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## VALUE, PRICE, AND ST. THOMAS

### *lntrodootion*

"WHEN He shall appear, we shall be like to Him; and we shall see Him as He is." [1] With this citation from the First Epistle of St. John, St. Thomas climaxes his discussion in the *Summa Theologiae* of man's last end. " Final and perfect happiness," Aquinas concludes, " can consist in nothing else than the vision of the Divine Essence." [2] St. Thomas is a philosopher with great confidence in the rational powers of man, and he does not hesita.te to place man on a pinnacle above all material creation.[3] Even as a theologian he does not hesitate to verify from revelation man's preeminence over material creation. For he quotes the Psalmist as saying, " Thou hast subjected all things under his feet." [4] But as a theologian he cannot stop there. For man is not his own end, and so his own happiness, his own good,

[1] 1 John 3, 2.
• *Sumnna Thoologiae* I-ll, 8, 8.
" *Ibid.* I, 98, 6.
'*Pa.* 8, 8 cit. in *Sumnna Tkeol.* I-ll, 2, 10.

ultimately cannot consist in his natural domination and enjoyment of the creatures whom he excels.[5]

Revelation teaches us that man's natural excellence stems from his creation in the image of the Triune God, who by nature is true and good in Himself. Moreover, through God's creative generosity, man participates in the kind of activity that characterizes God Himself. But for this very reason man will never achieve his own fulfllllment until that image with its powers and acts of knowing and loving is adequately realized in intimate vision and union with Him who is true and good.[6]

Meanwhile, despite the weight of sin that man inherits and enlarges, the image of God in him has already acquired some of the brilliance and strength to which it is ultimately destined. For a created share of the very life of his Creator is already present and operative in man through the redemptive grace of Christ. Consequently, commensurate with this state in which man finds himself as created, redeemed and elevated by God, he must live a life that is ordered and structured to his ultimate happiness. St. Thomas points out that in so doing man will already achieve a partial, although imperfect, happiness in this life.[7]

The ordering and structuring of this life is to be accomplished through a life of virtue, for " happiness," says St. Thomas, " is the reward of virtue." [8] The words of St. John, " You shall be blessed if you do them," [9] provide Aquinas with theological verification of this enlargement on the teaching of Aristotle.

Although man's body is not necessary for the happiness of the Beatific Vision/[0] its well-being is necessary in this life for an unhampered life of virtue according to St. Thomas in a paraphrase of Aristotle.[11] And indeed he finds in the words of

• *Ibid.* I-ll, 1, 2.
[8] *Ibid.* I-ll, 8, 8.
[7] *Ibid.* 1-11, 4, *6.*
[8] *Ibid.* I-ll, 4, 6, *sed CO'l/,tra.*
• John 18, 17.
[10] *Su'IT/llna Tkeol.* I-ll, 4, *6.*
[11] *Ibid.* I-ll, 4, 6.

Isaia the theological evidence that bodies of the blessed will someday share in their eternal happiness.[12]

Clearly then, what St. Thomas terms external goods, like material wealth, are by no means necessary for perfect happiness in the vision of God that the blessed in heaven enjoy. After all, the vision of God is accomplished with no need for the body and its limited senses. The saints in heaven at this moment enjoy a spiritual intimacy with God that is unhampered by the limitations of material go-betweens, and hence by the need for material sustenance.[18] Even after bodies and souls are reunited on the last day, there will be no need for external goods to sustain a body that has been miracuiously spiritualized.u.

And yet external goods, even wealth, do play a positive role in man's happiness; if not in the ultimate enjoyment of it, at least in the attainment of it through the imperfect happiness of a virtuous life in this world.[15] For material goods are tools· that fashion man's physical well-being and so serve his life of virtue, both active and contemplative. Economic activity thus :findsits true meaning for St. Thomas in serving the life of grace, and so economic realities, e. g., values, trade and profits, however distinct they are as natural realities in themselves, achieve their true meaning ultimately only in the context of their ordered relationship to the ultimate end of the persons they serve. And so it is the purpose of this essay to comment on the notions of economic value in the thought of St. Thomas, . especially as found in his *CommentaT1}on the Ethics of Aristotle* and in his *Summa Theologiae.*

## *The, Problem of Economic Values*

When Tertullian spoke of commercial trade, it was in terms of avarice; when St. Jerome spoke of it, it was in terms of fraud, while for St. Augustine it was what turned men's minds away

[11] *Is.* 46, 14 cit. in *Summa Tkeol.* I-II, 4, 6, *sed contra.*
[18] *Swmma Tkeol.* I-II, 4, *5.*
[u] *Ibid.* I-II, 4, 7c.
[1a] *Ibid.*

from true rest.[16] By the fifth century, however, St. Leo the Great could say that trade was neither good nor evil in itself.[17] At the height of the commercial revival that began about the time of the Crusades and continued to grow through the thirteenth century, St. Thomas took a more optimistic stand. In fact, he quotes the Golden Rule from the Gospel of St. Matthew as a preface to his justification of trade for a profit in the *Summa}* [8]

It is true that at the level of society he continued to extol the importance of self-sufficiency:

> The more dignified a thing is, the more self-sufficient it is.... A city therefore which has an abundance of food from its own territory is more dignified than one which is provisioned through trade.[19]

Nevertheless, trade had become so necessary to life that even " the perfect city will make a moderate use of merchants." [20] Certainly the principle of economic exchange was acknowledged by Aquinas in his earliest writings; [21] and it is fully acceptable by the time of the Commentary on the *Politics* of Aristotle:

> . . . commerce is sought in the city-state in order to exchange the things necessary for the good life. Exchange of this kind is desiJ;able for a complete sufficiency of life.[22]

Finally, in the *Summa* we are given a general description of exchange as a situation in which " something is paid to an individual on account of something of his that has been received." [23] But this situation is "seen chiefly in selling and buying, where the notion of exchange is found primarily." [24]

[16] George O'Brien, *An Essay on Medieval Economic Teaching* (London: Longmans, Green, 1920), pp. 145-6.
[17] *Epistola ad Rusticum* cit. in O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p. 146.
[18] *Summa Tkeol.* IT-II, 77, 1 *sed contra.*
[19] *De Regimine Principum* II, 8. Cf. *In Etkicorom* V, 11.
[••] *Ibid.*
[21] 8 *Sent.* d. 88, q. 8, a. 4, qla. 5, ad 2.
[••] *In Politicorom* VII, 4.
[••] *Summa Tkeol.* II-II, 61, 2.
[*"Ibid.*

The principle of economic exchange then can be summed up a little further on when St. Thomas concludes, "buying and selling seem to be established for the common advantage of both parties, one of whom requires that which belongs to the other and vice versa." [25]

But anything established for common usefulness should not be more of a burden to one party than to another. In economic exchange this means that an equality of value must be preserved between the things traded. But what is the measure of that value?

> The value *(quantitas rerum)* of a thing that comes into human use is measured by the price given for it. . . . Therefore if either the price exceed the amount of the thing's value, or conversely, the thing exceed the price, there is no longer the equality of justice.[26]

And the determinants of that price which truly measures value? St. Thomas gives no explicit treatment of the answer, perhaps assuming the answer to be obvious to his medieval readers. [27] The assumption is unwarranted, however, in the case of many of his more modern readers. At one extreme some have heralded St. Thomas as an exponent of an objective cost theory of price determination, apparently basing their arguments on some comments of his in the Commentary on the *Ethics* of Aristotle concerning the importance of labor and other expenses in the determination of price. [28] Some have gone so

[26] *Ibid.* IT-II, 77, 1.

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Cf. O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

[28] Selma Hagenauer, *Das "justum pretiU1n" bei Thomas Aquinas, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der objektiven Werttheorie* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1931), pp. 13-16, cit. in John W. Baldwin, "The Medieval Theories of the Just Price; Romanists, Canonists, and Theologians in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, new series, Vol. 49, pp. 4, 75. Some claim that the medieval Church itself commonly taught that value was an absolute, something independent and separate from price or from value in use and exchange. See James W. Thompson, *An Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages* (New York: Century, 1928), pp. 697-8; Lewis W. Haney, *History of Economic Thought* (New York: Century, 1928), p. 10; R. H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, A Historical Study* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1926), p. 40; Amintore Fanfani, *Catholicism, Protestantism and Capitalism* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1935), p. 1!l2.

far as to ascribe to St. Thomas and the other· scholastics a rudimentary labor theory of value: " The last of the Schoolmen was Karl Marx." [29]

On the other hand, others have seen in Aquinas' distinction between price and value, quoted above, the justification of a competitive market in the pattern of the classical liberal model, where subjective elem((nts of demand are predominant in the determination of price{

> The distinction he seems to make between price and value is not a distinction between price and some value that is not a price, but a distinction between the price paid *in an individual tTansaction* and the price that consists in the public's evaluation of the commodity ... which can only mean normal competitive price or value in the sense of normal competitive price...• [80]

Others extend this interpretation of St. Thomas to include any " current price," excluding only " prices determined artificially through private monopolistic practices such as forestalling, engrossing and regrating." [81] Still others restrict the Thomistic subjective estimation of the price that justly measures value to " the considered judgment of the best-informed members of the community." [82]

## *A Notion* of *Value*

However, before anything conclusive can he said about the determinants of price according to St. Thomas, some attention: must he paid to a notion of value consistent with Thomistic thought. St. Augustine, who perhaps originated the distinctively Christian notion of just price,[88] offers some elementary notions of value. Objectively speaking,

•• Tawney, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

[80] Joseph Alois Schumpeter, *HistO'T'JI uf Economic A1llll11ais* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 98.

[81] Baldwin, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-80. Cf. John T. Noonan, Jr., *The ScholasticA1llllyais of Ull'UT1J* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 85 :lf.

[82] O'Brien, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-7, 180..

[38] *De Trinitate*, XIIT, 8: " Scio ipse hominem quum venalis codex ei fuisset oblatus, pretiique ejus ignarum ideo quiddam, exiguum poscentem cerneret venditorem, justum ·pretium, quod multo amplius erat nee opinanti dedisse." Cit. in O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

. . . among those beings which exist, and which are not of God the Creator's essence, those which have life are ranked above those which have none; those that have the power of generation, or even of desiring, above those which lack this faculty. And among things that have life, the sentient are higher.... And, among the sentient, the intelligent are above those that have not intelligence.... These are the gradations according to the order of nature .... [84]

On the other hand,

... according to the utility each man finds in a thing, there are various standards of value, so that it comes to pass that we prefer some things that have no sensation to some sentient beings. . . . Who, e. g., would not rather have bread in his house t\lan mice, gold than fleas? [811]

For St. Thomas too, when something is valued there is implied both an object of value and a subject to make the evaluation, plus a relation between the two.[86] The subject who makes an evaluation cannot for St. Thomas be the direct cause of value, since no agent is the direct cause of the *esse* of an effect, but only of a change, a *fieri,* in something that owes its *esse* to its creator.[87] True, a mere existent is not value, but insofar as it actually exists, there is established the *ratio* of the good, the backbone of value.[38] "Every existent insofar as it is an existent is good." [89] " ¥cl whereas truth is principally in the mind, good exists " in things themselves," [40] so value above all must be objective.

Of course, to the extent that every existent is good it has the character of end, according to St. Thomas. "Nevertheless, this character pertains to every existent," he says, " and it adds

•• St. Augustine, *City of God* (New York: Modem Library), Book XI, c. 16, p. 860.

•• *Ibid.*

•• *Summa Contra Gentiles* ill, 10: "Voluntas vero movetur ex iudicio virtutis apprehensivae, quae indicat hoc esse bonum vel malum."

•• *Summa Theol.* I, 104, 1: "Aliquod agens est causa sui efl'ectus secundum fieri tantum, et non directe secundum esse eius."

[88] *Contra Gentiles* I, 87: "Esse igitur actu boni rationem constituit."

•• *Summa Theol.* I, 5, 8. Cf. I, 17, 4 ad !il; 1-11, 18, I; 1-11, IS, 8 ad 3.

•o *Ibid.* I-II, !il!il, !il.

nothing to the being of the existent." Thus, " unmistakably, there is static value in the mere existent from the beginning because the existent is a possible aim of action." [42]

On the other hand, the existent under a functional aspect of the good can ultimately take on the character of end only relative to a subject, an agent with intellectual and appetitive powers to apprehend and seek the " Functional value needs something in addition to *ens*, and in addition to this as desirable; to *ens* as desirable, functional value ·adds the element of being desired."" For, whatever is good "is good insofar as it is desirable, and is the term of the movement of the appetite." [45] Appetite thus expresses a need whose satisfaction is the role of the good as end; and it is in the meeting of agent and object that functional value is found. [46]

A new pair of shoes already exists and is good independently of its prospective users. When it is brought to their attention, however, there is established a basic relation that identifies its function and its " use value." Value, as a functional aspect of the good, takes on " a new special relation," the relation of end, although this relation adds nothing real to the object. Thus " value is in the object primarily, but also in the mind or agent." [49] Any real change that follows upon this value-relation must obviously be a change in the valuer, not in the object valued. New shoes will be no better or worse after their value is expressed, but their value will nevertheless reflect the needs of persons who use shoes (or who would spend elsewhere the labor and materials that it takes to make them) .[50] More-

*"De Veritate* XXII, I ad 9; cf. *Summa Theol.* I, *5,* 2 ad I, ad 2; I, *5,* 4; IT-IT, 28, 7.

"Leo R. Ward, C. S.C., *Philosophy of Value, An Essay in Constructive Criticism* (New York: Macmillan, I980), p. I59.

[8] *Summa Theol.* I-IT, I, 2. Cf. I, 6, I ad 2; l-IT, I ad 2.

.. Ward, loc. *cit.*

•• *Summa Theol.* I, *5,* 6. Cf. I, I6, I; l-IT, 12, 2.

'" *Ibid.* I, 44, 4.

[T] Cf. *De Malo* XITI, 4 ad I5.

[8] Ward, *op.* cit., p. I74.

*'"Ibid.* p. I76.

•• On the subject of trade St. Thomas distinguishes between use value and exchange value, but both imply the value-relation. See infra p. 848 fl.

over, for a thing to be desired as valuable it is not necessary that the object actually be good, but only that it be apprehended as a good.[51] The end may be the good or only an apparent good.[52] A new pair of shoes may be very attractive, and still tum out to be stiff and uncomfortable.

Obviously however, for the value-relation of a useful good to be a true one, the rational agent must both apprehend the end for what it really is in and perceive the object of value in its ordered proportion to that end.[58] Only then is the need expressed by the appetite made objective, and the value-relation freely determined.

Value for St. Thomas then is above all objective, as objective as the existent:

> The judgment of the goodness of anything does not depend upon its order to any particular thing, but rather upon what it is in itself, and on its order to the whole universe, wherein every part has its own perfectly ordered place.... [5"]

Value is as universal as good itself, with all its analogical properties of sameness and difference. But the value judgment of the good certainly does not preclude, but rather requires the relations of subject to object, of need to good, of agent to end. " Thus it is unmistakable that the theory of St. Thomas, rightly or wrongly, regards value as first in the object and derivatively but improperly in the desire of the object. . . ." [55]

### *Value and Economic Goods*

Unlike the creatures below him, man has the power to produce deliberate acts of free choice toward an object which is end and good.[56] It is in the accomplishment of the end that man fulfills a desire for perfection and to that extent achieves

[61] *Summa Tkeol.* I-ll, 8, 1: "Ad hoc igitur quod voluntas in aliquid tendat, non requiritur quod sit bonum in rei veritate, sed quod apprehendatur in ratione boni."

•• *Ibid.* Cf. 1-11, 84, i.

•• *Ibid.* 1-11, 6, i; I, 59, 1.

•• *Ibid.* I, 49, 8.

•• Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

•• *Summa Tkeol.* 1-11, 1, arts. 1-8.

happiness.[57] However, for St. Thomas there is not an infinity of ends to be attained,[58] but there is nonetheless a hierarchy of ends, and hence of goods and of values.[59] The highest good is of course the universal good, which can only be God, who is Good Himself.[60] God alone "has that complete self-sufficiency which is promised by wealth."[61] Creatures are good only by participation, and so none of the created particular goods can be the end to which all the others are ordered. " Therefore that good which is the end of the whole universe must be a good outside the universe."[62]

For man it is happiness that possesses the highest value; and perfect hapinness consists in nothing other than the perfect good, which totally satisfies the appetite.[63] The object of man's appetite, however, is precisely the universal good, which "is not to be found in any creature, but in God alone."[64] Happiness in contemplation and enjoyment of God is thus man's last end, and man must necessarily desire all that he desires for this last end.[65] This does not mean, of course, that one must always be thinking of his last end every time that he desires something or does something.[66] In fact, Aristotle claimed that attention to the universal or separated good is altogether useless to the exercise of the arts and sciences, and St. Thomas in his Commentary does not disagree:

> No doctor or soldier becomes more efficient because he has meditated on the idea of a separated good . . . so one concludes that knowledge of the universal and separated good is unnecessary either for the acquisition of the sciences or for their exercise.[67]

[57] *Ibid.* 1-11, 1, 6.
[58] *Ibid.*, 1-11, I, 4.
[59] *In Etk.* I, 9; *Summa Tkeol.* 1-11, 12, i; l-11, il, I ad i; 11-11, !!3, 7; 11-11, 58, 10 ad 2; 11-11, 64, I.
[60] *Contra GentilBB* I, 41, 2; *Summa Tkeol.* I, lOS, i; 11-11, 117, 6.
[61] *Summa Tkeol.* I, 26, 4.
[62] *Ibid.* I, lOS, 2; Cf. *Contra Gentiles* ill, 17, 6; *Summa Tkeol.* 1-11, i, 8.
[63] *Ibid.* I-ll, 2, 8.
[64] *Ibid.* Cf. 11-11, 26, s.
[65] *Ibid.* 1-11, I, 6; Cf. *In Etk.* I, 9; *Contra Gentiles* ill, 17, 6; S7, 1.
[66] *Ibid.* I-II, I, 6 ad s.
[67] *In Etk.* I, S.

It is sufficient that we make an intention with respect to the last end, for this " remains in every desire directed to any object whatever, even though one's thoughts be not actually directed to the last end." [68]

It is this supernatural happiness of individual persons, begun with their life of virtue as members of the Mystical Body of Christ on earth, that is likewise the ultimate common good and end of human society.[69] But because even now man has a social nature, we can speak of a temporal common good, social ends to be achieved by common action in this life. At the level of the temporal human goods to which man devotes his attention, the temporal common good of society surpassses the private good of the individual and so should be reckoned as a higher value.[70] But this remains true only as long as they are of the same genus. For " it may happen that the private good is better generically." [71] In short, the temporal public welfare is subordinated to the supernatural end of persons, much as the temporal is subordinate to the spiritual in man's own nature.

Clearly then, the temporal end to be attained by society in the pursuit of the common good is by no means an ultimate, self-sufficient one. For,

> The same judgment is to be formed about the end of society as a whole as about the end of one man. If, therefore, the ultimate end of man were some good that existed in himself, then the ultimate end of the multitude to be governed would likewise be for the multitude to acquire such good, and persevere in its possession.... If that ultimate end were an abundance of wealth, the man who knew economics would be ruler of the community .... [72]

Man is a social animal because he is not self-sufficient in the necessities of human life.[78] Therefore society exists to satisfy

•• *Summa Theol.* I-II, 1, 6 ad 8.

•• *Ibid.* ill, 8, arts. !!-8.

[70] *Ibid.* II-II, 117, 6; Cf. *Suppl.* 40, 6; I-II, 88, 1 ad *5;* II-II, 58, 7 ad !!; *Contra Gentiles* ill, 17, 6; *De Regimine* I, 1.

[71] *Ibid.* 11-II, 15!!, 4 ad 8. St. Thomas offers the example of virginity consecrated to God as preferable to carnal fertility.

[70] *De Regimine* I, 15.

[78] *Contra Gentiles* III, 1!!9, *5; In Pol.* III, *5; Summa Theol.* I-II, 81, I.

human needs, not vice versa. · Social values and their determinants are to be reckoned important in man's hierarchy of values, but they are not an ultimate. For, " it is clear," says Aquinas, " that the end of the community gathered together is to live virtuously ... virtuous life is the end for which men gather together." [7]

But even the virtuous life is something temporal, transitory, and inhering in man himself. It is not the extrinsic, universal Good, who is man's last end. Rather, " through virtuous living man is further ordained to a higher end, which consists in the enjoyment of God." [75] But society exists for persons. Consequently, concludes St. Thomas,

> since society must have the same end as the individual, it is not the ultimate end of an assembled community to live virtuously, but through virtuous living to attain to the possession of God.[76]

The temporal goods of persons, including the good of the body, are, subordinate to the good of the soul and its spiritual activities. [77] Furthermore, "the good of the body surpasses those goods that consist in external things." [78] For, "just as the body is ordained to the soul as its end, so are external goods ordained to the body itself." [79]

Obviously, "soundness of body is needed for the perfection of contemplation." [80]. A reasonable person would prefer his health to new shoes any time. Nevertheless, St. Thomas offers four reasons why even this most basic of personal goods is not to be regarded as a highest or ultimate value:

> The fact that man's highest good does not lie in goods of the body, such as health, beauty and strength is clearly evident. . . . For

u *De Regimine* I, 15.
'"*Ibid.*
•• *Ibid.* Cf. 8 *Sent* d. 85, q. 4, a. 1 ad 2.
"*Contra GentilflB* III, 141, 6. Cf. Jacques Leclercq, *Christianity and Money* (London: Burns and Oates, 1959), pp. 67 :lf.
'"*Summa Theol.* II-11, 117, 6.
•• *Ibid.* 1-11, 2, 5 ad 1.
•• *Contra Gentil68* m, 87, 7.

these things are possessed in common by both good and bad men; they are also unstable; moreover, they are not subject to the will. •.. Moreover, many animals better endowed than men, as far as goods of the body go.... [81]

As far as the external goods like wealth and honor go, these are " relative goods " by comparison with the " intrinsic " goods of man like " health, strength, ... science, virtue and so forth." [82] Consequently, in commenting on these divisions made by Aristotle, St. Thomas concludes:

The dignity of man considered absolutely should not be determined according to the dignity of these goods, but according to the dignity of the absolute goods.[83]

External goods, like material. wealth, thus are to be ranked rather low in St. Thomas' scale of values. [84] They can by no means be considered as man's last end. [85] Man's last end, after all, consists in an intuitive spiritual union with God, while external goods are material additions to man's bodily existence. Man's highest value consists in a happiness that is unending and unchangeable, while external goods are subject to all the vagaries of day-to-day life. [86] "External goods come under the head of things useful for an end," Aquinas says. [87] Although they are only useful instruments, they have real value relative to the higher ends of the persons who use them, since " the intention of the principal agent and that of the instrument are directed to the same thing." [88] The force that impels these more or less inert instruments into the orbit of

[81] *Ibid.* ill, S!l, 1 ad 4.

[82] *In Pol.* V, 2.

[83] *Ibid.*

[84] *Contra Gentiles* lll, 141, 6: "Cum enim bona exterior&ad interiora ordinentur, corpus autem ad animam; in tantum exteriora et corporalia bona sunt homini bona in quantum ad bonum rationis proficiunt."

[85] *Ibid.* ill, SO, 1. Cf. *In Pol.* iV, 10; *Su111/TTUl, Theol.* ll-11, 126, 1; 1-11, 108, 4; 1-11, 2, 1.

[86] *Su111/TTUl, Theol.*, I-ll, 4, 7.

[87] *Ibid.*, ll-11, 118, 1. Cf. *Contra Gentiles* ill, SO, 1-2; *Swmma Theol.* 11-11, 118, !!; 11-11, 126, 1 ad S.

[88] *Contra Gentiles* ill, 24, 1; 22, 8.

man's supernatural end is the power of virtue, especially the virtues proper to the use of material goods, namely, temperance, prudence, justice, liberality and munificence.

And the criterion or measure of the relative value of these instrumental goods is above all human need, not only for Aristotle, but throughout the writings of St. Thomas.[89] In commenting on Aristotle's discussion of commerce, St. Thomas approvingly cites the Philosopher's words "that human need embraces everything as a kind of measure."[90] Later, in discussing the corporal works of mercy, Aquinas points out the extent of our material needs when he notes that bodily need, as for food, clothing and occurs both in this life and even afterwards in the need for burial. Furthermore, there are bodily needs that are common to the very existence of life plus additional unique needs that come up in the lives of individual persons.[91] Moreover, the need for material goods extends to the household, the state and the whole society, as Aristotle points out.[92]

Nevertheless, there are limitations, for Aristotle adds:

> the wealth that makes up the goods necessary for life are finite.... No craft has infinite tools . . . neither in quantity nor in size. . . . Therefore wealth ... is not infinite, but rather has some limit.[93]

In the *Summa* St. Thomas clarifies this necessary limitation of wealth still further.[94]

But first there is a distinction to be made in the meaning of wealth itself:

> For wealth is twofold, namely natural and artificial. Natural wealth is that which serves man as a remedy for his natural wants,

[89] *In Eth.* I, 1; IV, 5; *In Pol.* I, 7; *De Regimine* IV, i; *Summa Theul.* IT-IT, 77, 2 adS; 77, 40.
[90] *In Eth.* V, 9.
[91] *Ibid.* n-n, u1, 6 ad 2. Cf. also s2, 2.
[92] *In Pol.* I, 6.
[93] *Ibid.* Cf. I-ll, !t, 1 adS.
[94] *Swmltoo Theol.* I-ll, !t, 1 ad !t. Cf. ll-ll, 118, 1.

such as food, drink, clothing, transportation, housing and the like; while artificial wealth is that which is not a direct help to nature, e. g., money, but is invented by the art of man.[95]

After pointing out that man's happiness cannot consist in natural wealth, Aquinas places money lowest in his scale of values, since artificial wealth "is not sought save for the sake of natural wealth, man would not seek it except that, by its means, he procures for himself the necessaries of life." [96] Money is simply and solely a means to higher ends. But unlike the desire for natural wealth, which is not infinite, " the desire for artificial wealth is infinite, for it is the servant of disordered concupiscence .... " [91] The miser is simply the person who seeks money as his last end.[98]

The reasonable desire for natural wealth is not infinite because it provides for our natural sustenance " according to a certain measure." [99] This measure is not necessarily an absolute quantity, but rather a relative mean based on a rule of reason.[100]

So it sometimes happens that what is excessivein relation to the quantity of an external thing may be moderate in relation to the rule of reason . . . this rule measures not only the size of a thing that is used, but also the circumstances of the person, and his intention, the fitness of place and time and such other things that are necessary in acts of virtue.[101]

Thus in his approach to material wealth, St. Thomas certainly shuns any extreme of destitution. In fact, he acknowl-: edges the harmful psychological effects of forced poverty. on the virtuous life when he. writes in the *Summa:*

[85] *Ibid.* I-II, I.
[••] *Ibid.* I-II, 1 ad
[IY] *Ibid.* Cf. *In Pol.* II, 9: .. Primo enim homini qui nihil habet videtur sufficiens quod habeat duos obolos; quos cum acquisiverit vel ex haereditate paterna accepit, semper videtur quod indigeat pluribus, et hoc usque in infinitum."
[88] *Ibid.* I-II, 16, 8.
[••] *Ibid.* I-11, 1 ad
[100] *lfa Etk.* V, 1; *In Pol.* V, 6.
[101] *Contra Gtmtilu* m, lSi, 7.

not infrequently the fear of want that results from the experience of want hinders those who have acquired money from using it up by acting with liberality.[102]

Moreover," when the poor and the needy see that they do not have the things that others have, they envy them." [108] But when people " have enough goods they are not envious." [104]

As a matter of fact, there is a relative absence of texts extolling the merits of poverty in St. Thomas' writings, despite the fact that monasticism had reached a high degree of development by his time.[105] Undoubtedly the monastic poverty which he himself practiced, although obviously a means of personal perfection, remained a matter of Christian counsel, not of natural or divine law.

Instead, St. Thomas sees real value in the acquisition and use of material goods.[106] He of course realizes the danger that men's passions bring to the use of external goods like power and wealth.[107] " It is difficult," he concludes, " to safeguard charity amid riches." [108] And so the use of material goods must be moderate, for their value via the criterion of human need is strictly subordinate to the virtuous life, which in itself is subordinate to man's supernatural end. Nevertheless, this moderation is not an absolute, but apparently allows for progress conditioned by the contingencies of time and place.[109]

Economics studies the allocation of available, relatively scarce material resources among possible alternative uses.[110]

10" *Summa Theol.* 11-II, 117, 4 ad 1.

108 *In Pol.* IV, 10.

10' *Ibid.*

105 Leclercq, *op. cit.,* p. 57.

108 *Summa Theol.* II-II, 188, 7: "... necesse est enim hominem aliqualiter sollicitari de acquirendis vel conservandis exterioribus rebus. Sed si res exteriores non quaerantur vel habeantur nisi in modica quantitate, quantum sufficiunt ad simplicem victum, talis sollicitudo non multum impedit hominem. Unde nee perfectioni repugnat Christianae vitae."

101 *In Pol.* II, 9; Cf. *In Pol.* II, 8; IV, 10.

108 *Summa Theol.* II-II, 186, 8 ad 4.

100 Leclercq, *op. cit.,* p. *65.*

110 Bernard W. Dempsy, S. J., "Prudence, Providence and Economic Decision," *Thought,* XXXV, Spring, 1960, 16. Cf. Geo. J. Stigler, *The Theory of Price* (New York: Macmillan, 195le), pp. 8-4.

Consistent with his hierarchy of values, there may have been in St. Thomas less emphasis on the scarcity of resources than in later economic thought, chiefly because of his reliance on Divine Providence.[111] Reliance upon the Providence of God to provide the necessities of life stems from the very nature of God, as we know Him, and from the very meaning of providence. For God Himself is absolute, unlimited good out of whose generosity springs all the good that is in creatures. The good of creatures, however, includes their order toward an end, "and especially their last end, which is divine goodness."[112] But because the order itself is good, it too has its origin in God. Divine Providence, on the other hand, " is nothing less than the type of the order of things toward an end,"[113] This type or plan preexists in the infinite wisdom of that God who is also good and the Creator and end of all good. Thus it is reasonable to rely on the goodness of God to supply the necessities of human life in aCf'ordance with His divine plan for all creation.

