idea of the "unethical God" of the ethical prophets. On the question of the afterlife, an interesting treatment is weakened by the lost opportunity for a bracing hermeneutical discussion of the *sensus literalis*, which remains naïve and problematic in Ramage's usage throughout the book. It is a fascinating, evocative thing that Christ's Resurrection fulfills the "literal" (rather than spiritual!) sense of certain Old Testament texts, only metaphorically fulfilled and signified in their original context.

The criticism of criticism is for Benedict a multifaceted affair, but its first effort is explicitly directed at a diachronic account of biblical scholarship itself. To this extent, the "spiritual history" of theses such as those advanced by Smith concerning Israel's primitive and prolonged "polytheism" (also a problematic term) might be poignantly addressed, for instance, in in-

terrogating his pedigree of study in the line of Frank Moore Cross and in probing his quieter rejection of the classical construct of an "Axial Age"—as well, most certainly, as in holding to account his significant contact with contemporary philosophy and hermeneutics. Admittedly, passing judgments on the determinations of the exegetical establishment requires confidence and credentials, and one understands Ramage's attitude of servile deference to a very simplistic (at times outdated) version of what he takes as the "assured results" of Method B exegesis. This situation of effective academic impotence impinges on any hope for the realization of a Method C, however, and touches a serious problem also raised in the conference after the Erasmus Lecture. How can those outside the biblical guild justify and logically order their use (or rejection) of particular exegetical theories and results? Very possibly, the first move here must come from the exegetical side in the form of an honest, theologically oriented internal audit. Chances are, it may be some time before such a self-review is undertaken and still longer before it is completed.

Refining a new Christian hermeneutic is no easy chore. Ramage has attempted to take a step in this direction, for which we may be grateful. In the end, however, one may wonder if perpetuating the algorithmic language of "Method" (though consecrated by Ratzinger's *passing* usage) is perhaps a disservice that threatens to bind us too narrowly to rationalistic Enlightenment modes of thought. What is desired is quite simply a new *ratio*, a pattern of thought, historically oriented, but stamped by the light of eternal truth. If Ratzinger foresaw this requiring at least the work of a whole generation, with Ramage's book new sensitivity to "divine pedagogy" can begin favorably to shape the thought of the next generation of Catholic exegetes.

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Aquinas's Ontology of the Material World: Change, Hylomorphism, and Material Objects. By JEFFREY E. BROWER. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xxii + 327. $74.00 (cloth). ISBN: 978-0-19-871429-3.

Brower sets out, and I think quite successfully, "(a) to offer a precise reconstruction of the essential elements of Aquinas's ontology of the material world; (b) to locate these same elements within the context of Aquinas's thought more generally (and in particular, within the context of his views on

natural philosophy, metaphysics, and theology); and finally (c) to highlight the historical and philosophical significance of Aquinas's views, especially from the perspective of contemporary metaphysical debates" (vii). This book is one of the clearest, most carefully argued reconstructions and defenses of Aquinas's work on hylomorphism and material objects I have encountered. It is an excellent resource for philosophers both classical and contemporary, and a model for those interested in bringing the two into dialogue with each other.

Not only is this book filled with boxes containing clear definitions of key concepts and reconstructions of arguments, but it is also full of useful figures and tables that help represent Aquinas's rather subtle distinctions. Being finely attuned to these subtleties, Brower has included what he describes as "a catalog of the most important terms for which we have had to distinguish more than one sense" (311) within his "Glossary of Technical Terms" found at the end of the book.

I cannot do justice to each part of this wonderful book in such a short review. Therefore, I will provide a brief overview of what I take to be the main points of interest. *Aquinas's Ontology of the Material World* is divided into five parts: "Introduction" (chaps. 1 and 2), "Change" (chaps. 3 and 4), "Hylomorphism" (chaps. 5-7), "Material Objects" (chaps. 8-10), and "Complications" (chaps. 11-13). Part 1 provides "a systematic introduction to Aquinas's complete ontology" (3). According to Brower, "there are four main ontological types [of beings] in terms of which the world as a whole can be understood: (1) Prime Matter, (2) Form, (3) Substance, (4) Accidental Unity" (18). Part 1 is largely concerned with providing an explanation of what these ontological types are as well as their relationship to the ten Aristotelian categories and Aquinas's discussion of modes of being. Chapter 2 focuses on a more detailed analysis of these issues. Of particular interest (especially to the analytic philosopher) is Brower's discussion of how recent literature on ontological pluralism can shed light on Aquinas's talk about *modes of being*.

According to Brower, Aquinas's material ontology is rooted in his hylomorphism, which itself stems from his general analysis of change. For that reason, he next turns—parts 2 and 3—to Aquinas's analysis of change. Chapter 3, "Change in General," provides Aquinas's general analysis of change in terms of generation and corruption. It is in his general analysis of change that we are introduced to the basic elements of his hylomorphism, namely, matter, form, and hylomorphic compound. According to Brower, "change is to be analyzed in terms of generation and corruption, where this is to be understood in terms of the temporal succession of distinct states of affairs that overlap, and hence share a common constituent that endures the change itself" (62). For Aquinas, change is not merely the coming to be of something that was not, nor the passing away of something that was, but rather the coming to be of something *from something* and the passing away of something *into something*. If Y comes to be *from* X (rather than X merely 'popping' out of existence, which is succeeded by Y 'popping' into existence),

then there must be something from X that *endures* the change into Y. This enduring subject allows Aquinas to "distinguish instances of change from instances of creation" (61). As noted above, a proper analysis of change provides the basis on which his hylomorphism is developed. Brower writes:

> Aquinas introduces the term 'matter' (*materia*) for that which remains the same throughout a change—that is, for the enduring subject of change. . . . By contrast, he introduces the term 'form' (*forma*) for that with respect to which the matter or enduring subject is changed—that is, for what does not endure or remain the same throughout the change. . . . Finally, he introduces the term 'compound of matter and form' (*ex materia et forma composita*) for that which exists in virtue of some matter possessing a form, and hence for what serves as the termini of change. . . . In short, we can see that Aquinas just analyzes change in general in terms of the generation and corruption of hylomorphic compounds. (62)

It is important to note the incredibly broad characterization of this hylomorphic analysis of change. It not only captures what Brower terms standard "*one-one* changes" (64) but also "*one-many* and *many-one* changes" (ibid.), as when a tree (*one* thing) changes into a multitude of wood chips (*many* things) after being sent through a mulcher, or when a sperm and egg (*many* things) change to make a human being (*one* thing). This extension of Aquinas's general analysis of change (to one-many and many-one changes) requires that matter can come in portions. From this, it follows that the matter of one thing can be "divided or compounded with that of another to produce yet further portions of matter" (ibid.).

According to Brower, a distinction between types of change—substantial and accidental—needs to be made. Aquinas distinguishes these two types by appealing to the different ways in which matter functions in each. According to Aquinas, the matter of a substantial change functions as the "matter from which" (*materia ex qua*) something comes to be, and the matter of an accidental change is the "matter in which" (*materia in qua*) something comes to be. The basic idea behind the distinction is that the matter in a substantial change merely serves as the substrata for a form without also being characterized by that form, whereas the matter of an accidental change both functions as substrata and is characterized by the forms it possesses. The matter of the former is called prime matter, while the matter of the latter is called secondary matter. For Aquinas, a material substance is "a being . . . that exists in virtue of some prime matter possessing a substantial form" (82). An accidental unity is simply "a being . . . that exists in virtue of some secondary matter possessing an accidental form" (ibid.). Therefore, the matter of an accidental change is nothing but a material substance. So, what is generated/corrupted in an accidental change is an accidental unity, for example, seated-Socrates (the compound of Socrates and the accidental form

of seated). An accidental change occurs when Socrates (the secondary matter of this change) goes from actually being seated and potentially standing, to actually standing. Seated-Socrates is corrupted, standing-Socrates is generated, and Socrates (the matter of the change) endures. An interesting feature of this analysis is that, according to Brower, accidental unities are the beings that are *primarily* characterized by accidental forms because accidental unities possess accidental forms as part of their essence (i.e., accidental forms are constituent parts of accidental unities). Socrates is derivatively characterized as seated only if Socrates shares all the same matter with a hylomorphic compound that has the accident of being seated as a constituent part. In other words, the statement "Socrates is seated" is true because Socrates shares all the same matter with the accidental unity seated-Socrates. As is clear, Brower's account of Aquinas's hylomorphism and material objects (part 4) turns on the notion of matter sharing, which Brower explains in terms of the relation of *numerical sameness without identity*. Numerical sameness without identity plays a key role throughout the book: it grounds Aquinas's distinction between accidental and essential predication (139-51), and it yields (at least according to Brower) the best solution to the problem of material constitution (165-74) as well as the problem of temporary intrinsics (174-81). I hope this book sparks more discussion of this relation as it pertains to the literature on composition.

Brower finishes up part 4 (221-31) by arguing that, for Aquinas, material *objects* (as opposed to substances or accidental unities) are to be analyzed in terms of spatial extension. Brower's discussion of Aquinas's account of a material object as being "*numerically the same as* an object possessing three-dimensional, spatial extension" (226) will prove very interesting to anyone working on the metaphysics of material objects. An area for further research in this area might concern whether an accidental unity could have a plurality of substances that together play the matter role and an accidental polyadic relational property that plays the role of form. In short, aggregates could turn out to be accidental unities. Granted, on this view of Aquinas, there are not such things as polyadic relational forms, and so it is reasonable for him to ignore such a possibility. But I see no reason why (in general) this should not be seen as a live option for anyone willing to accept the majority of Aquinas's hylomorphic picture of the world in addition to relational properties. An apparent virtue of doing so might be that it allows commonsense objects (like desks, televisions, and books) to qualify as material objects (even if not substances), which they would not on Brower's account of Aquinas. Moreover, they would be numerically the same as their matter, that is, parent substances.

Brower ends his book (part 5) with a discussion of several complications (235-310) that arise for the basic view developed in parts 1-4. In chapter 11, he shows how Aquinas addresses nonstandard instances of change that do not fit neatly into the general account developed in part 2. Such problem cases are transubstantiation (235-41) and transmateriation (the gaining and losing of

matter that does not result in the generation of a new compound [241-45]). Also addressed in this chapter are complications regarding his general hylomorphic account of the world, for example, non-inhering forms (both non-inhering accidents [245-50] and the subsistence of the human soul [250-58]).

Chapter 12 consists of Brower's explanation of how humans (a specific type of material substance) fit into Aquinas's complete ontology of the material world. Of particular interest is Brower's discussion of exactly how human beings are to be classified as *material* substances when they have a wholly immaterial part. This chapter is certainly a masterpiece in the philosophy of mind, since it shows that for Aquinas questions about the mind are really just questions about the metaphysics of a certain kind of material substance.

