AQUINAS ON THE EVALUATION OF HUMAN ACTIONS

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AMONG THE questions dealt with in the *Prima Secundae* are those of what moral goodness "is" and on what basis it is attributed to some human actions but denied of others. Aquinas's answers are currently a matter of contention between the proportionalists and their critics, as is his answer to the question of how human actions are classified.

The presentation in the *Prima Secundae* does give rise to problems, thanks in part to Aquinas's pedagogical procedure. That procedure can be described as bit-by-bit exposition. Rather than set forth his whole view of a topic in one place, in a synthesis of some sort, and applying it piecemeal thereafter as subsequent questions may demand, the Common Doctor keeps his whole view back, exposing no more of it than is needed to resolve the particular issue at stake in a given article. The result of this, quite often, is that qualifications crucial to a fair comprehension of what he holds are scattered over places far removed from each other. Because what he holds on the classification and evaluation of human actions consists of several parts, each complicated, and all connected, his solution is unsuited to bit-by-bit exposition. Genuine doubts as to what the parts are, and how they come together, can arise. The purpose of the present paper is to present a synthesis that lets the whole picture emerge; as it emerges, certain attempts to read Aquinas in a manner supportive of the proportionalist position will be shown to conflict with the design of the whole.

In his preface to qq. 18-20 in the *Prima Secundae,* Aquinas

describes their subject matter as the goodness or badness *(boni-tas vel malitia)* of human actions. These abstract nouns are derived from the corresponding adjectives, "good" and "bad," and the very first thing Aquinas tells us (in the first sentence of q. 18, a. 1) is that "good" and "bad" are to be asserted of human actions in the same way as they are asserted of other things.' So how is that?

A BACKGROUND TOPIC: 'GOOD' AND 'BAD' IN GENERAL

If one should take up any item at all-an apple, a shoe-and say that the item is good, would one be purporting only to describe it as it is, or would one be purporting also to evaluate it in light of how it ought to be? Differently posed, does a proposi-tion of the form "x is good" represent a product of speculative reason alone, or does it include an element, at least, from practi-cal reasoning? Recent analytical philosophy is quite clear that the latter option is correct. "Good" and "bad" are terms which express evaluation rather than some sort of disinterested, theo-retical description. [2] Aquinas can be read, at least, as holding the same view.

In a text in which he defined a completely general sense of "good" (more general, for example, than just "human good"), he said: *ratio boni est quod aliquid sit appetibile.* [3] To make out what this dictum means, two remarks are in order. First, the *ratio* of a term "T" is the reason anything is called T. Aquinas identified it as the aspect of things which the mind grasps and signifies through "T."[4] He meant the aspect which would be "what it takes" for a thing to merit or verify the term, in case the term is applied to it. Thus the *ratio* of "good" is what it takes for

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[1] Respondeo dicendum quod de bono et malo in actionibus oportet loqui sicut de bono et malo in rebus ....

' The analytical philosophers derive a portion of their clarity on this issue from the celebrated remarks of David Hume on the difference between "is" and "ought": *A Treatise on Human Nature,* III, i,l.

[3] See *ST* I, q. 5, q. 1. corpus, and many other places. Aquinas often quoted Aristotle's definition of "good" as what all things seek or tend toward *(appetunt);* the Stagirite's text is in the *Nicomachaean Ethics,* book I, chapter 1.

[4] Ratio enim significata per nomen est id quod concipit intellectus de re et significat illud per vocem *(ST* I, q. 5, a. 2). Elsewhere, the *ratio* of a term is more closely identified

anything to be called good; and in that sense it is the reason any-
thing is rightly called "good." Second, *appetitus* and *appetibile*
are broad terms. The former means any sort of tendency or incli-
nation whatsoever. [5] The latter (the *appetibile)* refers to anything
which has what it takes to satisfy any sort of inclination of any
sort of being. [6] So in the dictum at hand *(ratio boniest quod aliq-
uid sit appetibile),* Aquinas is saying that, vis-a-vis any kind of
thing, S, an object or state having what it takes to satisfy an
inclination found in S-things is "good" to (or for) S-things.'

with its definition (cf. *ST* I, q. 13, a. 1). The *ratio* of a term need not be its sense but can
just as well be the real aspect of a thing which corresponds to that sense and so fits or
verifies the definition.

[5] Aquinas takes *appetitus* so broadly as to include even gravitational or inertial phe-
nomena. Hence those phenomenologists who prefer to start their account of "good" with
admiration are not, in fact, offering a rival starting point. For wherever there is an incli-
nation to admire something, that inclination will be an *appetitus.*

[6] Among these potential satisfiers Aquinas counts not only objects external to the
being, such as food, shelter, etc., but also states internal to it. In biological kinds, the
mature state of the individual satisfies tendencies which are present in, but not yet satis-
fied in, the larval or juvenile state of the individual.

[1] This account coincides with Aristotle's definition, on the supposition that Aristotle
was offering a contextual definition of the phrase "good of," as in "the good of a stone."
For then he was saying that, for all things x, the good of x = what x seeks or tends toward.

Notice that the instrumental sense of"good," found in "pots are good for cooking," is
set aside by Aristotle and Aquinas as another (and secondary) affair. For pots do not seek
cooking; and stones, though good for throwing at malefactors, do not tend towards that
employment.

Rather, the focal and primary sense of "good" is the sense in which a benefit is good
to a beneficiary. Thus an elementary statement of goodness becomes something like
"Milk is good for me." The shorter sentence, "Milk is good," can then be construed. It is
either an abbreviation of "Milk is good for me" or else an implicit generalization of it,
meaning that milk is good for my species (people).