### *MDTality and Economic Activity*

Nevertheless, for St. Thomas as for all economists there is a deliberate human choice among alternatives to be made in every economic decision, and this choice presupposes an understood standard, a goal, an order of values.m For St. Thomas every deliberate act is a moral act, good or bad, depending upon its reasonableness with respect to the goal that is intended, and upon particular here-and-now circumstances.[115] According

[111] *Quodlibeta* Vll, 7, 17: "Diversificatio hominum in diversis officiis contingit primo ex divina providentia, quae ita hominum status· distribuit, ut nihil unquil.m deese inveniatur de necessariis ad vitam." Cf. *De Regimine* Ill 11; *In Pol.* I, 8; Dempsey, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-22. For a different emphasis on scarcity see Stigler, *op. cit.*, p. 1: "The central element of the economic problem is scarcity."

[112] *Summa Theol.* I, 22, 1.

[113] *Ibid.* I, 22, 2.

[m] Stigler, *op. cit.*, p. 8; Cf. George H. Speltz, *The ImpOTtance of Rural Life AccOTding to the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1945), p. 76.

[115] *Summa Theol.* I-II, 18, 9.

as human acts are directed to special ends, to particular goods, they will be ordered by special virtues.[116]

"Man's active life consists in the use of bodily goods," says Aquinas, " and hence the active life is directed by the virtues through which we make a right use of these goods."[117] It is the virtue of temperance that is to guide the use of external goods according to the rule of human need.[118] " Temperance uses moderately " any material good that is not an outright hindrance to "health and sound condition of body," says St. Thomas, " according to the demands of place and time, and in keeping with those among whom one dwells."[119] He sums up the application of temperance to the rule of reasonable moderation when he concludes:

> . . . temperance regards need according to .the requirements of life, and this depends not only on the well-being of the body, but also on the fitness *(convenientiam)* of external goods, such as wealth and .station in life, and more still on the requirements of good conduct *(convenientiam honestatis)*·[120]

The economic decision is a decision of direction, of reasonable governance over material resources in accord with their value in fulfilling the human needs dictated by the hierarchy of goals or ends of human life. Temperance is the virtue that governs one's overall attitude toward material wealth, but for St. Thomas it is prudence that is the virtue of reasoned ordering and governance for man,[121] not unlike the providence of God Himself:

> It belongs to prudence . . . to direct other things toward an end ... as for instance a man is said to be prudent, who orders well his acts towards the end of life....[122]

[118] *Ibid.,* II-II, 109, 2; cf. II-II, 81, 1; 114, 1; 187, 1.

[117] *Contra Gentiles* I, 92, 7.

[118] *Summa Theol.,* 11-ll, 141, 6: "Temperantia accipit necessitatem huius vitae sicut regulam delectabilium quibus utuntur: ut scilicet tantum eis utatur quantum necessitas huius vitae requirit."

[110] *Ibid.* 11-II, 141, 6 ad 2.

[uo] *Ibid.* 11-11, 141, 6 ad 8.

[121] *Ibid.* 11-11, *50,* 1.

[122] *Ibid.* I, 22. 1. ·cf. II-II, 4.7. 10.

In the providence of God, of course, there is no ordering toward an end outside Himself, since He Himself is the end of aU that is.[128]

Prudence for Aquinas is principally an intellectual virtue, for it must basically recognize objectively the ends to be achieved by various human actions, or in other words, it must make evaluations.[124] But value as we have seen involves a relation between the human appetite and the good, and so the prudential evaluation will in some way be a practical moral one too, since its matter includes a right ordering of the human will or appetite to those ends to be achieved here and now.[125] The prudent man must not only decide that a certain quality shoe at a certain price would satisfy his needs, but his decision must follow through to an effective willingness to accept here and now this bargain on this pair of shoes.

Because prudence must direct a person to an immediate, practical concrete choice or action, it draws into its proper scope many other human virtues. " Memory, understanding and foresight, as also caution and docility and the like, are not virtues distinct from prudence, but are related to it as integral parts." [126] Even shrewdness plays a valid role in prudence, one which St. Thomas oddly enough likens to that of docility.[127]

Since prudence concerns the voluntary direction of means toward ends, it must have a reference to that common good which is the one supernatural end of all human life.[128] There is moreover a whole hierarchy of temporal social goods related to one another in their ordering to the highest common good, but distinct enough as ends of action to warrant a hierarchy of distinct species of prudence. Thus St. Thomas speaks not only of individual prudence, but of political and domestic or economic prudence according to the objects of their acts.[129]

"""*Ibid.*
,., *Ibid.* II-II, 47, 1; I-II, 57, 4; 1-11, 58, S ad 1.
m *Ibid.* 1-11, 61, 1.
[106] *Ibid.* 1-11, 57, 6 ad 4. Cf. 11-11, 48, 1.
,.. *Ibid.* II-11, 49, 4.
[108] *Ibid.* 1-11, 1, 6.
[129] *Ibid.* II-11, 47, 1i.

True prudence then, even when considered in its subordinate and subjective parts will be perfect when it is direCted" to the common end of all human life," and imperfect, but still true prudence when it is directed to some particular good end apart from the common end, as " when a man devises fitting ways of conducting business ... he is called a prudent business-man." [130] The fully prudent man thus should regard not only private goods or individual values, but also the common good of the whole society. [131] After all, the person who seeks the common good of men is thereby seeking his own good for at least two reasons:

First, because the individual good is impossible without the common good of the family, state or kingdom.... Secondly, because, since man is a part of the home and the civil society, he must consider what is good for him by being prudent about the good of many. [132]

What St. Thomas calls " economic " prudence is one species or subjective part of prudence, one that stands midway between the prudence of the single individual and that of the whole society. [133] It is that brand of prudence which "is directed to the common good of the household." [134] The household for St. Thomas was a basic social unit of production and consumption, a unit that exists logically and perhaps historically prior to the market division and exchange of labor and property. [135] The functional household, e. g., an agrarian manor under the direction of a prudent householder, provides a relatively easy framework for placing and evaluating basic economic needs and their satisfaction in the whole structured finality of human life. [136]

[180] *Ibid.* II-II, 47, IS. Cf. I-II, *57,* 4 ad S.

[181] *Ibid.* II-II, *50,* I ad 1. Cf. II-II, *50,* 4; I, 22, 1;, II-II, 47, 10; II-II, 47, 11.

[13"] *Ibid.* II-II, 47, 10 ad 2.

[188] *In Eth.* VI, 7; *Summa Theol.* II-II, 47, 11; *50,* S.

[18·] *Summa Theol.* II-II, 47, 11. Cf. Dempsey, *op. cit.,* p. 27.

[135] *In Pol.* I, 7.

[186] *In Pol.* I, 1: St. Thomas comments here on Aristotle's functional description of the household under the governance of the *oeconomus,* a governance constituted by two relationships: the generation of offspring and the everyday activities that pertain

Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to compare the household examples in the thought of St. Thomas to the Robinson Crusoe models of classical economics. The immediate task of the prudent householder is the distribution of material goods as needed for living well or virtuously.[131] His economic task is not one of actual production, ·which belongs to the arts and crafts, but rather one of allocation of the goods which exist for his nourisment.[138]

### *Morality and Economic Knowledge*

The economic decision is thus a voluntary moral act and so the branch of human knowledge that studies economic acts will be a branch of moral science.[139] Moral science studies not the rational techniques of manufacturing proper to the mechanical arts, but rather it considers voluntary human acts as they are ordered to one another and to an end.[140]

Moreover, for St. Thomas some knowledge is completely speculative, some completely practical and some is partly speculative and partly practical. Knowledge is partly speculative and partly practical when it is possible to consider speculatively some knowledge, e. g., moral knowledge, that is ordered to a practical end.[141] This may well have been what St. Thomas had in mind more than a decade earlier when he wrote that economics " is a speculative habit, that is, reflective and practical."[142] At that time he divided economic knowledge

to the general welfare of the household, e. g., providing for food, heat and shelter. Cf. *In Etk.* I, 1; Speltz, *op. cit.*, p. 6: "**It** was comparatively easy in the agrarian way of life advocated by Aristotle and Aquinas for the people to retain a true evaluation of bodily goods as opposed to external goolis, the former having a fixed relation to the needs of the various households. They were educated to a true sense of value through the prevailing practice of the institutions of the time." Cf. Henri Pirenne, *Economic and Social History of EuTope* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1956), p. 64.

187 *In Pol.* I, 8.

188Ibid.

189 *In Etk.* I, 1.

uo *Ibid.*

" 1 *Swmnna Xkeol.* I, 14, 16.

"" S *Sent.* d. SS, q. S. a. 1, qla. 4.

" into paternal economics, when it is appropriate for the head of the household, and into economics absolutely so-called." [143]

Economics then will be morally normative and will have the same place in the hierarchy of human knowledge that economic ends have in the hierarchy of ends of human acts," since the end is to practical matters what the principle is to speculative matters." [144] Thus in his Commentary on the *Politics* of Aristotle, St. Thomas takes note of the classical division between the liberal and the servile sciences. On one hand, some science is free or liberal " because through this kind of knowledge man is intellectually disposed to his proper end." [145] On the other hand,

> ... that knowledgewhich disposesman relative to the good of the body itself and to external goods is called servile, since it is related to man's good in so far as it should serve him in a mechanical way.... Likewise,among the servile pursuits the more servile one is the one in which the intellect or reason is more depressed into practical matters, and niatters more remote from man as man. For example, the kind of knowledge that is ordered to external goods is more servile than that which is ordered to the good of the body.... [146]

Economic knowledge is not specifically mentioned. Insofar as it is ordered to external goods, it is certainly servile knowledge, but insofar as it presupposes a scale of proper ends or values of human life, it has a relation to liberal knowledge. Economic knowledge properly used would seem to be included in that servile knowledge whose " purpose is the advancement of one's own virtue." [147] " Such knowledge is neither wicked or illiberal." [148] In sum, " the disciplines that are ordered to occupations, or activities, or external work " are necessary but are not absolute goods in themselves, just as the external goods which are the object of economic decisions are necessary, but

ua *Ibid.*
"'*Summa Tkeol.* II-II, 7 ad i. Cf. *In Etk.* I, I.
1 ... *In Pol.* VIII, I.
1 .a *Ibid.*
147 *Ibid.*
us *Ibid.*

strictly goods.[149] In his Commentary on the *Ethics* of Aristotle St. Thomas applies these principles when he notes that Aristotle requires political science to use economic science for its own higher end, the common good of society.[150]

Knowledge of variable and contingent matters, e. g., concrete prudential economic choices, cannot approach the certitude of science, because they are known only as singular data of sense knowledge, according to Aristotle.[151] Nevertheless, St. Thomas points out later in the *Summa* that " there are some sciences of contingent matters, such as moral sciences."[152] Even contingent things must have in them something necessary and hence universal according to the metaphysics of St. Thomas/[153] Furthermore, it is the intellect alone, not the senses, that has the universal for its object. And so St. Thomas concludes that even contingent matters are known indirectly by the intellect, and whatever universal and necessary principles govern them are known only by the intellect. Otherwise, the very operation of prudence itself would be frustrated, since it requires the application of universal norms, e. g., *in medio stat virtus*, to the contingent circumtances of particular situations. Hence, when we consider the things that are the subject matter of science, some·sciences, such as the moral sciences, are of contingent matters.[154]

St. Thomas, however, does not wholly deny Aristotle's point about the lack of certitude in contingent matters, for elsewhere in the *Summa* he quotes Aristotle on the same subject and· himself concludes:

> Consequently, in contingent matters such as natural and human things, it is enough for a thing to be certain if it is true in the greater number of instances (*ut in pluribus)*, although it may be lacking sometimes in a few cases.[155]

[149] *Ibid.*
[150] *Swmma Theol.* I, 86, 8.
[151] *In Eth.* VI, *6.*
[152] *In Eth.* I, !a.
[153] *Ibid.*
[154] *Ibid.*
[155] *Ibid.*, 1-11, 96, 1 ad 8; cf. *In Eth.* V, 16: "De quibusdam non est possibile quod dicatur aliquid verum in universali, sicut de contingentibus; de quibus etsi aliquid sit vemm ut in pluribus, ut in paucioribus tamen deficit."

*Value and Economic Exchange*

The scope of economics expands as its subject matter expands beyond the economic activities of the household. Because man is a social animal, because he is not self-sufficient, even within the society of the household, trade is necessary along with a separation of production from consumption. St. Thomas, as we have seen, acknowledges the legitimate existence of exchange. However, the moral dangers connected with trade may have influenced his judgment that the activities of traders, although legitimate and necessary, were more remote from the exchange proper to the necessities of life than were the activities of the householder, the *oeconomus* strictly so-called.[156] It is perhaps no historical coincidence either that St. Thomas' most complete *ex professo* treatment of buying and selling is included under the more general topic of fraud in one of the questions of the *Secunda Secundae* dealing with sins against the virtue of justice.

Nevertheless, exchange is sufficiently basic to be considered by St. Thomas one of the two fundamental uses of material goods. In his Commentary on the *Politics* he explains Aristotle's conception of this twofold use:

> FiJ:st he says that ... we should accept the principle that there is a twofold use of everything. These two uses agree in the fact that each of them is essential *(secundum se)* and not accidental *(per accidens)* . They differ, however, because one of them is the personal *(proprius)* use of something, the other is not personal, but common *(communis)* .[157]

To illustrate the twofold use of things, St. Thomas then employs the familiar example of shoes that can be used both as wearing apparel and as a medium of exchange. Again he stresses the fact that, although the exchange use is not the *proprius usus,* it is nonetheless an *usus per se* and not *secundum accidens,* because the person who exchanges shoes does so

[166] *Ibid.* II-II, 77, 4. Cf. II-II, *56,* 2 ad 2: "Praecipue autem solet fraus exerceri et dolus in emptione et venditione."

[107] *In Pol.* I, 7.

" according to their value." At about the same time or a little

St. Thomas uses this same Aristotelian distinction, additionally qualifying the *propri:us usus* as " principal " and the *usus communis* as" secondary." [158]

Thus, besides distinguishing between value considered in itself and the economic value in man's uses of material goods, it is reasonable to distinguish between the use value and the exchange value of economic goods themselves.[159] These values are not unrelated, however, for all participate in the objectivity of good itself and trace their ultimate origin and end to the same good. The values are as analogically related as the goods they express.

Since the time of St. Thomas, of course, history has seen the business firm, the labor union and industry replace the domestic productive plant, as social institutions lying midway between the individual and the whole of civil society and subject to economic prudence.[160] This modern organization built around exchange has institutionalized even more emphatically the twofold use and value, i. e., personal and common, of material goods.

If the institution of exchange does not finally create value as such, it does express economic value in terms of monetary price. The precious metals may very well possess useful value in themselves/61 but in as early a writing as the *Commentary on the Sentences*, St. Thomas states that money itself lacks such usefulness. Rather, "it is the measure of the usefulness of other things." [162]

[168] *De Malo* 18, 4 ad *15.*

[168] Oswald von Nell-Breunig, S. J., " The Concept of a Just Price," *Review of Social Economy,* Vill (1950), 111-5. A. Sandoz, "La Notion de juste prix," *Revue Tkomiste,* XXIII (1989), new series, 286.

[180] Dempsey, *op. cit.,* p. Cf. John F. Cronin, S. S., *Social Principles aruJ, Economic Life* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1959), pp. 178-80 for position of labor unions.

[181] *Summa Theol.* II-II, 77, ad 1.

[18]. S *Sent.* d. 87, q. 1, a. 6: "... aliae res ex seipsis habent aliquam utilitatem, pecunia autem non, sed est mensura utilitatis aliarum rerum ... Et ideo pecuniae usus non habet mensuram utilitatis ex ipsa pecunia sed ex rebus quae per pecuniam mensurantur secundum industriam ejus qui pecuniam ad res transmutat."

Later, in the *Commentary on the Ethics of Aristotle,* St. Thomas summarizes the role of money as a means of exchange and a standard of value:

> First Aristotle says that, to equalize the products of the various crafts so that they can be exchanged, all of those that can be exchanged should be somehow comparable to one another, so that we may know which of them is worth more and which less. Money ... was invented for this purpose, because through it the prices of these goods are measured. Thus ... [money] becomes a kind of medium whereby everything is valued .... [168]

Monetary price will thus express value in exchange. The true price for St. Thomas, because it accurately expresses should be consistent with the whole hierarchy of ends which economic goods serve: individual material needs, common or social needs, the virtuous life and ultimately the man's own supernatural end. It is this scale of values that economic prudence should bring to the market, for every economic decision presupposes some order of values.[165]

The need for exchange implies also the division of labor and property, which, along with the notion of exchange, are by no means foreign to the economic thought of St. Thomas. As Aristotle showed, exchange and the division of property went hand in hand:

> The first exchange began in the things that nature provides for the necessities of human life, because some men had an abundance of these things, while others were short on them. . . .
>
> As a more extensive community grew up . . . some people were separated, in many different goods as well. Therefore, since these goods had been divided, it was necessary that exchange arise .... [166]

The division of goods as embodied in the institution of private property does not of itself create value, any more than exchange itself does; but it does clarify and emphasize it, and

[168] *In Etk.* V, 9. Cf. *Summa Tkeol.* II-II, 78, 1.
[1]··· *Summa Tkeol.* II-II, 77, I.
[165] John R. Hicks, *Value and Capital* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 55.
[168] *In. Pol.* I, 7. Cf. *Summa Tkeol.* I-II, 105,

in this sense contributes to the satisfaction of human need. For value implies a relation with the appetite, and private property certainly institutionalizes this value-relation. As Aquinas comments, "Aristotle says that he can scarcely express how pleasant it is to count something as one's own property." [167] Of course, a certain amount of attention is required in caring for one's possessions. But St. Thomas is satisfied as long as virtue is kept the rule of need:

> So long as external things are sought or possessed only in a small quantity and as much as is required for ordinary livelihood, such care does not greatly hinder one; and consequently is not inconsistent with the perfection of Christian life.[168]

Man is so much more likely to appreciate and care properly for what is his own, that St. Thomas concludes that private ownership is " necessary to human life." [169]

Economic prudence, however, always has regard for the common good, and prudential decisions about property and private ownership are no exception:

> With regard to possessions, it is a very good thing, says Aristotle (II Pol. 2), that the things possessed should be distinct, but that the use thereof should be partly common, and partly granted to others by the will of the possessors.[170]

The virtuous man who owns property will recognize in it the opportunity for practicing the virtues of liberality and munificence.171 "According to the proverb ... the things that belong to friends are common to them." [172]

Moreover, in extreme need," all things are common property, so that in my opinion there would be no sin in taking another's property." [178] Although not contrary'to naturallaw,m private

[167] *Ibid.* II, 4.
[168] *Summa Theol.* II-II, 188, 7.
[169] *Ibid.* II-II, 66,
[170] *Ibid.* I-II, 105, Cf. II-II, *5* ad
[171] Ibid. II-II, qq. II7, 184. Cf. *Contra Gentilea* ill, 184, 7.
[172] *In Pol.* IT, 4.
[173] *Summa Theol.* II-II, 66, 7.
[m] *Ibid.* II-II, 66, ad I. Cf. I-II, 94, *5* ad 8.

property is, after all, a human addition to it, to the natural order of things, and so must remain subordinate to natural law. *H* usefulness in the satisfaction of the needs of man's nature is what leads to the human institution of property, then that institution must always be subject to the overriding demands of human nature, to the common end and need that is the origin of the institution itself. Obviously, however, before an individual can determine that all things are common property, he must make a prudential comparison of his individual need to the needs of mankind being served under the institution of private property.

In addition, St. Thomas does not fail to point out that private ownership is a hindrance to persons striving for religious perfection. Even the care that one takes of a moderate amount of wealth pertains to the love of self in temporal affairs; whereas religious perfection pertains to charity and the lo,ve of God to the exclusion of self.[175]

Like the division of property, the division of labor does not of itself create value, but it leads to increased output and efficiency.[176] In a discussion of manual labor in one of the *Quodlibeta* St. Thomas offers two reasons for specialization. The first is the familiar inability of the individual to perform all the functions necessary for human social life.[177] Here *to9* economic prudence looks to the common good, for Aquinas uses as an analogy the orderly functioning of the Mystical Body of Christ in the diversity of its members. The second reason suggests a natural value-relation:

> A second reason arises from natural causes because as a result of these, there are in different men different inclinations to different jobs, and even to different ways of life.[178]

[17"] *Ibid.* IT"n, 188, 7.

[178] *Ibid.* IT-IT, 40, " Diversa autem a diversis melius et expeditius aguntur quam ab uno ... Et quaedam negotia sunt adeo sibi repugnantia ut convenienter simul exerceri non possint."

[177] *Quodlibeta* VN, 7, 17.

[178] *Ibid.*

## *Morality and Economic Exchange*

With the institution of exchange and tp.e division of property and labor that accompany it temperance and prudence are no longer the only virtues that underlie the economic decision. For exchange adds to the economic decision the notion of dealing with another. And justice is the virtue whose proper subject matter " consists in those things that belong to our dealings with others." [179] The object of justice consists in rendering that which is due to another according to some equivalence or equality. [180] Thus economics remains normative after its subject matter is expanded to include exchange among persons. There is what St. Thomas calls an " economic justice " proper to the household, but this pertains to the relations between husband and wife.[181] The justice that most immediately applies to market exchange is the commutative justice that " consists in mutual giving and receiving, as in buying and selling and other kinds of exchange." [182] Basically, commutative justice " is concerned with the mutual dealings of two persons." [188] Using Aristotle's terminology in the *Commentary on the Ethics,* St. Thomas calls it " a species of particular justice which consists in the rectitude of justice in exchanges, since in these exchanges something is transferred by one person to another." [18,

There is, however, another kind of particular justice, called distributive justice, which " consists in the distribution of some common goods which are to be divided among those who associate by civil agreement." [185] The distribution of any external good falls under this kind of particular justice. " It may be honor, or money ... it may be labor, expenses and the like." [186]

Whereas in commutative justice there is an exchange between

[179] *Summa Theol.* II-II, 58, I. Cf. II-II, 57, 4; 58, 2; 61, I.
[180] *Ibid.* I-II, 60, 8 ad I. Cf. II-II, 58, 2; 1-11, 114, 1.
[181] *In Eth.* V, 11.
[182] *Summa Theol.* I, 21, 1. Cf. *In Etk.* V, 4.
[188] *Ibid.* II-II, 61, I.
[18,] *In Etk.* V, 4.
[18•] *Ibid.*
[186] *Ibid.*

individuals, in distributive justice there is a transfer of some external good from a society or group of individuals.[187] Commutative justice seeks an equality of thing to thing [188] between individuals who are considered only in relation to one another.[189] But distributive justice seeks equality between person and person with respect to some external good insofar as those persons are related as parts of a whole society or group.[190]

Examples used in the *Commentary on the Ethics* indicate that for Aristotle and perhaps for St. Thomas distributive justice was operative, not only between a state and its citizens, but in the distribution of external goods by any society.[191] St. Thomas appears to concur in his earlier *Commentary on the Sentences* of Peter Lombard, where both commutative and distributive justice are linked together by one general end, the transfer of the necessities of life.[192] However, by the time the *Summa Theologiae* was written some seventeen years later, St. Thomas restricted the emphasis in distributive justice to the relationship between the individual and the civil society, between ruled and ruler.[193] Although at one time moral theologians applied norms of distributive justice to the determination of wages and corporate dividends, modern moralists restrict the emphasis in distributive justice to the relations between the civil government and its citizens.[194] St. Thomas himself

[187] *Ibid.*

[188] *In Eth.* V, 8; II II, 61,

[189] *Summa Theol.* II-II, 61, 1.

[190] *Ibid.* II-II, 61, 1 &

[191] In *Eth.* V, 4: "... ex hoc fiunt pugnae et accusationes quasi sit iustitia praetermissa; quia vel aequalies non recipiunt aequalia in distributione bonorum communium, vel non aequalibus dantur aequa: puta si inaequaliter laborantibus dantur inaequalia." *In Eth.* V, 6: " Dicit ergo primo quod iustum supradictum semper est distributivum communium bonorum ... Puta in negotiationibus, quanto aliquis plus posuit in societatem, tanto maiorem partem accipit. Et in civitatibus quanto aliquis servivit communitati, tanto plus accipit de bonis communibus."

[199] IV *Sent.* d. 17, q. 1, a. I, qla. I: "Uno enim modo est specialis virtus aequalitatem constituens in commutationibus et distributionibus communicabilium bonorum quae sunt necessaria in vita."

[193] *Summa Theol.* II-II, 6I, I, I.

[194] Cronin, *op. cit.,* pp. Cf. H. Noldin, S. J. and A. Schmitt, S. J., *Summa Theologiae Moralis* (Oeuiponte: Feliauus Rauch, I957), II,

as early as the *Ccnnmenta'T'Jpon the Sentences* used the example of wages due to a laborer in a vineyard as an example of commutative rather than distributive justice.[195]

Besides these two forms of particular justice, Aristotle defined the general virtue called legal justice, which includes in its subject matter all the virtues.[196] Legal justice differs however from general virtue because it adds to general virtue the essential note of *ad alterum*, the" relation to another" that defines justice of any kind. In this case the " other " is not another individual butthe happiness of the community of men embraced in the common good.[197] St. Thomas points out that the name of legal justice can thus be given to every virtue in so far as the latter is directed to the common good.[198] " Speaking in this way," concludes Aquinas, " legal justice is essentially the same as all virtue, but differs therefrom logically." [199] Aristotle relates legal justice to the good of the civil society or city-state, and St. Thomas concurs.[200] Later thoughts, including modern papal teaching, have expanded the application of legal justice to all of society under the title of social justice.[201] The social injustice that has been the modern concern would thus seem to be a special vice corresponding to the injustice which St. Thomas finds opposed to legal justice. " This is essentially a special vice," he say," insofar as it regards a special object, namely the common good which it contemns." [202]

Since justice of any kind involves the transfer of what is due to another according to some " equality," [208] there is implied a

[195] m *Sent.* d. 88, q. 8, a. 4, qla. *5* ad 2.

[198] *In Eth.* V, 2.

[1] " *Ibid.* Cf. 4 *Sent.* d. 17, q. 1, a. 1, qla 1; *In Eth.* V, 8; *Sum'TI/4 Theol.* 1-11, 60, 8 ad 2; 11-1158, *5;* 11-11, 59, 1.

[198] *Swmnna Theol.* 11-11, 58, 6; Cf. 1-11, 61, *5* ad 4.

[199] *Ibid.* Cf. *8um'TII4 Theol.* I-11, 60, 8 ad 2.

[" 00] *In Eth.* 2.

[801] Cronin, *op. cit.,* pp. 62-65; 78-76; Dempsey, *op. cit.,* pp.- 81-82. Cf. *Sum'TI/4 Theol.* 1-11, 100, *5:* "Ad pro:ximos autem aliquis bene se habet ..• generaliter...• Generaliter autem quantum ad omnes, ut nulli nocumentum inferatur."

[soa] *Swmnna TheoZ.* 11-11, 59, 1.

[808] *Ibid.* 11-11, 58, 1 and 2.

relation and equation of values presupposing a given standard of values. Acts of justice are external human acts related to another / [04] and so the equality that justice demands can be measured by an almost mathematical ratio or proportion, which Aristotle in the *Metaphysics* calls a mean. In the case of justice the mean looks not merely to the condition of persons as does the mean in other virtues. [205] Rather, the mean of justice equalizes as well the external things that are the matter of acts of justice. [206]

In commutative justice the two parties are treated as equals, so there is simply a strict equality to be maintained between thing and thing. For Aristotle and St. Thomas this equality can be expressed by an arithmetic mean or progression which simply equalizes two quantities. [207] "No consideration is given to the diverse condition (proportio) of persons." [208] In distributive justice, however, the mean is established by a four-term geometric proportion, so that goods are divided in the same ratio that divides the persons who are to share the goods. In the example used in St. Thomas' *Commentary,* Socrates receives two pounds for having worked two days, while Plato receives one pound for a single day's work. [209]

A kind of geometric proportion in addition to the arithmetic mean of commutative justice is applied to economic exchange value by Aristotle and by St. Thomas in the *Commentary on the Ethics:*

> ... we should use a proportion to establish an equality of things insofar as the action of one craftsman is greater than the action of another; as building a house is greater than making a knife. So if the builder exchanges his action for the action of the craftsman, there would not be an equality of the thing given and received; namely, of the house and the knife. [210]

••• *Ibid.* II-II, 58, 8; 58, 9 corp and ad 2.
••• *Ibid.* II-II, 58, 10.
••• *Ibid.* II-IT, 58, 9 ad 2; 58, 10.
••• *In Etk.* V, 6. Cf. *Summa Tkeol.* II-ll, 58, 10 *sed contra.*
--[8] *Ibid.*
••• *Ibid.* V, *5.*
[210] *Ibid.* V, 8.

Unless a value-relation like the one schematically outlined in this proportion is expressed in market prices, exchange itself will be threatened and the just price that St. Thomas describes later in the *Sumnia* will be impossible.[211]

Some recent commentators contend that Aristotle intended the application of the principle of proportionality in exchange to constitute actually another category of justice known as reciprocal justice and rendered in the medieval Latin translations of Aristotle as *contrapassum.*[212] According to these theories, there is a direct analogy to be made between Aristotle's divisions of justice and the three mathematical proportions known to Pythagorean mathematical theory. The means of commutative and distributive justice would correspond respectively to the arithmetic and geometric proportions, while reciprocal justice would correspond to a harmonic mean of Archytas that embodies a principle of reciprocation already known to Pythagorean philosophy.[218] In sum, Aristotle probably solved the determination of exchange value in the framework of a twofold mathematical scheme.[214] First of all there is established a geometric proportion of ratios that compare relative want or need satisfaction of goods to persons, e. g., of goods to their makers and to their customers. In this way the skill of one person in satisfying human needs with his own product, e. g., the builder and his building, can be related to the product of another man's skill, e. g., the craftsman's knife. And so the basis for a bargain between the two goods can be established in relation to their respective satisfaction of human needs. Then the actual bargain value struck in exchange is expressed by the arithmetic mean that cqrrects or equalizes the individuals' own estimations of the relative values of the goods.

Both St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas in their Commen-

[211] *Summa Theol.* 11-11, 77, 1.

[212] Josef Soudek, "Aristotle's Theory of Exchange: An Inquiry into the Origin of Economic Analysis," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* 96, Feb. 1952, 45-75. Cf. Baldwin, *op. cit.,* pp. 11, 62.

[213] *Ibid.* pp. 58-8.