The final chapter, "The Afterlife," takes up the question regarding the ontological status of the human person during the interim state (the state between death and the resurrection). According to Aquinas, the human soul subsists after death. However, there is a debate about whether he also thought (and whether *we* should think) that human persons do so as well. Brower's view—which he terms *non-human survivalism*—is both highly original and highly intriguing, not to mention fairly convincing (both philosophically and as an interpretation of Aquinas). Brower argues that persons can survive death but not as actual human *beings*. This is because human souls retain their essential disposition to be united to matter and so are essentially *disposed* to be human (see 294-301). His argument turns on how one should understand Aquinas's view on natures. Brower (fairly convincingly, in my opinion) argues that they are best understood dispositionally. Therefore, although the separated soul is not a human *being* (*substance*), on Brower's account it is nonetheless a substance (albeit an *incomplete* substance [284-86]) of a rational nature (it is non-contingently disposed to be a human), hence it still classifies as a person. His argument in this last chapter also delves into Aquinas's Christology in order to show its implications on these questions. That discussion is well worth one's time.

I strongly believe that this book will become a standard text for those interested in working through St. Thomas Aquinas's account of the material world. Brower has accomplished something of great worth (philosophically and interpretively) that is deserving of careful and critical thought as well as sincere praise.

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Politics for a Pilgrim Church: A Thomistic Theory of Civic Virtue. By THOMAS J. BUSHLACK. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2015. Pp. viii + 271. $35.00 (paper). ISBN: 978-0-8028-7090-2.

Politics for a Pilgrim Church is an ambitious and wide-ranging book that poses important questions and makes clear claims. The author's goal is to retrieve Aquinas's notion of the common good to help infuse contemporary life with "the political practices of a pilgrim church" (4). For Bushlack, this would foster a unique public witness that would issue in a renewed appreciation of liberal regimes and a more dialogic mode of public action than we have recently seen from a variety of politically engaged Christians. The book has two main parts. In part 1, Bushlack examines the work of Aquinas in order to reconstruct his account of civic virtue. "In Part II, [he moves] into the modern context and [begins] to construct an account of Thomistic civic virtue for the church and liberal societies today" (27).

In the first chapter, Bushlack traces a history of the forces that have shaped the modern Catholic Church's teachings about the relationship between church and state. He makes a distinction between "more doctrinaire forms of liberalism" (65) that were aggressively secular and therefore hostile to religion and more moderate forms that were not. Over time, the Church moved away from its judgment against modern democracy because it came to see how it was reacting to doctrinaire liberalism. Relying in part on Émile Perreau-Saussine's magnificent *Catholicism and Democracy*, Bushlack argues that Vatican II endorsed "political liberalism as the political solution most in keeping with its teaching on natural rights and the civil and legal separation of church and state" (62). The tendency to elide better and worse forms of liberalism persists, however. Bushlack argues that Catholic neo-conservatives employ a criticism of doctrinaire liberalism to endorse free markets, individual autonomy, and an "uncritical use of violence" (63). On the Catholic left, he finds that the equation of moderate and doctrinaire liberalism moves in a different direction. It issues in a rejection of the legitimacy of the modern nation-state and a plea for solidarity in alternative local communities. Bushlack argues that we can return to Aquinas's notion of civic virtue for an alternative to both critiques of contemporary liberal democracies, responding to their deficiencies with a more robust sense of the common good.

In Chapter 2, he examines Aquinas's account of justice to articulate the latter's account of civic virtue. Bushlack rejects a thin conception of the common good according to which it is an aggregation of individual goods or the sum of opportunities available to citizens. He argues that, for Aquinas, there is a substantive common good in political communities. This can be informed by the Christian "desire to act for the good of others and to enhance" common life (108). However, he rejects the idea that this means that Christians know more about the human good than their fellow citizens (ibid.). Christians can direct their civic virtue towards a higher end in a way that is

"distinctive . . . without claiming epistemic superiority over non-Christians" (ibid.).

Chapter 3 seeks to develop Aquinas's account of the relationship between the passions and justice. Here Bushlack argues "that well-ordered passions are an essential component of civic virtue" (109) and "that there is a distinctive kind of civic virtue that is expected from those who hold positions of political authority" (122). Yet he also wants to avoid the "political paternalism" implicit in the claim that we must rely on the wisdom of statesmen to make the natural law manifest. He associates this "elitism" with John Courtney Murray (124). All citizens must "participate in the kind of public deliberation that the possession of political prudence makes possible" (125). He wants his approach to be "more republican-democratic and less elitist," and so he turns to the task of "developing a modern, constructive account of civic virtue" in the second part of the book (126).

In Chapter 4, Bushlack situates a Thomistic notion of civic virtue within the discourse of the natural law in the Catholic tradition. In particular, he revisits Henri de Lubac's thesis regarding nature and grace. Bushlack pushes for a stronger distinction than de Lubac permits because he thinks that this allows for more autonomy for the political sphere. It "creates some theological and conceptual breathing room for recognizing a public space for Christian engagement in rational deliberation about the natural, penultimate goods of the political community" (129). Thus his approach avoids the danger of integralism, which insists that the political community must be directed by spiritual authorities. He wants to encourage Christians to "[affirm] natural goods as gifts of God in creation that all persons can appreciate through the exigencies of natural law morality. . . . Then Christians may engage in a dialogue that highlights those goods while extending and tethering them to the higher order of goods to be found in the supernatural realm" (162).

Chapter 5 takes up the relationship of Bushlack's account of civic virtue to both liberal theory and classical republicanism. Liberal theory is in search of a thick conception of public goods, and thinkers like John Rawls find it difficult to identify them. The tradition of classical republicanism responds by articulating a more robust account of the freedom of a citizen and public goods. The point seems to be that arguing for a notion of civic virtue informed by a Thomistic account of the common good derived from the natural law tradition is not out of the mainstream of democratic theory. Despite his negative appraisal of Murray's efforts in *We Hold These Truths*, it seems that Bushlack's project shares a similar goal: to show ways Catholic political thought could inform reflection on America's democratic experiment.

Chapter 6 is an unexpected twist in the argument. It contends that Christians must turn away from politics to culture. Bushlack uses the work of James Davison Hunter to argue that the way Christians have framed their relationship to contemporary political life is profoundly misguided. The "culture wars" are bad for Christians because they tend to make the church

into a political instrument. They are bad for society because they foster self-righteousness among one element of society and resentment among another (30). Consequently, Christians need to depart from the idea that they can infuse their society with Christian values through the political process. Rather, they need to work through the culture in a way that is informed by the civic virtues of a pilgrim church. "A Thomistic account of civic virtue offers a way for the members of a pilgrim church to witness to the social, moral, and political significance of their theological convictions through natural law reasoning with humility and charity, while also respecting the legitimate plurality of late modern cultures and the relative autonomy and penultimate value of the civic sphere vis-à-vis the ultimate aims of the pilgrim church" (198).

Careful readers of Aquinas will have questions about whether Bushlack distorts or obscures elements of Aquinas's teaching to make his argument about civic virtue more palatable to citizens of modern democracies. However, Bushlack is not primarily interested in exegetical analysis but rather in employing a Thomistic framework to talk about the common good in liberal democratic communities. So my own question is whether his argument has delivered on its promise to articulate a more robust vision of how to participate as faithful Christians in the *political* life of contemporary Western democracies.

For Bushlack, "culture is more foundational to a community's vision of the good than politics" because it is "the power to define a 'normative order by which we comprehend others, the larger world, and ourselves'" (199, quoting Hunter). "The struggle to control these mechanisms of symbolic meaning . . . is about domination and power" (200). For the last several decades, Christians have tried to engage and transform their society by using the legislative process to foster their preferred political policies. This approach is faulty because it rests on an inadequate "understanding of the mechanisms of cultural power" (ibid.) as well as Christians' own place in the enactment of that power. Cultural change happens from the top-down, according to Bushlack, and "Christianity is a relatively weak culture" in part because the way Christians have engaged in politics has lost them credibility (207). So they should recognize that they need to regroup and change their approach. Specifically, they should "support . . . the kinds of moderate liberalism and positive laicity that was most fully embraced and articulated in Vatican II" (208). "'While politics can only do so much, it is also true that bad politics can do truly horrific things.' That is why a Thomistic account of civic virtue remains committed to many of the goods and aims of the modern liberal nation-state" (208, quoting Hunter). In this vein, Bushlack concludes with two paradigmatic examples of the ways Christians can operate in ways that foster credibility and cultural change (251): Sant'Egidio and the Focolare movement. These began in prayer, friendship, and service and have grown into international movements within the church "dedicated to witnessing to the

unity of all humankind through dialogue and a multitude of lay apostolates" (254).

Yet does not this approach conflate the public effects of work in the church with the political life of Christians? The work of the ecclesiastical communions that Bushlack holds up are wonderful examples. Yet they are the work of a church, whose common efforts are directed to worshiping God, the works of charity, the salvation of souls, and the building up of the communion of saints. These works surely have a public effect. Yet, in gesturing in the direction of cultural change through the corporate works of mercy, Bushlack has not provided us with a clear account of the ways a Thomistic account of the common good might affect the life of our *political* communities.

What is politics about, anyway? A political community inevitably shares some basic things, for example, territory, citizenship, and a way of life (including, for instance, what we will permit to be bought, sold and traded; the structure of family life; the education of children; criminal laws; zoning policies; public rituals of remembrance; and celebratory holidays). The way to pursue these shared realities is a manifestly political question, not a cultural one: political communities vote in school boards about how to educate children, in zoning committees about signage, in legislatures about economic policies, and so on. If we pursue these issues in ways that allow all our fellow citizens to flourish with and through each other, then we can say that our political community has achieved the common good. It goes without saying that Christians are called to engage in works of mercy as members of the church. Yet it may be that their faith also calls them to engage in the patient and difficult political work of enacting the common good through the way we share our common weal. For Christians, this dimension of public life must be informed by the gospel. Bushlack argues that Christians should move away from direct involvement with political life into an amorphous realm of culture, which somehow defines the "normative order" primarily through elites working through mechanisms of power. But this does not seem to be Aquinas's approach. He consistently describes the goal of common life as *conversatio*: to have conversation, communion, and convivial exchange in those areas where our interdependence requires us to work together politically (he uses this term consistently, e.g., *STh* I, q. 18, a. 2, ad 2; q. 115, a. 4; I-II, q. 35, a. 5, s.c.; q. 65, a. 5; q. 91, a. 4; q. 101, a. 4; q. 105, a. 3; q. 107, a. 1; II-II, q. 23, a. 1, ad 1; q. 26, a. 8; q. 114, a. 1; q. 145, a. 1, ad 3; q. 145, a. 2; q. 168, a. 2). Bushlack promises to help us understand how Aquinas can help Christians think better about how to participate in political life. Yet in the end, I wonder if he delivers an account of how to better participate in *political* life. Perhaps there is a deeper tension between Aquinas's approach to politics and Bushlack's than he wants to admit. In the absence of an exploration of that question, we cannot know whether Bushlack has succeeded on his own terms. Insofar as he is correct that Catholics have adopted the anthropology and political horizons of modernity, one is left wondering whether the Church

needs not so much political theology but a much more robust and theologically informed political philosophy.

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Before Virtue: Assessing Contemporary Virtue Ethics. By JONATHAN J. SANFORD. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2015. Pp. x + 280. $65.00 (cloth). ISBN: 978-0-8132-2739-9.