"It is good for the spider to eat the fly" is ambiguous. Taken one way, it means that
eating the fly is *goodfor the spider,* which is true for the most part. Taken the other way,
it asserts some larger interest in light of which it is good *that* the spider eat the fly. This
larger interest might be the environment, or the global eco-system. Artistotle and
Aquinas would have talked about the "common good" of the universe. If this larger sys-
tem tends or inclines towards a balance in the numbers of the species, and this balance is
served by the spider's (rather often) eating the fly, then the tendency of the system is what
makes the spider's predation "good." Indirectly, the fact that we humans are part of the
system makes the spider's diet good for us as well.

Thus goodness claims which appear theoretical or "absolute" are found to retain a
core of intelligibility which is practical and evaluative. A person who literally had no
inclinations and who therefore could not experience anything as *appetibile* could not

Now, if there is a kind of being S_0 which has only one inclina-
tion, the above remarks suffice to say all that can be said about
"good" for that kind of being. But for kinds of beings Si which
have more than one inclination, there is more to be said. An
object or state may have what it takes to satisfy one inclination
of an Si-thing but not its others. Such an object or state is only
"good to some extent" or "good in some respect." By contract, an
object or state which had what it took to satisfy all the being's
inclination would be good "period."'

Aquinas had inherited a famous thesis to the effect that good
is coextensive with being-that is, that "good" would be applic-
able wherever "exists" is applicable. To make this thesis come
out right, Aquinas posited in every being an inclination to stay in
being. In that way, for every being, the fact that it exists would
satisfy one of its inclinations, so that its sheer being would be, for
it, "good in some respect." [9] By salvaging (even in this way) the
coextensivity thesis, Aquinas escaped the "naturalistic fallacy."
That fallacy consists in thinking that goodness is a nature which
some things have and others lack. [10] If that view were correct,
"good" and "bad" would work like any contrasting pair of
descriptive adjectives, such as "colored" and "colorless" or "ani-
mate" and "inanimate." There would then be good beings and
bad beings, just as there are animate beings and inanimate ones.
And in that case, the class of good beings would be narrower
than the class of beings, just as the class of animate beings is nar-
rower than the class of beings. Aquinas rejected all such ideas
with the sweeping declaration that good "adds" nothing to
being-adds nothing like a form or nature."

understand what was meant by any claim of goodness. As we shall see in a moment,
claims about the goodness of existence are no exception.

[8] *ST* I, q. *5,* a. I ad 1. Aquinas often thought of a thing's full maturity as a state toward
which it was inclined and in which it would find all its inclinations satisfied. Such a state
would represent its "perfection" and "complete good." To reach this state would be the
"ultimate purpose" of the thing's tendings, inclinings, striving, etc. Aquinas affirmed the
same connection between "ultimate purpose" and "complete good" in the case of man *(ST*
I-II, q. 1), though he could point to no non-theological or this-worldly state in which all
man's inclinations would be satisfied.

[9] *STI,* q. *5,* a. 1.

[10] The classic discussion is G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge, 1959), 73.

[11] See *STI,* q. *5,* a. 3 ad 1.

This account of "good" comes closer to the topic of human action, of course, as Aquinas leaves behind the very wide use of "good" just discussed and turns to the more familiar use that arises from human experience of the human inclinations. In human beings, the inclinations are managed (or mismanaged) by the will.[12] So the reason *we* call something "good" is that it is desirable. [13] Again the evaluative rather than disinterestedly descriptive   of "good" in Aquinas is unmistakable. Moreover, "desirable" is ambiguous as between "in some respect" and "period." Because the will manages all the inclinations in the light of reason, what would satisfy one of my lower inclinations may be desirable at first blush (and so good "in some respect") and yet may fail to be desirable "all things considered," that is, in light of my other inclinations, needs, or interests (and so may fail to be desirable "period"). There is thus a potential, at least, for a conflict to arise between the desirability which is just "there already," prior to a reasoned judgment, and the desirability which consists precisely in a conformity to such judgment [14]

This potential for conflict lends human interest to the difference between the desirability which is the reason we call something good "in that respect" and the desirability which is the reason we call something good "period." All the more interest attaches to it, when one asks how the reasoned judgment just mentioned, which in man's case is supposed to make this difference, is itself to be made. How do we reach an overall assessment? How do we compare the desirability (goodness) which a thing may have "in one respect" with its undesirability in   some

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[12] **-** per voluntatem utimur omnibus quae in nobis sunt *(ST* I, q. 5, a. 4 ad 3).

[13] On the connections and overlaps between *appetitus, desiderium,* and *voluntas,* see *ST* I, q. 19, a. 9; I-II, q. 30, a. 1 ad 2; q. 56, a. 5 ad 1, etc.

[14] According to I-II, q. 50, a. S ad 3, the "object" to which the human will is inclined by its very nature is the good which consists in being in accord with reason *(bonum rationis);* cf I-II. q. 56, a. 6. By this Aquinas underscores the difference between the will (a rational faculty) and the sense appetites. The goodness which is desirability to a sense appetite is pre-rational and may be experienced as counter-rational, that is, as a pull felt in the teeth of rational refusal. But the goodness which is willability is based on reason; it cannot be experienced as against reason, though the accord with reason may be dishonestly contrived through "rationalization."

other respect, so as to judge reasonably whether it is desirable or
not "all things considered"?

On this topic, the logic of applying "good" according to
Aquinas lines up perfectly with some modern accounts of "eval-
uation" and conflicts with others. Let us look at an account with
which he could agree.