[214] *Ibid.* pp. 58-64.

taries on the *Ethics* of Aristotle, and St. Thomas in his *Summa Theologiae* explicitly acknowledge only two kinds of particular justice, distributive and commutative.[215] However, St. Thomas in the *Summa* acknowledges the principle of just reciprocation, of *contrapassum,* as a principle of commutative justice operative in voluntary economic exchange in order to establish equality in the exchange of things that are of unequal value in themselves. *Contrapassum,* as a determinant of monetary price, establishes the necessary equality of value for a .just price by taking into consideration the condition of persons " according to a proportionate measure."[218]

## *Economic Value and Market Price*

It is thus possible, at least in theory, for a normal market price to meet the standards of the just price of St. Thomas. Human need, as Aristotle and St. Thomas saw it in light of higher spiritual needs, provides the foundation for the utility or want satisfaction of material goods. It is this " subjective " element made objective by the natural necessity for exchange that is the basis for a theory of demand that must dominate in the determination of normal· market price.[217] And it is the principles of commutative justice that provide the moral norms for relating in terms of monetary price the respective values of goods through the prudential economic decisions of those who constitute or influence the market itself.

Moreover, a theory which holds that normal market price can be the just price squares well with the statements of St. Thomas in the *Summa* on deviations from the just price.

First of all, he states that a merchant may not raise his price

[216] St. Albert the Great, *Ethica,* V, 2, 9 in *Opera O'IMiia* 7: 855. St. Thomas AquinDll, *In Eth.* V; 8; *Summa Theol.* Il-ll, 61, 1.

[818] *Summa Theol.* Il-ll, 61, 4: "... etiam nee in commutationibus voluntariis semper esset aequalis passio si aliquis daret rem suam, accipiens rem alterius: quia forte res alterius est multo maior quam sua.-Et ideo oportet secundum quandam proportionatam commensurationem adaequare pWISionem actioni in commutationibus: ad quod inventa sunt numismata. Et sic contrapWISUin est commutativum justum."

[217] Cf. Hicks, *op. cit.,* chaps. I and IT.

to one customer, just because the product would be of exceptional utility to this particular buyer, and he would be willing to pay extra for it:

> For the utility which accrues to the other party [the buyer] does not proceed from the seller, but from the condition of the buyer; and no one should sell to another what is not his own.[218]

The moral principle that a seller is not free to profit from the subjective condition of a single buyer seems to implicitly assume a notion of utility like that behind any normal theory of demand. Moreover, there can be implied further in such a moral judgment a standard for comparing the subjective value of a good to a single individual with the just price itself. The most obvious standard of comparison for a moral judgment would seem to be the normal market price, for, assuming virtuous inclinations, it reflects the subjective evaluations of all buyers in relation to available quantities and alternatives.

Secondly, given his views on the lack of certitude in our knowledge of contingent matters, it is consistent with market price that St. Thomas allows for small fluctuations in the just price due to error.[219] He attributes the error to the fact that the just price cannot always be determined exactly *(punctaliter)*, but consists more in a kind of estimation (*quadam estimatione)*.[220] A comparison such as this again seems to be most readily validated in the context of normal market price.

Moreover, St. Thomas allows for fluctuations in the just price of the kind that are normally associated with the demand determinants of the normal market price, e. g., variations in time and place/[221] as well as the important part that scarcity plays in the determination of price.[222] St. Thomas even justifies the withholding of information by a seller about a future increase in supply in order to uphold present demand and seeure

[218] *Summa Tkeol.* ll-ll, 77, ı.
[219] *Ibid.* ∩-∩, 77, 1 ad 1.
[220] *Ibid*.
[221] *Ibid.* ∩-∩, 77, 4 ad 2.
[222] *In Pol.* I, 9: " Alia istorum [animalium] in aliis regionibus abundant; ut scilicet emant in loco ubi abundant, et vendant in loco ubi sunt cara."

a higher price in the present market.[228] He justifies a moderate profit of the seller on the grounds that a merchant's activities are ordered to supplying the necessities of life to the needy, to households and to the commonwealth.[224]

### *Economic Value and Law*

The place of law in the determination of exchange value cannot be overlooked. In fact, some have held that the market price itself participates in the nature of law.[225] For St. Thomas law is an ordinance of practical reason ordered to the common good, a rule or measure of acts whereby men are led to perform some acts and restrained in the performance of others.[226]

Because law is a principle of reasonable human acts, the common good as the proper end of law is structured like common good as the end of virtuous activity.[227] Consequently, law has first of all a relationship to happiness. This relationship extends both to the common good that is man's ultimate happiness, which St. Thomas knows from revelation to be the beatific vision, as well as to the general welfare of society with reference to the virtuous life which is the temporal beginning of man's eternal happiness through the life of grace. And law itself is of more than one kind. There is an eternal law in the very divine reason that providentially governs the entire universe.[228] There is a natural law whereby the rational creature participates in this eternallaw.[229] There is finally human law whereby human reason exercises this participation under divine providence through its own reasonable determinations in particular matters proper to human sociallife.[280]

Thus law, even human positive law, has a relation to morality

••• *Summa· Tkeol.* ll-11, 77, 8 ad 4. Market manipulations were not unknown to St. Thomas; cf. *In Pol.* I, 9, where with tongue in cheek he tells an anecdote about the philosopher, Thales Milesius, who once used his knowledge of philosophy to comer the market in olives!

••• *Ibid.* II-ll, 77, 4.

••• *Summa Theol.* I-II, 90, 1 and 2.

••• Sandoz, *op. cit.*, pp. 289-91.

"'"1 *Ibid.* I-ll, 90, 2. Vd. supra pp. 842-848.

••• *Ibid.* I-ll, 91, 1.

••• *Ibid.* I-ll, 91, 2.

••0 *Ibid.* I-ll, 91, 8.

in its direction of human acts to end, ultimately to their common end in the divine goodness. But human law is not to be identified with morality on two counts. First, its end is the general welfare of a society of many persons, " the majority of whom are not perfect in virtue." [281] And so it cannot be expected to repress all the vices which truly virtuous people avoid, but only those whose prohibition is necessary to maintain human society. Furthermore, human law can prescribe acts proper to all the virtues, since every virtue can be referred to the common good of society. But only those acts can be prescribed which can be ordered to this .common good.[282] St. Thomas notes further on in the *Summa* that man's social life pertains to justice, whose proper function is the direction of a community. And so he concludes:

> Therefore human law makes precepts only about acts of justice, and if it commands acts of other virtues, this is only in so far as they assume the nature of justice. [283]

Moreover, in light of the necessary lack of certitude which St. Thomas finds in our knowledge of contingent matters, due to an intrinsic lack of intelligibility in them, it seems reasonable to conclude to a place in his thought for authority in the contingent and variable area of economic exchange involving the *usus communis* and exchange value of goods. After all, the most perfect knowledge possible of variable and contingent matters, like the whole world of economic exchange, will not scientifically or demonstrably narrow alternative possibilities for achieving common ends to a single necessary choice.[284] In fact, in terms of a common end to be achieved, increased knowledge may often increase the number of alternatives available to attain a common end. Reliance upon the automatic working of the market is one alternative available for achieving in part the

••• *Ibid.* I-IT, 96, !!.
••• *Ibid.* I-IT, 96, 8.
••• *Ibid.* I-IT, 100, !!.
••• Yves R. Simon, "Common Good and Common Action," *The Review of Politics,* !!2, No. 2 (April, 1960), 216-218.

temporal common good. But it need not be the sole and unanimous one, even assuming virtuous inclinations on the part of all. Hence, without infringing on the natural law itself, a place may be naturally assigned to the determining role of authority. [235]

There seems to be, nonetheless, a scarcity of texts in the writings of St. Thomas concerning positive legal regulation of markets, prices and other economic affairs. Once in the *Summa* he comments upon the principle of *laesio enormis,* a principle as old as Roman law and one used by canonists of the Middle Ages.[236] The principle of *laesio enormis* provided for legally enforced restitution to the injured party of a contract <Jf sale in which the bargained price differed from the just price by more than fifty per cent. The principle had originated largely as protection for the seller of land against exceptional injury, but by the time of St. Thomas it provided legal remedy for unusual injuries to buyers as well.[237] St. Thomas comments on the principle in his response to an objection that this law apparently permits considerable leeway for fraudulent deception in the establishment of price. It is important to point out that St. Thomas does not take issue with the validity of a human law that sets limits on the extent of human bargaining. He merely notes that the civil law may be more broad in the matter of justice than the divine law, since the civil need not prohibit every action contrary to virtue. Its task is to prohibit whatever would destroy beneficial social intercourse, and in this ·effort it must reckon with many people who are lacking in virtue. [288]

Legal regulation in economic affairs comes in for further scrutiny a little later when St. Thomas assigns to civil rulers the task of determining what are just measures of marketable goods.[239] For St. Thomas this is no automatic decision, since

--[6] *Ibid.*
••• Baldwin, *op. cit.,* pp. GS fl.
••• *Ibid.* p. 27.
••• *811-mma Theol.* II-II, 77, 1 ad 1.
••• *Ibid.* II-II, 77, 2 ad 2. At least one commentator translates *memurae Terum*

he apparently endorses the Aristotelian notion that quantitative measures of the same goods will vary from place to place depending upon relative local abundance or scarcity of the goods.

Recently some have contended that the entire medieval theory of money and usury is not to be treated as a special case of the just price theory of commodities. Rather, medieval usury theory is to be based upon the principle of legal regulation of the value of money, considered not as a commodity but as a measure.[20] If this analysis is correct, then the example of legal regulation of commodity measures may well constitute the single link between medieval just price theory and 'usury theory.[21] Nevertheless, a special treatment of lending and usury by St. Thomas may have had a theological origin in the traditional interpretation of such scriptural texts as Luke 6: *85,* upon which·St. Thomas explicitly comments in the *Summa.*[22]

Despite the scarcity of texts on legal regulation of prices and other economic matters, such regulation seems to be naturally consistent with Thomistic principles of law.[23] The economic decision is an act of prudence and as such it is a judgment of practical reason that is not oblivious to the common good. But to the extent that it has a relation to the common good, the economic decision falls under the scope of legal or social justice. Furthermore, when it is situated in the market, the

*venalium* as "prices." Vd. V. Michel, *St. Thomas and Today* (St.-Paul, Minn., 1986), p. *69.* While the overall thought of St. Thomas justify this translation, the immediate context of the objection with its reference·to *Etk.* V, 7 of Aristotle is one of measuring quantities of commodities, and hence not warrant a translation that would explicitly ascribe to civil authority the task of setting commodity prices. In the context of the objection such a translation, if used consistently, would imply that St. Thomas favored higher prices when commodities were more abundant: " quia ubi res magis abundant, consueverunt esse maiores mensurae."

[20] Noonan, *op. cit.,* pp. 58-7; 98-5. But cf. Bernard W. Dempsey, S. J;, *The Functional Economy, The Bases of the Economic Organisation,* pp. 100 fl'. for an analysis of the medieval theory of usury as a special case of just price analysis. Cf. also O'Brien, oo. *cit.,* p. 188.

[21] Noonan, *op. cit.,* p. 89.

[22] *Summa Theol.* ll-ll, 78, I obj 4 and ad 4.

[23] O'Brien, *op. cit.,* p. 106.

economic decision may be governed by the principle of just reciprocation or *contrapassum.* The principle of *contrapassum,* although related to commutative justice by St. Thomas in the *Summa,* admittedly has a more general but immediate application to the common good. St. Thomas acknowledges this Aristotelian principle in his *Commentary on the Politics* when he writes:

> Aristotle says that the civil society (civitas) is preserved by just reciprocation (*contrapassum);* i. e., by proportionally compensating each person with the equivalent of what he has done. This is necessary if the society is to exist among people who are free and equal. For if compensation were not made to each in accord with what he has done, the result would be a kind of slavery .... [244]

In his treatment of *contrapassum* in the *Summa* St. Thomas confirms a relation to the common good by an example of multiple compensation for injury to the property of another. Multiple restitution is due " because he has injured not only a private party, but also the common good *(rempublicam),* since he has weakened the security of its protection." [245]

Moreover, the positive law of justice in buying and selling is explicitly derived from the natural law via a division that Aquinas calls the *ius gentium,* because it pertains to man's natural social life.[246] Hence it is not unreasonable that legal regulation should be an admissable principle in a Thomistic theory of price determination. [247]

### *The Labor-Cost Theory of Price*

Given the roles of supernatural finality, virtue, law and human need in a Thomistic determination of economic value, an attempt may be made to examine the various value theories ascribed to St. Thomas. No emphasis has been given here to the so-called objective cos_t or labor determinants of value which some have claimed to find in St. Thomas. Admittedly, however, St. Thonias makes several references to the economic

•u *In Pol.* II, I.
••• *Summa Theol.* II-II, 61, 4.
••• *Ibid.* I-II, *95,* 4.
••• Cf. O'Brien, *op. cit.,* p. 185.

value of human labor during the two-decade period covered by his extant writings.

As early as the *Commentaru on the Sentences* St. Thomas uses an example of a laborer in another's vineyard to illustrate the kind of debt that is governed by comni.utative justice.[248] St. Thomas prefaces the example with the statement, " commerce (*commutatio)* properly so-called exists when something become due to someone from the exchange of work *(ex mutuis operibus)*." [2411] Yet the emphasis in the context is on the equality of exchange that must be maintained in matters of commutative justice. The fact that the owner of the vineyard " becomes a debtor for the amount of the value of the labor " [250] illustrates a principle of justice but does not specify a particular theory of value.

Writing a little later in one of the *Quodlibeta,* St. Thomas offers three reasons for the utility of manual labor.[2u] It is useful first to avoid laziness, and secondly to keep the body in subjection. Finally, it is ordained as a means for seeking a livelihood, both by precept of human positive law and even by natural law.[252] Here the emphasis appears to be on over-all human need, on the utility of human labor to the finality of human life rather than on some undefined intrinsic value-determining quality of labor itself.

It is in the *Commentaru on the Ethics,* probably written in preparation for the *Summa,* that the most significant texts on labor are found. In the fourth chapter of the fifth book, " labor and expenses " are included in the examples of common goods that are to be divided according to the norms of distributive justice.[258] The labor cost example is amplified later in the chapter to illustrate the principle of equality that should prevail in matters of distributive justice. The mean of proportionality will not be observed when equal shares of goods are given to those who have labored unequally, or when unequal

••• S *Sent.* d. SS, q. S, a. 4, qla. *5* ad
U8 *Ibid.*
BSO *Ibid.*
051 *Quodlibeta* VII. 7, 17.
•.. *Ibid.*
868 *In Eth.* V, 4.

shares are given to those who have labored equally.[254] But the point at issue is the proportional equality that should be maintained in any situation governed by distributive justice, and in this context it would be unreasonable to infer that labor is assumed to be the ultimate determinant of economic value.

In the next chapter of the same *Commentary* the example of labor performed by Socrates and Plato is used to illustrate the same principle of proportionality in the mean of distributive justice.[255] The emphasis appears to be on the almost mathematical relationship involved, not on the material significance of the example. The same kind of emphasis appears to be present in the eighth chapter's example of the exchange between the builder and ·the knife-maker used to illustrate the principle of *contrapassum.*

In the seventh chapter, the common-sense observation is made that the arts and crafts would be destroyed if the artisan were not equivalently rewarded for his product. " Therefore," concludes St. Thomas, " the works of one craftsman should be measured with the works of another to make sure the exchange is just." [256] The implication is that a just exchange will cover labor and expenses, for if it did not, exchange itself would break down. But this is not to say that labor is the ultimate, " objective " determinant of exchange value. Indeed, from a statement made a little later in the same chapter with reference to the legality of commercial exchange, one may as well infer to legal regulation as the ultimate determinant of exchange value.

The ninth chapter of the *Commentary on the Ethics* treats of the role of money as the measure of exchange value. To illustrate the need for a monetary measure, the example of an exchange of shoes for a house is used. We are told that although a house is worth more than a shoe, a certain number of shoes will equal the price of one house. " Therefore," concludes St. Thomas, " for this to be a just exchange, enough shoes should be given for one house . . . to cover the labor and expenses of

••• *Ibid.* ••• *In Etk.* V, *5.* ••• *Ibid.* V, 7.

the builder .... " [257] Taken by itself, this comment can be used to support a labor theory of value.

However, St. Thomas goes on to note that if labor and expenses are to be covered, the shoes will somehow have to. be equated to the house. Aristotle points out that all goods of this kind can be equated because they can all be measured by some one standard. " This one thing," says Aquinas, " which measures all truthfully is need, because it embraces all exchange goods insofar as they are related to human need." [258] Not" objective" cost and intrinsic value of human labor but human need in the form of want satisfaction or utility to the ends of human life is the measure of exchange value. The value of any contingent good relative to an end has a certain indifference when considered as an object of choice by a free agent. [259] Thus St. Thomas can state, "goods are not valued according to the dignity of their nature. Otherwise," he adds, using an example reminiscent of the one used by St. Augustine/ [60] " one rat, because it is an animal with sense, would be worth more than a pearl." [261] After a fuller explanation of need, the train of thought returns to the subject of money, which itself " has been established by agreement, that is, by a kind of convention among men, for the exchange of need, i. e., of necessary goods." [262]

In the *Summa* there is a conspicuous absence of statements about labor costs and other objective expenses. Once in the *prima secundae,* St. Thomas defines merit and reward in terms of price for work and toil. [263] In the *secunda secundae* we are told that a man's service is directed to some kind of utility, and therefore servants are hired for a monetary wage. The reason, however, is because utility itself "has a pecuniary value." [264] The concise theory of the just price in Question 77 of the *secunda secundae* contains no reference to coverage of labor costs and expenses in the determination of the just price

••• *Ibid.* V, 9.
••• *Ibid.*
••• Sandoz, *op. cit.,* p. 286.
••• Vd. supra p. 8.
[261] *In Eth.* V, 9.
"""*Ibid.*
••• *Summa Theol.* I-II, 114, ı.
••• *Ibid.* II-II, 100, *5.*

beyond a reference to transporation costs. Proponents of a Thomistic market-price theory of just price maintain that this silence indicates an evolution in the thought of St. Thomas.[265] On the other hand, St. Thomas is not exactly explicit in support of the market price in the *Summa*, although his statements there are consisotent with a market-price hypothesis.

Actually, it appears that there need be no inconsistency between the earlier statements and those in the *Summa.* It is quite possible that for St. Thomas the utility dictated by human need in light of the structured finality of human life remained ultimate in the determination of economic value. Yet at the more immediate level of exchange he was conscious of the fact that price must cover costs or else exchange and social life itself would break down. This notion certainly appears to be behind the example of the house-shoes exchange, sometimes offered as a conclusive example of a labor theory of value. St. Thomas concludes the example with this reasoning:

> If this condition [coverageof labor cost and other expenses]is not fulfilled, there will be no commercial exchange and men will not trade their goods with one another.[266]

The just price should certainly and at minimum cover labor costs. However, does not St. Thomas in the *Summa* make the value of labor itself ultimately dependent upon its utility, even when no useful artifact is produced, as in the example of the servant hired for a monetary wage?[267]

### *The Liberal Competitive Price*

Considerations such as these would seem to argue for a just price that fluctuates around a competitive equilibrium not unlike that of classical liberal price theory. Free competition in the market would tend to drive prices to the point where they just covered costs, including a return for services of the

••• Baldwin, *op. cit.*, pp. 78 ft.
••• *In Etk.* V, 9.
--7 *Su'11111114 Tkeol.* II-II, 100, *5.*

merchant. If price should drop below the competitive equilibrium, some firms would drop out, thereby reducing supply and raising the market price to a cost-covering level. If the price rises above, other sellers may enter the market and drive it down toward the competitive equilibrium.

Such an interpretation of St. -Thomas is plausible and consonant with his statements in the *Ethics* and in the *Summa.* However, there are few statements in his writings concerning competition in the classical sense. In the exchange examples in the Commentaries the relationship is between two parties supplying different products to fill different needs. He notes that when neither of the parties needs what the other possesses, there will be no exchange,[268] but he does not acknowledge a situation in which two parties supply or seek the same good on the market.

However, twice in the *prima secundae* in discussing the effects of likeness or similitude, Aquinas uses an example of the relationships that exist between two potters. In the first passage we are told that a certain likeness between two persons may hinder one from gaining a good that he desires. If this happens, the other becomes hateful to the first, " not for being like him, but for hindering him from attaining his own good." [269] And so St. Thomas adds, " this is why potters quarrel among themselves, because they hinder one another's profit." [270]

In a later question St. Thomas distinguishes two ways in which likeness or similarity can be hurtful to one's own good. The first way is by excess, as an excess of pleasure weakens health. The second way is by direct opposition or contrariety to one's own good. " Thus," says Aquinas, " a potter dislikes other potters not because they are potters, but because they deprive him of his own excellence or profits, which he seeks as his own good." [211]

Taken by themselves these texts are inconclusive in judging the moral effects of competition according to St. Thomas.

••• *In Eth.* V, 9.
••• *Summa Theol.* I-ll, '1!1, s.
uo *Ibid.*
•n *Ibid.* I-ll, 82, 7.

However, in the *secunda secundae* St. Thomas discusses more completely the sadness that can arise over the good of another .[272] The first variety that he distinguishes occurs when a man grieves over the good of another from fear that it may cause harm to himself, a condition that appears to be realized particularly in the second example of competitive potters. However, "this sorrow is not envy," says St. Thomas, "and can exist without sin." [278] A man may also experience sorrow over another's good, simply because he happens to lack the good which the other has, a condition that would appear to be applicable to the first example of potters' profits. Following Aristotle's definition, Aquinas decides" properly speaking, this is zeal." *m* When this zeai concerns attainment of virtues_it is praiseworthy, but when it concerns temporal goods, "it may be either sinful or sinless," [275] implying a subordination to higher values to determine morality. Sorrow over another's good simply because it surpasses one's, own" is envy properly speaking and is always sinful." [276]

When applied to the economic decision, these statements would seem to imply that the morality of the competitive model depends not on the " rational " profit-maximizing techniques that it entails, but upon the structured order or hierarchy of values that underlie and oversee the decisions of the " economic " man. Indifference curves, demand schedules and maximizing to the margin are morally indifferent in themselves. But the shapes and relative positions of the curves, the dynamic attainment of "·equilibrium" will depend upon the moral values that determine economic choices, and it is to these values that the model remains subordinated. [277] Once this scale is given, an efficient allocation of resources and an efficient organization of production, implying competition, may well be morally desirable.[278]

••• *Ibid.* ll-ll, 86, !!.
•••*Ibid.*
"" *Ibid.*
""*Ibid.*
•••*Ibid.*
••• Fanfa.ni, *op. cit.,* p. 122.
••• Tibor Scitovsky, "The State of Welfare Economics." *The American Economic Review,* XLI (1951), *805.*

In these terms it is difficult to reconcile the Thomistic scale of values with the liberal *ethos* that underlies the competitive model of the classical economists.[279] The primacy of man's supernatural end and of the life of virtue is difficult to reconcile with a subordination of values, to " iron laws " of wages, or to the " invisible guiding hand."

Principles of self-determination, individual responsibility, and self-interest are by no means excluded from Thomistic moral teaching.[280] But the resemblance to their classical liberal counterparts is limited. Men are free, but not to make their own morality. Christian finality requires subordination of self-determination to the workings of providence and grace, and of self-interest to the common good, however difficultly defined.[281]

Above all, individual responsibility for St. Thomas is governed by charity. "Charity," says Aquinas, "is likened to a foundation or root in so far as all other virtues draw their sustenance and nourishment from it."[282] Moreover, just as legal or social justice directs all the other virtues to the common good, so charity is the general virtue that directs all the others to the divine good as its end.[283] Love for God and for our fellow man are rooted in man's very nature.[284] Thus in human society friendship among many people is a necessity.[285] And so sometimes a citizen motivated by charity will suffer damage to his own property for the commonweal.[286] If this is true of natural man, how much more true is it of the Christian, " with regard to the friendship of charity which is based on the fellowship of the gifts of grace."[287] The ideal Christian society is an

[279] Cf. Tawney, *op. cit.*, pp. 81, 191.

[280] Cf. *Summa Tkeol.* 1-11, 26, 4; 27, 8; 11-11, 188, *!t* ad 8.

[281] Alessandro Passerin d'Entreves, *Natural Law* (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1955), p. 45.

[282] *Ibid.* 11-11, !!8, 8 ad !!.

[283] *Ibid.* 11-11, 58, 6; Cf. U-II, 28, 8 ad s.

[284] *Ibid.* II-11, 26, 8; *Contra Gentiles* m, 117.

[285] *Contra Gentiles* m, 1!!5, 6. Cf. *In Etk.* I, !i!; *In Pol.* II, 4; VII, 8.

[286] *Summa Theol.* 11-11, 26, 8.

[287] *Ibid.*

organic unity of virtuous persons, not a mass of self-centered atoms.[288]

Nevertheless, the good which the charitable man wishes to another will be chiefly a spiritual one, for it is the divine good that is ultimately the object of charity.[289] Charity does not demand that we wish temporal goods to others, " except in relation to their eternal salvation and to the salvation of others."[290] Nonetheless, liberality and even the rich person's munificence are Christian virtues to govern economic choices of those who can afford it.[291]

Despite qualifications and opposition to monopolistic practices of his time, the moral principles of St. Thomas sound little like the "iron laws" that determine the actions of the nineteenth-century economic man. Consideration for the common good in prudential decisions, emphasis on principles of distributive justice and on legal regulation, plus social limitations to the right of private property also weigh heavily against identifying the just price of St. Thomas with the competitive price of the classical economists.

## *Market Price*

Perhaps to avoid conflict with underlying philosophical principles of liberal economics, some have made a more sweeping identification of the Thomistic just price with the more descriptive, empirical notion of current price.[292] Modern manuals of moral theology as a rule also accept this interpretation.[293] Some, however, allow more leeway for variations than did St. Thomas, and even permit the seller to profit from the exceptional utility that a good may have for a particular buyer, provided the buyer is willing and is free from the pressure of

••• *Contra Gentiles* III, 125, 6; Cf. *In Etk.* I, *In Pol.* II, 4; VII, 8.
••• *Summa Tkeol.* 11-11, 11, 4.
••• *Ibid.*
*"'"Ibid.* 11-11, qq. 117, U9.
[292] Vd. supra, pp.
••• Noldin, *op. cit.,* II, 518-lH9.

Actually, theological approval of the right of buyer and seller flexibly and freely to decide exchange price dates back to some later Schola_stics,namely St. Bemardine and St. Antoninus, who in tum attribute the opinion to Duns Scotus.[285]

We have seen that in principle the current market price is consistent with the statements of St. Thomas in the *Summa.*[296] As a matter of practice, he once used the market price of cloth at the Fair of Lagny as the criterion of just price for deciding a moral case in a letter to his fellow Dominican, James of Viterbo.[297]

Nevertheless, it may justly be asked whether the current price during any period of history would *ipso facto* be acceptable to St. Thomas as the determinant of just price.[298] The answer will depend partly upon historical fulfillment of institutional determinants of medieval market price as St. Thomas knew it. Unfortunately he has left little written opinion on the important economic institutions of his day.[299] However, from the extent of his interests and travels, the assumption that he was familiar with major economic institutions is not unwarranted.

The commercial revival that had become noticeable in the twelfth century was in full swing during the lifetime of St. Thomas.[300] Nevertheless, the agrarian economy that had dominated Western Europe since the end of the eighth century was still basic to the social structure of the thirteenth cen-

••• *Ibid.* pp. 519-20. Cf. Urban Adelman, trans. Heribert Jone, *Morol Theology* (Westminster: Newman, 1957), p. 210.

••• S. Bernardini Senensis, *Opera Omnia* (Quaracchi: Ad Claras Aquas Florentiae, 1950), Tomus I, Sermo 87, Art. 2, Cap. 1. Antoninus, Sanctus, 0. P., *Summa Theologica* (Verona, 1740), Vol. 4, Pars 2a, tit. Ius. c. 16, n. 2, col. *.255* cit. in Dempsey, *Functional Economy,* p. 429. Cf. Noonan, *op. cit.,* pp. 84-6. Tawney, *op. cit.,* pp.

••• Vd. supra, pp. 857 ff.

[297] *De Emptione et Venditione:* " Quia si mercatores Tusciae portantes pannos nundinis Latiniacl, ut eos usque ad tempus Resurrectionis expectent plus vendant pannos quam valeant secundum communem forum non est dubium esse usuram."

[298] Cf. O'Brien, *op. cit.,* p. 116.

••• Speltz, *op. cit.,* pp. 8-9.

[300] Pirenne, *op. :cit.,* p. 192.

tury.[301] The medieval commercial economy was developing in a society whose institutions were still those of a feudal agrarian economy.[302]

From an economic point of view the most characteristic institution of the earlier civilization was the large landed estate.[303] At the peak of their development the great medieval estates may have comprised 10,000 acres, as they strove to attain the greatest possible self-sufficiency.[304] Besides farming, each maintained its own workshops of weavers, wheelwrights, blacksmiths, brewers and others. In addition, each estate was a relatively independent civil society with its own laws and system of courts.[305] No attempt was made to produce a surplus beyond local needs and there was little exchange, trade or profit-making, although money never ceased to circulate throughout the feudal period.[306] Weights and measures, coinage, tolls and whatever markets there were were subject to regulation of kings and feudal powers.[307]

The revival of trade was observable in Venice as early as the end of the ninth century,[308] and by the beginning of the thirteenth century the traditional manorial organization had begun to decline in importance.[309] The transition accompanied a veritable "population explosion" on the continent with a corresponding growth in the number and size of towns.[310] Stimulated by the Crusades, the increase in trade was also accompanied by a rise in the use of money.[311]

[301] Speltz, *op. cit.*, p. 48. Pirenne states that urban inhabitants in the whole of Europe never exceeded ten per cent of the total population between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries (p. 59).

[302] Tawney, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-80.

[303] Pirenne, *op. cit.*, pp. 7 ff.

[304] *Ibid.* pp. 59-62.

[305] *Ibid.*

[306] *Ibid.* pp. 64, 68, 105.

[307] *Ibid.* p. 181.

[308] *Ibid.* p. 18.