"Aristotle's ethics is not a virtue ethics" (180; cf. 15). This arresting claim is at the literal and conceptual center of Jonathan Sanford's insightful *Before Virtue: Assessing Contemporary Virtue Ethics*. The claim is jarring to anyone casually and even well familiar with the recent turn to virtue ethics in contemporary philosophy, a move that nearly always draws significantly upon the thought of Aristotle. To establish his claim, Sanders must of course provide an account of what contemporary virtue ethics is and then a basic account of Aristotle's ethics. This is precisely the structure of *Before Virtue*. The first half of the book sets up the project and narrates the origins and varieties of contemporary virtue ethics. The second half of the book offers an overview of a robustly Aristotelian ethic.

Sanford starts from the often-made claim that contemporary virtue ethics finds its origin in Elizabeth Anscombe's 1958 essay "Modern Moral Philosophy," which offered a rousing critique of the subject named in its title. However, he argues that virtue ethics has succumbed to the very same limitations of modern moral philosophy outlined by Anscombe and others, and thus neither responds to Anscombe's clarion call nor offers a truly Aristotelian ethic that would indeed constitute such a response. Thus, his book might be understood as an attempt to "save" Aristotle from contemporary virtue ethics, the latter of which is apparently referenced in the title *Before Virtue*.

Sanford's book is of enormous value to proponents of traditional Aristotelian and Thomistic accounts of morality. He offers an insightful and accurate narrative of the rise of contemporary virtue ethics. Perhaps his greatest contribution is the way he substantiates his thesis about this movement's failure to break out of the shackles of modern moral philosophy by his careful delineation of its many varieties through reliance on its most prominent exponents (e.g., Hursthouse, Slote, Annas, Nussbaum). Sanford provides a mental map of contemporary virtue ethics that is of great value to readers of this journal and that would be a service to the thinkers just

mentioned as well. The book's second half, an overview of a thoroughly Aristotelian ethic (one augmented by an occasional turn to St. Thomas), will surely be appreciated by scholarly readers as accurate, even though they will find less there they do not already know.

Sanford's introduction and chapter 1 present the overall thesis of the book and do some needed brush-clearing for his later analysis. For instance, chapter 1 claims that all contemporary moral philosophers address, in one way or another, sets of basic questions about who we are, why we are here, and how we are to live (31-37). Sanford also claims that every contemporary moral philosophy relies on a metaphysics, explicitly or implicitly, and offers a very helpful distinction between metaphysical and religious claims (40).

He then turns in chapter 2 to the near-universally regarded matriarch of contemporary virtue ethics, Elizabeth Anscombe. He uses her classic essay to distill three theses about the inadequacy of modern moral philosophy: (a) it is not profitable to do moral philosophy until we have an adequate philosophy of psychology; (b) concepts of moral obligation and moral duty ought to be jettisoned as survivals of older conceptions of ethics no longer regnant; and (c) the differences between modern English moral philosophers are actually, in Anscombe's words, "of little importance" (62). Sanford uses Anscombe's theses as well as related markers of modern moral philosophy (relying on Solomon [see 108 and 121; cf. 151]) as standards with which to evaluate contemporary virtue ethics. He concludes that contemporary virtue ethics fails to heed the former and continues to be characterized by the latter.

It is in chapters 3 and 4 that Sanford's scholarship shines brightest. He argues that contemporary virtue ethics is marked more by the "loose unity" of a "movement" than by cohesiveness, comprehensiveness, and coherence (e.g., 139, 142). He distinguishes "mainstream" (or "conventional" or "routine") virtue ethics from "radical" (or "unconventional") virtue ethics, and distills characteristics of the former from some of the most prominent virtue ethicists today, including Hursthouse, Annas, and Nussbaum. He concludes that their use of characteristic terms such as virtue, phronesis, and happiness in reality does not distance them from the foundational commitments of modern moral philosophy. Sanford's description of how Nussbaum identifies a virtue ethic explains perfectly how virtue ethicists today can anchor their thought in such diverse figures as Hume, Kant, and Nietzsche (104), a fact that, Sanford rightly argues, reveals not an asset but rather the incoherence of contemporary virtue ethics (127). According to his narrative, the early promise of virtue ethics as an alternative to deontology and consequentialism has crumbled as mainstream virtue ethics has succumbed to the concerns of modern moral philosophy as the cost to join its older siblings as the newest member of the "big three" (115-16).

Sanford is careful to note that his critique of mainstream contemporary virtue ethics does not hold true of "radical" virtue ethics (8-11, 106-9). Mainstream virtue ethicists draw on Aristotelian language but are focused on

responding to standard objections to virtue posed by modern moral philosophy (12, 123) in order to "argue that virtue ethics ought to share the main stage with the other dominant moral theories" (55). Radical virtue ethicists such as MacIntyre (46-47), however, are unconcerned with objections that betray a commitment to modern moral philosophy and instead "seek to show that an approach grounded in the virtues ought to replace the dominant modern moral philosophies" (55). Sanford again relies on Solomon to list characteristics that distinguish radical virtue ethics from mainstream contemporary virtue ethics (107). These characteristics prepare the reader for the second half of the book.

Before shifting to the book's second task, some assessment of its first major task is in order. Recall that the pivotal claim in Sanford's book is that Aristotle is not a virtue ethicist. Defending this claim entails a clear delineation of what constitutes a "virtue ethicist," and by the end of the first half of the book, Sanford has wonderfully prepared the reader to accept his thesis. Even if the first half of the book were published on its own, it would be a very significant contribution to moral philosophy. Far from being a broad-stroke narrative alone, Sanford's book only achieves that broader objective through careful analysis of particular virtue ethicists. For instance, Sanford examines Hursthouse's treatment of certain contested issues (e.g., homosexuality, treatment of animals) and argues persuasively that her clear positions on those cases betray an emotivism in her work. Those positions are avowed without any attempt to derive them from her account of virtue, as she herself labels virtue ethics "an explanatory rather than a justificatory enterprise" (136). Sanford's narrative of the origin of contemporary virtue ethics, his treatment of its most prominent proponents, his delineation of varieties within virtue ethics, and his analysis of the varying ways it relates to modern moral philosophy provide an enormous service, especially to scholars who are well versed in traditional Aristotelian and Thomistic accounts of morality but are less expert on secular virtue ethics and its relationship to traditional accounts.

Laying out the broad strokes of such an account of "Aristotelian ethics" is the second task of the book. Sanford admits that he cannot engage in rigorous fashion any of the intra-Aristotelian interpretative debates (which at times he signals, e.g., 149, 217 n. 18), and that the task of his book demands that he operate more at the "big picture" level that does not attend to details as it surveys the broader region. Though fair, this signals a significant shift in the second half of the book, as to both genre and audience. The final four chapters provide an insightful and accurate overview of a truly Aristotelian ethics. Readers of this journal will find far less new in these chapters, and the engagement with secondary literature drops dramatically. The genre shifts to that of a superbly written and accurate introduction to the key features of Aristotelian morality, text that would be ideal for usage in a graduate (or perhaps a high-level undergraduate) classroom. But this material is written

neither to convince those uncommitted to Aristotelian ethics nor to deepen the technical grasp of such ethics by those already so committed.

Chapter 5 is a wonderful summary of ten characteristic features of Aristotelian ethics (151-80). The difference between such an ethics and what is so carefully delineated in the book's first half is so obvious that it need not be said. But Sanford does say it briefly, in a chapter section whose title is "Aristotle's Ethics Is Not a Virtue Ethics" (180). He concludes chapter 5 with the observation that "the fate of Aristotle's ethics does not stand or fall with the fate of contemporary virtue ethics" (182). The rest of the book provides "not a complete vindication but rather a modest defense of Aristotelian ethics by laying out" its answers to those three sets of fundamental questions that Sanford earlier claimed all moral philosophies address (185).

Chapter 6 addresses the question of who we are with a "skeleton" account of Aristotelian anthropology, augmented where appropriate with St. Thomas's thought (e.g., on the passions [193]) and extended with MacIntyre's work in *Dependent Rational Animals*. Chapter 7 addresses the question of why we are here by presenting MacIntyre's "notions of practice, tradition, and his account of the narrative unity of human life," with which, Sanford claims, "MacIntyre fills one of the lacunae present in Aristotle's own account of the virtues: namely, the designation of certain habits as virtues without sufficient justification or even description of what makes them virtues" (214). Much of this chapter focuses on virtues as "active states" (218), preventing a common modern-moral-philosophy view of the virtues as instrumentally related to happiness or character-building (219). Finally, chapter 8 addresses the question of how we are to live by presenting an account of natural law. Sanford rightly notes that despite common estrangement, "virtue theorists on the one hand and natural law theorists on the other would seem to stand in need of each other's support" (227). Natural-law reasoning, he rightly claims, "is, simply, our thinking about what we are to do, and as such it provides standards against which we can judge progress toward our ends" (253). He concludes, "Making sense of the virtues requires natural law theory, this theory is indelibly teleological in character, and acting virtuously requires a certain perfection of natural law reasoning" (ibid.).

As this last quotation indicates, Sanford's work in the second half of his book is lucid and accurate, but the audience that stands to profit is more likely those less initiated in Aristotelian ethics. That could of course include the contemporary virtue ethicists whose work is so carefully engaged in the first half, but the text is not written to them. If it were, it would start from their claims about Aristotle and argue more technically how Sanford's more radical virtue ethics is superior. That is not to say there are no topics in the second half that will stretch the more well-versed reader's grasp of Aristotelian ethics. For instance, Sanford delivers a superb account of why mainstream contemporary virtue ethicists offer no robust accounts of justice, that paradigmatic ancient virtue. Their individualistic anthropology (e.g., the

rejection of the social nature of the person, the neglect of friendship) can lead only to a contractual account of justice. Though this is far from a new claim, Sanford shows how it marks a chasm between ancient and contemporary mainstream accounts of the virtue of justice as a virtue (250-52), and suggests by extension that it reverberates in respective accounts of "those other traits of character we regard as virtues" (252; see also 254).

Another more technical issue raised in the second half of the book is Sanford's repeated insistence that "virtue serves as a logically and generationally prior concept to the full-blown account of happiness" (212; see also 149). This claim makes sense in the context of a concern to avoid the instrumentalization of virtue to secure happiness, common to contemporary virtue ethics (218). Yet given Sanford's accurate understanding of virtues as active states (216) and activity as constitutive of happiness (157), the insistence on the priority of virtue to happiness is more puzzling, even if at other times he rightly describes this relationship as more interdependent (223).

There is no doubt that the questions addressed in the book's second half are amenable to technical analysis and that Sanford is capable of the endeavor. That is simply not the task he has chosen for this part of the book. Nor has he chosen to engage a theological account of the virtues in any significant way, barring a brief reference to early Christian virtue theorists (56) and equally brief mentions of confusion about charity in recent virtue ethics (66, 167-68). What Sanford has chosen to do he has done well. His penetrating analysis of contemporary virtue ethics in the first half of the book substantiates his seemingly odd thesis that Aristotle is not a virtue ethicist. His "skeleton" portrayal of an Aristotelian ethic in the second half establishes that an Anscombe-heeding, truly Aristotelian account of virtue has not been tried and found lacking, but rather it has not been tried in mainstream contemporary moral philosophy.

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The Mystery of Union with God: Dionysian Mysticism in Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. By BERNHARD BLANKENHORN, O.P. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2015. Pp. xxxiii + 508. $65.00 (cloth). ISBN: 978-0-8132-2749-8.