In recent thought, an evaluation is a procedure in which items
of some kind are compared to certain criteria ("standards") and
are graded on how they measure up. Thus apples are compared
to criteria having to do with size, flavor, freshness. Shoes are
compared to criteria having to do with style, comfort, durability.
Each criterion is applied to the thing by checking some facet or
aspect of the thing. If the facet has the feature demanded by a
criterion, then the thing has some property which it ought to
have. It is as it ought to be, at least in that respect. If the thing
(apple or shoe) has every feature demanded by the criteria
applied to it, then it is as it ought to be in every respect. It is "all
it should be." If the thing fails to meet some criterion, it is "lack-
ing" in that respect and so is "not all it should be." After the thing
is compared to the criteria by this sort of application (checking of
features), the thing is graded, and this grade is its evaluation
proper. [15]

Notice that the term "good" (or its opposite) can appear at two
different places in this procedure. It can appear at the end as a
final grade (whether as one of many grades, like "excellent,"
"good," "fair," "poor," etc., or as one of only two, like "good"/
"bad" in the sense of pass/fail). But it can also appear earlier on,
at the feature-checking stage. As each facet of the item is
checked against a relevant criterion, satisfactory fulfillment of
that criterion can be marked by saying that the item is "good" in
that respect (and this preliminary goodness can again be one of
many marks or one of only two).

Thus far, the account corresponds exactly to St. Thomas 's dis-
cussion of evaluation. "Good" as a final grade he calls *bonum
simpliciter,* and he says in a crucial text that its *ratio* includes

[15] I am indebted for this account to J. O. Urmson, "On Grading," *Mind* 59 (1950): 145-
159.

debita plenitudo essendi.[16] This last translates exactly as "all it should be." So the reason we grade anything as "good" is that it is all it should be.[17] "Good" as a mark on a feature, by contrast, he calls *bonum secundum quid.*

But now we come to the interesting question, on which varieties of evaluation (and modern accounts of them) divide. The fact that there are two places where the term "good" can appear demands a way of getting from the one to the other. That is, the marks given feature-by-feature must lead somehow to the final grade. One kind of evaluation procedure will sum and average the marks to reach the grade, and so it requires a commensuration of the features, and one will have had to import enough arithmetic to allow for computation. Another kind of procedure introduces an order of rank among the criteria (or, equivalently, among the features that fulfill criteria), so that if a thing is good in one feature and bad in another, its grade will depend upon whether it is good in any feature that outranks the ones in which it is bad. But it is also possible to have an evaluation procedure without numbers or measures or rankings of any kind.

Such a procedure would be the following. No matter how many features need to be checked, the marks applicable to each feature are just two ("good"/"bad"), and the overall grades are just two ("good"/"bad'), and the rule for getting from the former to the latter is this: the overall grade is "good" if and only if the mark on every required feature is "good"; otherwise, the overall grade is "bad." (Hence the grade is "bad" if and only if the mark on some feature is not "good.")

This extremely parsimonious example of an evaluation scheme is of special philosophical interest for three reasons. First, it allows "bad" to be defined entirely by negation. As a final grade, "bad" simply means "not good." As a mark on a feature, "bad" also means "not good" (so that the *ratio* of the term is the same in both places) and hence means that the feature

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[16] ST1-11, q. 18, a. 1.

[17] Aquinas does not forget that how-all-the-thing-is becomes how-all-it-should-be *(debita plenitudo)* by the thing's having what it takes (in being how-all-it-is) to satisfy the appetitive faculties. This point is made explicit in 1-11, q. 18, a. 5 corpus and ad 2.

demanded is "not there." Hence the famous neo-Platonic and
Patristic thesis that evil is privation-privation   of a good, hence
absence of a "due" feature-is   fully supported.'"

Secondly, this scheme can be formalized in a modal second-
order predicate calculus using only the quantifiers "all" and
"some." An object x of the kind Sis graded "good" if and only if,
for all predicates ⟨p⟩, it ought to be the case that an S-thing is ⟨p⟩,
and xis ⟨j⟩." It follows by elementary logic that an object x of the
kind S is graded "not-good" if and only if, for some predicate ⟨p⟩,
it ought to be the case that an S-thing is ⟨p⟩ and x is not ⟨p⟩.[20] The
grade "bad" can then be introduced by definition as "not-good."
Such a formalization confirms that no recourse to rank, number,
quantitative,   or arithmetical   operation on measurements   is
required.

Thirdly, the parsimonious   scheme is explicitly that of
Aquinas. His basic rule for getting from the marks to the grade
is that a thing is *malum simpliciter* when it is merely *bonum
secundum quid* (that is, good in some respect but not in every
respect). This rule is stated in converse form at *ST* I, q. 11, a. 2
ad 1: if anything is merely *bonum secundum quid,* then it is
malum simpliciter. But there is no question that he accepts the
rule running the other way as well: if anything is *malum sim-
pliciter,* then it is *bonum secundum quid.* For he holds that the
bad thing at least exists, and that whatever exists is good to that
extent *(ST* I, q. *5,* a. 1 ad 1; a. 3 ad 2). For what fails to be good
in even that respect is just "nothing" and is not evaluated; if it is

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[18] By contrast, an evaluation procedure which averages the marks has to set an arbi-
trary number *n* as the cut-off point, has to define "good" as "higher than or equal *ton,"*
and has to define "bad" as "lower than *n."* Thus the *ratio* of "good" and the *ratio* of "bad"
include relatively opposed relations to *n.*

An evaluation procedure which ranks the criteria has to define the grade "bad" as
"lacking an important feature" or "not good in an important respect," whereas the mark
"bad" just means "lacking a feature." The ranking relation enters, in other words, into
the *ratio* of "good" and "bad" as grades but not into the *ratio* of "good" and "bad" as
marks. Hence the two *rationes* split apart, even though, in each, "bad" might be defined
as "not good."

[19] In symbols: Sx ::::>(goodx = "ifq>(O((y)(Sy::::>q>y))::> q>x)), where "0" is a deontic modal
operator ("it ought to be the case that").