[309] Francois Louis Ganshop, "Medieval Agrarian Society in Its Prime," *Cambridge Economic History of Europe from the Decline of the Roman Empire*, (2 vols.; Cambridge: The University Press, 1941-52), I, Chap. VII, 290-802. Cf. Pirenne, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

[310] Pirenne, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

[311] Speltz, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

The growth in urbanization saw a rise in specialization and division of labor. Even specialization in the cultivation of land was known.[812] Domestic workshops declined in importance and townspeople became the bakers, blacksmiths, cobblers, and pewterers of an entire area.[813] Trade and the use of money penetrated the disintegrating self-sufficiency of the manor, and complications began to arise over the exchange of free labor services for rents in kind or in money.su Fairs became one of the most striking features of the medieval economy until the end of the thirteenth century.[315] It was at these that the products of urban specialization and of the new trade, both domestic and international, met and were exchanged:

Undoubtedly, traces of the liberal, capitalistic spirit, with its emphasis on the profit motive. could be found in the Middle Ages, but this spirit is most evident only in the large commercial centers specializing in foreign trade and finance.[816] Rather, the transition to a commercial economy was characterized by a marked stability of institutions, customs and spirit. Stability as a condition of medieval life was not restricted to the monastery.

Economic stability is apparent first of all in the emphasis on legal regulation of economic life in the burgeoning cities.[817] The patriarchal spirit of the feudal estate is transferred to urban life in the form of strict legal control of profits, prices and industry.[318]

Without the agricultural self-sufficiency of the manorial estates, and with rapidly expanding population, an especially urgent need of the new economy was sufficient food.[819] It is no coincidence then that stability of food supply and prices was the special target for a legal regulation that was often minutely

[812] Pirenne, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-5.
[818] *Ibid.* p. 82.
[814] Ganshop, *loc. cit.*
[816] Pirenne, *op. cit.,* p. 97.
[816] Tawney, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-6; Pirenne, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-8.
[817] Pirenne, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-6.
[818] Tawney, *op. cit.*, p. 25; cf. Pirenne, *op. cit.*, p. 68; Fanfani, *op. cit.*, p. 158.
[819] Pirenne, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

detailed, " despotic and inquisitorial," even at the expense of individual liberty.[320] Private monopolistic practices such as forestalling and regrating were strictly prohibited, but social monopoly in the form of legal requisitioning and pricing of food from the surrounding countryside was common.[321] The appearance of price stability of staple foods was further encouraged by custom, so that it was not uncommon for the weight of a loaf of bread, rather than its sale price, to vary with the price of wheat.[322]

The condition of stability was not limited to local food markets, but extended to thorough regulation of industry in medieval towns.[323] The transfer of the patriarchal spirit of the feudal manor to urban industry was accomplished through legal regulation that became institutionalized in the familiar craft guilds of the Middle Ages.[324] The guilds were local affairs, and never included a majority of the medieval artisans.[325] Nevertheless, their economic organization was the same throughout Europe, and the control they exercised over the freedom of the crafts was comprehensive.[326]

••• *Ibid.* pp. 174-6.

""1 Ibid. p. 175. Cf. Dempsey, *Functional Economy*, p. 91, where there is reprinted a local medieval ordinance restricting free trade in food: ". . . if anyone shall be found to have bought fish to retail them between the towns of Suetnthen and Altdruphen ... the fish will be taken from him ..." (A. D. 1106).

••• Roy C. Cave and Herbert H. Coulson, *A Source Book for Medieval Economic History* (New York: Bruce, 1936), pp. 140-2. Cf. Pirenne, *op. cit.*, p. 175. Encouragement of price stability of food by legal regulation and custom dates back at least to the eighth century. Vd. the eighth-century Frankfort Capitulary and letter of Pope Gregory reprinted in Cave and Coulson, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-8; 130.

••• *Ibid.* p. 247: " 'The Consuls of Stendal ... have passed the following decree: I. If any of our burgesses should wish to practice the craft of weaving he ought to have one spindle or as many as two, and he should place them in his house . . . 4. But if anyone be .caught with false cloth, his cloth will be burned publicly, and verily, the author of the crime will amend according to justice.'" (Stendal, A. D. 1283).

••• Pirenne, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-3; Dempsey, *Functional Economy*, p. 87.

••• Dempsey, *Functional Economy*, p. 85. Cf. Tawney, *op. cit.*, p. 26, who says ,that the guilds in Paris at the end of the thirteenth century never included more tha11 5000 masters and 6000 to 7000 journeymen.

••• Pirenne, *op. cit.*, p. 185. Cf. detailed medieval regulations reprinted in Cave and Coulson, *op. cit.*, Section III, pp. 234-57.

The guilds operated as social monopolies that strove to protect the artisans from external competition and from competition among themselves, while opposing private monopolies of any kind.[327] Strict regulation of wages, hours, techniques and prices provided protection for craftsmen, but it may also have stifled initiative.[828] Consequently, not only was competition restricted, but there was little mobility of labor.[829] On the other hand, just as legal public regulation of markets in food strove to protect the consumer,[830] so the guild regulations were intended to contribute to the common good, especially through high standards of workmanship and protection against fraud.[831] " The ideal was stable conditions in a stable industry."[882]

Above all, the unifying element in the stability of the medieval economy during the ·revival of commerce in a predominantly agrarian society was a common faith and Christian philosophy that penetrated every walk of life.[833] There was economic rationalization in medieval life, but the rationalizing term was a personal God, who had destined man through Christ and His Church to a supernatural end in Himsel£.[834] Rationalization of every aspect of human life must be in terms of virtuous attainment of this end.[385] And rationalization of economic life, agrarian or commercial, through virtues of prudence, justice and charity, is simply a functional rationalization of the part to the whole.[336] The corruption of the guilds through their monopoly power, especially during the later Middle Ages, is sufficient evidence that the ideal of an economic *bonum*

••• Vd. documents in Cave in Coulson, *op. cit.,* p. !Ui4-5 concerning the regulated monopoly in dyeing at Douai in 1!Ui0 A. D. Cf. Pirenne, *op. cit.* pp. 185-6; Dempsey, *Functional Economy,* p. 189.

••• Pirenne, *op. cit.,* pp. 185-6.

••• Tawney, *op. cit.,* p. 26.

••• Pirenne, *op. cit.,* pp. 174-6.

[881] *Ibid.* p. 186. Cf. Dempsey, *Functional Economy,* p. 108; Tawney, *op. cit.,* p. 27.

••• Pirenne, *op. cit.,* p. 186. Dempsey, *Functional Economy,* p. 428.

••• Fanfani, *op. cit.,* pp. 148-4.

••• *Ibid.* p. 122. Cf. Dempsey, *Functional Economy,* p. *95;* Tawney, *op. cit.,* p. 81.

••• Fanfani, *op. cit.,* p. 122.

••• Tawney, *op. cit.,* p. 81.

*commune* was not always achieved.[387] However, the medieval social order, in the words of Pope Pius XI," although indeed not perfect or in all respects ideal, nevertheless, met in a certain measure the requirements of right reason, considering the conditions and needs of the time." [388]

Economic controls and " patriarchal " economic decisions of the Middle Ages may or may not have been arbitrary. [889] But given the widespread confidence in Christian moral principles, traditional dependence on authoritative regulation, and simply the influence of custom itself, it is not surprising that theologians should rationalize the social order as they knew it.[840] It is not surprising that St. Thomas should defend local economic self-sufficiency;[841] class status based on wealth,[842] and even slavery.[348] On the other hand, the very fact that St. Thomas did incorporate the new entrepreneur and his profits, the market price and its justice, into the framework of Christian moral philosophy earns him the title of " pioneer of a liberal intellectual movement." [344]

And yet it can still be asked whether or not St. Thomas would intend the market price to be a kind of automatic, impersonal determinant of just price in any society or in any economy. Some have inferred that the very necessity of

[887] *Ibid.* p. 27. Cf. O'Brien, *op. cit.,* p. 128; Pirenne, *op. cit.* p. 188 on unfair restraint of trade in medieval markets.

[888] Pius XI, *On ReconstTUCtingthe Social Order* (Washington, D. C.: National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1942), Par. 97, p. 85. Cf. Tawney, *op. cit.,* p. 28; Dempsey, *Functional Eco'TlO'lny,* p. 95; Fanfani, *op. cit.,* p. 158; Pirenne, *op. cit.,* p.176.

••• Pireune, *op. cit.,* p. 176, calls medieval control measures " most arbitrary," But cf. Dempsey, *op. cit.,* pp. 88-4.

••• Tawney, *op. cit.,* pp. 22, 81.

[841] *De Regimine* II, 8. Cf. Tawney, *op. cit.,* p. 88: "it was natural that Aquinas should laud the state which had small need of merchants because it could meet its needs from the produce of its own soil."

••• *In Pol.* V, 6: " Causa autem quare in statu optimatum plus attribuatur divitibus, est, quia in statu optimatum distributio bonorum, secundum dignitatem virtutis fit ... Sed divites plus attingunt ad vi.rtutem, vel videntur attingere, quam pauperes." Cf. Tawney, *op. cit.,* p. 22.

••• *Summa Theol.* I-II, 94, *5* ad 8.

au Tawney, *op. cit.,* p. 81.

exchange itself which he recognized, makes market price automatically rational, regardless of historical context.[8,5] The market price would achieve the objectivity of the just price from the very nature of exchange, just as human positive laws according to St. Thomas determine reasonably what has been left indeterminate by nature.[3,6] The market price thus becomes essentially a matter of common law.[3,7] It is true too that for Aquinas human law need not repress all vice and legislate only the most virtuous acts. Yet for the market price to be equated with a just law would there not have to be presupposed a degree of unanimity of virtuous inclination on the part of the buyers and sellers making up a given market, since their joint action determines the market price? [348]

Canonists of St. Thomas' time were in the habit of using the judgment of the " prudent " or " good and wise " man to determine the just price in particular cases.[849] Some who defend the market price determination of medieval just price claim that the function of the " good and wise " man in such judicial cases was to accurately estimate the current market price, thereby determining the just price.[350]

But is it not possible that the converse is more accurate, that prudent recognition of just value determined market price? [351] Is it not possible that Thomas accepted the market price of his own time, because he knew that the market was by and large made up of " good and wise " men who shared common Christian principles of prudence, justice and charity? Is it not possible that he accepted that market price because it could describe and reflect the influence of stable custom and law of a functional society whose end and goals were still by and large the same Christian ones as his own? Would he, like some

••• Sandoz, *op. cit.*, pp. !!89-91.

[8,6] *Ibid.*

••• *Ibid.*

••• Cf. Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

[3,···] Baldwin, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

suo *Ibid.*

[861] Cf. O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p. ISO.

moralists today, unquestionably accept as just prices the market prices of a society whose members are in no agreement on the nature of man, society, law and the very end of human life? [852] It is certainly possible that in the complexity of social life today market prices which at least achieve economic efficiency, even though in terms of questionable scales of personal preferences, may be preferable to fallible authoritative regulation.

Would St. Thomas be willing morally to equate these prices with the market prices of his own time, or with monopolistic but presumably prudent legal regulations of the medieval town? It may not be impossible to estimate the comparison he would make, at least in theory, between the administered prices and wages of today and those of the craft guilds. But would he consider, for example, even a competitive market price for contraceptives a "just" price? More generally, how much relationship would he see between interrelated prices of markets that supplied the necessities of life as he conceived them and the allocation of resources through the markets of an economy that, even with competitive efficiency, supplies hula hoops to satisfy the whims of an "aflluent society? [858] These are quesions for which no conclusive answer can yet be giVen.

## *Conclusion*

St. Thomas was a humanist, but he was a humanist because as a theologian he knew that man stands at the summit of a creation that is destined to give glory to its Creator, who is at once true and good, and the source of all truth and goodness. Whatever man ·is and has, his power, ambitions, wealth, law, society, happiness, all have meaning ultimately only in their ordered relationship to their Creator and last end. As a Christian St. Thomas knows that man's happiness consists ultimately

••• Dempsey, *Functional Economy,* pp. 95; lOS. Fanfani, *op. cit.,* p. 148.

••• John K. Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1958), Chapter X, " The Imperatives of Consumer Demand."

in the vision of God made possible by the merits of the Son of God become man. Hence the use that man makes of the lowliest of God's material creatures must finally bear an ordered relationship to the happiness that man seeks in his Creator and Redeemer. And this is attainable only through a life of personal virtue achieved at least in part in the context of social action.

The exchange value of the material goods man uses is not identical with their intrinsic worth, as labor theorists may have implied. But neither can exchange value be entirely separated or divorced from the values which it presupposes, as market price theorists may appear to hold. A merely descriptive conformity to empirical measures of want satisfaction and efficiency cannot in itself determine the justice of a price. Any attempt to define the just price must recognize the simultaneous sameness and difference of exchange value with respect to the values it serves. Market prices can certainly be a just measure of the exchange value of the goods man uses and may even participate in the character of law. But their justice ultimately rests on the virtuous inclination of the whole community of persons who collectively make up the market, however insignificant the decision of any one of them is in the determination of a market price. Ultimately the justice of prices rest.s on the justice of persons.

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# RECIPROCAL CAUSALITY:

## SoME APPLICATIONS IN

EVERY student in theology is acquainted with and may have been puzzled if not shocked by the endless disputes which divide different schools, hopelessly one should say, either side upholding its own position and talking a language which the other apparently fails to grasp. We may just recall the systems of grace, some explaining the efficacy of grace " ab intrinseco " and others ·" ab extrinseco." Disinterested witnesses of these parallel monologues which never become a true dialogue may well come to ask themselves: " To what purpose is this waste? " And often, it would seem, the reason of the deadlock lies in a failure to grasp some basic concepts, each side understanding them in its own way.

One such often misunderstood concept is the Thomistic idea of reciprocal causality and priority playing between constituents of some complex reality or happening. We find it, for example, in justification, between man's disposition and the grace infused, the two conditioning one another; [1] or in perfect contrition, between repentance and the charity that forms it.[2] Because of its recurring applications in theological questions which divide the schools, it may be worth while to consider it more closely and to examine some of its applications.

### *Popular Idea of Intercausality*

Perhaps we should recall here by way of introduction the popular idea of intercausality which is commonly admitted and understood somehow though rarely analysed. The point is that the paradox of reciprocal causality and priority (priority which is not of time but of nature) which looks baffling to some minds

[1] Cf. *Summa theol.* I-II, q. 118, a. 8 ad 4 *Sent.* d. 17, q. 1, a. 4; *De verit.* q. !!8, a. 7 and a. 8.

• Cf. v. g., *De verit.* q. !!8, a. 7 ad 1 (gratia for caritas).

when it is expressed in technical terms is taken for granted by common sense. It is by no means infrequent for people to speak of intercausality and to 'live ' it. The nations get the rulers they deserve and give themselves; children take after their parents who in tum are moulded by their children; teachers learn while teaching their students. In all these pairs of agents, nations-rulers, parents-children, teachers-students, both sides shape and are shaped by one another. And no one seems to be surprised at these facts of intercausality.

The not uncommon experience of what looks like a vicious circle, as when one cannot sleep because he is restless and is restless because he cannot sleep, does not seem to surprise the common man, nor to create any difficulty or point to an impossibility since the facts exist. Some sort of this circle causality is present in the most common events, wherever contraries are at stake. Darkness recedes from a room because the light enters, and light enters because darkness gives way. So does warmth expel the cold and the cold disappear to let warmth enter. If I dip my hand in a bowl of water, it is my hand that creates the vacuum which it fills and it is the existence of the vacuum which allows my hand to be there-mutual causality!

Such facts are literally countless. We find them wherever men live and work together in society, as they naturally do in keeping With their social nature: they shape one another while being moulded by one another. And if men are thus called to live in society, it is because none of them can attain his goal or perfection except by helping others and being helped by them. Contemporary thought loves to stress the intercausality between man's personal and social Personality calls for communion with other persons, and this communion supposes personality. On the level of Christian charity, a similar interdependence exists between personal grace-life and neighborly love, between personal spirituality and apostolic fruit-

[8] Cf. M. Nedoncelle, *La recipurocite des consciences* (Paris 1948); H. de Lubac, *Catholicisme. Aapects aociaux du dogme•* (Paris 1947), especially chapter 11, "Personne et societe," 288-805.

fulness. Christians grow in grace by helping others to do so, and they do so help others by growing in grace. Both practical experience of the life of the spirit and doctrinal refle:xioncon-firm the Christian belief in supernatural intercausality. [4]

Why then, we ask, should the idea arouse suspicion or create difficulty when it is formulated in abstract and technical terms? There seems to be only one way of answering the question in an effective manner, it is to go back to the very texts of St. Thomas. They should, for all their technicality and seeming abstractness, open the way to some insight into the intriguing reality of reciprocal causality.

### *St. Thomas' Texts*

We find the technical expression of mutual causality ex-plicitly in St. Thomas' own texts. It is true, he rarely deals with the question ex professo and perhaps never for its own sake but only on the occasion of some specific question; more generally he supposes it and applies it to particular instances. Yet we do find quite definite statements of the theory. They are mainly four, which we quote here in full according to their chronological order; the first two are the more developed and both of them are given in connection with justification; the last two are brief comments on Aristotle's Physics and Meta-physics.

4 *Sent. d. 17, q. 1, a;* 4, *resp. 1:*

"All priority of nature can in some way be reduced to the order of cause and effect; for principle and cause are the same thing. In the order of causality it happens that one and the same thing is both cause and effect, according to different genera of causality, of course, as is clear from 2 Phys. and *5* Metaphys. Walking, for example, is the efficient cause of good health, and good health is the final cause of walking. It is likewise for the relation that exists between matter and form.

• H. de Lubac, *loc. cit.;* also the section on " supernatural causality in favor of others " in our article "Merit and Prayer in the Life of Grace" in *The Thomist* XIX *(1959),* 477 ff.

In the line of material causality the matter is the cause of the form because it supports the form; and in the line of formal causality the form is cause of the matter because it confers on the matter actual existence.

"To the order of material causality pertains somehow whatever makes the matter a fit subject for a ·form, as for example the dispositions or the removal of obstacles. For that reason, in the genesis of things of nature, when the decay of one thing means the genesis of another because one form is introduced and another is expelled, then the removal of the previous form pertains to the order of material causality. And so it precedes by a priority of nature, in the line of material causality, the introduction of the new form; but in the line of formal causality the reverse order obtains.

" Because form and end and agent coincide in one numerically or specifically the same thing, for that reason, the introduction of the form is prior also in the line of efficient causality; the form thus introduced by a priority of nature is the similitude of the form by which the agent acts.

" Likewise is it in the line of final causality. Nature intends in the first place the introduction of the form, and to this effect it directs the .expulsion of whatever is incompatible with the intended form." [5]

[5] 4 *Sent.* d. 17, q. 1, a. 4, resp. 1, "... omnis prioritas secundum ordinem naturae aliquo modo reducitur ad ordinem causae et causati; quia principium et causa sunt idem. In causis autem contingit quod idem est causa et causatum, secundum diversum genus causae, ut patet in *II Phys.* et in *V Metaph.;* sicut ambulatio est causa efficiens sanationis, et sanatio est causa finalis ambulationis. Et similiter de habitudine quae est inter materiam et formam; quia secundum genus causae materialis materia est causa formae quasi sustentans ipsam, et forma est causa materiae quasi faciens earn esse actu, secundum genus formalis.

" Ex parte autem materialis se tenet secundum quamdam reductionem omne illud per quod materia efficitur propria huius formae, sicut dispositiones et remotiones impedimentorum. Et ideo in generatione naturali quando corruptio unius est generatio alterius per hoc quod forma una inducitur et alia expellitur, remotio formae praeexistentis se tenet ex parte causae materialis. Et ideo secundum ordinem causae materialis praecedit naturaliter introductionem alteriua formae, sed secundum ordinem causae formalis est e converso.

" Et quia forma et finis et agens incidunt in idem numero vel specie, ideo etiam

*De Veritate q. 28, a.* 7c.

" In each genus of causality the cause is prior by a priority of nature to the effect. It happens, however, that according to different genera of causality one and the same thing is both cause and effect in regard to one and the same term of reference. Thus purgation is the cause of health in the genus of efficient causality, but health is the cause of purgation in the genus of final causality. Similarly, the matter is in a way the cause of the form in so far as it sustains the form, and the form is in a way the cause of the matter in so far as it confers upon matter actual existence. Accordingly, nothing prevents a thing from prior and also posterior to another according to different genera of causality.

" What however must be called prior in every respect according to the order of nature is what is prior in the line of that cause which is prior in the very order of causality. This is the case with the final cause, which is called the cause of causes, because all the other causes receive from the final cause their status of causes. The efficient cause does not act except for the sake of the end, and by reason of the action of the efficient cause the form perfects the matter and the matter supports the form.

"And so we must say that, whenever one form is driven out of matter and another is introduced, the expulsion of the previous form is prior by a priority of nature in the line of material causality; for every disposition for a form is accounted as a material cause, and stripping the matter of the contrary form is, as it were, the disposition for the reception of the form. Besides, the subject or matter, as is said in 1 Physics, is distinguishable; we distinguish in it by our reason the substance of the subject and the privation which attaches to matter and subject.

"In the line of formal causality, however, the introduction

in ordine causae efficientis introductio formae prior est; quia forma prior introducta est similitudo formae agentis, per quam agit.

" Et similiter in ordine causae finalis: quia natura principaliter intendit introductionem formae, et ad bane ordinat expulsionem omne eius cum quo non potest stare formae intentio."

of the form, which by way ,of formal causality perfects the subject and drives out the contrary, is prior by a priority of nature. And because the form and the end coincide in numerically the same thing, and the form and the efficient cause coincide in what is specifically the same inasmuch as the form is the likeness of the agent, for this reason the introduction of the form is prior by a priority of nature in the line of efficient and :final causality. And from this it is evident, ,according to what was said above, that it is prior in every respect according to the order of nature." [6]

*In Physio. II, leot. 5, n.* 7

" Some things are cause of one another according to a different genus of causality. Work, for example, is the efficient cause of good health, and good health is the :final cause of work. For there is nothing against a thing being prior and posterior to another under different aspects. The end is prior (to the

[8] *De verit.* q. !l8, a. 7, c: "... in quolibet genere causarum, causa naturaliter prior est causato. Contingent autem secundum diversa genera causarum idem respectu eiusdem esse causam et causatum; sicut purgatio est causa sanitatis in genere causae efficientis, sanitas vero est causa purgationis secundum genus causae finalis; similiter materia causa est formae aliquo modo inquantam sustinet formam, et forma est aliquo modo causa materiae in quantum dat materiae esse actu. Et ideo nihil prohibet aliquid altero esse prius et posterius secundum diversum genus causae. Sed tamen illud est prius simpliciter dicendum ordine naturae, quod est prius secundum genus illius causae quae est prior in ratione causalitatis; sicut finis qui diciter causa causarum, quia a causa finali omnes aliae causae recipiunt quod sint causae; quia efficiens non agit nisi propter finem, et ex actione efficientis forma perficit materiam et materia sustinet formam.

" Sic ergo dicendum, quod quandocumque a materia una form expellitur et alia inducitur, expulsio formae praecedentis est prior naturaliter in ratione causae materialis: omnis enim dispositio ad formam reducitur ad causam materialem: denudatio autem materiae a forma contraria est quaedam dispositio ad formae susceptionem. Subiectum etiam, id est materia, ut dicitur in libro *I Phya.*, numerabilis est: numeratur enim secundum rationem, in quantum in eo praeter subiecti substantiam invenitur privatio, quae se tenet ex parte materiae et subiecti. Sed in ratione causae formalis prior est naturaliter introductio formae; quae formaliter perficit subiectum, et expellit contrarium. Ei quia forma et finis in idem numero incidunt, forma vero et efficiens in idem specie, inquantum forma est similitudo agentis; ideo formae introductio est prior naturaliter secundum ordinem causae efficientis et finalis: et ex hoc patet, secundum praedicta, quod ordine naturae sit simpliciter prior."

agent) as to its idea, but it is posterior to him in existence. The case of the agent is the reverse. Likewise the form is prior to matter under the aspect of completing, and the matter is prior to the form, in the case of all things which are moved from potency to act, by a priority of becoming and of time." [7]

*In Metaphys. V, lect. 2, n. 775*

"We should know that, of the four mentioned causes, two are mutually related, and the other two also. The agent and the end are mutually related; the agent is the principle of movement, the end is its term. Likewise are matter and form. The form gives being, the matter receives it.

" The agent is cause of the end, and the end is cause of the agent. The agent is cause of the end with regard to being, because by his action the agent brings about the existence of the end. The end is cause of the agent, not with regard to his existence, but with regard to his causality. For the agent is cause inasmuch as he acts, and he acts only because of the end. So it is from the end that he draws his causality.

" The form and the matter are cause of one another with regard to existence. The form is cause of the matter inasmuch as it confers on matter actual existence. The matter is cause of the ·form inasmuch as it supports the form. These two are cause of one another either without any qualification or in some respect only. The substantial form confers existence on its matter without qualification; an accidental form does so in some respect only insofar as it is a form. So also, the matter at times supports the form, not with regard to existence without qualification, but only insofar as it is the form of this

[7] *In Physic. 11,* lect. *5,* n. 7: "... quaedam sibi invicem sunt causae secundum diversam speciem causae; sicut laborare est causa efficiens bonae habitudinis, bona autem habitudo est causa finalis laboris. Nihil enim prohibet aliquid esse prius et posterius altero secundum diversas rationes: finis enim est prius secundum rationem, sed posterius in esse; agens autem e converso. Et similiter forma est prior quam materia secundum rationem complementi; materia autem est prius quam forma generatione et tempore in omni quod movetur de potentia ad actum."

individual and exists in it; this is the case of the human body with regard to the rational soul." [8]

From these basic texts we gather the following points, reserving the explanation of particular details or difficulties for further analysis:

1) There exist a mutual causality and priority by which one and the same thing is with regard to another thmg both cause and effect, or prior and posterior according to an order of nature, not of time, and of course under different aspects.

2) This mutual causality or priority plays between two pairs of causes in a different manner: it exists between the agent and the end, or the efficient and the final cause, and between the form and the matter, or the formal and the material cause (and also· between what are formal and material cause by reduction or analogically). The difference between these two kinds of reciprocal causality is the following. The end moves the agent to act not as it exists in reality but as it is intended by the agent, and the agent so moved to act effects or attains the end in actual reality. The priority of the end to the agent is one of intention, its posteriority to the agent is one in objective reality; there is a succession even in time between the four moments of this intercausality; the end as intended moves the agent; the agent is moved to act; the agent acts;

[8] *In Metaph. V*, lect. 2, n. 775: "... cum sint quattuor causae superius positae, e:uum duae sibiinvicem correspondent, et aliae duae similiter. Nam efficiens et finis sibi correspondent invicem, quia efficiens est principium motus, finis autem terminus. Et similiter materia et forma; nam forma dat esse, materia autem recipit. Est igitur efficiens causa finis, finis autem causa efficientis. Efficiens est causa finis quantum ad esse quidem, quia movendo perducit efficiens ad hoc quod sit finis. Finis autem est causa efficientis non quantum ad esse, sed quantum ad rationem causalitatis. Nam efficiens est causa inquantum agit: non P,git nisi causa· finis. Unde ex fine habet suam causalitatem efficiens. Forma autem et materia sibiinvicem causae sunt quantum ad esse. Forma quidem materiae inquantum dat ei esse actu: materia vero formae inquantum sustinet ipsam. Dico autem utrumque horum sibiinvicem esse causam essendi vel simpliciter vel secundum quid. Nam forma substantialis dat esse materiae simpliciter. Forma autem accidentalis secundum quid, prout forma est. Materia etiam quandoque non sustentat formam secundum esse simpliciter, sed secundum quod est forma huius, habens esse in hoc, sicut se habet corpus humanum ad animam rationalem."

the end is effected-the fourth moment is in no way prior to the second or the third, nor is the first in any way posterior to the second or third. Priority and posteriority in this case are not merely of nature but also of time, and so are not reversible. Not so is the intercausality of matter and form (and of their equivalents). Form and matter cause one another and are prior and posterior to one another as they exist in the objective order of things: the form perfects the matter, the matter sustains the form; their mutual priority and posterity is one of nature only.- In this study we shall confine our consideration mainly to the intercausality of formal and material causes.[9]

3) Form, end and agent coincide in some manner. In every change or mutation, when one form is expelled from and another is introduced into a matter, the end moves the agent to act and the agent by acting introduces the new form which is the likeness of his own form, the one according to which he is in act.[10] The intercausality between form and matter may therefore be mistaken for an intercausality between efficient cause and material cause. In reality intercausality plays between the form and the matter.

4) The mutual causality between the form and the matter presupposes the efficient causality of the agent moved by the end.[11] But there is no mutual causality and priority between the agent as such and the effect of his action. In the line of efficient causality the effect produced (or the end actually effected or

[9] The reason for leaving aside here the intercausality between agent and end is that it does not refer directly to the applications of mutual causality in theology which we intend studying. Only indirectly does it do so insofar as " form, end and agent coincide": the agent is moved by the end he intends, and this is the communication of his form to the subject or matter; thus the new form introduced into the matter is numerically identical with the end intended, and specifically identical with the form of the agent.

[10] Thus it appears that the causality of the end and that of the agent result in one and the same form which is introduced into j;he matter.

[11] *In Metaph. V,* lect. 8, n. "Efficiens (causa) est causa causalitatis et materiae et formae. Nam facit per suum motum materiam esse susceptivam formae, et formam inesse materiae."

attained) is posterior to its cause in every respect. Nor is the causality of the form with regard to the matter in any way an efficient causality, it is formal causality; just as the causality of the matter with regard to the form is not the passivity corresponding to efficient causality, it is material causality.[12]

With these points in mind we now come to the analysis of the technical concept of reciprocal causality as it obtains between form and matter and their analogical equivalents.

### *Technical Idea of Mutual Causality*

*Its Proper Place.-For* a proper understanding of the technical idea of mutual causality it is imperative first of all to remember and to grasp correctly its proper place in the field of causality, namely, in connection with the four causes. The point is this: mutual causality or priority properly exists only between the formal and the material causes, that is, between the formal and material, perfective and perfectible, active and passive, intrinsic principles of being. It does not apply to efficient causality as such, that is, in the relation between the agent and the effect (which is the end attained or realized).[13] Of matter and form, and of their analogical equivalents, mutual causality or priority means to say that in one respect the form is prior to and cause of the matter, and in another aspect the matter is prior to and cause of the form.