This book presents the author's doctoral research—in modified version—done under the supervision of Gilles Emery, O.P., at Fribourg. The title is

correct and well chosen, but can easily lead a possible reader astray, thinking that the book is about Albert and—even more—Aquinas and mysticism. One of the fundamental tenets of this study, however, is that Albert's and especially Aquinas's receptions of Dionysian mysticism approach union with God as something that does not necessarily entail visions or other unusual aspects, and that is open to more than just a small elite. Aquinas even admits that union is open to all who are baptized and have progressed in the state of grace. To a certain extent, this book may be welcomed as a successful attempt to show how mysticism can be interpreted as relevant for every Christian who aims for holiness. The mystical science begins by faith and not some other special grace. It is not Hierotheus (the alleged first bishop of Athens, who figures prominently in the Dionysian corpus) nor "Moses in darkness" but John the Evangelist, Christ's best friend, who is Aquinas's model mystic (434).

The book—published in the *Thomistic Ressourcement* series with an adequate bibliography, index of names, and subject index—consists of three parts. The first deals with Dionysius and his early interpreters on union with God and mostly summarizes present scholarship on the issue. The original elements of this study are parts 2 and 3, concerned with Albert and Aquinas, respectively. The chapters and sections are organized in a way that reflects both a logical and a chronological order. With respect to the logical order, the author, before presenting Albert and Aquinas on union with God, first studies the underlying assumptions and doctrines ("background issues" and "doctrinal pillars") concerning anthropology, eschatology, the invisible missions of the Son and the Spirit, grace and the theological virtues, the gifts of the Spirit (especially the gifts of understanding and wisdom), the vision of God, and divine naming. The author then studies his protagonists in a historical way, dealing with their writings in chronological order. In the course of the book, a more doctrinal, synthetic approach is followed by an approach that focuses on texts and that presents a close analysis when studying Aquinas. This indirect approach, scholarly and careful as it is, presents the reader with a considerable challenge, asking perhaps for more patience than is typically found in the present day.

The central thesis of the book is summarized by the author as follows: "Albert and Thomas interpret Dionysian mysticism in a kataphatic way, emphasize our need for mediations as well as the mystic's active cooperation in union, and posit a trinitarian structure for union, all the while retaining a qualified apophatism, the noetic status of union, and the immediacy of God's conjoining action" (443). Each element of this summary can be elucidated by its reverse. Both Albert and Thomas can still be said to be engaged in negative theology, but they interpret the Dionysian corpus in a way that, to a certain extent, is much less apophatic. Elements of this reception include the way in which both of them attempt to retain their analysis of human cognition when accounting for mysticism. Mystical union does not leave human cognition behind or make the *triplex via* of divine naming superfluous. On the contrary,

on Aquinas's reading, the gift of understanding precisely consists in helping its recipient to understand "what God is not" (e.g., the dark cloud of Moses's vision), a "fine-tuning of his ears" listening to Scripture and Tradition (406). There is no passivity in divine union, but the human mind actively contributes, with the help of the invisible missions of the Son and the Spirit and with the gifts of understanding and wisdom.

Blankenhorn especially stresses that Aquinas is the first Scholastic theologian who associates the dark cloud with the gift of understanding. This gift of understanding enables a "gifted noetic remotion." This is part of Aquinas's interpretation of the pure of heart who are promised the vision of God. They are able to purify their mind of "phantasms and errors, namely, that the things which are proposed about God [in Scripture and Tradition] not be taken by the mode of corporeal phantasms, nor according to heretical perversities. And the gift of understanding brings about this purity" (*STh* II-II, q. 8, a. 7, quoted on 397). "Hence the gift of understanding does not shut down but rather refines our use of concepts concerning God and his works. A virtue-centered theology makes mystical ascent available to all" (439).

Mystical union does not involve a leaving behind or discarding of concepts; for Aquinas, cognition within union is concept-bound. Albert and Thomas even more represent the nonaffective intellectualist reading (no union beyond mind) of Dionysian mysticism—made possible by making Trinitarian theology (Word and Love) fruitful for thinking through union—as opposed to Thomas Gallus and Bonaventure: "Love beyond mind does not unite, for only love with knowledge assimilates us to the triune God. The Trinity's inner life shapes Thomas's mystical theology on a crucial point. He shows the analogous correspondence of the Trinity's immanent life, the *imago*, and our spiritual life" (245).

This book is a real tour de force. Each of its protagonists brings its own huge hermeneutical challenges: the corpus of Pseudo-Dionysius because of its unknown author and its hermetical nature (which to a certain extent is reflected in its commentaries as well); the writings of Albert because of their constant and diverse development of insights and theories, which sometimes leads to the impression that there is more than one Albert; and Aquinas because of the manifold and diverse ways of interpreting his thoughts. This exposition and analysis, however, is successfully executed, and the author merits our admiration for doing so. Quite a few studies have appeared on subjects such as human cognition, the human soul, the *imago Dei*, faith and charity, the Trinitarian missions, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and divine naming, but rarely does one find them all treated and discussed on a high level in an integrated and balanced way. This book offers answers to questions such as whether Albert's and Aquinas's thoughts on divine naming and mysticism presuppose sanctifying grace or not; what relationship exists between the divine missions, mysticism, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit; how man as the *imago Dei* determines views on union with God; and to what extent the

knowledge of "what God is not" represents adequate knowledge at all. This also means that the author enters quite a few discussions, old and new, and formulates his own positions. For instance, he opposes convincingly "modern" authors such as Garrigou-Lagrange, Gardeil, and Labourdette on the issue of the noetic content of the gift of understanding. There is a remarkable "exterior" or revelation-centered mysticism in Aquinas's theology of the gift of understanding, which relies on Scripture and Tradition, and does not posit a reception of infused forms or a higher vision of the divine ideas. The gift of understanding helps the faithful to remove from revelation and Tradition all that is too closely bound to creation so that it is not attributed to God.

If I were to dare mention a slightly critical remark, it would be that the author could have done more to show his readers how mysticism as conceived by Albert and Thomas is indeed pertinent to problems and challenges of our day. I know he does so elsewhere and, indeed even here, proposes this issue for further study (467). But this book could have profited from an approach that would make clear that the author does not study Pseudo-Dionysius, Albert, and Thomas from an exclusively historical-theological or philosophical perspective. He wants to enter into a collaborate enterprise approaching the living God, "suntheologein" as Karl Rahner once put it. At some points of the book, I would have welcomed such a theological reflection (for the sake of the accessibility of the book, as well) and wished the author had left out some of the intricacies of his subjects. The author understandably excuses himself, due to lack of space but also out of hermeneutical respect for these premodern authors, for concentrating solely on union itself, not covering the way to union (prayer, meditation, the Eucharist, etc.). This comes at a cost, however.

I am impressed by the potential theological fruitfulness of the concepts studied in this book. *The Mystery of Union with God* is a welcome study in the theology of the *nexus mysteriorum*.

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The Root of Friendship: Self-Love and Self-Governance in Aquinas. By ANTHONY T. FLOOD. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014. Pp. xix + 164. $59.95 (cloth). ISBN: 978-0-8132-2605-7.

Anthony Flood argues that the key to understanding Aquinas's account of self-governance lies in understanding an aspect of his thought that has not

been traditionally acknowledged, namely, his account of proper self-love, which in turn gives rise to self-friendship. For Flood, self-love grounds one's conscious experience of oneself as a self and a person, which makes self-friendship possible. He draws upon Aquinas's general description of the five central characteristics of friendship, namely, (1) a desire for the friend's existence, (2) a desire for various goods for the friend, (3) the promotion of those goods for the friend, (4) the pleasure of the friend's company, and (5) a commonality of mind concerning joys and sorrows. Self-friendship, on Aquinas's account, involves the same cognitive and affective attitudes directed toward oneself. Since friendship requires consciousness of the other, self-love and self-friendship fundamentally involve conscious awareness of oneself. Furthermore, the conditions for friendship entail desire for and union with the beloved. Since with self-friendship there is no separation between beloved and lover, self-love constitutes the deepest form of interiority possible, grounding one's experiences of and action in the world.

Flood distinguishes between what he calls common self-love, ordered self-love, and wicked self-love. All human beings exhibit common self-love insofar as, at the minimum, they desire their own self-preservation (the first of the five conditions for friendship). But well-ordered persons desire more than simple physical self-preservation; they also care about the quality of their interior lives. Although all human beings desire the good for themselves and pursue what they take to be good (conditions 2 and 3), here, once again, the well-ordered and the wicked part company. The well-ordered recognize what is in fact good for them and direct their actions accordingly. In so doing, they achieve a pleasant life (satisfying condition 4) and achieve an inner peace (condition 5). Thus, the well-ordered attain self-friendship. The wicked, on the other hand, desire their own existence but are interested only in pursuing their passions (what Flood calls their animal characteristics), rejecting what right reason would deem appropriate. They pursue the wrong sorts of goods or pursue badly what is in fact good. Since they do not achieve the goods conducive to a flourishing life, they end up in misery and conflict. Thus, the wicked satisfy only the first of the five conditions for self-friendship and do so only superficially. In so doing, they fail to achieve self-friendship and set themselves up for a chaotic and unhappy life.

Flood argues that proper self-love and the resulting self-friendship are required in order to achieve self-governance. An individual must satisfy three conditions in order to be a candidate for self-governance: the epistemic requirement, the motivational requirement, and the authority requirement. The first two constitute what Flood calls the psychological conditions for self-governance. One satisfies the first requirement by possessing the knowledge requisite for self-direction, namely, knowledge of the moral law. The natural law, according to Aquinas's account, plays a major role here, as well as the human ability and obligation to seek out moral guidance in situations of uncertainty. Therefore, the virtues of prudence and docility bear important

responsibilities in this matter. The second requirement refers to the ability to act on the basis of one's own internal motivation as opposed to being subject to or determined by external threats or rewards. The perfection of the sensitive appetite is especially important here, for unless the passions are perfected, they are inclined to resist the direction of the intellect in determining what actions to perform. Thus, the acquisition of virtues such as courage and temperance is important in satisfying the second requirement. The final requirement has to do with the possession of the moral authority for self-governance. On Flood's reading, one satisfies this requirement as a result of satisfying the other two; as he puts it, possession of the requisite knowledge and motivation is both a necessary and a sufficient condition for moral authority. Culpable ignorance and the possession of vices damage the agent's prospects for fulfilling the psychological conditions. Hence, on Flood's interpretation of Aquinas, the wicked are not capable of effective self-governance.