[20] That is: Sx ::::> (-good x = 34J(O((y)(Sy ::> q>y)). -q>x)).

not evaluated, it is not "bad." [21]   In many places, Aquinas states the rule in the form in which he found it in his source, Denis: *quilibet singularis defectus causat malum, bonum autem causatur ex integra causa.* [22] In keeping with this formulation, he says innumerable times that *malum* is *privatio boni.* [23] Hence "bad" is defined by negation; "good" and "bad" as grades differ as "all demanded features are there" differs from "some demanded features is not there", and "good" and "bad" as marks on a facet as "the demanded feature is there" differs from "it is not there." From mark to grade, the *ratio* remains constant; "bad" is rigorously defined by negation of "good," in whose *ratio* no appeal to rank or measurement is made. Nor is any admissible. For a thing which is good overall has to have no less than every feature demanded by the relevant criteria.

THE EVALUATION OF HUMAN ACTIONS

With this background in place, St.Thomas 's opening declaration in I-II, q. 18, a. 1, that "good" and "bad" are to be asserted of human actions in the same way as they are asserted of other things, becomes informative. It allows one to predict much of what the articles in Question 18 will cover. One can predict that calling an action good will mean that it is good for man-a good way for a human to act. One can predict that something will be said about the "standards" or "criteria" by which human actions are judged to be good for man. One can predict that the facets upon which these criteria bear will be listed, so that one can see what will need to be checked in evaluating a human action. One can predict that the interesting goodness or badness of human actions-their moral goodness or badness-will be reached *via* marks on their features, in the parsimonious way already discussed.

These predictions are quickly fulfilled. We are told in article 1

[21] Si vero nihil haberet de entitate vel bonitate, neque malum neque bonum did posset *(ST* I-II, q. 18, a. 1). Notice again that the famous slogan, *Bonum convertitur cum ente,* concerns "good" as a mark on a *feature-bonum secundum quid.* It has nothing to do with "good" as a final grade, which emphatically does not apply to every being.

[22] Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, *De divinis nominibus,* chapter 4. See *ST* I-II, q. 18, a. 4 ad 3, for example.

[23] E.g., *ST* I, q. 19, a. 9; I-II, q. 18, a. 2 ad 2; q. 21, a. 1

that a human action is not evaluated on the existential basis that it takes place or fails to take place. For, while an action can be called good just for existing *(omnis actio, inquantum habet aliquid de esse, intantum habet de bonitate),* that talk is irrelevant. For whether the action happens will not turn out to be a feature that is marked in its moral evaluation. Rather, the basis for evaluation is whether the action is "all it should be" as a human action: *inquantum vero deficit ei aliquid de plenitudine essendi quae debetur actioni humanae, intantum deficit a bonitate, et sic dicitur mala.* We are told that this "all" of what an action should be is not reducible to causal issues like efficacy. For an action will have its causal efficacy through the positive being it has and not through what will make it bad, if it is bad (namely, its lack). The example given is adulterous intercourse, which is highly efficacious towards offspring and yet is not all a human action should be. We are told that what it lacks is "order of reason." [24] This is a first indication that the criteria for human actions are "ordinations" of reason, so that the features demanded in human actions are conformities to these ordinations. A long way ahead, in I-II, qq. 90ff., we shall be told that the "ordinations" set by reason are universal propositions of practical reason bearing upon actions and having what it takes to be called "laws" (having the *ratio legis).[25]* We shall be told that these laws or precepts derive from first principles such as "Good is to be done and its opposite avoided" [26] and the Golden Rule [21], we shall be told that the derivable precepts include the moral content of the Decalogue,[28] and that they therefore include precepts which admit of no exception or "dispensation." [29]

Thus a human acton will be "good" in case (and only in case) it is "all it should be" in conforming to precepts derivable by rea-

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[24] Ad tertium dicendum quod actio mala potest habere aliquem effectum per se secundum id quod habet de bonitate et entitate. Sicut adulterium est causa generationis humanae inquantum habet commixtionem maris et feminae, non autem inquantum caret ordine rationis (I-II, q. 18, a. 1 ad 3).

[25] 1-11, q. 90, a. 1.

[26] 1-11, q. 94, a. 2.

[21] 1-11, q. 100, a. 3.

[28] Ibid.

[29] 1-11, q. 100, a. 8.

son. This conclusion makes sense, because a human action is not so much a good we seek (an object of inclination) as a way of pursuing a good we seek. The "good" actions will be the good ways of pursuing the things we seek. The "good" ways, in turn, will be those which have what it takes to satisfy a desire we have bearing upon our ways of pursuing things. Well, we have various desires bearing on these: we want our ways of pursuing things to be easy (if possible), efficient, enjoyable (if possible), not too tiring, and so on. But controlling all of these preferences, and generating them, is the constant desire which Aquinas calls the natural desire of our will, namely, that our ways of pursuing things *make sense,* that they be intelligent, that they be reasonable. [30] The features demanded of these ways, therefore, will not be physical features having what it takes to satisfy a drive but conformities-to-reason, having what it takes to satisfy a desire for practical reasonableness.

Next, in articles 2, 3, and 4, we are quickly told which facets of a human action have to be checked to see if the conformities demanded are there. Three facets are listed: *genus ex objecto, circumstantiae,finis.* These amount respectively to: (1) the specific kind to which the action belongs, when it is classified according to the verb-and-object needed to express what the agent is choosing to do to what, or to whom; (2) the circumstances in which a token of that specific kind would be realized, if the agent were to perform the action as he has chosen; (3) the further purpose (if any) for the sake of which the agent would be choosing to do the action. These three facets are such that each can have the feature of conforming to reason through consistency with a precept of reason, and each can lack this feature; each mark of "good" (or "bad") means that a conformity-to-precept is there (not there) and hence is a moral mark; and the procedure for getting from the moral marks to the moral grade is just what we should expect-every facet has to be marked "good" (has to conform to precept), or else the action gets "morally bad" for its grade. [31]

[30] See above, note 14.
[31] See 1-11, q. 18, a. 4 ad 3.

(Next, a graded action is subject to further classification into
a "moral kind," according to article 5, as an act of some virtue-
a specific way of being completely reasonable--or   as an act of
some vice-a specific way of being unreasonable-but   we shall
not pursue that matter in these pages.)