Between the efficient cause and its effect, we said, there is no such mutual causality. This must be understood in the strict meaning of the terms agent and effect. The agent or efficient cause as such is in every respect prior to and cause of the effect as such, and the effect as such is in no way prior to or cause of the agent. Only to the extent that an agent or efficient cause

[12] This essential difference between formal-material causality on the one hand, and efficient causality on the other is perhaps the most important clue to an understanding of the idea of mutual causality. St. Thomas states the difference in definite terms; cf. v. g., *De verit.* q. 28, a. 7, ad 5 (for formal causality), and *ibid.* a. 8, ad 5 in contrar. (for material causality).

[31] *Cf.* above p. 389, second point: the end effected is in no way prior to or cause of the action of the agent.

is not purely efficient but also *patient* or being perfected and gaining from its action on another is it in this respect posterior to and ' caused ' by this other. In that case' the effect is not purely effect, it is also perfecting the agent-patient, and not merely being perfected; it is also cause of and prior to the agent-patient. To that extent, therefore, insofar as the agent acquires a new form from another (from the effect) on which he acts, and the effect re-acts on or communicates to the agent a new form, there is place for an intercausality in the meeting between agent and effect. Actually, St. Thomas notes [14] this is the case of all created agents, all of them being at all times of their activity both agent and patient; God alone is pure Act and pure agent. But the intercausality here noted does not exist between the agent as such and the effect as such, but between the agent as he is disposed to acquire a new perfection, and the effect as it is reacting on the agent and communicating him a new form.

Between the final cause and the agent who strives for it, we noted above after St. Thomas, there exists another kind of mutual causality which does not include reversibility, and so does not coincide with the reciprocal causality of form and matter. No need therefore to consider it any further.

The proper *locus,* then, of mutual causality or reciprocal causal influence and priority, is found wherever act and potency, form and matter; are components of a happening or a reality, whenever two component principles of being form a unit per se and stand to each other in the relation of perfective and perfectible element. In every such case the perfective principle, call it act or form, is prior to the perfectible principle, call it potency or matter, in the line of formal causality and posterior to it or in a position of dependence in the line of dispositive or material causality. The perfectible principle, in its turn, potency or matter, is prior to the perfective principle, act or form, in the

"Cf. *Summa theol.* I, q. 60, a. 1, ad *it,* "... omnia quae sunt in toto mundo aguntur ab aliquo, praeter primum agens, quod ita agit quod nullo modo ab alio agitur."

line of dispositive causality (unless it provides the required disposition, the perfeCtive principle would be unable to exert its proper causality), but it is posterior to or dependent on it in the line of formal causality (it can exert its proper causality only because the perfective principle by its own causality enables it to do so).

*Its Proper Causality.-To* preclude an all too easy misunderstanding, the proper causality of each of the two concurring principles should be noted. The formal and material, perfective and perfectible, principles of a thing do not, in the causality that is proper to them in their mutual union, produce any effect by way of efficiency. They are not efficient causes. No, the proper causality of each of these principles of being is to unite itself and being united to one another in order to constitute a *tertium quid.* They support each other, allow or cause each other to be what they are and to ' act ' accordingly. The form allows the matter to be matter, and the matter allows the form to be form; but the form does not ' effect ' anything new in the matter, it just unites itself to the matter and so is what it is, namely, perfection of the matter, and it allows the matter to be what it is, namely, support of the form. Just so the matter, by being the support of the form, does not effect anything new in the form, it just is united to the form and so is what it is and allows the form to be what it is.[15]

This remark about the proper causality of form and matter (and of their analogical equivalents; formal and material elements, whether accidental or substantial) applies to every case of such union, and in both stages of its history, namely, whether *in fieri,* and then we speak of change or mutation or of the introduction of a form (or act or perfection) in a subject

[16] When St. Thomas says that the form gives to the matter actual existence (" dat materiae esse actu," *De verit.* q. itS, a. 7 c), he does not mean to say that it does so by way of efficient causality; he explicitly distinguishes the two kinds of giving actual existence, as is aF·=· _!.Lt from the context, and also from *IV Sent.,* d. 17, q. 1, a. 4, resp. I, "forma est causa materiae quasi faciens earn esse actu, secundum genus causae formalis."

(matter or potency) , or *in facto esse,* and then we have to deal with a composite being which has actual existence.

But every such union of matter and form supposes an efficient cause that effects the union or brings it .about. Two distinct and separate principles of being do not unite of themselves, they need to be united by an agent (this does not suppose that they preexist to their union) .[16] The union is the effect of the agent in the line of efficient causality. As noted above, the action of the agent who effectively causes the union of the form with the matter or the introduction of a new form in a subject consists in communicating the likeneS'S of his own form. It is between this communicated form and the disposition of the subject that there is room for mutual causality, not however between the subject that receives the form and the agent which is the extrinsic cause of the change.

These few considerations should suffice to focus_ the idea of reciprocal causality and to demarcate its field which is very large indeed. It obtains in every created activity and in every composite being. No wonder its applications in theology are many.

### *Change and Mutual Causality*

Before coming to specific applications we must first briefly explain, in the light of what ·was said above, the well-known Thomistic principle which rules every change or gain of some new form or perfection: the last disposition of a subject for a new form is caused by the form itself and in its turn causes the introduction of the form.[17] It is the case of reciprocal causality between a form *in fieri* or being infused into a subject and the disposition for it or the material causality of the subject

[18] *Cf.-Summa theol.* I, q. *65,* a. 1, c: "Si ... in aliquo uniuntur, necesse est huius unionis causam esse aliquam; non enim diversa secundum se uniuntur."

[17] Cf. *Summa theol.* I-ll, q. US, a. 8, ad !!, "dispositio subiecti praecedit susceptionem ordine naturae; sequitur tlimen actionem agentis, per quam ipsum subiectum disponitur." *De verit.* q. 28, a. 8, c, "de dispositione quae est necessitas ad formam"; compare *In Metaph.* V, lect. 2, n. 767, "ultimam dispositionem ad quam ·sequitur de necessitate forma."

that acquires the form. This can be expressed paradoxically by saying: the new form is there because the subject is disposed for it, and the subject is disposed because the form is there; or more technically: from the angle of formal or perfecting causality the presence of the form is first and is cause of the disposition of the subject for itself, and from the angle of material or dispositive causality the disposition of the subject is first and cause of the presence of the form.

First of all we should note the precise point at which reciprocal causality intervenes, namely, at the instant in which the change or the acquisition of the new form takes place, that change itself being instantaneous (even when preceded by a gradual preparation).[18] Reciprocal causality does not intervene at any stage in the gradual approach to the change. It is true, a change, whether in physical things or in human and moral realities, is generally prepared in a gradual way, the subject being gradually or step by step disposed for the new form. And there may be any number of more or less remote or proximate dispositions arising in the course of this gradual preparation. At none of these do reciprocal causality and priority between form and disposition obtain. It is only between the last or ultimate disposition of the subject for a form-" ultimate " meaning precisely the disposition which necessitates, or is of necessity together with, the presence of the new form-and the new form that is being gained by the subject which changes, that the reciprocal causality and priority find a place.[19]

Then it should be repeated here: this mutual causality does not pertain to efficiency.[20] Disposition and. form are not efficient causes and (efficiently) produced effects of one another. It is true, the change supposes an agent or efficient cause which determines the passing over from potential to actual change.

[18] Cf. *St111111ma theol.* I-ll, q. 118, a. 7 c.

[19] Cf. *De verit.* q. !!8, a. 8 c.

[20] Cf. above n. 1!!. *De verit.* q. !!8, a. 7 c, "gratia non per aliquam operationem est causa remissionis culpae, sed per informationem subiecti • . ."; *ibid.* ad *6* in contr., " dispositio non facit aliquid ad formam effective, sed materialiter tantum, in quantum per dispositionem materia efficitur congrua ad receptionem formae."

But as noted above, it is not between agent and effect that reciprocal causality finds place but only between disposition and form. The form, communicated by the agent, causes the disposition by way of formal causality, that is, by being the perfecting principle of the subject. And the disposition causes the presence of the form by way of material causality, that is, by being the support of the perfecting principle or form. Both form and disposition determine or cause the change, each in its own way, not however as efficient cause but (in conjunction with the causal influx of the agent which is the efficient cause) as formal and as dispositive or material cause.[21]

There may be a difficulty in conceiving (or imagining) this kind of causality which is not efficient causality. Perhaps our direct concept of a cause calls up the idea of an agent who touches and moves an object and so determines a change in that object.[22] But neither form nor disposition are causes in that sense; they do not ' move ' one another in the sense of producing an effect by way of efficiency. They cause one another by being what they are, both of them and their conjunction being produced by way of efficiency by an extrinsic agent. Form and disposition are intrinsic causes of the change, and only so can they, each in its own manner and under a particular aspect, be cause and effect of the other. The form causes the disposition by being there, and the disposition in turn causes the presence of the form by being there. The presence of both form and disposition is the effect produced by the efficient action of the agent or efficient cause.[28]

The difficulty looks greater still when the subject of the change is a free person and the disposition for the new form is

[21] Therefore, the causality proper to form and matter is not to produce but to unite, and only in that manner does the form give existence to the matter and the matter support the form.

[••] This is all the more so of the 'scientific notion of cause (=antecedent) as opposed to the metaphysical concept of cause (' infiuens esse,' ' movens ' in the sense of causing to pass from potency to act). Cf. *In Metapk. V* ledt. 2, n. 765, " unde prius est principium permutationis et quietis; et haec causa movens vel efficiens."

[••] Cf. above n. 11.

his free act.[24] Then we spontaneously conceive this free disposition as causing the presence of the new form by way of efficient causality. We find it hard and paradoxical to say that this free disposition or free act has only a dispositive or material causality with regard to the form. Yet, that is what is implied in saying that our free act is the disposition for the new form.

Another difficulty comes from the fact that the introduction of the new form in the subject supposes the efficient causality of the agent who communicates his form to the subject acquiring it, and thus the formal causality of the form is of necessity linked with the efficient causality of the agent.[25] We may fail to distinguish these two kinds of causal influence that go into the making of the change. And so we may think only of the efficiency that introduces the form into the subject at the risk of conceiving the causality of the form as efficiency and not as intrinsic perfective causality. When that happens in the case of the free disposition of the subject, then the problem arises of how the agent can move the free subject without undoing its freedom or self-determination. In reality we then overlook that the agent is only the extrinsic efficient cause of the change and produces both form and disposition without entering into composition with the subject, the union or composition existing only between form and disposition.[26] The form it is that causes the disposition by way of intrinsic formal cause of the change, that is, it enables the free disposition to be what it is, just as it is the free disposition which enables the form to exist by allowing it to perfect or to enter into composition with it. The proper causality of form and disposition consists in giving being to one another by receiving being from one another, not however by giving being in the manner of efficient causes, but by allowing the causal influence

•• This is the case in justification; cf. *Summa theol.* I-II, q. llS, a. 4 and a. *5;* and compare Trent, decree on justification, chapter 7, "per voluntariam susceptionem gratiae" (Denzinger, *Enchiridion,* n. 799).

•• Cf. *De verit.* q. fl8, a. 7 c; "ex actione efficientis forma perficit materiam ...; forma vero et efficiens in idem specie (incidunt), inquantum forma est similitudo agentis "; cf. *Summa theol.* I-II, q. !l6, a. 1, c, "agens naturale ... dat formam."

•• Cf. above n. 11.

of the efficient cause. Their proper causality consists in uniting themselves and being united to one another.

This analysis should suffice to ' prove ' reciprocal causality between form and disposition in every fact of mutation or change. If change means acquisition by the subject of a new form or perfection, if no subject can acquire a new form without being properly disposed for it (since perfectible and perfection as such are of necessity in due proportion to one another) , if thus form and disposition of the subject condition one another: then in every mutation, whatever be the agent or efficient cause that brings it about, there exists between the intrinsic causes of the change, namely, the new form and the disposition of the subject, the mutual conditioning that involves mutal causality and priority of the one with regard to the other. Reciprocal causality and priority are therefore necessary aspects of every mutation.

When a change is considered no longer *in fieri* but *in facto esse*, the mutual causality and priority between the disposition of the subject and the form it now possesses continue as a permanent or habitual interaction, such as exists between the component elements of every composite being. What St. Thomas says of matter and form in the proper sense of the terms, namely, that they are cause of one another, [27] (v. g., body and soul, or rather soul and ' first matter ') , applies proportionately to the components of every substance or every accident (habitus, activity, state) in which a perfective and perfectible principle, or formal and material element, (in an analogical sense) can be distinguished. The two elements support or cause one another each in its own manner of causality. [28] But here there is no longer the difficulty of reciprocal priority (of nature, not of time) which in the analysis of a mutation *in fieri* baflles so many who overlook the proper manner· of formal and material or dispositive causality.

[27] *In Metaph.*, V, lect. !l, n. 778, "Forma autem et materia sibiinvicem causae sunt quantum ad esse."

[28] *Ibid.*, "Forma quidem (est causa) materiae inquantum dat ei esse in actu; materiae vero formae in quantum sustentat ipsam."

*Some Applicaticms*

It remains now to illustrate these abstract considerations by some applications of the idea of reciprocal causality and priority in theology. They are many in practically every section· of speculative theology. We propose here to analyse in some detail two well-known examples, the theology of original justice (and of its privation, original sin), and that of justification (with its concomitant, perfect contrition) . After that we may briefly indicate some more examples, just stating the cases. Lastly, by way of suggestion for a dialogue between different theological systems, we will attempt to apply the concept of mutual causality to the theology of the causality of the sacraments, and to that of grace and human freedom.

*Original Justice (and Original Sin)*

We may call original justice the complex of supernatural and preternatural gifts bestowed on Adam as the fountainhead of mankind, and distinguish in it a formal element, sanctifying grace, and a material element, the preternatural gifts.[29] Between these two elements there exists a reciprocal causality and priority, after the analogy of that which exists between matter and form, both as we consider original justice in Adam, and its transmission to his posterity.

In Adam the preternatural gifts were the disposition of his nature for sanctifying grace, gift to the persons.[30] Actually these gifts were not needed as a disposition for grace in Adam as a person; grace could exist in him without them, it did so in fact if he recovered grace after the fall, as is commonly believed. They were needed because original justice was not

•• On the question whether, in St. Thomas' theology, original justice (and original sin) includes sanctifying grace (and privation of sanctifying grace) or not, cf. our article "Original Sin, Privation of Original Justice," in *The Thomist* XVll, (1954), 469-509. As noted there, p. 504, n. 118, in either of the positions the between sanctifying grace and the preternatural gifts obtains. Cf. also "Original Justice and Adam's Sin" in *The Clergy MontJ..ly* XXIV (1960), 12-20, especially p.14.

[8] Cf. *De Malo,* q. 5. a. 1, c, "dispositio quaedam."

only his personal but also a social endowment, or as St. Thomas says, an accident to the specific nature to be passed on with nature to Adam's posterity.[81] They were, in Adam the fountainhead of the race, prior to and cause of sanctifying grace by way of material causality, that is, as a disposition of his nature for the gift of sanctifying grace (he could not receive this, as head of mankind, unless he possessed the preternatural gifts); and from the angle of formal causality, or as perfective element and cause, sanctifying grace was prior to and cause of the preternatural gifts;[82] these gifts were in fact an analogical sharing of his whole nature in the spiritualizing or divinizing gift of grace. The two, sanctifying grace and preternatural gifts, were cause of one another, not in the line of efficient causality-God Himself was the efficient cause of both. He both infusing sanctifying grace and the disposition of Adam's nature for sanctifying grace. But as intrinsic causes of original justice they caused one another by being what they are. Sanctifying grace by being the· divinizing gift in Adam, fountainhead of mankind, caused, . by way of perfecting or formal element, the preternatural gifts; and these ·in tum ' caused ' sanctifying grace by being its support or nature's disposition for grace. They were prior to and cause of sanctifying grace in the line of dispositive and material causality. The two were of necessity together in the supematuralization of the fountainhead of mankind; neither of the two could exist without the other if Adam was to be fountainhead of both nature and grace for all his posterity ,[88] This necessary connection is, in St. Thomas' theology of original justice, the hinge of its organic structure both *in facto esse* and *in fieri* or in its transmission.

The transmission was to be a complex happening (actually it never did take place). Adam could not have transmitted sanctifying grace which is God's personal gift to each person. He could only and would have passed on together with nature

[81] *Summa theol.* I, q. 100, a. 1, c, "accidents naturae speciei."
[82] *Ibid.,* " Radix iustitiae originalis. . . ."
[83] *Ibid.,* I, q. *95,* a. 1, c; cf. *ap. cit.,* q. 100, a. 1 ad !il.

nature's disposition for grace, that is, the preternatural gifts which properly speaking were the specific accident of nature. But because these gifts cannot exist without sanctifying grace, their transmission could not have happened without God infusing sanctifying grace at the same moment.[34] Similarly the transmission of human nature itself is a complex happening. The parents transmit only the matter disposed for the infusion of the soul which is created by God, while this disposition itself depends on or is caused by the soul (in the line of formal causality). Accordingly, as in the order of natural generation, the causality of the human parents and that of the First Cause, the Creator, are inseparably linked and, in their respective effects, condition one another-God's transcendency being perfectly safeguarded; so also in the transmission of original justice, the causality of Adam transmitting a nature disposed for grace, and that of God infusing sanctifying grace, are inseparably linked in their respective effects. God infuses sanctifying grace because the nature transmitted by Adam is disposed for it, and this nature is disposed for grace because God infuses grace. The paradox of mutual causality and priority! Thus in the genesis of original justice in Adam's children, the presence of the preternatural gifts in the nature which Adam transmits is prior to and cause of the presence of sanctifying grace in the line of dispositive or material causality; and in the line of formal causality, the infusion of sanctifying grace by God is prior to and cause of the preternatural gifts as nature's last disposition for grace. The two exist simultaneously and are together of necessity. Neither of these causa1ities is efficient causality. They presuppose a twofold efficient causality: that of Adam providing the material part of a nature disposed for grace by the preternatural gifts; that of God infusing grace. But the mutual causality does not exist between these two (though they cannot exist without one another) , but between their effects. Form, end and agent, St. Thomas says, coincide in the form

•• Cf. *Ibid.*, I, q. 100, a. I, c and ad 2, where St. Thomas uses the comparison with man's natural generation; and *Clergy Mcmtbly*, art. cit., 15 fl'.

and disposition produced, and it is the form and the disposition that enter into mutual causality with one another.[85] In the line of formal and material causality the presence of grace and that of the preternatural gifts in Adam's posterity are cause of one another.

That is what should have been, and would have been but for Adam's sin. Actually the fallen Adam passes on to his posterity original sin which is the privation of original justice. Here also we could and should distinguish the privation of the formal element of original justice or of sanctifying. grace, and the privation of its material element or of the preternatural gifts which is the indisposition of nature for grace.[86] Adam now transmits a nature deprived of the preternatural gifts and so indisposed for grace; this indisposition makes it impossible for God, in keeping with His free ordinance concerning our supernatural elevation to infuse sanctifying grace. The privation of the preternatural gifts and that of sanctifying grace in Adam's posterity condition each other. Because nature is indisposed ·for grace, grace is not infused; and because grace is not infused, nature is indisposed for it. We have here the negative print of what was to happen in the transmission of original justice. As there is question only of privations, we caa hardly speak of mutual causality, when there is no *positive* causality; there is only a mutual priority of nature (not of time, evidently) between the privation of the preternatural gifts which is nature's indisposition for grace, and the privation of sanctifying grace which is the reason for nature's indisposition.

*Justification (and Contrition)*

Justification is the change-over of a sinner from the state of (mortal) sin or of injustice to the state of justice or grace.

•• Cf. the texts quoted above n. 5 and n. 6, and also n. 9.

•• The remark made above n. 29 applies here also. It is immaterial with regard to reciprocal priority and posteriority of the privation of sanctifying grace and the privation of the preternatural gifts in the transmission of original sin, whether the connection between the two be conceived as that of formal and material elements, or as that of privation in the person and privation in the nature.

Taken in the active sense of the word, it designates God's action which forgives sin and infuses grace. In the passive sense of the term it means the change in the sinner who is forgiven his sins and receives sanctifying grace. This change-over supposes his free cooperation, namely, the voluntary acceptance of grace and gifts, as Trent was to say, or, as St. Thomas said, a movement of the free will against sin and towards God.[37]

In this complex and mysterious happening there is a threefold mutual causality at play.[38] First of all, between the part of God who infuses grace (and remits sin) or justification in the active sense, and the part of the sinner who freely accepts grace (passive justification); the two condition each other.[39] We must locate exactly this reciprocal causality, for this does not exist precisely between God's efficient causality producing and infusing grace, and man's 'passive' receiving grace. Mutual causality, we have said above[40] is not found in connection with

•• Cf. above n. 24.

[88] We may note here that it is in connection with his theology of justification that St. Thomas gave his most detailed exposition of the idea of mutual causality, in the *Commentary* on the Sentences and in the *De veritate;* cf. above n. 5 and n. 6. In the *Summa theol.* the theory is not explicitly proposed but supposed throughout, especially in I-ll, q. liS, a. 7 and a. 8; one should say, however, that there is less emphasis on it in the *Summa.* Why is this so? If the interpretation proposed by Fr. H. Rouillard, S. J. in *Conversion et grace chez S. Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: 1944) is acceptable, and there is in St. Thomas' conception of grace a shift from the idea of grace as habitus or form to that of grace as divine motion (cf. *·op. cit.* p. 166) or from a static to a more dynamic notion of grace, then the absence of emphasis on reciprocal causality (as between form and disposition to form, still mentioned however in a. 7, c and in ad S, ad 4 and ad 5) is not surprising. We should say that the more or less explicit use of the idea of mutual causality here is a clear indication that in St. Thomas' mind it applies also to grace conceived as motion or dynamically; cf. especially *loc. cit.* a. S, "... ita infund,it donum gratiae sanctificantis, quod etiam simul cum hoc movet liberum arbitrium ad donum accipiendum .... "

•• Cf. *IV Sent.* d. 17, q. 1, a. S, sol. *!l,* "oportet quod infusio gratiae sanctificantis sit secundum talem modum qui voluntati competat . . . Et -ideo . . . requiritur motus liberi arbitrii ..."; a. 4, sol. *!l,* "... motus (liberi arbitrii) qui sunt in iustificatione, sunt quasi dispositio ultima ad gratiae susceptionem, suo modo praecedunt quidem in via causalitatis materialis, sed sequuntur in via causae formalis "; *Summa theol.,* 1-11, q. liS, a. 7, "... Deus ad hoc quod infundat gratiam animae, non requirit aliquarn dispositionem nisi quam ipse facit ..."; a. S, "... movet liberum arbitrium ad donum gratiae acceptandum. . . ."

•• Cf. above n. IS.

efficient causality and its effect, but with formal and material or dispositive causality. In the aspect of justification we are considering, the two causalities which are in the field are that of grace as form or perfection of the justified sinner, and that of the sinner's disposition for this form which is his free acceptance of grace.[41] Both of these are considered here *in fieri,* namely, at the moment of the change-over which is justification, but this *fieri* is instantaneous.[42] Whatever precedes justification as its gradual preparation does not come into consideration here. Now, between grace that is being infused as a form and man's acceptance of it there exists a reciprocal causality. Grace is infused or the form is there, because man accepts it or is disposed for it (this is the ultimate disposition necessitating the presence of the form); and man is so disposed for the form of grace, or accepts it, because grace is there. Grace causes man's free acceptance by way of formal causality (not of efficient causality), and man's disposition or free acceptance causes the presence or infusion of grace. The two are together of necessity and condition each other. (If we consider God's efficient causality in justification, we must say that He causes both grace and disposition for grace simultaneously;[43] there should be no particular difficulty for saying so from the fact that this disposition is man's free act; this also is caused and supernaturalized by God).

A second place of reciprocal causality in justification lies between remission of sin and infusion of grace, considered not from the side of the divine efficient causality remitting sin and infusing grace (with the corresponding' passion' of the sinner),

[41] Cf. *IV Sent.* d. 17, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 2 (text quoted above n. 89), and the comparison with natural generation, "secundum ordinem naturae utrumque (dispositio quae est necessitas, et generatio ad formam) est prius altero aliquo modo."

[42] *Ibid.,* a. 5, sol. 8: "iustificatio non est successiva sed subita "; *De verit.* q. 28, a. 9, "iustificatio impii est in instanti "; *Summa tkeol.,* I-II, q. 118, a. 7, c: "iustificatio impii fit a Deo in instanti."

[43] *Summa theol.,* I-II, q. 118, a. 7: "Facit autem (Deus) huiusmodi dispositionem sufficientem ad susceptionem gratiae quandoque quidem subito, quandoque autem successive.... "

but rather as absence of sin and presence of grace." (Sin itself is not a pure absence but a privation of grace and so includes an objective reason for the absence of grace, namely, an indisposition.) [45] Those two condition each other as the negative and positive side of a change, that is, as the decay of one form and the' genesis' of another.' [6] Sin is forgiven because grace is infused; and grace is infused because sin is forgiven. Grace causes the forgiveness of sin as a form perfecting a subject .and excluding a previous contrary form: forgiveness of sin causes grace to be there as disposition for grace, the absence of sin being pre-required for the presence of grace. (Grave sin and grace cannot coexist). In the line of material or dispositive causality the forgiveness of sin is prior to and cause of grace being infused; in the line of forinal causality grace being infused causes and is prior to the forgiveness of sin.[47] This mutual causality is not efficient causality. The only efficient causality which produces both grace and forgiveness of sin is the divine causality undoing the indisposition or causing the disposition for grace and infusing grace.

A third reciprocal causality is involved in the disposition of the justified sinner, in his free acceptance of grace and gifts. This, St. Thomas explains,[48] involves a double movement, one against sin, another towards God. The first is repentance for sin, the other love of God in charity (including faith and hope) .'[9] The two together are contrition perfected by charity. This is,

.. Cf. *IV Sent.,* d. 17, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1: "... cum gratiae infusio et remissio culpae se habeant sicut introductio unius formae et expulsio alterius ..."; Compare *Swmma theol.,* 1-11, q. 118, aa. !! and 6.

•• Compare *IV Sent.,* d. 17, q. i, a. S; sol. *5* ad *!t.*

•• Cf. *Summa theol.,* 1-11, q. US, aa. 6 ad !!; and above n. 44.

•• *IV Sent.,* d. 17, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1: "... secundum ordinem causae materialis remissio culpae praecedit infusionem gratiae; sed secundum ordinem causae formalis infusio gratiae natura prior est."

•• Cf. *I Sent.,* d. 17, q. 1, a. S, sol. 1 ad 8; *De ve:rit.,* q. !tS, aa. 4 and *5; Summa theol.,* 1-11, q. 118, aa. 4 and *5.*

•• Cf. *Summa theol.,* 1-11, q. 118, a. 4 ad 1: "motus fidei non est perfectus nisi caritate informatus; unde simul in iustificatione impii cum motu fidei est etiam motus ca.ritatis "; and a. 5 c, "... alius (motus liberi arbitrii) quo detestetur peccatum "; cf, *De ve:rit.,* q. 28, a. 4, c and ad *5.*

according to St. Thomas, the unique and indispensable disposition of the sinner for justification-whether this happens in the reception of a sacrament or without it by the desire of the sacrament.[50] Between repentance and love of God there is a reciprocal causality. The sinner effectively and fully draws away from sin, byeffective contrition and effective renouncement of sin, because he draws near to God unconditionally in charity, loving Him above all else.[51] His repentance is (perfect) contrition because charity is infused, and charity is being infused because his repentance is perfect. His repentance is prior to and cause of the presence of charity, as the necessary and necessitating disposition for charity, or in the line of dispositive causality; and charity in its turn is prior to and cause of his perfect contrition as its force and perfection, or in the line of formal causality. The two, contrition and charity cannot exist (in a repentant sinner) without each other; they condition each other.

*More Examples of Reciprocal Causality*

Among the many other cases of reciprocal causality we list here a dozen chosen at random, indicating the precise point at which it obtains.

In human generation the parents provide the matter disposed for the infusion of the soul by God its Creator. There is reciprocal causality between the ultimate disposition of the matter for the soul and_ the spiritual soul being infused.[52]

•• Cf. our article " Two Concepts of Attrition and Contrition " in *Theological Studies*, XI (1950) 8-88, esp. 17, n. 58 and p. 21.

[51] Cf. *Summa theol.*, I-ll, q. 118, a. 7, c, "motus liberi arbitrii in peccatum ordinatur ad motum liberi arbitrii in Deum: propter hoc enim homo detestatur peccatum, quia est contra Deum cui vult adhaerere. Et ideo liberum arbitrium in iustificatione impii simul detestatur peccatum et convertit se ad Deum."

•• Cf. *Summa theol*.. I, q. 118, a. 2, c and ad 2, and a. 8, c; also q. 100, a. 1 ad 2.--St. Thomas, with his contemporaries, held 'delayed animation' cf. "Animation Theories" in *The Clergy Monthly*, XVII (1958). 289-98.-We may note here that for most of the examples quoted here, St. Thomas does not explicitly develop the mutual causality between form and disposition. it generally remains implicit in the very statement that one is the disposition for the other.

In every deliberate and free act there exists an intercausality between mind and will, the mind providing the form or specification for the act of the will which is the 'exercise.' The idea is the form of the act and is sustained by it, while the act is specified or perfected by the form or idea;[53]

The act of faith is an intellectual assent to revealed truth commanded by the will. The intellectual assent provides the form or specification, the will the exercise of the act. There is a mutual causality and priority between intellectual assent as specification and the command of the will as exercise.[54]

In every meritorious act-as in every act of a creature-there is a passive and an active aspect with regard to its object; the act disposes for and merits the object. Between these two, disposition and merit, there is mutual causality and priority.[55] Created grace is both disposition for and effect of Uncreated Grace. The divine indwelling is transforming and· brings with it created grace; this in tum is the link or disposition for the divine indwelling.[56] Grace as a created form is both effect of and disposition for the divine indwelling.

The same can be said in other words: grace is both form or perfection of the soul and a link uniting with God. It assimilates (and so changes) the soul to God and unites with Him; the union is the cause of the assimilation and the assimilation is the cause of the union. Grace is a form or perfection because it links with Uncreated Grace, and it is a real link because it is a form or perfection.[57]

A particular case is the grace of union in Christ. It is both perfection and link, the one conditioning and being conditioned by the other.[58]

In the beatific vision the light of glory is both disposition

•• Cf. *Summa tkeol.*, I, q. 8!!, a. 4, c and ad 1.

•• Cf. *Summa tkeol.*, 11-11, q. 2, a. 9, c and ad 1.