I found this book especially interesting and its approach novel. Flood argues that, on Aquinas's view, self-love is a necessary condition for friendship with others. Although he does not point this out, a consequence of his interpretation is that Aquinas endorses the common intuition that one cannot love others if one does not love oneself. In the course of his discussion, Flood also examines virtues and vices that are not often addressed, including humility, docility, and imprudence. Nevertheless, there is much here that will be familiar to those who work on Aquinas's ethics. In developing his account of self-governance, Flood discusses Aquinas's account of the natural law, the nature of friendship, the cardinal virtues (although, interestingly, justice seems not to play much of a role here), vices such as pride (although, interestingly, there are no references to Aquinas's discussion of pride in *De Malo*), and the eudaemonist tradition that influenced Aquinas. These familiar topics are presented using a different organizing principle, one that Flood quite rightly points out is not often considered. On Flood's view, (proper) self-love gives rise to self-friendship, which in turn enables self-governance and the possibility of a fulfilling and serene life. Flood makes a particularly strong claim here. He argues that proper self-love and self-friendship are essential to not only effective self-governance but also the acquisition of the virtues. But I wonder to what extent the notion of self-love is in fact necessary. Proper self-love involves the preservation/development of one's interior life through the identification and pursuit of genuine goods that perfect oneself and result in self-integration and a pleasant life. The realization of this state of affairs requires suitably developed human cognitive and appetitive capacities (achieved through the acquisition of virtues), which enable one to act in accordance with the moral law. While the notions of self-love and self-friendship make interesting organizing principles, once Flood concludes his direct discussion of self-love and self-friendship and moves on to the three conditions for self-governance it is not clear to me that the original notions are doing a lot of heavy lifting. What seems essential to Flood's account of

self-governance is the development of those capacities that make it possible for human beings to order their activities in accordance with the moral law, namely, a virtuous intellect, by which we come to recognize the requirements of the moral law, and virtuous appetitive capacities, which foster our pursuit of the goods specified by the moral law. These are ideas that Aquinas scholars have long recognized. Organizing these capacities under the umbrella of self-love is interesting and innovative, but it is not clear to me at least that Flood makes good on his premise that self-love is necessary in order to understand Aquinas's account of self-governance.

Nevertheless, Flood argues that proper self-love is required for the acquisition of the virtues. This is an intriguing position. On his interpretation, an individual who loves herself properly is motivated to attain a virtuous character. Thus, proper self-love, which is prior to and informs the kinds of actions that one performs, is necessary for virtue formation. In other words, one cannot acquire the virtues without a prior suitable orientation to their acquisition. Since the virtues are necessary for self-governance, this position supports Flood's claim. On the other hand, Flood also admits that the virtues are required in order to achieve self-friendship. Thus, on Flood's view, while proper self-love is structurally prior (his phrase) to virtue acquisition, both proper self-love and the virtues are present together as self-friendship becomes fully developed. This suggests a very complicated feedback mechanism and independent yet interlocking pathways that arise in the development of both self-friendship and the virtues.

Adequately assessing this viewpoint would require examination of Aquinas's account of virtue formation, something I cannot undertake in this brief review. Human beings are naturally disposed toward the good, which lays a foundation for virtue formation. Virtue acquisition itself requires education, practice, and, at least for the infused virtues, grace. Although Aquinas does not mention self-love in his discussion of virtue formation, one might argue that without the proper orientation of the will toward the right goods, one would not be motivated to acquire virtues. Self-love would of course provide such an orientation. Whether it is also necessary for this orientation, I will leave open for the reader to decide.

Regardless of whether Flood can defend his position, I think there is an especially fruitful use for his notion of self-love, in response to those who worry that Aquinas's account falls prey to the egoism objection. I have never found that objection particularly persuasive; it seems obvious to me that Aquinas is not an egoist. But I would argue that Flood's development of Aquinas's notion of self-love helps to demonstrate why egoism is not a problem for Aquinas's account. The notion of self-love might seem to raise the issue of egoism since it appears as if one pursues the good because doing so benefits oneself. But not all self-love is created equally. On Flood's interpretation, proper self-love is a prerequisite for self-friendship. Friendship on Aquinas's account involves the desire for and promotion of genuine goods

for the beloved for the sake of the beloved. No one regards this a problem with other-directed forms of friendship. Self-friendship operates in the same manner, except that there is no distinction between lover and beloved. But that strikes me as an accidental difference. If such goods are good for another, then it is not clear to me why they cannot be good for oneself. The agent with proper self-love pursues those goods, laid out in the natural law, that perfect oneself as a person. In other words, the agent with proper self-love pursues the virtues and a virtuous life. These are in fact authentic goods attained in a morally appropriate manner, whether sought for one's own sake or promoted for the sake of another. Self-love goes wrong when one fails to pursue authentic goods in an ordered manner. Flood argues that this is often (although not exclusively) rooted in pride, a vice that, as he notes, is "the habitual tendency to exalt oneself above God and others" (87). Pride focuses one's attention on oneself, rejecting any kind of submission to a higher authority. This is certainly egoistic. Aquinas can then say that egoism is (at least often) the result of an unvirtuous self-love. No doubt, this argument needs further refinement. I merely intend to sketch out how such an argument could go.

Flood is especially interested in responding to philosophers who criticize the historical tradition, of which Aquinas is a part, as providing inadequate accounts of self-governance. In my view, Flood has argued persuasively that philosophers involved in that debate have dismissed Aquinas's account unfairly. But even those who are not particularly interested in the current debate over self-governance should find this book useful and engaging.

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Thomas Aquinas: Faith, Reason, and Following Christ. By FREDERICK CHRISTIAN BAUERSCHMIDT. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. xii + 342. $110.00 (cloth), $31.00 (paper). ISBN: 978-0-19-921314-6 (cloth), 978-0-19-921315-3 (paper).

After so many "companions" or "readers," is it still possible to compose a novel introduction to Aquinas? In this insightful book, presented "as a general introduction to the life and thought of Thomas Aquinas" (x), Frederick Bauerschmidt meets the challenge.

His work consists of seven chapters. The first chapter, "Time, Place, and Person," is a historical-cultural introduction focusing on Aquinas's life and

activity in the context of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (1-37). Two parts follow. The first has a historical-theoretical flavor. It explains "how Thomas related reason to faith" (x), including the following chapters: "Thomas's Intellectual Project" (chap. 2, pp. 41-81), "*Praeambula fidei*: God and the World" (chap. 3, pp. 83-142), and "*Fides quaerens intellectum*" (chap. 4, pp. 143-75). The second part, "Following Christ," deals more with morals, starting in a quite Thomasian way by examining "the way of God incarnate" (chap. 5, pp. 179-227) before examining "the way of God's people" (chap. 6, pp. 229-89). Chapter 7, "Thomas in History" (291-316), presents a nuanced overview of the history of the reception of Aquinas.

According to Bauerschmidt himself, "those who wish to have an easy descriptor for this book can describe it as an essay in Hillbilly Thomism" (xi, alluding to Flannery O'Connor). However, this opus is much more refined than the humble claim suggests. Indeed, the last chapter, "Thomas in History," shows great hermeneutic sophistication and mastery. Although Bauerschmidt obviously favors *la nouvelle théologie* rather than archeo-Thomism in his review of the history of twentieth-century Thomism, he stresses both the naïveté of Marie-Dominique Chenu's dichotomy between religious affirmations or intuitions and particular languages and concepts throughout history, and the "point" of Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange "that it is hard to identify continuity of intuition or affirmation without some sort of conceptual continuity" (313). We would go further and speak of a necessary continuity of wording, of *language*.

When he compares "historical theology" à la Rorty with the "history of theology" (308-10), Bauerschmidt obviously presents the reader with his own method. Indeed, his book does not only offer (1) historical reconstructions (accounts of Aquinas in terms that Aquinas himself would approve, trying to avoid anachronism) and (2) "rational reconstructions" (redescriptions of Aquinas in our terms, deliberately anachronistic). It also gives some insights pertaining to (3) *Geistesgeschichte* and (4) intellectual history (the broader cultural context). Indeed, this book epitomizes "historical theology" at its best, by presenting Aquinas's intellectual project as "a form of discipleship" (x) still imitable today.

Bauerschmidt presents theology, *sacra doctrina*, as a "way of life." Throughout the book, he demonstrates how *sacra doctrina* as understood by Aquinas compares with ancient philosophy as rediscovered by Pierre Hadot: it is a way of life, more than a theoretical discipline. Bauerschmidt stresses the reciprocal integration of Aquinas's way of life (as a Dominican) and his thought. For instance, he writes, "Thomas recognizes, as did the schools of philosophy in antiquity, that virtues are acquired or deepened through practices, which always occur at particular times and places under the guidance of particular rules, teachers, and examples" (260). Even the reception of infused virtues may be prepared by such exercises (ibid.). Hence the prevalence of virtue over law in Aquinas's moral teaching. This feature

mirrors the statements of the Order of Preachers about the legal—not moral—status of its regulations (258-59).

In order to stress the Dominican-oriented dimension of Aquinas's theology, Bauerschmidt makes a judicious use of Michèle Mulchahey's work on medieval Dominican institutions (chap. 2 and pp. 258-64). Dominican formation started even with learning "a new way to walk" (261)!

Since Aquinas was a "disciple," his way of life and oeuvre are fundamentally Christocentric: "his single goal was at all times the Dominican task of preaching Jesus Christ" (37). Hence, the true nature of his "purity" was often enhanced by his first biographers: "the purity of heart that wills one thing—the comprehensive good that is God . . . comes to see [all] created goods as ordered toward the highest good" (227). More precisely, following St. Paul "'[taking] every thought captive to obey Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5)' . . . 'happens when a person subjects all that he knows to the service of Christ and the faith'" (227, quoting *Super II Cor.* c. 10, lect. 1).

The thought revolution brought about by this absolute love for Christ is not forgotten. Nicely citing the commentary on Galatians, "in cruce est perfectio totius legis, et tota ars bene vivendi" (*Super Gal.*, c. 6, lect. 4), Bauerschmidt stresses Aquinas's astonishing Christological reversal in moral theology of the Aristotelian framework: "For Aristotle, the idea that 'the whole art of living well' could be summed up in an instrument of torture was nonsense" (263, quoting the *Nicomachean Ethics* 1153b19-21).

In order to describe Aquinas's practice of theology as a foretaste of God's vision— "in this world, any imperfect perception of divine knowledge affords us delight, and delight stirs up a thirst or desire for perfect knowledge" (*STh* I-II, q. 33, a. 2)—Bauerschmidt judiciously uses Aquinas's poetry, especially the dialectic poetics of veiling and unveiling that structures the *Adoro te devote,* cited and commented following the work of Robert Wielockx (272-82).

Being a "*way*" of life, Aquinas's work is also acutely eschatological. Bauerschmidt provides a useful summary of the eschaton as told by Aquinas through at least twenty different passages from his oeuvre (283-84). But even more importantly, he shows how eschatology suffuses the atmosphere in which Aquinas lived and wrote. Indeed, his work manifests a remarkable association of knowledge in general with eschatological vision.

Eschatological speculations based on the Bible's poetry and prophecy frame Aquinas's philosophical-theological reflection on the present condition of mankind between what Bauerschmidt calls two "axioms," as encapsulated in key phrases of Aquinas: "grace does not destroy nature but perfects it," and "my soul is not me" (229 and 291). The compatibility of free will and beatitude rests on the fact that human freedom is the freedom to determine the means to the end, not the end itself, which by nature is the good that is perceived (285). The eschatological horizon of Aquinas allows for his better, more balanced view of the relation between nature and grace and especially of the dynamic relation between faith and reason (142).

The eschatological drive also illuminates the unique blend of humility and audacity, apophasis and cataphasis in Aquinas's own work (140). Bauerschmidt gives a nice interpretation of Aquinas ceasing to write the *Summa* at the end of his life: "this is not simply a confession of the inadequacy of his words, but is a testimony to the transcendence of the reality toward which those words stretch out" (141). The truth revealed was not in contradiction. It was in excess to what Aquinas was able to say, so that vision is not in a dialectic relation with language but rather its fulfillment. One could probably go further and relate some of his characteristic views (e.g., on being) to the daily celebration and contemplation of the Eucharist as an exercise in eschatological desire.