Such, at least, is the classical interpretation   of Aquinas's
remarks on the evaluation of human actions. Since it offers a
trouble-free reading of I-II, q. 18, and connects well with St.
Thomas 's more general goodness and badness, it has a degree of
plausibility. Yet the interpretation   just presented has a rival
which deserves consideration. The rival has been advanced by
Josef Fuchs, Louis J anssens, and Richard McCormick, three of
the most eminent moralists writing in recent decades.

A QUESTION OF CLASSIFICATION

To introduce the view shared by these contemporary moral-
ists, it is useful to note that, of the three facets which are to be
marked, according to Aquinas, the first, the *genus ex objecto,*
holds a special status. Aquinas says that a mark of "good" on this
facet is the "first goodness" of a human action-first,   because it
is the goodness which the action has already in "being what it
is." [32] Likewise, a mark of "bad" on this facet is the "first bad-
ness." [33] In the classical interpretation,   what this amounts to say-
ing is quite simple. Nothing can be evaluated unless and until it
is classified. No hunk of stuff can have criteria applied to it, until
we are told what it is. Moral evaluation, too, falls upon a classi-
fied act. I cannot tell you whether you did right or wrong with-
out knowing what you did. But as soon as I know, I have some-
thing to mark.

Now notice: if this first mark is "bad," I need not consider any
further facet (circumstance or purpose) given Aquinas's evalua-
tion procedure. For badness in this first facet is *quidam defectus,*

[32] Primum au tern quod ad plenitudinem essendi pertinere videtur est id quod dat rei
speciem . . . . Et ideo sicut prima bonitas rei naturalis attenditur ex sua forma quae dat
speciem ei, ita et prima bonitas actus moralis attenditur ex objecto convenienti; unde et
a quibusdam vocatur bonum ex genere (I-II, q. 18, a. 2).

[33] Et sicut in rebus naturalibus primum malum est, si res generata non consequitur
formam specificam, puta si non generetur homo, sed aliquid loco hominis; ita primum
malum in actionibus moralibus est quod est ex objecto (I-II, q. 18, a. 2).

and a human action is morally bad (grade) *ex quocumque defectu.* But this in turn means that a norm can be formulated, picking out a kind of action which is *mala ex objecto,* describing that action only in its *genus ex objecto,* and saying that an action of that kind is never to be done-and such a norm will be true. For any exercise done by anyone, in any circumstance, for any reason, which has what it takes to fall into that kind will have the *defectum* of that kind and so will be a morally bad action. [34]

In a word: if Aquinas says that a moral mark can be put on an action's kind-from-its-object, then his teaching leads at once to "moral absolutes" of the sort which it has been fashionable to question recently. [35] Moralists of a proportionalist bent, who wish to annex the prestige of the Common Doctor, must therefore find a way to eliminate this feature from his teaching.

The move made by Janssens, Fuchs, and McCormick serves this purpose. It can be explained but taking a look at a key text in I-II, q. 1, a. 3. That article is about the classification of human actions. In it, Aquinas says that human actions get classified on the basis of their end. For if actions are looked at as man moving or changing himself, the end is their starting-point. For actions are human insofar as they proceed from deliberated willing; what gets willed (the *objectum voluntatis)* is the good and the end; hence the starting-point of human acts *qua* human is the end. Alternatively, if human acts are looked at as man moved or changed by himself, the end is their terminal-point. For that at which a human course of action terminates is that which the will intends as the end. In this article two of the objections are important. The first says that a thing has to get its species from something intrinsic to it; but the end is an extrinsic cause of the action;

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[34] In the language of his commentary on the *Sentences,* book II, d. 40, a. 2, such an actus will be *de se malus, qui nullo modo benefieri potest.*

[35] John G. Milhaven, "Moral Absolutes in Thomas Aquinas," in Charles Curran, ed., *Absolutes in Moral Theology* (Washington, D.C.: Corpus, 1968), 1S4-18S; John F. Dedek, "Intrinsically Evil Acts: An Historical Study of the Mind of St. Thomas," *The Thomist* 43 (1979): 38Sff. For discussion and further bibliography see Patrick Lee, "Permanence of the Ten Commandments: St. Thomas and His Modern Commentators," *Theological Studies* 42 (1981): 422-443; William E. May, *Moral Absolutes* (Milwaukee, Wisc.: Marquette, 1989), and John Finnis, *Moral Absolutes* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1991).

so it cannot give it its species. Aquinas replies (adl) by denying
that the end is entirely "extrinsic" to the action. For the action is
a change, in which the end can be looked at either as starting-
point *a quo* or as terminal-point *ad quem-neither* of which is
extrinsic to a change. The other important objection is the third,
in which the issue is whether ends can secure uniqueness of clas-
sification. It reads: a thing can only exist in one "species," but
numerically one and the same human act can be ordered to
diverse ends; therefore the end does not give the act its species.
St. Thomas replies by distinguishing the minor and then by
bringing up a related item of business. So the reply (ad 3) falls
into two parts. Here they are.

(a) Numerically one action, as it flows from the agent at a unique
moment, is ordered to just one proximate end and gets its classification
from that; but it can be ordered to several more remote ends, of which
each is for the sake of the next.

(b) However, the following is possible. One and the same kind of action,
typed by natural kind, can be ordered to diverse ends of the will *[fines
voluntatis,* i.e. intended ends], and the result will be diverse actions-
diverse in moral kind. Thus the natural kind of action which is killing
a man can be intended to preserve justice or can be intended to slake
wrath. If intended the first way, it will be an act of virtue; if intended
the other way, an act of vice. For a change is not classified by that
which is its term *per accidens* but only by which is its term *per se.*
Moral ends are accidental to a natural thing; but the reverse is also
true: the natural basis for assigning an end to something is accidental
to a moral thing. Hence nothing prevents acts which are the same in
natural kind from being diverse in moral kind; and, vice versa, noth-
ing prevents acts which are the same in moral kind from being diverse
in natural kind. [36]

The obvious (and traditional) way to line this text up with the

[36] Ad tertium dicendum quod idem actus numero, secundum quod semel egreditur ab
agente, non ordinatur nisi ad unum finem proximum, a quo habet speciem; sed potest
ordinari ad plures fines remotos, quorum unus est finis alterius.