•• Cf. *Summa theol.*, I, q. 46, a. 4; I-ll, q. 114, a. 8 ad 8; cf. our article "Growth in Grace" in *Cross and Crown*, IV (1952). 856-65, esp. 858 f.

•• Cf. *Summa tkeol*•. I. q. 48, a. 8 ad 2, and a. 6.

•• Cf. *Summa theol.*, I, q. 48, a. 8, c; 1-11, q. 114, a. 8 ad 8.

[68] Cf. *Summa tkeol.*, III, q. 2, aa. 7 and 8.

for the vision and its effect; there is the vision because the light of glory steels the beatified intellect; and the intellect is so disposed or steeled because there is the vision.[59]

An increase in sanctifying grace both causes the disposition for itself and is caused by the disposition; there is mutual causality between the increase of grace as a form and its willing acceptance as disposition.[60]

Sin is both a turning away from God and a turning towards a creaturely good instead of God. The turning away from God causes, by way of disposition, the turning towards the creature; this in its tum, causes, by way of formal causality, the turning away from God.[61]

The Holy Spirit as Soul of the Mystical Body brings His charismatic and sanctifying gifts of grace. These graces are both effect of and disposition for the presence of the Holy Spirit as Soul of the Church.[62]

The love of God in charity implies both love of benevolence or selfless surrender and love of desire or of union with God; the two condition each other. Union is the condition for the self-surrender or disinterested love, and surrender or disinterested love demands union.[68]

Charity is the form of the virtues giving them their Godward orientation which is their supernatural perfection. The virtues are perfected by charity and in tum give a support or field of action to charity.[64]

These few cases may suffice to show the wide field in which reciprocal causality or priority has its relevance. If we bear in mind that its proper place is formal and dispositive causality

•• Cf. *Summa thecl.,* I, q. 1!!, a. *6.*

•• Cf. *Summa theol.,* I-II, q. 114, a. 8 ad S; cf. above n. *66.*

•• Cf. *Summa theol.,* I-II, q. 78, a. 8 ad!!.

•• Cf. *De verit.,* q. !!9, a. 4; *IV Stmt.,* d. 18, q. !!, a. 1 ad !!.

•• Cf. *Summa theol.,* I-II, q. 66, a. *6;* 11-II, q. !!S, a. 1, c; cf. our article "Hope and Charity in St. Thomas" in *The Thomist,* XII (1960), !!04-48, 8!!6-6!!; esp. !!81 fl.; also •• Desire of God: Hope or Charity? " in *Irish Theological Quarterly,* XXIII (1966), 898-404, esp. 898 f.

•• Cf. *Summa theol.,* 11-11, q. !!8, a. 8; and G. Gilleman, S. J., *The Primacy of Charity in MOTal Theology* (Westminster, Md.: 1969, London: 1960), pp. !!9-46.

obtaining between components of one complex event or thing coexisting in time, and that the mutual priority implied is not one of time but only of nature, then indeed it should give some light into these often mysterious realities.

We must still test the concept in some more detail at two disputed theological problems: the causality of the sacraments, and the interplay of grace and free will.

## *Causality* of *the Sacraments*

Sacraments are instrumental causes for the infusion or increase of grace. The manner of their causality in producing grace is explained by theologians in different ways, which may be divided into two main classes: perfective, and dispositive causality (we may leave aside here the details of the various subdivisions). Perfective causality, whether understood as ' physical ' or as ' intentional,' means to say that the sacraments produce or have an instrumental efficient causality on grace itself, as instrumental causes of Christ and of God. Dispositive causality here means that the efficient instrumental causality of the sacraments is limited to producing the disposition for grace, grace itself being given directly by God. This dispositive causality is often explained on the pattern of the threefold moment: sacrament only, sacrament and effect, and effect only; the second of these being the disposition for grace produced by the sacrament and calling for grace.[65] Is there any way of reconciling or synthesizing these two ways of the

••• It should be noted that the principle of reciprocal causality, applied to the theology of sacramental causality, does not intend directly to decide between the different theories or to synthesize them: these concern mainly the relation of the sacraments as instrumental causes to Christ (or God) as principal Cause, and not directly the infusion of grace which is the precise· point at which reciprocal causality obtains. But it intends this: whichever way the relation between the instrument (sacrament) and the principal cause be conceived, the sacrameni will either have a twofold causality, both ' perfective' and 'dispositive' (but only instrumental), in the infusion of grace, or else it will have none at all: it cannot have one without the other. And this point precisely-the only one we wish to make here-may invite a revision of the theories of sacramental causality in its relation to the causality of Christ (or of God), and eventually lead to a more synthetic solution of the problem.

causality of the sacraments? Perhaps there is; and the way to it may be shown by the concept of reciprocal causality.[65].

According to that principle, disposition for grace and grace are the intrinsic causes, as disposition for the form and form itself, of the event which is the infusion of grace. They are mutually cause of one another. The (ultimate) disposition for grace is caused by grace by way of formal causality; and it causes grace by way of dispositive causality.[66] But they suppose an extrinsic efficient cause of the infusion of grace, which gives being by way of efficient causality and thus allows both form and disposition to be what they are or to exert their own, formal and dispositive, causality.

The efficient cause of the infusion of grace of necessity produces both the disposition for grace and grace itself. It would not be possible that it proudce only the disposition for grace; this (ultimate) disposition cannot ·stand by itself, no more in this than in any other case of infusion of a new form. Nor can the efficient cause produce only the form without the disposition for it; the form cannot stand by itself either, it supposes the disposition for its infusion. And so the infusion of grace, as of any other form, of necessity supposes the synthesis of 'perfective' and 'dispositive' causality in the sense of the terms explained above. This should be evident of the principal or total cause of infusion of grace; it causes by way of one effect both the disposition for the new form (grace) and the form itself. God causes both grace and disposition for grace.[67]

Does .this also apply to-the causality of the instrument, of the sacraments? It would seem so. It is true the common explanations of that causality rather considers only one side of the problem: either the efficient producing of the disposition for grace, or the effecting of grace itself.[68] Wrongfully, however,

[64] For an exposition of the various theories on the causality of the sacraments, cf. v. g., B. Leeming, S.J., *Principlea of Sacramental Theology* (London: 1956), pp. S14-S9; and W. van Roo, S.J., *De SaCTamentiain genere* (Rome: 1957), pp. 275-306.

[65] Cf.IV *Sent.*, d. 17, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 2, quoted above n. 89.

[66] Cf. *Summa theol.*, I-II, q. US, a. 7, quoted above n. 9.

[67] In *IV Sent.*, d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1, St. Thomas taught that the sacraments cause

it would seem. For the first of these explanations comes to mean that the sacrament's instrumental causality regards only the disposition for grace, not grace itself, in such manner that the efficient causality with regard to grace belongs entirely and exclusively to the principal Cause God.[69] But this seems to reduce unduly the causality of the sacrament-instrument, and to include a sort of impossibility. If form and disposition for it are intercauses, as they undoubtedly are, and so also disposition for grace and grace itself, then the one cannot be without the other; the agent or efficient cause which produces the one cannot do so without producing the other. But then, the sacraments either have an (instrumental) efficient causality on both disposition for grace and grace itself, or on neither of the two.[70] The same reasoning applies to the other explanation, that by way of perfective causality. The (instrumental efficient) causality of the sacraments cannot bear on grace itself without at the same time effecting the disposition for grace. For the form, in this case grace, cannot stand by itself,

grace only *dispositive* and not *effeetive* (while they cause the character 'effective'). In *De verit.,* q. 27, a. 4, c,. he says: " sacramenta .. - sunt causa gratiae quasi intrumentaliter operantia ad grli.tiam"; and from the context and reference to the causality of Chrisfs humanity which is "instrumentalis causa nostrae iustificationis" and " nobis applicatur corporaliter per sacramenta," he means more than ' dispositive' only. Also in the *Summa* he speaks of instrumental causality of the sacraments without further explanation, cf. *Summa tkeol.,* 1-11, q. 112, a. 1 ad 2; ill, q. 62, a. 1, c. From these various texts it is not surprising that both theories of dispositive and perfective causality of the sacraments appeal to St. Thomas. Perhaps we may read the reason of the difference in teaching between the *Sent.* and the later works in his more explicit awareness of Christ's causality in the sacraments, as apparent in *De verit., loc. cit.* and in the *Summa theol.,* ill, q. 62.

•• This may perhaps not be inconceivable, and may well be implied in St. Thomas' teaching in *Sent.* cited above n. 68. But it seems to be excluded both by the idea of mutual causality between grace and disposition for grace, as explained in the text, and also by St. Thomas' teaching in *De verit.* and the *Summa.* on the efficient (instrumental) causality of the sacraments with regard to grace.

•• The reason for saying so is that the disposition for grace cannot be produced by way of efficiency except in connection with the formal causality of grace with regard to this disposition. The same ' virtus instrumentalis ' is required for causing the disposition as for causing grace. And then there is no reason for attributing to the sacraments an instrumental causality with regard to the disposition and not with regard to grace.

without its con-cause, the disposition for it. And so it would seem impossible that the sacraments cause grace without at the same time causing the disposition for it, since the infusion of grace depends on the disposition of the subject (in the line of material or dispositive causality, and without this disposition the infusion of grace is impossible. And so it would appear that the two, causing by way of efficiency or producing the disposition for grace, and producing or infusing grace, are of necessity connected.[11] Nor does it make any difference whether the causality be instrumental or principal: in the very measure that one of the two is produced the other effect also is. The reason for saying so lies with the necessary mutual causality that obtains between form and disposition for it, grace and disposition for grace; the one cannot exist without the other, and therefore cannot be caused or produced without the other. If that is so, then we must say that the two ways of conceiving the causality of the sacraments are complementary; they should be synthesized.

This conclusion should appear more forcefully perhaps if we consider the sacraments as actions of Christ.[72] It is Christ, the God-man, it may be said, who continues through the sacramental signs His redemptive and sanctifying work, the disposition of graces. Whichever way this causality of Christ in the sacraments be conceived-whether as ' intentional ' or as an act of His will,· or as ' physical ' as it were by the physical contact of the minister who acts in His name and power-Christ's own causality with regard to grace is both effective and dispositive.[73] He causes both grace and disposition for grace, not merely one or other. There is another reason for saying so besides the one drawn from the intercausality between

[71] St. Thomas says this in so many words of God's causality in justification; cf. the texts from the *Summa theol.*, I-II, quoted above n. 89.

[••] This idea is common teaching today, and is based on St. Thomas' doctrine of the "virtus qua humanitas Christi instrumentaliter ad iustificationem operatur," and in which the sacraments participate, the Eucharist in the first place, and also the other sacraments; cf. *De verit.*, q. a. 4, c.

[73] Cf. *Summa theol.*, III, q. a. 5, "humanitas Christi instrumentum coni-t:nctum . . . . "

grace and disposition for grace; it is that His humanity is the instrument linked to the Word by the hypostatic union. The divine causality producing grace and disposition for grace now passes through the man-Christ; there is no grace except through Christ. And just as in the immediate dispensation of grace He effected during His mortal life He as man caused both grace and disposition for grace (as instrument of the divinity), so also His action through the sacraments, by virtue of His real presence in the Church, His mystical Body, has both a perfective and a dispositive causality in the infusion of grace.[74]

Nor is there any difficulty here-particularly with regard to the perfective causality on grace itself-for the instrumental mediation of Christ's humanity or of the sacraments in the dispensation of grace, from the immediateness of the union with God that is proper to the life of grace.[75] The fact that grace means an immediate union with the Triune God indwelling in the souls of the just does not preclude the instrumental causality of Christ's humanity or of the sacraments in the infusion of grace. Why is that so? Because this instrumental causality moves on the line of efficiency while our union with the indwelling Triune God belongs to the order of quasi-formal causality.[76] The instrumental causality of the sacraments and of the humanity of Christ regards the producing of created grace; it does not mediate or act as an intermediary in the linking of the justified souls to the indwelling God.

Accordingly, because of the reciprocal causality that exists of necessity between grace and disposition for grace, the infusion of grace in the sacraments of necessity entails a twofold

••In the *De verit.* and the *Summa* St. Thomas does not mention explicitly the dispositive causality of the sacraments and only speaks of instrumental causality. 'But from what we know of his idea of mutual causality between grace and disposition for grace and from his explicit teaching on the divine causality producing both grace and disposition for grace, it may be inferred that dispositive causality is implied in the idea of instrumental efficient causality as its correlative.

•• Cf. St. Thomas' teaching on the divine missions and sanctifying grace in *Summa theol.,* I, q. 48, a. 6.

•• Cf. our note on" Divine Quasi-formal Causality" in *Irish Theological Quarterly,* XXVII (1960),

instrumental efficient causality on the part of the agent who acts through them: Christ through the sacraments-and God in Christ-causes both the grace and the disposition for grace. The causality of the sacraments, to the very extent that it is real causality albeit instrumental only, is with regard to the infusion of grace both and inseparably dispositive and perfective.

*Grace and Free Will*

Could the idea of reciprocal causality thrown any light on the mystery of grace and free will, of which the various systems of grace attempt to give some understanding? It would seem so.

The two main theological schools on the question are well known. (For our present purpose we may leave aside their various subdivisions). One conceives grace as efficacious of itself or from inside; the other, as efficacious not of itself but from outside. In the first, the reason why grace entails the free consent of the will lies with grace itself. When grace is considered in its first act, that is, at the moment antecedent to the actual consent (a moment that is logically distinct but inseparable from the actual consent), then there is in it an objective reason for the consent, a reason that is not found in a grace which does not become efficacious but remains merely sufficient. In the second school, the reason why the free consent is given does not lie with grace itself but elsewhere; there is in efficacious grace considered in its first act nothi¥g more than in a grace which remains merely sufficient.[77] Both schools remain on their respective plateaus, apparently without any desire for or attempt at mutual understanding.

We suggest that these differences of explanation are complementary rather than mutually opposed, and will try to apply the principle of reciprocal causality to the interplay of efficacious grace and free will. The two condition and cause each other (and so grace is efficacious both from outside and from inside, under different aspects).

[77] For a recent evaluation of the various systems of grace, cf. v. g., the article of F. Stegmiiller "Gnadensysteme" in *Lexik,on fur Theologie und Kirche"* IV, 1007-10; for a.n exposition cf. any manual, v. g., Van Noort, *De Gratia Christi*, nn. 64-76.

Perhaps we should first ask: Is there any objection against applying here the principle of mutual causality? There is here no question of formal and dispositive causality as this obtains in the infusion of a new form into a subject,. but of a passing help of grace for a free act, of a divine motion moving our free consent.-It is true, efficacious, actual grace is not a form in the sense of a permanent perfection, it is a motion or passing impulse to which eventually a free consent is given. There is not here, therefore, the intercausality that exists between a form and the (ultimate) disposition for the form. But we have here, in the case of an actually efficacious grace to which the free consent is given, the complex reality of the supernatural, and in the just, meritorious act, in which the component elements are efficacious grace and our free consent, a perfecting and a perfectible element which condition and cause one another. [78]

And when a perfective and perfectible element unite to form one ontological unit, there is, it would seem, room for intercausality. In fact, the free consent is, by way of perfectible element and in the line of analogical dispositive causality, the cause of the efficacious grace, but it is itself caused by the efficacious grace in the line of perfecting or analogical formal causality. [79] (We should note that this mutual causality is not an efficient causality). Accordingly, in a supernatural deliberate act, there is mutual priority of nature between the free consent and grace, the interplay of mutual causes. The reason why

[78] The idea of mutual causality, therefore, can be applied only in an analogical sense. Given the analogy or partial similarity that exists between form and disposition for the form, on the one hand, and on other, perfective and perfectible element in a complex act, there can be intercausality between the last two as there is between the first two.

[79] St. Thomas, *Summa theol.*, I-II, q. lUI, a. 8, c, seems to suggest this application (which he never made explicitly himself) where he says, "non fit motio a Deo ad iustitiam absque motu liberi arbitrii." Especially in the interpretation of Fr. H. Bouillard, mentioned above n. 89, which sees in sanctifying grace itself a *motio divina* and not merely a static form, there seems to be no essential difference between the interaction of this 'motio divina' or sanctifying graee and man's free acceptanee of the gift of grace, and that which exists between the 'motio divina ' which is actual grace and the free consent to actual grace.

we consent to efficacious grace is grace itself; the reason of the presence of efficacious grace is our free consent, which is perfected by it); efficacious grace cannot exist except in' composition ' with our free consent. The free consent does not determine efficacious grace but it lends it a support. [80]

This intercausality obtains, it should be noted, in the case of actually efficacious grace, or of efficacious grace considered in its second act. Does it also give any clue to the problem of grace that is going to be efficacious, or is efficacious in first act? It is there, we just recalled, that the difference lies between the systems of grace. Yes, it would seem that intercausality between grace and free will plays also at that stage. What does the idea of efficacious grace in first act mean? It means, the systems are agreed to say, that grace is infallibly going to be efficacious or that the free consent is going to be given without fail. If we may express this infallible connection between the two after the analogy of the ultimate disposition for the infusion of a new form [81] (there also there is an infallible connection between disposition and form) , then we may say that at the stage of efficacious grace in first act, the prefectible element is ultimately ready to be perfected by the perfecting element: it cannot but be perfected by it (though it is not so perfected as yet, nor exist except in its psychological antecendents, the indeliberate acts which invite it) .[82] At that stage already we

[80] This does not exclude--as we must say in keeping with St. Thomas' teaching on mutual causality in the text quoted above n. 6-that grace or the divine causality is absolutely prior by a priority of nature to our free consent. The introduction of the new form, St. Thomas says, *loc. cit.*, is "in ordine naturae simpliciter prior." So also the ' motio Dei ' which is actual efficacious grace is " ordine naturae simpliciter prior ' to our free consent.

[81] The ultimate disposition for a form, which is ' necessitas ad formam,' is prior by a priority of nature (not of time) to the presence of the form. In that sense and to that extent it is possible to consider a moment prior to the presence of the form which is going to be infused. After the analogy of this priority, it should also be possible to consider, in the case of efficacious grace, the moment prior to the free consent (which corresponds to the presence of the form).

[82] It should be noted that the moment of these indeliberate acts considered here is the very last or the very moment at which the deliberate consent follows, namely, the moment that is prior to the free consent by a priority of nature but is inseparable from it.

must say grace is going to be efficacious without fail, it cannot but be efficacious, by the union of grace and free consent which cannot fail to follow. This means to say that at that moment also the free consent is the reason, by way of perfectible element which calls for its perfecting complement, of the efficacy of grace; and the efficacy of grace is the reason, by way of perfecting element which calls for its perfectible complement, of the free consent.[83]

Does this consideration of a reciprocal causality and priority between the grace that is not yet efficacious but is infallibly going to be, and the free consent that does not exist as yet except as invited infallibly in the indeliberate acts which precede in the will, explain why the free consent goes together with efficacious grace( Yes and No. It does not give any reason for the free consent, in the sense of a determining cause; such a reason cannot be given from the very nature of a free consent which is not determined by an objective reason hut is self-determination.[84] But it does give a reason of the existence of the free consent, and this reason is none other than grace itself. The influence of grace on the free consent is not one of efficient causality determining the consent, it moves in the line or after the analogy of formal causality; grace acts as perfecting principle uniting itself to the free consent as the perfectible principle, the two being the components of one complex reality, the free supernatural act. The union of the two is brought about by the divine efficient causality which produces as one effect both efficacious grace and free consent.[85] (The ultimate source or reason of this divine causality is predestination. This however, does not change but ratlJ.er constitutes things in the order of being, and so also the free supernatural act) .

[83] The remark made above n. 80, about the priority of grace ' simpliciter in ordine naturae,' applies also here.

[84] Cf. *Summa theol.*, I, q. 82, a. 2, c and q. 88, a. 1 ad 8, (the free will) "seipsum movet ad agendum," while yet " Deus ... est prima causa movens et naturales causas et voluntarias."

[85] St. Thomas almost says tb:is in so many words, in *Summa theol.*, I-II, q. 109, a. 6 ad 1 (in connection with the supernatural act by which man prepares himself, with the help of grace, for the infusion of sanctifying grace), "liberum arbitrium ad Deum converti non potest nisi Deo ipsum ad se convertente."

It is because the free consent is the complementary perfectible principle. of the supernatural act, that it may happen (as it does in the case of purely sufficient grace) that the supernatural act does not (and cannot) come about, namely, when the free consent is refused. To that extent the idea of the causal interaction between grace and free consent explains why grace can and does at times remain inefficacious. It does so when the free consent is withheld.[86] But to give an objective reason- of why the free consent is refused, in the sense of a determining and complete explanation of the refusal, is as impossible as it is to give such a reason for the free consent itself. It is so from the very nature of the case. A free consent is one which is not determined by such a reason.

Accordingly, the principle of reciprocal causality seems to explain or to account for all that can and needs to be explained or accounted for in the interplay between grace and free will.

## *Conclusion*

The above considerations may suffice to give some idea of the place and role which the concept of reciprocal causality holds in theology. It need not be considered as a master key to unlock every problem. The heart of all reality is mysterious and doubly so the heart of supernatural reality. Even if in all its intriguing paradox the principle of mutual causality leaves the mystery of reality untouched and unrevealed, it should not for that reason appear as a mere play of concepts. The very fact that the mind finds consistency in its explanation should be a sign that it does give some insight into the hidden nature of things. What was said here should, it is hoped, contribute ever so little towrads a grasp of this authentic Thomistic view and so perhaps also towards suggesting a way out of some long-standing controversial deadlocks.

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[80] In keeping with what was said above about efficacious grace, we must say that, in the case of merely sufficient grace, the 'ultimate disposition' of the free will for the motion of grace is absent, and so also the motion of grace itself; and from the side of analogical formal causality, the effective motion of grace is absent and so also the will's ultimate disposition for it.

[87] Cf. above n. 84.

# PROGRESS AND MODERN MAN

VIVIDLY projecting themselves from the tapestry of human progress and civilization are the many and varied technological and scientific advancements and achievements of the present age of technology. In a comparatively few short years man has used his intellectual and physical efforts to such a progressive extent that doors of life and living never before imagined have opened wide. History heretofore has not witnessed such revolutionary and far-reaching accomplishments of human inventiveness and creative ability. The majority of us have witnessed, and perhaps some of us have personally experienced, the vast changes in electronics, atomic power, space travel, uses of the petrochemicals, uses of the silicones, atomic electricity, etc.; and certainly all of us will ultimately be affected by the fruits and results of such changes. It is truly an exciting age in which we live.

Because many of the changes about us have come with such startling rapidity, the conclusion that these changes have been accidental or automatic is quite tempting. However, modern invention and applied science are neither a matter of mere accident nor are they automatic; rather, they are the result of planned research and extensive study. In accomplishing what he has, man has dramatically made manifest his rational potentialities in the attainment of a greater knowledge of nature and the discovery of new ways in which to master it. " Instead of being the helpless victim of natural forces, man has shown an extraordinary power to control them for his own purposes." [1] Though nature continues to challenge man in many aspects of his life, more and more modern man emphatically demonstrates his superiority over natur-e and its forces by the use of his intellectual abilities. "It is not human strength, agility, or speed

[1] Charles F. D'Arcy, *The Christian Outlook in the Modem World* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, n. d.), p. *55.*

that conquers it, but intelligent rearrangement and transformation, invention of tools, welding together different natural objects and forces, balancing one force against another, summoning its potencies to meet his ideas and answer his chosen will for it." [2] Such subjugation is possible, for the human intellect seemingly knows no boundaries as regards its potentialities of discovery, correlation, integration and application of new knowledge in the mastery of nature.

Father Wuellner remarks:

> By his mind man stands above nature, independent of it, aloof, and like a king thinking and wondering about it, measuring it, collating its laws, experimenting with it, asking it what it is, how it operates, what it is for, whether it can be reorganized and redistributed in space and time, whether it has any hidden resources, why it is so changeable yet so constant in its rhythmic changes, and what is its ultimate source and meaning.[3]

From such observation and investigation, man is able to acquire the knowledge and understanding of nature which enable him to use it to his best advantage and to further certains ends of life and living. Since the transfer of new knowledge and discovery to consumer products and services can be effected only by human endeavor, man is able " to conquer material bodies and subject them in a considerable degree to his human will and purposes." [4] In meeting the challenge of nature, man has not only laid bare many of his own potentialities but many of the universe as well. " In all this, man is subduing the world to his own will: he is mastering the forces of nature and making them his obedient slaves." [5]

In recounting the growth of civilization in his *De Civitate Dei*, St. Augustine pointed out the great capacity of the human mind for achievement. He tells us how all the wonderful-" one might say stupefying "-inventions and advances which the

• Bernard Wuellner, *A Christian Philosophy of Life* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1957), p. 162.

*"Ibid.,* p. 168.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 162.

"D'Arcy, *op. cit.,* p. 61.

men of his day enjoyed were the result of " the genius of man." [6] He asks:

> . . . has not the genius of man invented and applied countless astonishing arts, partly the result of necessity, partly the result of exuberant invention, so that this vigour of mind, which is so active in the discovery not merely of superfluous 'but even of dangerous and destructive things, betokens an inexhaustible wealth in the nature which can invent, learn, or employ such arts? [7]

He then goes on to speak of some of the specific achievements of human industry and genius:

> How skillful the contrivances for catching, killing, or taming wild beasts! And for the injury of men, also, how many kinds of poisons, weapons, engines of destruction, have been invented, while for the preservation or restoration of health the appliances and remedies are infinite! ... What skill has been attained in measures and numbers! with what sagacity have the movements and connections of the stars been discovered! Who could tell the thought that has been spent upon nature, even though, despairing of recounting it in detail, he endeavored only to give a general view of it? ... it is the nature of the human mind which adorns this mortal life which we are extolling .... [8]

With what amazement would the African Doctor view man's achievements ·since his day? What would he say of the Empire State Building, the Queen Mary, the Brooklyn Bridge, the atomic bomb, the jet airliner, air conditioning, the automobile, the sputniks, the atomic submarine, etc? What has been accomplished would simply confirm his thoughts regarding the human mind as containing an inexhaustible wealth and propensity for achievement in the arts and sciences. Man will continue to advance in this respect for, " it is humanity which has the care of the earth, the harnessing of its cosmic in order to make the earth more beautiful and society more fraternal." [9]

• St. Augustine, *City of God,* Bk. XXII, c. 24, translated by Marcus Dods (New York: The Modem Library, 1950), pp. 850-855.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 852.

*"Ibid.*

• L. J. Lebret, " Theology and Economics," *Thought,* XXX (Winter 1955-1956), 542.

Puffed up as it were with a great sense of self-praise and pride in virtue of the profluent achievements of science and technology, it is no small wonder that modem man seems to echo the thought of Protagoras: " Of all things the measure is Man, of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not." [10]

*Progressive Change As Characteristic Mark of Present Age*

Historians, economists, philosophers, scientists, etc., speak of a particular period in history as having its specific qualities or marks. The present age is not without its own characteristic designation. Whether we call it the "Age of Technology," the "Nuclear Age,"" The Second Industrial Revolution," the "Age of Speed and Space," there is one distinguishing quality of the present age which is quite evident, progressive change. In virtue of the many changes which occur almost daily about him, more than ever before man has become conscious of change; and as a result of this consciousness of change, man has also experienced a marked consciousness of " self." He knows that he is an integral part of the changing world; he knows that he is a part of the entire historical process. Mouroux expresses it this way:

> Modern man sees himself more and more as a fragment-or a summit-of the universe. He has become aware that his own history is a chapter in the history of the world. He scrutinizes the world with more interest, more appetite, and more hope than ever before. He wants to master it, to rule it, to make it more habitable, to make it yield more and more sustenance for body and soul.U

More than ever before man is conscious of his own value and of Jris relationships to his fellow man.

In that man through his efforts has "literally re-made the surface of the globe," [12] it is not difficult to see that he would

[10] Kathleen Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 125.

[11] Jean Mouroux, *The Meaning of Man* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 195!!), p. 19.

[12] D'Arcy, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

become conscious of himself as being in the midst of the discovery, subjugation, transformation and redistribution of nature. Mid-twentieth century man well realizes that he has subjugated nature in ways which have been unprecedented; and he also realizes that there are innumerable subjugations in the future which will further exemplify his superiority over, and control of, the dynamic forces of nature. His determination for victory is overshadowed only by the tremendous expenditures of toil, research, study, money, etc., which he employs in conquering his opponent, nature. " So intent is he upon it that ultimately it becomes in his eyes a kind of god that hides and takes the place of the true God." [18] Indeed, progressive change has affected modem man in a variety of ways as regards his status and endeavor in life..

### *Modem Man Different From the Greeks*

Living in a world where revolutionary discovery and· change are seemingly taken for granted and " victory follows victory so rapidly in the human conflict with natural forces," [u] men of the present day are cognizant of the fact that they are in their relationship to the universe quite different from any other men in history before them.

The Greeks were happily free from some necessities which might have absorbed their attention and from some interests which might have distracted it from the search for a human good. They were neither too poor nor too religious nor too scientific. . . . Their energies were not absorbed by the need to earn their bread. . . . Aristotle had independent means. Even Socrates, who was always poor, does not seem to have had to take his trade of sculptor seriously. In general thinkers and writers of Greece could give their whole minds to following their bent without troubling about a livelihood. .. . . Theirs was a society without extremes of poverty or riches.... [15]

•• Mouroux, *op. cit.,* p. 19.

"D'Arcy, *op. cit.,* p. 61.

[16] Sir R. W. Livingstone, *Greek Ideals and Modum Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), pp. 48-49.

Nor were the Greeks distracted from human problems by the material promises and gifts of science. Indeed it offered them none. Science flourished in the ancient world, but technology was It is characteristic that the Greeks made least progress in chemistry, materially the most fruitful of the sciences, and most in mathematics, the purest and poorest. They sought knowledge not for its rewards, for longer life and better health, quicker locomotion and increased resources, but for itself. It meant to them not airplanes or rayon or wireless, but knowledge.[16]

Hence we see that:

> The Greek ideal of science was essentially intellectualist. It was the contemplation of reality as an intelligible order. To the Greek mind the practical results of science were quite a secondary matter; indeed, in their eyes the application of science to mechanical ends seemed rather vulgar and childish.. The end of science was not to do but to know: *feli.a; qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*[11]

From this inclination to disinterest in the applications for which scientific knowledge could be used, one must not be misled into thinking that the Greeks were deficient in technological skills. " The recorded inventions represent only a modest portion of the substantive technological advance in antiquity .... "[18]

Our world is based on three underlying conceptions-science; technology, by 'Yhich I mean those applications of science which have given us the material fabric of our civilization; and a certain ideal of human nature and conduct. All these the Greeks had in the germ. They were the creators of the idea of the first two-science and technology. Like us, they regarded these as the basis of civilization. And, for the third, they had a clearer ideal of what life should be than we have.[19]

In certain fields of technology, the Hellenic achievement

[18] *Ibid.,* p. 58.