Bauerschmidt's book is not a Neo-Thomist introduction to Aquinas. Some readers may remember that Bauerschmidt was associated with the Radical Orthodoxy movement at its very beginning (e.g., his piece "Aesthetics: The Theological Sublime," in *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology*, ed. John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock, and Graham Ward [London: Routledge, 1999], 201-19). While resisting the temptation to exaggerate or oversystematize Aquinas's axioms—a temptation into which Radical Orthodoxy sometimes fell—this book retains the best insights of that movement. It does so in several ways.

First, Bauerschmidt constantly shows a keen sense of the linguistic, hence historical and cultural conditioning of human thought. "If we are going to do theology, we have to do it as the historically embodied beings that we are by nature, which means that we inevitably speak of the mysteries of God . . . in some historically-inflected human language" (291). I admire his presentation of Aquinas's rescue of the language of redemption, a metaphor that is scriptural and hence indispensable (218-19).

In "Rethinking the Five Ways" (99-101), Bauerschmidt does not hesitate to grapple with the difficulties raised when Aquinas's thought seems integrated with obsolete conceptions. For example, after a lucid assessment of the contemporary acceptability of the Five Ways (whose "details are highly problematic, given our current understanding of the natural world" [99]), he proposes "to recast the basic pattern of argumentation . . . by beginning not from the perceptible world as a physical object, but from the world as an object of inquiry for the human knower. That is, the five ways do not give us simply an accurate picture of the universe as something that entails God, but they show us that the world becomes ultimately unintelligible without that which people call God" (100-101). In the same vein, Bauerschmidt both admires Aquinas's demythologization of the metaphors used by Scripture in matters eschatological, and assesses Aquinas's attempt based on the fact that "demythologization is often purchased at the price of wedding oneself to an account of rational plausibility that is itself historically conditioned" (286).

In this book, Bauerschmidt presents a nuanced appreciation of "philosophy" (73-81). He elegantly avoids any polemical feature and waits

until the last chapter to stress the overly philosophical twist of Neo-Thomism—"a philosophical system with theological resonances . . . [and] an alternative to modern philosophical systems" (301)—a lack of polemics that, by contrast, situates this introduction far from Neo-Thomism.

In Aquinas himself, Bauerschmidt allows for a certain philosophical eclecticism. Aquinas's God combines features borrowed from Plato's (the knower of all things he makes) and Aristotle's (the ultimate desire of all things) (104). Concerning the way in which Aquinas (over)interprets Aristotle (106), should Bauerschmidt perhaps have evoked Aquinas's practice of *expositio reverentialis*, which consists in seizing more firmly than the author himself the actual truth for which he was searching (the actual *intentio auctoris*) but was unable properly to articulate?

Regarding the infamous question of "analogy," Bauerschmidt refuses to systematize Aquinas's take on the question, which is more a practice than a theory. He stresses the pragmatic take of Aquinas on questions related to language *in divinis* (139). Understanding a word is catching its *ratio*, which is the definition of the thing named when it has one. But there exist "things" that are not definable, albeit not meaningless, such as the categories (like quality or quantity): "their meaningfulness is displayed in our ability to use them within language in such a way as to communicate successfully. . . . Such a claim is obviously important to Thomas, since the word 'God' is not subject to definition, yet he does not want to say that it is meaningless" (135).

Bauerschmidt relates analogy with metaphysics and not only with logic. It "is a use of language that is grounded in a metaphysical vision in which creatures have a real participation in God's existence and the perfections that flow from it" (139). Nicely synthesizing Aquinas's position as a compromise between the Maimonidean-Avicennian resignation to logical negativity and the Dionysian-Anselmian hints at the "supereminent," and dismissing the present-day opposition between the agnostic-logic tendency à la Étienne Gilson, Bernard Lonergan, or Nicholas Lash, or a transcendentalist theory of the possibility of human language, Bauerschmidt adduces a fitting sentence of Garrigou-Lagrange: "human words, even inspired words, far from being exaggerations, can express supernatural truths only by understatement" (141, quoting *Reality*, trans. Patrick Cummins [Ex Fontibus, 2006], 254).

The last line of the book concludes it in a felicitous way: "that we can learn from [Aquinas] still today how to be better followers of Christ through handing on to others the fruits of contemplation is an indication of Thomas's intellectual greatness, but it is even more a sign of the glory of God's grace manifested through his life" (316).

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Are You an Illusion? By MARY MIDGLEY. New York: Routledge, 2014. Pp. viii + 160. $24.95 (paper). ISBN: 978-1-84465-792-6.

Nearly two decades ago Francis Crick, the codiscoverer of the double-helix structure of the DNA molecule, published *The Astonishing Hypothesis: The Scientific Search for the Soul*, in which he argued that science explains the soul away, for science successfully reduces us—our conscious thought, will, emotions, etc.—to the neurons and neuronal interactions that compose the brain. Many scientists have risen in the intervening years to critique Crick's thoroughgoing reductionist materialism (e.g., Gerald Edelman, *Wider Than the Sky: The Phenomenal Gift of Consciousness*). But during that time, no philosophical engagement of the issue has been as aggressive and directly accessible as Mary Midgley's *Are You an Illusion?* The absence of a subtitle shows the unusually focused nature of the project, for it is an exercise in dialectic that forces us to do what even philosophers are often hesitant to do: to set aside developed theories and their possible applications, to look directly at our first principles, and to weigh them.

Midgley's target, however, is broader than Crick or the philosophers following in his footsteps (such as Daniel Dennett). In the past half century, there has developed a widespread tendency among scientists to claim, "apparently in the name of science, that they believe themselves, and indeed their readers, not to exist" (vii), replacing us with brain cells. This "suicidal" thesis Midgley critiques in four general ways: it "does not really make sense in itself, nor does the reasoning that is used to support it," and it "does not actually flow from science" (ibid.) but (surprisingly) from a version of Cartesian dualism. This last claim—that the materialistic view of the self as an illusion traces back to Cartesianism—may sound the most counterintuitive to Thomists, who would take the first three claims as irrefutable. Yet Midgley makes a convincing case on all counts.

Much of the book, in fact, is a historical study of how we got here, defending the theory that this state of affairs goes back to Descartes. By making us (or rather our minds) self-subsistent spiritual observers of the *res extensa*, we did not have to think of ourselves as being in any way a part of or dependent on nature, so that as soon as the universe became only an object for our minds, it also became something we are free to work on in any way that suits us. According to Midgley, the irony was that, although this dualism freed scientists for unlimited research, leaving spirit to the churchmen, the obvious fact that mind and matter are connected always nagged at us until we saw them as opposed. The opposition, combined with spirit's (alleged) irrelevance to scientific study, and the success of the latter, inevitably streamlined dualism as materialism. Early twentieth-century behaviorists, Midgley argues, facilitated this simplification by embracing a sophism: objectivity is opposed to subjectivity, so one cannot be objective (that is, evenhanded) about the subjective world. Thus, we live now in "the last stage in the collapse of

dualism" (139), an incoherent age of materialism combined with the habits of dualism that delays "changes that will finally have to be made" to science (60).

One of the shadows of dualism under which we labor was a result of seeing spirit (ours and God's) as the only active beings, which relegated matter to the status of an exclusively passive participant in nature. This view does not sit well now with the evidence that the biological world evolves nor with the recognition that fields and energy should be central to physics (it is a weakness of Midgley's account that she refers only in passing to the notions of fields in this regard, while evolution receives most of her attention). Indeed, Midgley points out that "the central trouble" with this form of materialism is that over the past century the explanatory work given to matter "has increased dramatically and the concepts that used to share the burden" have already been rejected (14). Yet she concedes that evolutionary theory itself is laboring under these problems. Chapters 1 and 5 are in some ways a defense of Thomas Nagel's thesis, in *Mind and Cosmos*, that Neo-Darwinism has what appears to be fatal problems in its reliance on chance (natural selection) as a sufficient explanation for the diversity of life. Neo-Darwism cannot coherently reject teleology—the idea of purpose in nature and therefore the scientist's calling to explain natural things through purposes—while also exalting what amounts to a truncated teleology of mere self-perpetuation. But even more important than this, in both ordinary experience and in the particular studies of practiced science (such as in group selection), there is no denying a striving in each living thing, and not just in their genes but even in animal communities. Most importantly, natural selection "works simply by differential dying . . . [which] is only a filter, and filters have no originative force" (71). Rather, Midgley insists, material substances themselves must possess "innate creative capacities" (72). This internal teleology, she notes, also implies an objective (if in many ways relative) grounds for speaking of good and evil as "real emergent propert[ies]" (86), although she does not pursue this thought in the direction of morality. Likewise, she carefully refrains from equating natures acting for ends with the existence of a Designer. Rather, we must "recognize intelligence—design—of some kind as a basic constituent of the universe, whatever we may then decide to think about the idea of a designer" (89).

The general objective of several of the early chapters of the book is to illuminate the history of science, both how it is practiced and how it is presented to the public, in relation to the thesis. Thus, Midgley demonstrates science's essentially provisional nature combined with its aspiration to be (and to be taken as) definitive. The former is illustrated through examples of its constant self-revision, Midgley's overarching point being that "we need to be alive to the possibility that some current assumptions [in science] will simply turn out wrong" (11). The ambition and official face of science as being the only source of objective truth—scientism—she explains through an excursus into the physicist's implicit belief that "basically, all is number" (49). From Pythagoras and Plato to Descartes and Newton, scientism has become

something akin to a religion, and a mystical one, in which only the scientists can aspire to the priesthood. Midgley remarks upon the irony in this, insofar as science is usually taken to be inherently hostile to religion and to have waxed precisely as religion has waned. And yet, she admits, we are still somewhat afraid of science, worried that it is "anti-human" (21), not so much because of some lingering effect of organized religion but because of what the scientists themselves say. Thus, neuroscientists boldly and repeatedly assert that our inner lives, our consciousness, and our very selves do not exist and/or do not matter—a claim usually made without real argument but merely identified as "the scientific belief" (22).

Midgley surveys the ways such assertions seem more than a little odd, inferring many corollaries, such as that conscious and autonomic reactions do not differ in any important way, our actions in no way derive from our choices, pain does not really exist, animals are less like us and more like gasses or clockwork, and no one experiences illusion because *all* is illusion and no one is *there* to experience anything anyway. Key inconsistencies Midgley notes are neuroscientists' insistence that brain cells are the only place where explanation can occur and their "atomistic assumption" (30) that the smaller material component is what really matters (since this implies that the brain cell is derivative and therefore a distraction from explanation). Indeed, she turns this view on its head by maintaining not merely that wholes deserve equal time alongside parts, but further that the whole has a certain priority in explanation, since the "preliminary outward movement of thought—holism—is every bit as necessary as the inward, atomizing one[,] and in any investigation it usually needs to come first" (ibid.). She goes on to show through examples that multidisciplinary approaches and even conflicts between various disciplines more often than not lead to fruitful syntheses, whereas a rigorous declaration that one side is correct and the other simply false is destructive, most apparently in the dissonance between science and practice. Different approaches to a single question need not be thought of as being in competition, any more than the reports of two different sense powers (say, sight and touch) should force us to trust one and despise the other.