Possibile tamen est quod unus actus secundum speciem naturae ordinetur ad diver-
sos fines voluntatis, sicut hoc ipsum quod est occidere hominem, quod est idem secun-
dum speciem naturae, potest ordinari sicut in finem ad conservationem justitiae et ad
satisfaciendum irae; et ex hoc erunt diversi actus secundum speciem moris, quia uno
modo erit actus virtutis, alio modo erit actus vitii. Non enim motus recipit speciem ab eo
quod est terminus per accidens, sed solum ab eo quod est terminus per se. Fines autem
morales accidunt rei naturali; et e converso ratio naturalis finis accidit morali; et ideo
nihil prohibet actus qui sunt idem secundum speciem naturae esse diversos secundum
speciem moris, et e converso.

doctrine in I-II, q. 18 is to take one's clue from the part labelled (a). One identifies "object" and "proximate end," so that kind-from-the-object = classification from proximate end. Then, since the proximate end is an intended end *(finis voluntatis),* it will follow that the action already classified by its object is a "moral thing"-a human, willed action-so that it can be evaluated morally, and the mark upon it will be a moral mark, just as articles 2-4 in q. 18 seem to say and were classically interpreted to say.31

But part (b) is the text upon which Janssens, Fuchs, and

[37] In other words, Aquinas provides two major texts in the *Summa Theologiae* on the classification of human actions. In one he says that an action is put into its kind by its proximate end, and in the other he says that an action is put into its kind by its object. If these two texts are to hang together, there are three possibilities. Either (I) the kind based on the object and kind based on the proximate end are identical, or else (2) they classify on different levels, with one of them putting the action into a genus, the other putting it into its sub-genus or species, or else (3) the kinds are independent but both apply.

Perhaps all three possibilities turn up, but the first is the common one-so common that Aquinas seems to have thought it needed no discussion. A simple example, such as washing the car, will serve to illustrate it.

The proximate end is the agent's most immediate purpose in acting. Oftentimes, a statement of one's most immediate purpose will not differ (or will differ only slightly) from what one ordinarily thinks of as a statement of *what* one is doing. For example, if I am washing the car so as to get ready for a trip, the trip is my ulterior purpose, and to prepare for it or "get ready" is the intermediate purpose, but my immediate purpose in ading is to wash the car, or to get the washing over and done with. This is why I am bustling about in the driveway with a hose. Thus, if we call this end (to wash the car) ewe• we can say that it puts the bustling into the kind 'KwC' That is, the intended end classifies my bustling by putting it into the end-based kind ('K) which is washing the car.

The object is the matter with which the action deals *(materia circa quam).* One should think of this "matter" in grammatical terms. I start with the verb that would be involved in expressing what I am considering doing, e.g., "wash." I add whatever nouns or noun-phrases would be needed to complete the expression of what I am considering doing, e.g., "my car." This is the object, and "wash my car" is a kind of action *(genus ex objecto).* Suppose we call it °Kwc for short, and suppose I choose to do it. Do I also intend it? Do we have the result that °Kwc = 'Kwc in the case at hand?

In the Commentary on II *Sentences,* d. 40, a. 2, Aquinas used *objectus proximus* and *finis proximus* interchangeably. For they mean the same whenever one uses one's proximate end to describe one's means. An action of the object-based kind "wash my car" could easily be chosen as a means in the project to get ready for a trip. Thus it is easy to see that one's "means" will often be an object-based kind of action. Aquinas says that, once a means is chosen, its execution becomes one's most immediate end, and in that capacity it is intended (I-II, q. 12, a. 2). Hence the frequent identity of kind-from-object and kind-from-proximate-purpose. See also I-II, q. 20, a. 4, and q. 72, a. 3 ad 2. These texts are discussed in Joseph Boyle, *"Praeter intentionem* in Aquinas," *The Thomist* 42 (1978): 649-665.

McCormick seize. They identify the "natural kind" mentioned here with the kind-from-the-object mentioned in q. 18.[38] They identify the "end of the will" mentioned here with the "purpose" mentioned in I-II, q. 18, a. 4. It follows at once that the "object" pertains to a pre- or sub-intentional "materiality" of the act, such as bustling about in the driveway or causing a death-so that it cannot connect with a definite moral evaluation. [39] Hence different action-tokens of any one *genus ex objecto* can be ordered to different intended ends and thereby receive different and even opposite moral classifications. [40] And so no action, taken only in its *genus ex objecto,* will be open to receive a moral mark.

McCormick writes: "Acts that have the same features as object-events can have a different morality." [41]

Fuchs writes: "But now the critical question: what value do our norms have with respect to the morality of the action as such [he means, *ex objecto*], prior, that is, to consideration of the circumstances and intention? We answer: they cannot be moral norms unless circumstances and intention are taken into account." [42]

[38] This move is most explicit in Louis Janssens, "Ontic Evil and Moral Evil," *Louvain Studies* 4 (1972): 115-156, at 123-124.

[39] Janssens et al. do not acknowledge adequately the clash which their interpretation creates between these texts and the rest of Thomistic action theory. Janssens (Joc. cit.) recognizes that in Aquinas (I-II, q. 19) the agent's choice is the inner core of the action, so that what one has chosen to do *is* what kind of action one is doing. But Janssens et al. have to make this a secondary truth. For if the "object" gives the action its quiddity, but this quiddity is "natural kind," then every human action is *in essence* some kind of natural process, some kind of limb locomotion. Such bustle is already what-it-is prior to and independent of the agent's choice to do anything. The meaning given to the bustle by the agent's intention must be at best a secondary and supervenient "whatness," as when one reclassifies a rock as a sculpture, or an ink-spot as a symbol, by giving it a meaning.