[17] Christopher Dawson, *Mediaeval Religicm* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1984), p. 87.

[18] Abbott Payson Usher, *A History of Mechanical* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1929), p. 50.

[19] Livingstone, *op. cit.,* p. *56.*

was considerable. " The Parthenon and Propyleae witness to mechanical as well as to artistic genius." [20] "The notable practical achievements of Archimedes lay in the mathematical computation of the mechanical advantages of the various machines and their combinations." [21] It was through Greek science and invention that many of the defects of Egyptian apparatus for surveying and civil engineering were perfected. [22]

Though the chief contribution of classical civilisation to science was not in technics but in speculative thought, one of the most important contributions ever made to technology was made by the Greeks. This was their attempt to give rational explanations of the machines and other inventions and discoveries of their predecessors, which made it possible to generalize and extend their use. Thus it was the Greeks who first converted the practical, technological methods for reckoning and measuring, as developed in Mesopotamia and Egypt, into the abstract sciences of arithmetic and geometry, and who first attempted to give a rational explanation of the facts observed in astronomy and medicine.[23]

Of the actual scientific works, one might make mention of such things as:

... Aristarchus' discovery of the heliocentric theory, Archimedes' statement of the fundamental principles of hydrostatics, Eratosthenes' calculation of the earth's circumference at 7,850 miles; or of such brilliant premonitions of modern science, as Democritus' idea that the universe consists of atoms in infinite space, the anticipation of Darwinism in Anaximander's notion that' man originated from animals of a different species,' or Antiphon's statement of a view to which medicine has paid more attention in the last thirty years,' in all men the mind controls the body, for good health and for bad.'

If one considers these discoveries in themselves, and the fact that " the first Greek scientist was hom into a world which

•• *Ibid.,* p. 68.

01 Usher, *op. cit.,* p. 47.

•• Cf. Usher, *op. cit.,* p. 48.

•• A. C. Crombie, *Medieval and Early Modem Science,* rev. 2nd edition (New York: Doubleday, 1959), I, 187.

•• Livingstone, *op. cit.,* p. 57.

believed that the sun and moon were gods and that thunder was produced by Zeus," [25] the achievements were remarkable, if not astounding. Generally speaking, however, one might say that " the development of applied science in Greece was hampered by the notion that, while science was a natural and splendid activity of the human mind, its use for practical purposes was rather ignoble." [26] Plutarch tells us that there was a certain discrimination against practical mechanics because of the " low esteem in which such matters were held." [27] Diels indicates that ancient society in general undervalued the technologists.28 This discrimination against applied science and mechanics is perhaps one of the main reasons why little of Greek technological knowledge by way of writings of that period have come down to us. And again:

> The remains of Greek and Roman literature in the field of applied science are scanty, not because they were not treasured, and even added to, by the periods following, but apparently because there had thus far been so little development in the way of machines or of power other than manual and animal. [29]

### *Modem Man and Medieval Man*

Mid-twentieth century man would look upon medieval man with as much disinterest as he perhaps looks upon the Greeks and their scientific attitude of life. Men of the thirteenth century were not confronted with the potentialities and actualities of the universe as experienced by the' men of the modern era. Medieval man was in the main preoccupied with thoughts of the world of the spirit. He did not look upon his mundane activities with exclusive concern. Throughout the Middle Ages, Christianity reigned supreme over the hearts and minds of men. One Christianity reigned in the universal *mundus Christianus.* " All the factors of medieval civilization were impregnated

*""Ibid.*

•• *Ibid.,* pp. 68-64.

[07] As cited by Usher, *op. cit.,* p. 45.

""Hermann *Diels,,Antike Technik* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1914), p. !!1.

•• Lynn Thorndike, *A HiatCYT1J of Magic and Experimental Science* (New York: Macmillan, 19!!8), I, 18!!.

with the religious spirit, including its family, social, political, artistic, and scientific life." [80] One can say that the main occupations in early medieval .life were those which were directed toward the enhancement of man's spiritual activities. If we examine the contents of the medieval treatise of Theophilus, "Upon Various Arts," which the" humble priest" prepared for " all wishing to overcome or avoid sloth of the mind or wandering of the soul, by useful manual occupation and the delightful contemplation of novelties," [31] we find that it is a work which treats of " those things which are still wanting among the utensils of the house of the Lord, without which the divine mysteries and the services of ceremonies cannot continue, . . . and other things which useful necessity requires for the use of the ecclesiastical order." [82] To add further to our understanding of medieval occupations as being penneated with the religious spirit and as mainly directed to this same end, let us consider the following:

> The bishop's house first, and then the monastery, was the great nucleus of social life in the Middle Ages. Around the cathedral that the bishop built ... gathered all kinds of workmen-tillers of the field, the weavers of the cloth, the builders of houses, the decorators of the cathedral, the workers in linen and embroidery. Here were to be found the stone mason, the blacksmith, the joiner, the carpenter, the gold and silversmith, every artificer, indeed, for the little community. We see at once that all the germs of a city life are here.... Similarly, the monasteries were centres of consumption and distribution. . . . The minor arts, like delicate work in silver and gold, in ivory and wood, embroideries and tapestries, were kept alive by the constant need of new church furniture. [83]

Thus we see the occupational interests of medieval man directed toward those concerns which were indigenous to his lifetime.

[30] Maurice DeWulf, *History o{Mediaeval Philosophy* (New York: Dover, 1952), I. 277.

[31] Theophilus, also called Rugeru_s, *An Essay upon Various Arts,* translated with notes by Robert Hendrie (London: John Murray, 1847), p. xlv.

[••] *Ibid.,* p. 207.

[••] Thomas J. Shahan, *The Middle Ages* (New York: Benziger, 1904), pp. 154-155.

As any man in any age would have an appreciation and interest in those things about him, so the medieval man was no exception. However, his was an age in which man was not challenged ·from as many directions as is modem man in regard to the many and varied conveniences and comforts which nature and its forces might afford. Yet his was not an age of regression or stagnation. We should not hold the characterization of the medieval period as literally the " Dark Ages." The " darkness " of the Middle Ages was perhaps present in the early period, but it was certainly not a characteristic of the entire era.

Inheriting as it were a legacy of Greek scientific and technological knowledge by way of Arabic preservation and amplification, medieval learning and culture became enriched with the wisdom of the ages. In virtue of the assimilation, elaboration and utilization of this inheritance, early medieval " darkness" was neither persistent nor lasting. "The twelfth century was the springtime of feudal civilization, and the freshness of youth shone out in all forms of human activity." [84] From the hands of such translators as Gerard of Cremona, Plato of Tivoli, Abelard of Bath, John of Seville, Michael Scot, Herman the German, and Robert of Chester. Latin translations of Greek works via the Arabic appeared in the Latin West with such a steady influx that by the middle of the thirteenth century nearly all the important works of Greek science were available. Thus with the introduction of Greek and Arabic science, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, etc., the twelfth century experienced a new interest in science and scientific thought, and a new scientific culture arose in the Latin West. "In reality the recovery of Greek science and the restoration of contac:t with the main tradition of Greek thought was one of the most striking achievements of mediaeval culture." [85]

And it is even more than this: it is a turning point in the history of world civilization, for it marks the passing of the age-long

•• De Wulf, *up. cit.*, p. 45.
•• Dawson, *up. cit.*, p. 64.

supremacy of Oriental and eastern Mediterranean culture and the beginning of the intellectual leadership of the West. It is in fact a far more important and original achievement than anything that the Renaissance itself accomplished. For the Renaissance scholars, in spite of their originality, were carrying on a tradition that had never been altogether lost: the tradition of humanism and classical scholarship that was founded on· Cicero and Quintilian. But the rediscovery of Greek thought by the mediaeval scholars was a new fact in the history of the West: it was the conquest of a new world.[86]

With such a great wealth of knowledge at their disposal, medieval scholars did not merely look with awe upon their valuable and enlightening acquisitions.

The activity of the mind that had shown itself in the 12th century in the fields of philosophy and technology was applied in the 13th century to detect, and to endeavor to resolve, the contradictions that existed within the Aristotelian system itself, between Aristotle and other authorities such as Ptolemy, Galen, Averroes and Avi..-cenna, and between the various authorities and observed facts. The Western scholars were trying to make the natuJfU. world intelligible and they seized upon the new knowledge as a wonderful, but not final, illumination of mind and as a .starting point for further investigation. [81]

Thus with the scientific renaissance of the Middle Ages, marked changes in political, economic, social and cultural life came about; changes in life and living which affect us even in the present day. [88]

### *Human Nature Remains Constant and Invariable*

Today man does not live in the *mundus Christianus* of his medieval counterpart; nor does ·he look upon technological discovery and applied science as being " rather ignoble," but as noble and at times necessary achievements of man's intel-

88[bii/,.

Crombie, *op. cit.,* p. 65.

88 Cf. L. C. MacKinney, *The Medieval WOTld* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1988), p. 749. In: his epilogue, MacKinney gives a good description in brief of the many changes experienced by man in the transitional period of the Middle Ages.

lectual and physical efforts. In his relationship to the universe modem man is truly different from any other man in the history of civilization. However, we must distinguish between man considered essentially and man considered accidentally.

Although we can historically indicate the various distinctions of generations of man in respect to his attitudes, political ideals, economic status, technological or scientific advancement, etc., there is one thing which remains constant and invariable throughout the span of human history, human nature. Unlike the environmental and existential conditions about man, human nature is not subject to any mutation whatsoever. No matter what the history of civilization and culture would add to the circumstantial or accidental changes about man, human nature cannot undergo a change and remain human nature. Essentially man was the same in the Greek era as he was in medieval times; he is the same in the modem period; and he will remain the same in the post-modem period.

To say that the human problems of modern man are historically incomparable would be fallacious. True, every age has. its own perplexities, but truly human problems are much the same in the present as they were centuries ago. Since human nature is essentially the same in generation, the problem& related to it also remain essentially the same with but the possible accruement of certain accidental changes which are related to the exigencies of the times.

We make mention of man, constant and invariable by nature, as being in the center of complex change, for it is just such a position which is emphatically and at times forcefully made known to him in the present·" Age of Technology." Mid-twentieth century man has found himself voluntarily and involuntarily in the midst of a rapid progression of scientific and technological achievement. As a result of the genius of his own creative abilities, man's present endeavor is to know himself more and more, not only as discoverer but as one in the midst of discovery as well. The securities of days past to which man had held firm with a sense of pride and satisfaction have in the

present evaluation lost much of their meaning and worth. Man now looks to new securities of life and living which will enable him to cope with the " new found " discoveries and achievements which affect his very existence. The speed with which some 9f the changes have come about in recent years has caused man to become bewildered by the many adjustments and adaptations of life which he has had to make. Dizzy as it were in the whirl of rapid cha:Q.ge and progress, man at present is reaching out for something to grasp in order that he might not be swallowed up and dragged into the depths of the unforeseen challenges of nature. However, the security he hopes for cannot be attained in one brief moment.

Rather, the security he hopes for must be won anew from moment to moment, for it is continuously threatened. Today it is so seriously threatened that man no longer knows who he is. He feels himself a stranger in his own time. Above all else, he needs to orientate himself in the world where he feels alienated. [39]

He needs to find reasons for and a definite purpose in the many forms of progress which surround him. " Each man would like to be sure of his place in history as well as in the vast interplay of relations between peoples and continents; he is no longer content to define his destiny in terms of himself and God alone, but is vitally interested in all of humanity, in the whole universe." [40] Thus we find modern man confronted with the many problems which result from the complexity of changes which paradoxically constrict and expand his inode of living in the umverse.

•• Saturnino Alvarez Turienzo, 0. S. A., "Absence of. God and Man's Insecurity," digest translated by Rosemary Lauer, *Philosophy Today* (Summer, 1959), 189. Father Turienzo's article appeared in *La Cuidad de Dios,* CLXX (1957),

A recent exhibition by American and European artists at the Museum of Modem Art in New York City depicted man *liB* a faceless, misshapen and distorted entity. It is of interest that this representative group of artists portrayed modem man " in search of himself " in these unnatur-al forms. A study bllBed·on the exhibition is a book by Peter Selz, *New Images of Man* (New York: The Museum of Modem Art,

•• Lebret, *op. cit.,* p. 54J.

## *The Present Situation*

The attitudes and thoughts of modem man regarding the many human problems which daily affect him can best be illustrated by a presentation of two views which consider the effects of technocracy on man in the present situation of human existence and what man's attitude might be in relation to acceptance or rejection of further scientific or technological progress.

Berdyaev speaks of the affects and effects of the machine on mankind in this way:

> The advent of the machine brings about a revolution in all spheres of life. It rips man away from the bowels of nature and changes the whole rhythm of his life. Formerly, an organic tie had existed between man and nature, and his communal life had been governed by a natural rhythm. The machine radically modifies this relationship. It steps in between man and nature; and it conquers not only the natural elements for the benefit of man, but also, in the process, man himself. It both liberates and 'enslaves him once again. . . . A new and mysterious force, alien to both man and nature, now makes its appearance in human life; and this third, unnatural and non-human element acquires a terrible power over both man and nature. It disintegrates the natural human forms. It disintegrates and divides man so that he ceases to be the natural being he had been from time immemorial.[41]

In another place he says:

> The speed consequent upon the increasing mechanization of life has had a deadly effect on the human Ego, and has sapped its foundations of unity and consistence. The advent of machinery and the mechanization of life have led to an extreme objectification of human existence, to its materialization in a strange, inhuman and frigid world. And though this world is the work of man, it is essentially anti-human. The effect of high speed has been to
> the human Ego into minute fractions, into a succession of instants in disintegrated time.[42]

"Nicolas Berdyaev, *The Meaning of History,* translated by George Reavey (New York: Scribner's, 1986), pp. 152-158.

•• *Idem., Solitude and Society,* translated by George Reavey (London: The Centenary Press, 1947), p. 109.

Father Clarke speaks of the machine age in quite a different way:

> . . . if the possible courses of action are realistically examined, it seems to us clear that there is only one which measures up to the full Christian vision of man's nature and role in the universe, his apostolic responsibility toward his fellow men and the practical necessities of the Christian living in the modern world. This is the attitude, not of standing aside from the modern world to condemn it, but of entrance into it to transform it; not of condemnation of the secular, but of integration of it with the spiritual; in a word, not of rejection, but of consecration.[48]

> The panicky, wholesale condemnation of the machine age by too many self-styled humanists, Christian and others, must be called bluntly what it is: a sincere, perhaps, but nonetheless short-sighted nostalgia for a too narrowly esthetic and "spiritual" mode of humanism that is now irremediably inadequate. Genuine Christian humanism must free itself once and for all from such a timid and limited vision. In the long run flight from techniques-or any other human development-is as uncritical and as humanly disastrous for man as the heedless and unprincipled embrace which our secular culture has given them.[44]

Modem man is intellectually, idealistically and emotionally tom between the poles of thought which are represented by and expressed in these two views of the present dilemma of human involvement. Many are the questions which man asks of himself and others in seeking to know more and more about his existential status. Should man lessen his pace of scientific or technological progress for fear that any additional advance would simply drag him deeper and deeper into the abyss of dehumanization and depersonalization; or should man merely look upon the universe in a new perspective? Should man's attitude and approach to the present and life of the future be in keeping with the foreboding spirit as presented by Berdyaev; or should it be more in keeping with the Christian humanism which Father Clarke suggests?

[48] W. Norris Clarke, S. J., "Christian Humanism for Today," *Social Order*, III, (May-June, 1958), 281.

[44] *Ibid.*,

Even a superficial analysis of the aforementioned views would easily reveal the one which presents the more optimistic approach to the future. Berdyaev is of the opinion that we exist in an age which is devoid of hope; whereas Father Clarke takes the seemingly more realistic view which accepts the present situation of life as affording man many advantages which are a benefit rather than a curse upon mankind.

It seems certain that if one is to avoid the condemnation of scientific and technological civilization on the ground that it is but a repudiation of humanism, an increased interest in a Christian humanism is to injected into social communication. " The problem is one of recovering for man a humanism which will be his own, not borrowed, and which will take into account and give expression to all that is human." [45] In recognizing the problem as to " how we may struggle efficaciously against the weight by which in a technical age man is dragged down into the excesses of technocracy," Marcel suggests:

> What I think we need today is to react with our whole strength against dissolution of life from spirit which a bloodless rationalism has brought about. . . . Perhaps the most important task on the plane of speculation is to deepen once again that notion of life itself in the light of the highest and most genuine religious thought. [46]

As a consequence of his persent existential condition, it seems reasonable to conclude that man " must resign himself to being an alien in his own time, to finding no final meaning in his own life, or he must engage in battle with ' the stranger ' to construct a new order which will make a meaningful. life possible." [47] If one but considers the ultimate purpose of invention, scientific discovery, mechanization, etc., it is obvious that they are orientated toward the betterment of man in respect to his material needs and wants. Why then should activities which result in the invention of new machines, devices, com-

•• Turienzo, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

•• Gabriel Marcel, *The Decline of Wisdom,* translated by Many.a Harari (London: Harvill Press, 1954), p. 19.

•• Turienzo, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

puters, etc., as well as the inventions, machines, devices, computers themselves, be looked upon as a curse inflicted upon humanity? Should not these material achievements and advantages grant to man a. sufficiency of time and energy whereby he might direct his efforts toward the more important spiritual concerns of mankind? Man as man will always have a supernatural destiny which is essentially unchangeable; but man's natural destiny is both variable and subject to many changes. Hence, if we are to have a proper understanding of modem man, we must not neglect as an essential part of the human condition the world in which he lives together with its inevitable influences upon his mode of living.

Incorporation of the religious spirit in terms of purpose, application and utilization of science and technocracy is the key to future progress and seemingly the only salvation in man's continual pursuit of the conquest of nature and its forces. It is reasonable that:

> A Christian society for our time must assume all the technics developed in the last centuries. It must accept every single item of this man-made scientific tradition and every social responsibility that this entails. But all must be imbued with the tremendous transfiguring power of the Spirit of God. This means reaching a balance between ways of interpretation and technics of utilization. To be a Christian in technological society one needs a spiritual insight that mUSt be the deeper as techniCSare the more advanced.[48]
>
> We can never stay where we are nor return to happier times. We can only go forward to a new Christendom, where religion and technics shall not be indifferent or hostile to each other.[49]

At this point let us tum to a of the principles of change and progress as being helpful tools that man might use in his understanding and acceptance of the innumerable repercussions of a technical civilization which currently affect him and which inevitably will surround him in the future.

George H. Tavard, *The Church, The Layman, and The Modem World* (New York: Macmillan, 1959), p. *!!6.*

•• *Ibid.,* p. 81.

*The Meaning of Social Progress and Change*

St. Thomas tells us that men form groups to live a good and virtuous life [50]; for the felicity to which human life is directed in this life is inseparable from the commonweal and political felicity. [51] He also states that man's ultimate and complete perfection as a human person, *a spiritual-temporal being*, is dependent upon the acquisition of moral virtues. [52] Bourke expresses a like view in saying that, " the final perfection of man is an integral happiness of his whole being, body and soul, viewed as the being of a complete member of the human species." [58] It is in society and social living that man attains to intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical and material perfection.

The Angelic Doctor defines society as, " a grouping of men for the purpose of working out some aim together." [54] The essence of society consists in the permanent moral union of men in a cooperative and constant effort toward the attainment of some common end; in effect, a conspiration of minds and wills directed toward social and political harmony. " What constitutes the *raison d'etre* of the various social forms is potentially in each separate individual, to be made actual by the energies of these same individuals cooperating, or, _better, acting and reacting togther ." [55] In order that the common good of society might be secured, the members must agree to a common means toward that end; for if such agreement is lacking, confusion and chaos would replace the constant and efficient cooperative sociable movement which is vitally necessary for ordered society. Hence each member must contribute to and help to further the common good of all, for in so doing, he but attains his own perfection.

The reciprocity of advantages accruing to the members of

•• St. Thomas, De *Reg. Prine.*, Lib. I, c. 14.
•• *Ibid., Opusc.* 20, L. 4, c. 28.
•• *Ibid., In I Eth.,* 1.
""Vernon J. Bourke, *Ethics* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 47.
•• St. Thomas, *Contra impugnantea Dei cultum et religionem,* cap. III.
'"Luigi Sturzo, *Inner Laws of Society* (New York: Kenedy, 1944), pp. xiv-xv.

society in virtue of their contribution to the common good, is well pointed out in Jacques Maritain's definiti<:m of the common good:

> It includes the sum or sociological integration of all the civic conscience, political virtues and sense of right and liberty, of all the activity, material prosperity and spiritual riches, of unconsciously operative hereditary wisdom, of moral rectitude, justice, friendship, happiness, virtue and heroism in the individual lives of its members. For these things all are, in a certain measure, communicable and so revert to each member, helping him to perfect his life and liberty of person.[56]

All important is man's relation to the common good in society; for it is in society that man might realize all the social potentialities of his human nature and achieve the purpose and objective of human living.

The relationship of the human person to society is that of part to whole; and such a relationship is governed by purpose. The purpose of society in respect to the members which give it both existence and subsistence must correspond to the demands of human nature; and the progress of society is determined by the degree to which it adheres to this purpose and promotes the well-being and perfection of each of its members. In this light, society itself through the promotion of the common good must provide those measures which are necessary for the ordered and adequate development of man as man. Hence we can see that any change in society or in man's mode of living in society is one of reciprocal activity; what affects man, affects society; what affects society, affects man. Further, any change in society implies a direct relation to a hindrance to or an advancement of social progress.

Progress, *per se,* is generally defined as movement toward perfection; it is the termination of purpose, the end of operation, the transition from imperfect to perfect.[57] St. Augustine speaks

[56] Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good,* translated by John J. Fitzerald (New York: Scribner's, 1947), pp.

[57] St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 73, a. 1; ibid., 1-JI, q. 1, a.

of every change as a kind of death [58]; whereas, St. Thomas tells us that everything which changes remains as it were in part, and passes away in part. [59] One should not interpret, however, the notion of change in terms of an ominous connotation; for things change because they seek some new determination. What is changed acquires something by its movement, and attains to what it had not attained previously. This striving, this seeking, this transitory advance from potentiality to actuality is the basis of change.

Change, as such, is the transition of a thing from one mode of being to another. Progress is not synonymous with mere change. In contrast to true social change or progress, change for the sake of change has no definite purpose, no objective, no end in view. It is a meaningless and empty movement. To be considered as social change or included under the heading of social progress, change in society must be related to the needs of the human person; for progress in society is so intimately connected with and dependent upon the human person, that it would be vain to attempt to separate the two.

Though it is through the efforts of individual members of society that moral, intellectual and material progress is achieved, it is through society in general that social progress is effected. Man can find actuality only in the attainment of his final perfection and does so by directing his physical, moral and intellectual activities toward that end. Since man is in potency as regards the ordering to his and the application of his powers to .diverse objects whereby he might attain this end, [60] man's spiritual-temporal nature necessitates his living in accordance with a full realization of his binary potentialities. In that man's natural aptitudes, propensities and needs lead him to live in society, society as such becomes necessary for man to attain his finality. Hence society must recognize that

•• St. Augustine, *Contra Maq;iminum,* ii, 12, *as* cited in *St. Thomas Aquinas, Philosophical Texts,* selected and translated by Thomas Gilby (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 5s.

•• St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.,* I, q. 9, a. 1.

[60] *Ibid.,* a. !!.

man's perfection is dependent upon fulfilling both temporal and spiritual needs.

Although social progress embraces the same, it is not the mere accumulation of national or international power, nor great physical power and control of nature, nor industrial, economic and productive superiority, etc.; rather, it is the correlation, integration and summation of the intellectual, spiritual, moral, material and physical achievements which have a particular reference to the advance of human welfare in society. Whereas individual progress is measured in terms of man's personal approach to his perfection as a spiritual-temporal being, social progress embraces the all-over advance of both social and individual efforts in the perfection of the human person. This advance conjoins not only scientific and intellectual progressions, but spiritual and moral advancements as well. Social progress is the advance from the imperfect to the more perfect form of social living in the light of humanity as such.

Social progress is not to be confused with a simple acceptance of a proper set of volues. Merely to accept a set of values toward better human living accomplishes nothing unless the intellect and will of man is vehemently directed toward the attainment of these values. There must be an actual orientation and concrete striving toward the proper objective.

The meaning of progress as it relates to man in society is ably summed up by Father Zema as follows:

> . . . human progress, in its essential, universal and verifiable meaning, has from time immemorial always been conceived to be the growth of man's *life towards the perfection of his end,* or, to put it more specifically, the *increasing conformity of man's faculties, his mind and will in particular, with the primary end of his eroistence, which is the possession of the highest Truth and Good, and also the standard of all his actions and the essence of his ultimate and permanent happiness.* Every change, therefore,which leads a man towards this perfection marks progress; every change that leads him away from it marks retrogression. This applies both to individual men and to social groups, as well as to those attainments which constitute civilization and culture. [61]

[81] Demetrius Zema, S.J., *The Thoughtlessness of Modern Thought* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1984), pp. 58-59.

Whether or not the modern progress of scientific and technological advance is progress which leads man toward his proper perfection is dependent upon man's use and application of the imaginative fruits of his labors. Whether or not the discoveries of science and technology themselves will be successful in the advancement of human welfare in society will be determined by the extent to which they can be applied in the furtherance of human perfection.

*Modem Progress Viewed in Total Perspective*

If modem progress is viewed in terms of the past, present and future, many of the present-day anxieties of mankind would be alleviated. Because of the apparent forward movement of progress, many look only to the future for the resolution of their problems; whereas there are those who would cling only to the present accomplishment. Again, history is taken for granted by most. Only when the past is brought to the fore at the bidding of the present does history with its profound meaning and importance undergo as it were a rebirth of usefulness.

History in the making does not conform to any set formulae of human development. Each new change, each new value, each new concern must fight for recognition and acceptance. Just as man settles back to enjoy the comparative comfort and security of the present achievement, " all at once a change will come, the springs of the old life run dry, and men suddenly awake to a new world, in which the ruling principles of the former age seem to lose their validity and to become inapplicable or meaningless." [62] However, an appreciative study of the past would reveal that much is to be gathered from its treasury of "things ha:I?penedand accomplished"; for what the future can afford is vitally dependent upon the previous advancement. And then, there is always a consideration of the future to be taken into account, but this should not be at the expense or

•• Dawson, "Humanism and the New Order," *Essays in Ordlfl'*, edited by C. Dawson and J. F. Burns (New York: Macmillan, 1981), p. *J55.*

neglect of the past. As a matter of fact, when the changes which occur cannot be explained in terms of the past, man travels an arduous road in coping with the present and in making preparations for the future. In regard to social progress, the complete view would embrace the wisdom of the past, the considerations of the present and the portents of the future.

When progress is viewed as an achievement of the ·human mind by which mankind participates in the benefactions which the Almighty has placed in the created universe, the condemnation of the mid-twentieth century abundance of scientific and technological advance seems foolish if not at times premature. No attempt is made to minimize the obvious economic, social, and personal hardships and evils which have been the direct and indirect results of the flourishment of man's harnessing and control of nature and its forces. Any subjugation and harnessing of an alien force will result in some disorder of the normal quietude of things; and so too, man's subjugation of nature for his purpose results in certain disarrangements as regards the tranquility of society. However, it is suggested that the evils be viewed in their proper perspective as regards total human welfare and social progress. This all-encompassing consideration and evaluation of the myriad of changes which affect man today is well expressed in the clarity and simplicity which are the hallmarks of the insights of the Angelic Doctor:

> In appreciating what happens in time, we should remark that a mind bound up in it is differently placed from a mind entirely outside of its series. When many are travelling the same road, each of the company knows those ahead and those behind; he sees his immediate companion, he has seen those who have gone ahead, but those well behind he cannot see. But he who is no part of the throng but watches from high above is in a position to take in the whole convoy. He is able to see simultaneously all who are on the march, not as met before and after, but as all together in their order. [63]

In another place St. Thomas tells us:

[63] St. Thomas, *I Perihermenias,* lect. 14, as cited by Gilby, *op. cit.,* p. 84.

To those ... who estimate things, not by the nature thereof, but by the good they themselves can derive therefrom, everything which is harmful to themselves seems simply evil. For they do not reflect that what is in some way injurious to one person, to another is beneficial, and that even to themselves the same thing may be evil in some respects, but good in others.[64]

Rather than deplore the advances of technocracy and science and the benefits they afford and hold in promise, each individual as well as society itself should look at them as means whereby social progress is effected and secured.

Time does not antiquate the essential value or importance of discovery and invention, but it does change man's attitude in relation to their impact upon his present status of life and living. Fear of the known immediate results and fear of the correlated imminent consequences of the mid-twentieth century progress are perhaps the patent concerns of modern man. Fear of the unknown is perhaps a normal, natural human response, but, fear of the known only in so far as its immediate evils are concerned is not sufficient reason for condemnation or abandonment. Again, rather than be fearful of the forecasts of sCience and technology, " what modern man must fear is not a lack of that intellectual competence by which nature may be further subjugated but rather a want _of compliance with the moral responsibilities emanating from such subjugation." [65]

Though history attests to the fact that a materialistic social progress concurrently effects a depreciation of the spiritual values of man in society, a proper use and application of things material can result- in a spiritual as well as a material advancement of mankind. Aquinas puts it this way:

Now just as man's mind may be raised up to God by means of corporeal and sensible things, if one use them in a proper way to revere God, so, too, the improper use of them either completely distracts the mind from God, and so the end of the will is fixed

•• *Ibid., Summa Theol.,* I, q. *65,* a. 1, ad. 2, (New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1947).

•• Patrick S. Collins, F. S. C. H., in "State of the Question," *America* (June, 1958), 871.

in inferior things, or such abuse slows down the inclination of the mind toward God so that we become attached to things of this kind to an extent greater than is necessaty.[60]

Properly orientated, used, and applied, the material advantages of the present day, which seemingly bring man hack to the lodestone of the material, can handsomely effect ·the material perfection of man which in turn can assist him in the attainment of his spiritual end.