Part of the difficulty in modern neuroscience's promise that it will explain all our thoughts, feelings, and choices, Midgley contends, is that there is confusion about what it means to *explain* something. When we say something explains something else, we usually mean that it completes a previous and partial causal account; the "explanation" is not usually the whole explanation but only the last piece needed. In particular, by identifying in functional MRIs where the blood is flowing most during a particular kind of thought, we do not really understand that thought any better. (Midgley goes so far as to claim that modern brain-imaging techniques are "probably" what "finally launched this anti-subject campaign" [147].) This may be "why, even though neurology is of enormous use for medical purposes when the brain works badly, claims to use it to explain mental phenomena in healthy people are of very limited

use" (53). One of the few exceptions to this, Midgley thinks, is the contemporary understanding of the two hemispheres of the brain, especially as popularized by Iain McGilchrist in *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*. Here, she proposes, the different duties observed to correlate with the different halves seem to be a source of a "difference in attitude, in the way we attend to our surroundings" (129), which difference helps us see that although we are, "for central purposes, more one thing than two" (135), our psychological unity is "not a state fully attained but an enterprise, an effort, an aspiration that is central to our lives, all the more central because we are so much troubled by the clashes" (131).

As with explanation, in the chapter on the freedom of the will, Midgley holds that what it means to cause something has been misunderstood or at least has been treated too narrowly. In Aristotelian terms, she says we have been reducing all causality to agent causality and all agent causality to violence, where causes are "manipulators forcing helpless objects to produce their effects" (104). She suggests that we would profit from returning to the four causes and, furthermore, that some patients might be receptive to the influence of their agents. Might not the agency of the will, for example, sometimes be such a harmonious order of causes and effects, even though of course there are often conflicts between what we will and what our bodies are capable of? An Einstein cannot "simply lie back and let the cells do the job for him" (57). It is indisputable that "minds can affect brains as well as brains affecting minds," but this is ultimately because the two are "aspects of a single activity that we perceive in two separate ways" (105). In this implicit return to form and matter, Midgley touches only lightly on Benjamin Libet's experiments allegedly disproving free will and his notion of the "free won't," leaving the reader somewhat disappointed.

There are a few complaints one could level at the book. Stylistically, the thesis and the principal arguments for it are iterated and reiterated in each chapter, a confirmation of the author's admission that she feels an "increasing exasperation" (vii) with the denial of self. No point is made only once. Nevertheless, one might defend this circularity as neither vicious nor even inappropriate, since the author is trying to establish something that should be obvious but that intellectual customs have rendered obscure. It is reminiscent of Aristotle's barrage of arguments for the principle of contradiction in *Metaphysics* IV. If our habits are corrupt, offering redundant dialectical arguments manifesting a multitude of absurdities in a position may be all a teacher can do. All the same, there is an urgency that often looks like impatience and a lack of scholarly care in her bouncing back and forth among examples or references to "so-and-so" who said "this or that," frequently given without citation. Further, in terms of content, a Thomist might find imprecisions to grumble about: Midgley's understanding of the four causes is somewhat superficial; she gives minimal evidence for her assertion that the idea of nature was rejected by early modern philosophers and scientists

"because she was apparently female" (140); her rhetoric against the dualistic separation between mind and matter seems frequently to get carried away into a rejection of human beings as the highest of organisms; in her attempts at recovering the Aristotelian view of the "earth's continuity with its inhabitants" (116), she seems to read Aristotle's remark that there is an exceedingly fine gradation between the living and the nonliving as implying that he is a closet Darwinist. But such shortcomings are few and mild. Midgley, after all, is not a "professional" Thomist or an Aristotle scholar.

What makes this book most worth reading, studying, and ruminating upon, though, is the importance of the questions being asked, questions central to the philosophy of nature, to psychology, and to metaphysics, and questions that are becoming muddled in contemporary discourse, both in the academies and in popular media. Midgley's chief complaint rings true: "The bizarre anti-self campaign . . . [aims at putting] us off taking notice of everybody's inner life: to persuade us that this is a trivial, contemptible subject by the simple device of pretending it isn't there" (133). Her remedy similarly rings true: we need to return to direct experience and a nuanced view of common sense that is neither a fixed formula nor something that must be trumped by the latest scientific theory. Contrary to the dominant view of the relationship of science and direct experience, Midgley boldly argues that because science too "has to start from the data that humans normally perceive," if some people, of whatever authority, claim that science is "contrary to direct human perceptions and to those basic human thought patterns . . . then those people have to be mistaken" (2-3). For "experience is what we start from and what every demand for verification must come back to" (56). I cannot imagine words that sound more like Aristotelian and Thomistic epistemology.

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Aquinas and the "Nicomachean Ethics." Edited by TOBIAS HOFFMANN, JÖRN MÜLLER, and MATTHIAS PERKAMS. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. x + 275. $103.00 (cloth), $36.99 (paper). ISBN: 978-1-107-00267-8 (cloth), 978-1-107-57640-7 (paper).

The fourteen chapters of this volume provide sometimes rival answers to many of the most important questions about the relationship between St. Thomas Aquinas and the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Such questions include but are not limited to: What is the status of Aquinas's *Sententia libri ethicorum* in

relationship to his other works, such as the *Summa theologiae* and the *Quaestiones disputatae de virtutibus*? Does Aquinas radically misunderstand Aristotle and import foreign Christian conceptions into his interpretation of the *Ethics*? How does his reading of Aristotle concur and contrast with contemporary readings of the *Ethics*? Is the *Sententia libri ethicorum* primarily a philosophical or a theological text? What are the tensions and contradictions between Aristotle's *Ethics* and Christian ethics?

The book covers a wide range of issues and includes contributions from many of the top scholars in the field. The introduction, penned by the three editors, provides a helpful *status quaestionis* of contemporary assessments of the major questions asked in the previous paragraph. Each author in the volume was invited to summarize Aristotle's position on the matter in question, examine Aquinas's treatment of the same matter in his *Sententia libri ethicorum* and other works, and provide an assessment of the philosophical implications of the latter's view.

In the opening essay, T. H. Irwin assesses the historical accuracy of Aquinas's *Sententia libri ethicorum*. Since Aquinas did not read the Greek of Aristotle's text, his commentary suffers from historical deficiencies in various respects. However, precisely as a philosophical commentary, it provides valuable historical insights because "it is historically more accurate to attribute a consistent overall position to Aristotle than to attribute an inconsistent position" (23). In this respect, the *Sententia libri ethicorum* excels. "If we want to reach a historically accurate account of Aristotle, we ought not to ignore Aquinas's contributions to this goal" (32).

Michael Pakaluk considers the structure and method of Aquinas's appropriation of Aristotle's ethics, in particular the cardinal virtues. Aquinas develops Aristotle's account in part by resolving lacunae in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, by integrating ethics more closely with metaphysics, and by a more speculative and less practical focus.

Jörn Müller reflects on how Aquinas adopts and adapts Aristotle's conception of happiness in part by also looking at St. Albert the Great's two commentaries on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. "Albert has a more Neoplatonic vision of man, as an intellect that is able to overcome the borders of the sensible world and accomplish a kind of divinization by means of philosophy, while Aquinas sees human existence and cognition in this world as tied to the fact that man is a natural composite of body and soul" (63). Aquinas is keen to critique Averroistic readings of human happiness, just as in *De unitate intellectus* he critiques Averroistic understandings of the human soul.

Matthias Perkams looks at Aquinas's views of choice, will, and voluntary action. "Since choice is an interior act of the will, it is free in the sense of not being necessitated by any factor outside human reason, and cannot be impeded from taking place" (89). On this understanding, Aquinas goes beyond Aristotle to posit more than a rational appetite, specifically "will" as a faculty that produces internal acts, even if these internal acts cannot issue in external

actions due to external constraints. He combines an Augustinian emphasis on internal freedom with an Aristotelian focus on philosophy of nature.

Bonnie Kent considers Aristotle and Aquinas on the issue of the loss of virtue. She argues that much of the scholarly controversy hinges "on the assumption that Aquinas's commentary has some hidden unity of approach, reflecting some single overall purpose. If it reflects instead a hybrid of work done at different times, possibly for somewhat different purposes, the very assumption fueling the controversy is suspect" (99). Kent appeals to Vernon Bourke's argument that the *Sententia libri ethicorum* was originally crafted at Orvieto (1261-64) and then edited in Paris (1271-72). She holds that Aquinas was more optimistic than Aristotle in holding out the hope that even the most vicious person can become virtuous. A sinner can become a saint. But this human flexibility also brings about the possibility that even the most virtuous person may become vicious.

In a contribution that draws on Peter Lombard, Albert the Great, and Harry Jaffa, Jennifer A. Herdt's "Aquinas's Aristotelian Defense of Martyr Courage" explores how Aquinas "builds on, rather than repudiate[s], Aristotle's analysis of battlefield courage" (111). Herdt critiques Jaffa's interpretation of Aquinas on courage as well as Mark D. Jordan's claim that "the [*Sententia libri ethicorum*] was a literal exposition of the text that sought only to offer a close reading of the text" (127). Aquinas develops Aristotle's understanding of courage to make the martyrs the highest exemplars of fortitude.

In a terrific contribution, Kevin Flannery, S.J., writes about truthfulness and lies. Truthfulness is understood as "habitually matching one's words and actions to one's beliefs and so not pretending to be something other than what one is—which would include pretending to believe something other than what one knows" (144). Aquinas develops his teaching about the intrinsic evil of lying not just from Augustine's *De mendacio* and *Contra mendacium* but also from Aristotle's account of the virtue of truthfulness.

Jeffrey Hause's contribution is titled "Aquinas on Aristotelian Justice: Defender, Destroyer, Subverter, or Surveyor?" Hause claims that "Aquinas is, in short, trying to establish through his commentary nothing less than a plausible, complete, and consistent Aristotelian philosophical ethics. What we cannot assume, however, is that Aquinas has any interest in this philosophical system for its own sake. In fact, as we will see, his extraordinary concern to spell out Aristotle's ethics has, in the end, an entirely theological purpose" (148). It is difficult to see why someone would undertake such a lengthy and detailed commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* if indeed the person had no intrinsic interest in Aristotle's philosophical system.

Tobias Hoffmann, an editor of this volume, writes on "prudence and practical principles," highlighting the role of universal practical principles in Aquinas's ethics, a role that Aquinas learned about from Albert the Great. Aristotle does not have an explicit treatment of these principles, but Aquinas remedies this lacuna, synthesizing it with medieval accounts of *synderesis*.

Marko Fuchs, in one of the most fascinating contributions, examines Aquinas's appropriation of Aristotelian friendship as *caritas*. Fuchs offers a critique of David Gallagher's reconstructions of Aquinas's thought that love of others derives from love of self, since the friend is loved as another self. But we are to love the friend for his own sake rather than for our own sake, argues Fuchs (210). Wishing someone well for his own sake, a condition of Aristotelian friendship, is difficult to apply to *caritas*, a friendship between a human being and God. God, after all, is absolutely perfect and so is in no need of receiving benefit. We cannot benefit an Absolutely Perfect Being, but we can wish well for such a Being. Moreover, for the Christian, God becomes man, and the God-man said, "whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matt 25:40).