[40] For Aquinas (I-II, q. 18, a. 6), **some** *genera ex objecto* are morally indifferent (so that there will be some cases in which action-tokens of a common *genus ex objecto* receive opposite moral evaluations, thanks to differences of circumstances or purpose); but the Janssens-Fuchs-McCormick interpretation requires **all** *genera ex objecto* to be of this nature.

[41] Richard A. McCormick, *Notes on Moral Theology, 1965-1980* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981), 534.

[42] Josef Fuchs, *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1983), 138. Chapter 7 of this book, from which the quote is taken, bears the title "The Absoluteness of Behavioral Moral Norms"; it had been published separately in *Gregorianum* a dozen years earlier (1971).

The violence which this "we answer" does to the Catholic moral tradition, destroying all moral absolutes at a single stroke, has been widely discussed. [43] The untenability of the basic move from which the "answer" follows, namely, the identification of object-kind with natural-kind, has been thoroughly established by William E. May. [44] I should like to highlight the impact upon Aquinas's evaluation procedure.

THE "NUANCE" THAT ANNIHILATES

If object-kind = natural-kind = behavior described in "brute" or sub-intentional terms, then the goodness or badness which Aquinas says an action can have "first" in its object-kind must be a pre-moral goodness or badness. The bustle produces this liked (or disliked) effect as a sheer causal consequence, and that is now the first goodness (or badness). What is the next? What about the other facets which are checked, according to Aquinas, before a grade is reached-the circumstances and purpose? Are their goodness and badness pre-moral, too?

Yes, says Fuchs: "A moral judgement is legitimately formed under a simultaneous consideration of the three elements (action, circumstances, purpose), premoral in themselves."" McCormick praises this drawing together of the three elements as a balanced "nuancing" of the tradition. [46]

If that is so, then in successively checking object, circumstances, and end, one is registering pre-moral goods and bads. The *moral* evaluation has not begun yet. The evaluation-logic repeatedly stressed by Aquinas cannot be the *moral* evaluation-logic. It must be pre-moral. It must tell us that, if an action is pre-morally good in some respect but not in another, then the action is pre-morally bad "period." But since (the proportional-

[43] See above, note 35; also John Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1983), chapter 4; Germain Grisez, "Moral Absolutes, A Critique of the View of Josef Fuchs, S.J.," *Anthropos* 112 (1985): 155-201.(This journal is now called *Anthropotes* .)

[44] "Aquinas and Janssens on the Moral Meaning of Human Acts," *The Thomist* 48 (J984): 566-606.

[45] Fuchs, *Personal Responsibility,* 137.

[46] *Notes,* 534.

ists think) an action can be pre-morally bad but morally good,
this is only another way of saying that the moral evaluation has
not begun yet. And if that is so then nothing which Aquinas tells
us in I-II q. 18 pertains to moral evaluation.

"Unlikely" is rather too mild a word for an interpretation
which removes from the *Prima Secundae* all discussion of one of
its most important topics.

THE CONTROLLING BELIEF

Unlikely theories are sometimes true, however; and what one
thinks of the Fuchs-McCormick-Janssens   theory will depend
almost entirely on whether one believes that an action-evalua-
tion is supposed to take one from a set of pre-moral goods and
bads to a judgment of moral good (or bad).

If one believes this, the account in Aquinas cannot seem com-
plete. For a pre-moral bad is any damage whatsoever, including
the unintentional, from a disappointment to a death, from a
bruised tomato to a soul in hell. Aquinas can hardly have con-
sidered all such damages equal, but nowhere does he give us an
explicit account of "greater" evil or good. Call this the missing
piece. Now read q. 18 without the missing piece, as though it
were intended to be complete without it, and yet were intended
to take us from pre-moral marks to a moral grade. **It** would be
saying that any pre-moral badness in any action-facet to be
checked suffices to make the action itself morally bad. Aquinas
would be giving a moral veto power to any damage done, inten-
tionally or unintentionally, however slight. The Common Doctor
would be a moralistic utopian. To save him from such an obvi-
ous blunder, one will entertain the hypothesis that Aquinas did
not really mean to use his doctrine of evaluation, but meant to
replace it with something more sensible, like a scheme in which
the pre-moral goods are added up, the bads are subtracted, and
the action is morally good as long as it scores above zero; alter-
natively, one might entertain the hypothesis that the entire text
of I-II q. 18 was intended to cover a preliminary question only
(how to get from pre-moral marks to a pre-moral grade). Either
way, one will be insisting that Aquinas left the central question

(how to get a *moral grade)* undiscussed. For then the undiscussed question can be answered by the missing piece. Tacit "weights" or "ranks" can serve to distinguish the greater from the lesser evil, and then those actions which do plenty of pre-moral evil can still get the moral grade of "good" in case the evil they do is "lesser evil" compared to the good they do, or compared to the damage their alternatives would do, or something of the kind.

Many people writing about ethics today believe that an action evaluation must (in some such way) move from pre-moral marks to a moral grade. Fuchs and McCormick believe it. Therefore they supply the missing piece (the weights and measures) while still claiming to speak for the Catholic tradition. Fuchs writes: "Negative values are to be avoided … and only for adequate reasons may they be actualized concurrently with relatively higher and more urgent values." [47] Higher values? Then there must be ranks. More urgent values? Then there must be weights. McCormick writes: "If it is only object-end-circumstances together that can yield a final moral evaluation, the implication is that it is a proportion within the entire action between the values and disvalues that justifies the causing or permitting of the disvalues. "'[8] McCormick is talking here about Fuchs's view, but he states several times that (certain matters of clarity aside) he shares the view. For both men (and for Janssens), moral evaluation is looking at all three facets simultaneously,   and is weighing the pre-moral goods and bads found in each, and is assigning the moral grade "good" to the actions which sport a proportionate surplus of pre-moral value over disvalue. This last and crucial fact Aquinas merely neglected (in their view) to mention.