In conclusion, let us simply remark that man in the present condition of human existence is unique only in respect to the magnitude of the changes about him and the speed with which he is required to adapt himself to the demands of these changes. Whether. in the Hellenic period, the Medieval, or the Post-Modern period, man was and always will he subject to change. It is incumbent on man on occasion to take inventory of his achievements to see whether or not he has properly orientated them in the direction of true social progress. If what he has accomplished has helped to further and promote human welfare in regard to the ultimate destiny of man, then he has been successful; if not, then he has not looked to things material as *means* to his final eri.d, hut as ends in themselves. In the midst of all that befalls and benefits man, materially, scientifically, technologically, or otherwise, there is one consolation- " *omnia mutabilia reducuntur ad aliquod primum immoble."* [61]

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*Villanova, Penna.*

•• St. Thomas, *Sum. CO'fl,t. Gent.,* ill, U1 in *On the Truth of the Oatholia Faith,* translated by Vemon J. Bourke (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1956), Book ill, Providence, Part !!, p. 141.

•• *Ibid., Disp.,* XVI *de Veritate,* !!.

# . NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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# BOOK REVIEWS

*Prophecy and Inspiration.* By PAUL SYNAVE, O.P., and PIERRE BENOIT, O. P. Trans. by Avery Dulles, S. J. and Thomas L. Sheridan, S. J. New York, Desclee Company, 1961. Pp. 186 with bibliography and index. $8.75.

This is a translation of the original treatise " Reseignements techniques ., in the volume " La Prophetie," one of the fine series translating the *Summa* of St. Thomas into French. The author, Fr. Benoit, in his preface to the English edition states that he regards the work as " still valid ., though modifications, interpolations and clarifications have been introduced either as the result of scholarly suggestions judiciously adapted or from the author's own reconsiderations of difficulties involved.

The author's introductory paragraph to his study is a thoughtfully concise presentation of both difficulties and aims:

> " St. Thomas' treatise on prophecy is often used to clarify the notion of biblical inspiration, and has afiorded many valuable insights. ·It should be noted, however, that the " gift of prophecy " and " scriptural inspiration " are two distinct charisms, and that neither of them can be explained by the other without some adaptation. This fundamental observation has not always been kept sufficiently in mind, and as a result the subject has been obscured by confusions.
>
> It seems advisable, therefore, to explain St. Thomas' doctrine for its own sake and as clearly as possible before we study its bearing on modern discussions" (p. 61).

In the first of his "Notes on Thomistic Doctrine," then, Fr. Benoit offers a synthesis of St. Thomas' teaching on the charism of prophecy, and in his exposition of its distinctive characteristics and divisions he also provides the groundwork for the discussion of biblical inspiration to follow. Prophecy is a social charism n?rmally manifesting to the prophet truths hidden to his mind. Two distinct elements enter into the knowledge of the prophet, the intellectual light which illuminates the object and causes one to form a judgment about it and the species which furnish the subject-matter for the judgment, the principal element. The conjunction or disjunction of these two elements and the various species whether sensory, imaginative or intellectual provide bases for the division of prophecy. This division includes the possibility ". . . that the supernatural light might be given to the prophet simply to make him judge in a divine way about human matters which were already represented in his mind . . . This is a matter of great importance, for the present case is one which occurs very frequently in Holy Scripture ., (p. 66) .

Differences in terminology may likewise cause confusion, for " Today

we speak of inspiration when the mind of the' prophet receives only a light without representations, and of revelation when it receives both the one and the other., Can the authority of St. Thomas be invoked in favor of this terminology?" The author concludes that though the actual terms may differ there is foundation for it in Thomistic thought.

A final note of importance in this section deals with the notion and application of instrumentality to prophecy in its varying degrees. The transitory character of the charism completely dependent upon God's intiative displays one of the features of an instrument as does also the imperfect character of the knowledge possessed. Still he insists that " However transitory and imperfect the prophet's possession of the supernatural light, it is none the less truly given to him in an intrinsic way, and so as to perfect him in himself. This is a crucial point, heavily stressed in St. Thomas' whole treatment. The prophet actually receives this light in his intellect; it reinforces the natural light of his reason and becomes for him an active principle of knowledge" (p. 79). "In short, St. Thomas, who likes to use terms in their formal meaning, rarely calls the prophet an instrument of the Holy Spirit except when he can use this expression in its proper and rigorous sense, i.e. when there is question of secondary and hidden meanings to which his light does not extend " (p. 88).

On leaving Fr. Benoit's discussion of the charism of prophecy, one carries away the impression that he has deliberately avoided any unneeded exemplification of his thesis in order that the theological framework stand out stark and lucid. If this impression is correct, this procedure seems sanely geared to avoid the irrelevant objection. Certainly the spare prose which follows in the author's investigation of inspiration seems to confirm this reaction.

Fr. Benoit begins his consideration of inspiration by dealing in summary but adequate fashion with the existence and criterion of inspiration, false notions of it, and decisions of the Church's magisterium concerning it. He then analyses and respectfully but incisively rejects Cardinal Franzelin's opinion which distinguished between the ideas and the words of a book and proposed the " new theory of simple negative assistance for the latter, but maintained the old theory of real intellectual dictation for the former" (p. 91). Franzelin had fashioned his solution to meet the alternatives that man must be either an instrumental cause or a principal cause in the concurrence of divine and human activities. Benoit counters with a third possibility in which man would be a dependent principal cause or an instrumental cause in the broad, improper sense.

The author examines this third possibility in the light of Thomistic principles. This section, the heart of a masterly study, has been summarized, descanted upon, criticized and praised far too often to demand extended discussion here. The consensus seems to be that his treatment of the instru-

mentality of the sacred writer is a significant contribution to the literature on that subject. Generally, too, students of this treatise seem agreed that it contains certain main themes which are to some degree interdependent and mutually explanatory.

Even in justifying his method of approach to the question of inspiration, Benoit brings up one theme which will recur: the analogical application of concepts. He admits that some, as Franzelin, have preferred to begin with the human notion of author; he believes this results in a misleading univocity. Like Lagrange, he opts for the exact theological notion of inspiration as the more reliable point of departure. For this, properly developed, should lead to the idea of God as truly the Author of the inspired book in a broadened, analogical sense which is rich in theological implication and does not confine God within any narrow limits of human authorship.

Having adopted a theological notion as the focus of analysis, Benoit proceeds to a scholastic exposition of his thought. He begins with the general psychological viewpoint on the nature of the speculative and the practical judgment, important for their differing roles in the case of the typical prophet and the typical sacred write,r. In prophecy, the divine charism first affects the intellect while in literary inspiration, God acts initially on the will. In this connection, moreover, Benoit recognizes three possible formalities in the divine charism: 1) Revelation which brings supernatural knowledge to the mind through infused species; fl) Cognitive (formerly called " Prophetic " by Benoit) Inspiration which is a light illuminating the speculative judgment and raising it to a supernatural mode of knowledge; and 3) Scriptural Inspiration which is a supernatural impulse stimulating the will and directing the practical judgment in the writing of a book whose aim is the production oi a certain effect. Usually in concrete cases these formalities are found united though in varying degrees. The first is characteristic of the prophet while the third most properly pertains to the sacred writer, but to neglect the various possible interplays among them may eventuate in inspiration being regarded either as a form· of revelation or a simple orientation of the practical reason. In Benoit's theory the two orders of the speculative and practical overlap. "Now the consequence of this are of supreme importance: scriptural inspiration penetrates and specifies the writer's cognitive inspiration; his practical judgment commands and moderates his speculative judgment. The result is an inspired thought which exhibits all the nuances, restrictions, and limitations characteristic of human thinking, and which is nonetheless God's thought, precisely as he wishes to make it known to the children of men " (p. 117).

Inspiration, thus analogically conceived, extends proportionally and diversely to all the faculties used in the composition of a sacred book, for to be truly author of the whole work God must be influential in the

entire process. In like manner, inspiration must be extended to all those who were engaged in the composition of the sacred book to the degree of their engagement. All of this, Benoit calls " verbal inspiration " or " total inspiration," the later expression perhaps being more acceptable to those who find the former one alarming and smacking of a return to the old theory of " dictation."

A consequence of inspiration, but not its sole result, is inerrancy. "Instruction is only one of the aims proposed to the practical reason of the inspired subject; there are other ends which belong especially to the affective order, such as to encourage, console, reprimand, etc. Truth will then be one of the qualities of the inspired word, but not the only one . . ." (p. 18!l). Formal criteria should define the limits of biblical inerrancy, and Benoit proposes three: 1) the point of view or formal object of the sacred writer; 2) the extent of his affirmations; and 8) the degree to which he demands acceptance from the reader of his views. As he points out, inerrancy like the inspiration from which it derives is a divine gift which is operative in all of Scripture, not univocally, but analogically.

The author then rounds out his treatment of inspiration by applying it to the fields of textual, literary, and historical criticism; he concludes by considering its relation with rational exegesis and the rule of faith-all this in some twenty closely written pages, tantalizingly brief. A fuller presentation apparently not desirable here in view of the over-all plan would be welcomed in some future supplementary work or occasional paper.

The translators deserve congratulations for a readable rendering of the original text in what is usually termed serviceable prose; a spot check indicated that they translated faithfully but slavishly. The original format of the work was preserved save that the English reader will have to supply his own tract on prophecy from the *Summa* to make the " Explanatory Notes" more intelligible; though all of these notes are not equally pertinent to an understanding of inspiration, still the omission of some, such as note 85, would be a distinct loss. We consider this book a modem classic in its field and sincerely hope that a future less expensive edition will make it more accessible to the average student.

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*Theological Investigations.* Vol. 1: God, Christ, Mary and Grace. By KARL RAHNER, S. J. Translated with an Introduction by CoRNELms ERNST, O. P., Helicon Press, Baltimore; Darton, Longman and Todd, London 1961. Pp. xxii-88!l.

Father Karl Rahner is professor of Dogmatic Theology at the University of lnnsbruck. He is one of the most important and influential writers

on theological matters in Germany to-day and through the translation of his works into many languages his fame and influence are known and felt internationally. For well over twenty years now he has applied his acute mind to grappling with almost every aspect of the proper method and content of theological science. By the freshness and originality of his approach to old and new problems in theology and cognate sciences he appeals in a special way to the younger generation of theologians. He is convinced, and rightly so, that our traditional theology (as contained and served up in a great number of modern theological manuals, about which Fr. Rahner has many severe things to say) needs to be rethought and presented to the modern mind in a manner suited to its needs and its modern modes of thought. "Dogmatic theology to-day," he tells us, "is very orthodox. But it is not vividly alive " (p. 13) .

Taking into account the burning problems that torture the modern mind and basing himself on a return to the only sound sources of all theology, Scripture and Tradition as manifested in the official teaching of the Church, he has set himself the task of making theology 'vividly alive.' From 1954 onwards he began to publish in book form, under the general title of *'Schriften zur Theologie,'* different theological studies which had already appeared in various theological journals in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Already four dense volumes of these studies have appeared. The present work in a translation of the first in its entirety. The translation is admirably done by the English Dominican, Father Cornelius Ernst, who has achieved almost the impossible in rendering into a clear and readable English the all too frequent linguistic obscurity of the original. Father Rahner is never 'flat or dry or boringly pedantic. He is ever exciting and stimulating by the novelty and forthrightness of his views and exposition, which are destined to shake our complacency in traditional positions and force us to see theological truth in a new perspective. He questions everything and in the process succeeds, unfortunately perhaps, in casting doubt on many tenets till now regarded as unassailable.

However, he does not wish us to accept his ideas without reserve and bemoans the fact that in the field of theological writing " reviewers have adopted the modern practice of a more or less uncommitted ' notice ' of new publications, and have given up any concern to come to terms with a writer by a close and reasoned examination of his thought " (p. 13, note 1).

When one sets about examining closely Fr. Rahner's studies and strives to come to terms with him one cannot help making many, and at times even serious, reservations concerning the doctrinal content of his frequently all too daring theories. In a review of the French translation of the present work Father J.-H. Nicolas, professor of dogmatic theology at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland,. has taken him to task on many points

and feels himself forced to maintain that, by the time Fr. Rahner has finished with his speculations, there is very little left of the bible or of the teaching of the Church's magisterium. This is a very severe judgment, but for- all that I think it is perfectly justified.

In spite of the subtlety and intricacy of Fr. Rahner's speculations all along the line one has the very uneasy feeling that he has emptied the bible and the magisterium of the Church of any real meaning and presented one with his own personal theories. There are too many sweeping statements, too many generalizations. Many of the questions raised with eclat for Fr. Rahner have been already asked and answered centuries ago. He of course has a perfect right to refuse to accept the position of earlier theologians, but he has no right to present their position either incompletely or in a positively false light. This happens all too often in the present volume of theological investigations. In the present rev1ew I should like to point out a few (taken more or less at random) of Fr. Rahner's conceptions which appear inacceptable and altogether ill-founded. To deal with *all* the questions raised by the author or to attempt to solve *aU* the doubts raised by him, " by a close and reasoned examination of his thought," would go far beyond the limits of a simple review.

I. Regretting the "strange and disturbing" fact that "there is so little active formation of concepts in theology to-day " he goes on to give the following example of what he means. " It is admitted that there is an objective distinction between venial and grave sin, not only as regards the ' matter ' of the act, but also from the side of the subject, that is, as regards the degree of existential depth, the centrality or superficiality, with which the personal core of the .subject is engaged. The same distinction must then be applicable to the morally *good* act, from the very nature of the case, and in such a way that the ethical quality of these good acts, so various in kind, is only ' analogically ' to be comprehended in the same concept of the morally good act. Now there is not a single word in theology for this distinction and for what it should distinguish. If there were an appropriate *terminus technicus* we could ask, among other things, in another theological field: Does *every* morally good act (in the supernatural order) increase grace, or only (how are we to put it?) the 'grave' act? " (p. 5. Cf. also p. 370, note I). I wonder does the author really mean us to take him seriously here or is he simply trying to dazzle us? Can it be that Father Rahner has never heard of the distinction between ethically good actions and meritorious works? or between salutary and meritorious actions? or again between intense or fervent acts of virtue and remiss acts? These are all technical terms that have been used and explained in detail by theologians for centuries and are even contained in part in the magisterium of the Church. How then can he maintain that there is ' not a single word ' in theology to express the different degrees of good actions? .

2. In his essay on the development of dogma Fr. Rahner has the following to say about faith and its object: " the object of faith is not something merely passive, indifferently set over against a subjective attitude to it, but simultaneously the principle by which it is itself grasped as object." This statement of course only acqu4-es its full significance on the assumption that the actual support given to faith under the grace of the Holy Spirit is not a merely ontological modality of the act of faith beyond conscious apprehension, but also has a specific effect in consciousness (which is not necessarily to say that it is reflexively distinguishable). This effect makes it possible to apprehend the objects of faith given through the hearing of the external announcement, under a 'light,' a subjective *a priori* under grace (the formal object), which is not available to someone without grace. As is well known, this assumption is a controversial topic in Catholic theology. Nevertheless the Thomist view, which does make this assumption, seems to us to be true on Biblical and .theological grounds, and we have consequently the right to make thi,s assumption ourselves without being able to further justify it here." About this statement I should like to make two simple observations. First, if I understand the text correctly, Fr. Rahner here identifies the formal object (the *obiectum formale 'quo',* in scholastic terminology) with 'the subjective light of faith. And that is obviously a contradiction in terms. The formal object of any power or of any virtue is precisely something objective as the very term itself implies and can never become the principle by which the subject elicits a vital act of virtue or cognition. Secondly, here we have to do with a complete mis-representation and a complete mis-understanding of the Thomistic position. Neither St. Thomas himself nor his followers have ever propounded such a theory of faith and its object.

*3.* What is much more disquieting'still is Fr. Rahner's teaching on grace and the supernatural in general as proposed in the two essays which deal with the relationship between grace and nature and the scholastic concept of uncreated grace. For him " it is quite impossible for something purely created to be really absolutely supernatural and to present an absolute *mysterium"* (p. *333,* note 3) . As a consequence he finds no difficulty in admitting the position of Ripalda according to which it is quite possible to conceive of a purely created substance from which created grace would proceed connaturally!! (ibid) . Created grace itself is depicted as the ultimate material disposition (*dispoaitio quae est necesaitaa ad fcrrmam)* for the reception by the creature of uncreated grace. " In this regard," asserts Fr. Rahner explicitly," created grace is seen as *causa materialis (dispoaitio ultima)* for the formal causality which God exercises by graciously communicating his own Being to the creature " (p. 841; cf. p. 882 ff.) The obvious logical conclusion to be drawn from this is that God himself, uncreated grace, is the one real formal cause of justification! And by that is not

meant the formal extrinsic cause, the *causa exemplaris,* but the intrinsic formal cause. To the present reviewer such a teaching seems very like theological pantheism. But Fr. Rahner is not worried by that; nor is he worried by the very formal and explicit teaching of the Council of Trent that the *unique* formal cause of justification is created grace (Denz. 799). He explains {or perhaps better, explains away) this explicit teaching of the magisterium by saying that " we must remember that the Council only wishes to meet the imputation theory of the Reformers, Seripando and others, but did not wish to determine how created and uncreated (inner!} grace (of which latter it also says precisely 'signans et ungens Spiritu promissionis Sancto . .') are related to each other and together constitute the *single* grace of justification" (p. 841-842}. In attributing his theory to St. Thomas (p. 888} Fr. Rahner again displays an amazing facility for reading into the words of the Angelic Doctor a meaning which is not to be found there.

Examples of this kind could be multiplied almost without end. Let these three, however, suffice to give some idea of Fr. Rahner's theological method and teaching. They will also suffice to explain why we feel ourselves driven to the conclusion that Fr. Rahner, in the process of making theology " vividly alive," has only succeeded in making it less orthodox.

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*St. Thorruu Aquinas, Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle,* Translated by JoHN P. RowAN, II Volumes; Henry Regnery Co. {1961} {$25.00)

One who is requested to write a review of a translation, is given not one but two tasks. Obviously he is expected to record his comments on the merits of the translation. But there is another feature of the work about which he should express an opinion. It is this. Does the original merit a translation? It was with concern for the two tasks that .this reviewer approached the translation of *St. Thomas, Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle* by John P. Rowan.

Did Professor Rowan expend what must have added up to a very large investment of time, patience and scholarly research on a worthwhile project? Or was his effort analogous to the groaning mountain that brought forth the mouse? M. Etienne Gilson, whose historical studies in Thomism have earned for him the right to be heard with respect, writes of the phil-

osophical treatises: " Les Commentaries de S. Thomas sur AriStote sont pour nous des documents precieux, dont Ia perte eut ete deplorable." (Le Thomisme, 1948). Whether one is in complete agreement with Gilson's description of their (happily contrary to fact) loss as "deplorable," or believes such an occurrence should merit a much stronger term, depends ultimately on his acceptance or rejection of Gilson's central thesis on the character of Thomism.

In a sense though Gilson's " deplorable " situation is· not entirely contrary to fact. In a manner of speaking. the Commentaries of St. Thomas on Aristotle are lost, and this in spite of the fact that copies of the same are to be found in full view: on the library shelves of Universities, Colleges and Seminaries. While physically available to anyone who wishes to take and read, they are not in the same measure intellectually available. Their thought remains remote, inaccessible because it lies beneath a language that is today ' deader ' than it was twenty years ago. But some adventurous souls were not content and translations of some of the Commentaries began to appear. For those, however, whose interest in philosophy brought them to Metaphysics, these translations have served to heighten the sense of loss at the remoteness of St. Thomas' Commentary on· the Metaphysics. Nor was the attempt to assuage the feeling of loss by pointing out the availability of Aristotle's text in the vernacular too successful. The fact is that these translations of Aristotle's text offer the student the thought of Aristotle in a *language* that is familiar but *that thougkt* remains difficult to grasp. The metaphysical thought of Aristotle, and to a degree the thought of the entire *Corp'UIJ A:ristotelicum,*demands a master to read and interpret a master. In his translation of the *CommentaT'I/ of the Metaphysics of Aristotle* Professor Rowan has undertaken to supply us with that Master. And in so doing he has selected that which does indeed merit a translation.

And now we come to the task of essaying his labor. How well has Professor Rowan accomplished the work of putting the thought of St. Thomas within our reach?

The first.point that should be noted is that the text used in the translation is not a critical one. As the author states, he adopted the latin text which is to be found in Fr. Spiazzi's edition of the Commentary, departing from it only when evidence supported a variant reading. One might see in the use of a text that falls short of being critical a defect. But it would be unjust to impute the defect to the translator. As matters presently stand, such an edition is a thing of the future. A recent bulletin issued by the Leonine Commission contains the information that work on a critical edition of the Commentary on the Metaphysics is about to be undertaken. Judging from the past, the period of waiting its arrival will likely be quite extended and waiting might be a luxury that is too costly.

In his effort to fill a void the author was compelled to choose a text of the work which is reputable, if not critical.

Like everyone who has embarked on a work of translation, Professor Rowan -had to make a choice. There are several modes of translating. There is the simply literal translation which seeks to preserve the literary form of the original. There is the literary translation whose principal distinction consists in the employment of modern literary form and current idioms. There is the exCeedinglyliterary translation which shoUld be more properly called a paraphrase, Each mode has merit. But each is not equally serviceable in accomplishing the double task of showing an equal concern for the thought content of a work·and for the reader. Quite rightly Professor Rowan did not elect the exceedingly literary mode.

It was his intention to offer us a translation that would give access to St. Thomas' penetrating reflections on the Metaphysics of Aristotle. Now it is not merely a courteous presumption but an indisputable fact that the Angelic Doctor knew exactly what he wished to say and did express with exactness what he wished. Adherence, then, to the language of the Saint is not simply a mark of recognition of his genius, it is also a guarantee of fidelity to his thought. Professor Rowan's choice therefore of being literal in his translation was a highly prudent one. However he was not unaware of a certain literary unpleasantness that is inseparable from simply literal translations. His knowledge of the language of the original made him acutely conscious of the archaic quality of the literary forms in vogue among the medievalist latin authot:s. To be literal to the extent of employing such forms wotild reflect adversely in his concern for his perspective audience. Wisely he permitted himself a measure of freedom, using more acceptable literary forms wherever such substitutions would help the reader without doing harm to the thought. In his pursuit of a translation that was literal with a pinch of freedom he must often have been tempted to allow himself the luxury of a perfect freedom of expression. Happily he resisted the temptation and the resUlt is a translation of the thought of St. Thomas in a language that faithftilly reflects that thought and is as readable as one cotild hope.

There is one feature of the translation on which I would like to make a.special comment. Every translator of this type of work is bedeviled by the problem of technical language. Should one attempt to translate this language? Or is it preferable to commit the technical phrase to the limbo of the " untranslatable "? It is not a question that admits of an easy ·answer in view of the pronounced rigidity of the technical phrase and the fluidness of the English tongue. Here Professor Rowan, I believe, hit upon a happy compromise. In the instance·of the technical phrase whose translation offers some difficUltybecause of the questionable competency of the English word or phrase to faithftilly reflect the thought, he takes pains to

insure correctness by either an explanatory footnote or by parenthetically inserting the latin word of phrase. This precautionary measure is an admirable device and eloquently testifies to the author's concern for both the thought and the reader. But I could have wished that he had extended this procedure to embrace the phrases *per 8e, per accidena.* Actually he is content to give us the appropriate English equivalent and thereby, it appears to me, pasSes up a grand pedagogical opportunity. These latin phrases are perhaps the most frequently occurring distinctions in philosophy and theology. Their unvarying physical appearance can be very deceptive for they are exceedingly rich in meaning and a reading of them in context is always required to determine which of the various meanings is to be applied. Had Professor Rowan followed the practice of using the latin phrase along with the English translation, 'he would have performed a double service for the uninitiated in latin. (There are translations of some of St. Thomas' works that do employ these latinisms, hence the twofold service would be appreciated.) By the simple expedient of juxtaposing the phrases *per 88, per accidena* and their English equivalents he would instruct the uninstructed in the richness of meaning of these latinisms and in the need of caution in interpreting them whenever and wherever they are found.

One word more, I would recommend the reading of the author's study on the aristotelian text used by St. Thomas in his Commentary. It is an excellent presentation of the results of modem scholarship and research.

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*Doollf', Mtll8t1AJ1w,etfl.*

# BRIEF NOTICES

*God of the Scientists, God of the E:cperiment.* By REM-r CHAUVIN. Translated by SALVATOR ATTANASIO. Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1960. Pp. *152,* with glossary and bibliography. *$8.95.*

This essay propounds a novel approach to the problem of God developed by a scientist well known for his work in biology and psychology. He relies heavily on clinical and experimental methods to develop a new argument for the existence 0.f God that, despite serious limitations from the viewpoint of traditional philosophy, will undoubtely appeal to his fellow scientists.

The tone of the book is set in its opening pages. Chauvin holds that " when we speak to scientists we must speak their language," and is confident that in his work " laboratory people will immediately recognize one of their own in certain ways of reasoning, and above all in the importance assigned to experiment and the verification of hypotheses " (p. I) • He is aware that his experimental approach to religion will displease philosophers. Yet he does not intend the book for them, and is in fact derogatory of their role in the intellectual community. He is likewise dissatisfied with traditional theology and the way in which the Church presents Christ's message to the world.

One is led to expect that an author so critical of traditional thought will present a brilliant argument in support of God's existence. Yet Chauvin's exposition is far from this. His writing does not abound in the poetic imagery that makes Teilhard de Chardin's offerings palatable, nor is it a simple matter even to follow the thread of his thought. Reduced to the bare bones, it seems that the argument diffusely spread through the book may be summarized as follows:

If God *exists,* then man can experience Him in a way that vitally aJfects his personal life.

But the scientist can perform theotropic experiments for himself and see that God will affect his personal life.

Therefore he can experimentally establish for himself the existence of God.

The first statement is an hypothesis that Chauvin regards as capable of direct verification. The second statement properly locates the scientist on his own ground, where he can experimentally establish, and thereby verify, the theory implicity formulated. The conclusion then follows from the " lived experience " of the scientist, which generates a conviction believed

to be far superior to that generated by any type of " pure discourse " (pp. 17, 71, 73, 148).

As can be seen from this, Chauvin does not believe it possible to *demonstrate* the existence of God, if one takes " demonstration " in the classical sense. In his opinion, " to place the problem on a purely intellectual plane, to wish to demonstrate God like a theorem, is to preclude any results; to lock oneself in the prison of the 'undecidables' ... " (p. 10). In place of demonstration, he would substitute the notion of experimental verification. Thus he states: " The very idea which guided me in undertaking this essay is that if God exists, it must be possible to verify it (not to *prove* it) " (p. 11, emphasis his). However acceptable this approach may be to the experimentalist, it will be recognized immediately by the logician as at best a dialectical argument, and at worst the fallacy of *affirmatio consequentis.*

In spite of the logical weakness in Chauvin's argument, he does present considerable historical and psychological data that will interest the scientific mind, and might persuade the latter to investigate religious experience as a means of reaching God. Much of Chauvin's writing is in fact charged with moral persuasiveness. Thus clothing the bare bones of his argument with flesh and blood, he is able to niake out a case with considerable persuasive value for scientists who subscribe to his premisses.

Chauvin's book itself may best be characterized as an experiment. If it succeeds, it will bring scientists to a more profound realization of God's existence and His effect on their personal lives. If it does not, it will go far to show that the author's experimental method is not the uniquely *scientific* way of reaching out towards God.

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*Dover, Maaaachuaetta.*

*Philosophical Readings in Cardinal Newman.* Edited by JAMES COLLINS. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1961. Pp. 486 with index. $7.50.

Professor James Collins' *Philosophical Readings in Cardinal Newman* is an invaluable study of the thought of the venerable oracle of the Oratory. Dr. Collins has done more than edit and group texts. First, he has provided us with a splendid general introduction on Newman's philosophical formation and accomplishments. Then, prior to each of the four sections into which the selections are grouped, Professor Collins gives special introductory remarks complemented in the rear of the book by superb notes. This handsome volume concludes with a bibliographical note which is a gem of practical advice on reading Newman and literature treating of the revered Cardinal.

In the first group of texta are the tools of Newman's philosophical trade, the terminology and distinctions that Newman himself either develops or accepts and will use in his writings. Thomists may, at times, be irritated with the Cardinal's approach, feeling that Aristotle and St. Thomas have provided sharper and more versatile instruments. In the second section, are Newman's ideas on proving the existence of God and discovering the Divine Nature. Often he employs personalist notions with appeals to his conscience for data. However, Newman is not an idealist but a realist and hence parts whatever company he may seem to keep with the Personalists of the English school. The third group of texts is, perhaps, Newman at his most interesting and his best, hammering across his favorite thesis oil the evolution and development of ideas. Since he is treating of religion and social problems he )las ample room for his engaging and valid theory. The collection of texts closes with Newman's thoughts on faith and rea.soiJ..

Cardinal Newman has much to teach us imd Professor Collins makes this point in the wise choice of key texts. Considering the wide range of writings covered by the selections, it is interesting to note that one noble thought and desire is ever present in the mind and heart of Newman. He is unflinchingly loyal to the Magisterium of the Church while remaining fearlessly devoted to the pursuit of truth as he saw it. Not only the writings of Cardinal Newman but the example he gives should be refreshing and inspiring to the modern mind.

RAYMOND 0. p.

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*From an lv01'1J Tower.* By BERNARD A. HAuSMANN, S.J., Milwaukee: The Bruee Publishing Co., 1960. Pp. 122 witll index. $8.50.

In his preface, Fr. Hausmann notes that mathematics has often been used to refute sound philosophical positions. This book is his attempt to provide a foundation for a bridge between traditional philosophy and modern mathematics.

It consists of a brief comprehensive history of mathematics; a series of problems common to mathematics and philosophy: philosophy and its relation to Euclidian geometry, the definition of mathematics, the problem of number, the question of the infinite, the rules of logic; and, finally, an appendix taken from Euclid's *Elements.*

The author does not solve these problems. The book is in the manner of an excursion, an exploration, by one who is more of a mathematician than a philosopher. For this reason, allowance must be made for vague references both to philosophy and philosophers.

Nevertheless, such difticulties not be made to detract from the worth and general usefulness of this book. Problems common to ]Jlathematics and philosophy are clearly presented, mathematical terms are explained in a way especially adapted to the philosopher, while the history of mathematics supplies an excellent background knowledge. In short, *From an lvorg Tower* serves as a spring-board for philosophy.

EuGENE BoNDI, O.P.

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