Kevin White looks at pleasure as a supervenient end, focusing on passages in Aristotle and in Aquinas's *Commentary on the Sentences* and *Summa theologiae*. White highlights the integrative character of Aquinas's account. To "the Aristotelian thought that pleasure perfects action as a supervenient end," Aquinas "add[s] the Augustinian thought that this further good that is pleasure is a repose of appetite. On the subject of pleasure, as on many others, Aquinas the Aristotelian is finally inseparable from Aquinas the Augustinian" (238).

Finally, Candace Vogler considers "Aristotle, Aquinas, Anscombe, and the new virtue ethics" in her contribution, which more than any of the others brings contemporary ethics into engagement with ancient and medieval ethics. In some respects, Aristotle and Aquinas disagree. In other respects, Aristotle and Aquinas disagree with contemporary analytic virtue ethicists. One way into some of these disagreements is to consider exceptionless moral norms forbidding intrinsically evil acts. How should an analytic neo-Aristotelian treat the case of Sir Thomas More, who lost his head rather than sign his name to official documents affirming King Henry VIII as the head of the Church of England? A one-time vicious act does not, in itself, undermine an acquired virtue. "The analytic neo-Aristotelian could respond that being unable to face oneself, or being unable to face fellow members of one's community, or one's children, is a very serious matter, adding that, without the fixed points provided by moral prohibition, we cannot give an adequate account of virtue" (256). And yet, with Peter Geach and Anscombe herself, Vogler views the theological context of God's commands as a more satisfying account of the exceptionless prohibition of intrinsically evil acts.

This volume is required reading for anyone interested in Aquinas and the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

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The Glory of God's Grace: Deification according to St. Thomas Aquinas. By DARIA SPEZZANO. Ave Maria, Fla.: Sapientia Press, 2015. Pp. viii + 390. $45.00 (paper). ISBN: 978-1-932589-72-6.

Is there a genuine *doctrine* of deification to be found in the Western theological tradition? Norman Russell, the chronicler of the Greek patristic doctrine of deification, raises just this question: "Whether you can really graft *theosis* on to a Western theological approach remains to be seen" ("Why does Theosis Fascinate Western Christians," *Sobornost* 34 [2012]: 15). Gösta Hallonsten answers this question in the negative: "The label 'doctrine of *theosis*' should preferentially be reserved for the integral doctrine of deification as presented by the Eastern tradition" ("*Theosis* in Recent Research: A Renewal of Interest and a Need for Clarity," in Michael J. Christensen and Jeffrey A. Wittung, eds., *Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions* [Madison/Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007], 287). He maintains that a fully orbed doctrine of deification is grounded in an anthropology "that is significantly different from that of the Latin tradition" (ibid., 286) Why? Because "in the Western view efficient causality" takes the place of formal causality in the Eastern tradition, and the Eastern distinction between essence and energies in God "makes no sense to the [Western] scholastic point of view" (ibid.). Hallonsten clearly has Thomas Aquinas in view here. In his judgment, Thomas's philosophical principles prevent him from realizing a full-bodied doctrine of deification.

The Glory of God's Grace sets out to investigate just this question in Thomas's theology. While several studies have placed Thomas's account of deification in comparison with others, up until now there has not been a thorough study of his understanding of deification on his own terms. Daria Spezzano "[offers] such an in-depth examination of the nature of Thomas's mature teaching on deification in the *Summa theologiae*, the reasons for its development, and its highly significant—though sometimes hidden—role internal to his entire theological project" (3). Rather than taking a narrow view of the subject, limited to texts that specifically name deification, Spezzano wishes to investigate how Thomas's "understanding of deification shapes his larger theological project" and "how it operates within the larger body of his teaching" (5). This makes for a dense and detailed study that places great demands on the reader. But by taking this approach, Spezzano offers a substantial contribution to our understanding of Thomas's theology. She is not tracing a single theme simply on its own terms but seeking to grasp Thomas's entire theological project through the lens of deification.

Spezzano has to deal with two challenges. The first is the relative sparseness of deification terminology in Thomas (*deificatio*, *deificare*, *deiformitas*). Yet while the terminology appears relatively infrequently, this is true of many writers—East and West—who are reputed to teach a doctrine of deification.

The terminology is present in sufficient strength to warrant a presumption in favor of a doctrine of deification. The critical question is whether Thomas teaches a genuine theology of deification or simply uses the terminology occasionally in a metaphorical sense. Is deification really "internal to his entire theological project"?

The second challenge is the vast canvass that Thomas uses to display his theology. There is no "treatise on deification" in the *Summa* that provides a focal point for evaluation. Spezzano will conclude that "this examination of Thomas Aquinas's teaching in the *Summa theologiae* on grace, charity, and wisdom justifies the claim that he thinks of human salvation as deification" (328), but to demonstrate this she must wrestle with the *Summa* as a whole, with all its parts, in order to show how a doctrine of deification is found throughout and how that doctrine illuminates the whole.

In the first part of the study (chaps. 1-2), Spezzano explores what the *Prima pars* has to say about the divine source and goal of the "image of God." This is heavy going at points, like walking through a dense thicket, but crucial for establishing the place of deification within Thomas's theological edifice. She sums up her findings: "In the Ia *pars* of the *Summa* Thomas has consistently stressed the notion of progression in the perfection of the divine image, one that culminates in deiformity. . . . Each stage of this journey involves the bestowal of a new and higher perfection, the communication of a greater share in the divine goodness to the rational soul" (103). Interestingly, she identifies in the *Summa* an advance in Thomas's thinking about the "image and likeness" based on his encounter with a text from John of Damascus that enabled him to expand "his definition of the likeness to include the notion of perfection of the image" (97). This evolved view of the relationship between image and likeness leans toward the Eastern account and provides a suggestive link to the Eastern doctrine of deification.

In the next part (chap. 3), Spezzano turns to the *Prima secundae* to investigate Thomas's understanding of grace. As a stand-alone study of grace in Thomas, this chapter is outstanding. But for the purposes of demonstrating a theology of deification in Thomas, the striking insight is that, in his later works and systematically only in the *Summa*, "Thomas predominately refers to grace as a sharing or participation in the divine nature. . . . His scriptural authority throughout is 2 Peter 1:4" (130). Spezzano argues that Thomas's understanding of grace underwent a deepening and development in part through contact with the Greek Fathers and with Cyril of Alexandria in particular (who cites 2 Pet 1:4 more than any other ancient Christian author). In consequence, "Thomas's identification of habitual grace in the *Summa* as a 'participation in the divine nature' . . . helps us to understand this causal picture of deification, giving a new depth of meaning to grace's formal function and efficient activity" (126). To spell this out, Spezzano shows how for Aquinas grace acts both as an "intrinsic formal principle" (a new *habitus*, 115) in the human will that gives rise to genuinely voluntary action, and acts

by moving the human agent (through auxiliary grace) freely to will and to act. In sum, "in the gifts of habitual and auxiliary grace, God both gives the creature a new inclination and sets that inclination into motion" (ibid.).

In Thomas's view, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us, granting to us a new ability to act as free creatures and so contribute to our deiformity—our conformity to the image of Christ. By making use of the notion of secondary causality, Thomas can uphold at the same time divine agency *and* the genuinely free action of human beings by which they cooperate in their own path to deiformity: "The adopted children of God are those in whom grace, by a participation in the divine nature that changes them on an essential level, is the principle and root of the theological virtues that 'flow into the powers of the soul from grace,' moving them to act" (143). The links to the Eastern account of deification are multiple: the divine indwelling, transformation into the image of Christ, and the free participation of the creature.

In the next phase (chap. 4), the inquiry jumps to the *Tertia pars* to probe whether and how Christ in his human nature is the model for our deification. Spezzano also surveys Thomas's use of 2 Peter 1:4 in his biblical commentaries, showing a clear link with patristic accounts of deification. Thomas invariably refers to this text in the context of the Incarnation and the gift of the Spirit, who gives human beings a share in the divine nature (159). Notably for Thomas, Christ's human will was genuinely free and perfected (like ours) by grace: "Christ was thus perfectly obedient in his human nature to the movement of the Holy Spirit" (178). In other words, to participate in the divine nature is for Thomas to participate in Christ's own sonship. The critical conclusion, however, is that "Christ in his humanity is both cause and pedagogical model of participation in the divine nature by grace" (163). Though Christ is unique by virtue of the hypostatic union, his humanity nonetheless remains the model for our participation in the divine nature and is "at once the causal principle and highest example of human perfection by grace" (171). This dual role for Christ's humanity echoes not only the teaching of Augustine and Leo on Christ as *sacramentum* and *exemplum*, but also the teaching of Cyril of Alexandria that Christ is both the recipient and the giver of the Spirit.

The burden of the final part of the study (chaps. 5 and 6) is to show how deification through grace is worked out through the perfection of our intellect and will by the infusion of, respectively, charity and wisdom: "together charity and wisdom are the deifying virtue and gift *par excellence* of God's adopted children" (266). For its part, charity, because it is a participation in the Holy Spirit, "is the highest of virtues, commanding all the others as their 'mother and form,' as well as being the root of the gifts of the Spirit that perfect the activity of the virtues" (224-25). From this, Spezzano argues that Thomas offers a "deeply pneumatological vision of the moral life" even though it is not always elaborated as such (225). The gift of wisdom, which derives from charity, paradoxically also results in charity's perfection. Spezzano explains

this complex interaction of charity and wisdom in Thomas: "Wisdom . . . is a kind of knowledge stimulated by charity, which in turn helps charity to be properly ordered by judging and ordering the objects that the intellect presents to the will" (282).

All this amounts to a complex account of deification in Thomas. In densely composed summaries, Spezzano helpfully sums up what deification for Thomas means, as the following example illustrates: "By wisdom-perfected charity, adopted sons participate in the likeness of the Son and Holy Spirit so that their intellects and wills are conformed to the Word and Love, ordering them rightly on the way to beatitude" (326). If grace is at root participation in the divine nature, then charity is a participation in the Spirit and wisdom in the Word. Only in the *Summa*, Spezzano finds, "does Thomas give parallel descriptions of grace as a participation in the divine nature and charity and wisdom as participations in the likeness of Spirit and Son" (332). She admits that his theology of deification is not always explicit but maintains that, even when hidden, it is always at work (329). By a patient, step-by-step inquiry into Thomas's interrelated concepts, she argues that a clear and coherent theology of deification emerges: "Taken together, Thomas's mature teachings on grace, charity, and wisdom allow us to perceive an underlying theology of deification at work throughout the *Summa theologiae*—profoundly scriptural, Christological, and pneumatological in character—with extensive connections to his doctrines on the Trinity, image, moral life, Christ, and sacraments" (346).

The Glory of God's Grace presents a compelling case for a theology of deification in Thomas Aquinas. Spezzano's limited aim was to disclose this theology of deification only as it "functions internally to Thomas's theology"; it was not her intent "to support a claim that Thomas's teaching on deification is (or is not) the same as the Eastern doctrine" (15). But she may have accomplished more than she set out to do. As she unfolds Thomas's undoubtedly distinctive approach to deification, she also uncovers significant links between Thomas and the Latin and Greek patristic accounts of deification, and points to certain aspects of Thomas's teaching that have notable similarities to the Eastern Byzantine understanding of *theosis*.

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