But let us consider another possibility altogether. Suppose the controlling belief of the three recent moralists is wrong. Suppose the evaluation of a human action has nothing to do with premoral goods and bads in general, because such things are not even relevant except insofar as they are intended or chosen.[49]

[47] *Personal Responsibility,*   141

[48] *Notes,* 533.

[49] Proportionalists assume that cases become "hard" independently of intentions because of sheer causal problems-as when some event involved in the execution of an

Suppose further that all humanly intendable goods are partici-
pations in certain basic forms of human flourishing. Suppose
that all genuine precepts therefore take either (a) the positive
form of directing one to choose an action in which one would be
pursuing one of these forms of flourishing intentionally or else (b)
the negative form of directing one not to choose actions which
are such that, by choosing them, one would be damaging one of
these forms of flourishing intentionally-so   that no genuine pre-
cept directs one to count or weigh up pre-moral goods and bads
in general, and so none directs one to abstain from doing any sort
of pre-moral damage except in conjunction with some higher-
ranked pre-moral good, and so none tells one to choose such
actions as sport the better proportion or surplus of such things.
In short, suppose that rational precept-formation simply does
not generate any such precept as Fuchs et al. want to introduce. [50]
Then no step in an action evaluation procedure will be an appli-
cation of such a precept, and so no prior step will need to be an
assessment of pre-moral goods and bads in general. Rather, an
evaluation will move from preliminary *moral* judgments to a

action causally damages one good in producing another. Thus Peter Knauer, "The
Hermeneutic Function of the Principle of Double Effect," in Charles E. Curran and
Richard A. McCormick, eds., *Readings in Moral Theology No. 1* (New York: Paulist,
1979); Bruno Schiiller, "The Double Effect in Catholic Thought: A Revolution," in
Richard McCormick and Paul Ramsey, eds., *Doing Evil to Achieve Good* (Chicago:
Loyola University Press, 1978). Such authors ignore or dismiss the long and profound
tradition which says that cases become hard because of complications in distinguishing
between intending evil (choosing to produce evil in order to produce good, which is
always wrong) and foreseeing evil (choosing to produce good when there will be a bad
side-effect, which is not always wrong). See Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus,*
vol. 1, *Christian Moral Principles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983), chapters
8H, 9, and 12F; John Finnis, "Object and Intention in Moral Judgments according to
Aquinas," *The Thomist 55* (1991): 1-27; idem, "Intention and Side-Effects," in R. G. Frey
and C. Morris, eds., *Liability and Responsibility* (Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[50] Germain Grisez has argued that such a precept is without application because the
"thing" it directs one to discover in a given case (the greater good, higher value, or bet-
ter proportion) cannot be found in that case, nor in any case, because it is not "there" to
be discovered; the terms "greater good," "higher value," and "better proportion" have
neither clear sense nor objective reference; what they mean is rather a projection of the
agent's own subjective preferences. See "Against Consequentialism," *American Journal
of Jurisprudence* 23 (1978): 21-72; *The Way of the Lord Jesus,* vol. 1, *Christian Moral
Principles,* 141-172.

final and also moral judgment. And then the account in Aquinas's q. 18 will not seem incomplete. For a *moral* bad is a conflict with a moral precept-and in Aquinas's account such precepts identify the basic human goods and direct that they not be violated, by anyone, so that through one's actions one will "love" one's neighbor as one's self. A conflict with moral precept in any action-facet to be checked *will* make the action itself immoral. To see this, consider the project of throwing a party with plenty of liquor. One ought to be a generous host (precept); so the projected action is good in its *genus ex objecto* (preliminary moral judgment). But what if the invited guests are recovering alcoholics? One ought not subject vulnerable people to needless dangers (precept). So there is an *immorality* under that circumstance (preliminary moral judgment). Or what if circumstances are fine, but one's further purpose is to enroll the invitees in a fraudulent business scheme? One ought not steal (precept). So there is an immorality in that motive (preliminary moral judgment). Would either immorality suffice to make the party-project as a whole immoral (final judgment)? The account of action evaluation in I-II q. 18 is about exactly such a question, and the Common Doctor's answer is yes. Does it any longer seem utopian? Is there any longer room, or need, for a missing piece?

FIRST CONCLUSION

Neither Janssens nor Fuchs nor McCormick offers a reasoned case that action evaluation *does* take one from the pre-moral goods and bads to the moral. They just assume that it does. They import their assumption into a matter of Thomistic interpretation. Under the influence of their assumption, the obvious and traditional sense of I-II, q. 18 is swept away, to be replaced by a sense which cannot be made plausible without the further importation of weights or ranks plus a controversial sort of precept to go with them.

Yet any alleged precept which directs one to realize a weighted good (the greater good or the better proportion of good over evil) is inadmissible within the ethics of Aquinas. It cannot be a missing piece of his doctrine, which he would have supplied, if

he had had occasion to do so, or which *we* can patch into his system as a part consistent with the remainder of it. For as seen above, Aquinas has an account of good (and of evil as a privation of good) which depends upon a single, parsimonious account of evaluation, applicable across the board to anything whatsoever, including human actions. Formalizable entirely with "all" and "some," this account allows no room for either a ranking of criteria or a commensuration of values and disvalues. **If** Aquinas is right in his parsimony, then no application of a precept such as Fuchs, McCormick, and Janssens want would be a case of practical reasoning. For practical reasoning is reason evaluating, while any such precept would direct one *not* to evaluate (precisely *not* to do what Aquinas calls evaluating) but instead to do something else-e.g. to prefer, so as to realize the results one prefers to realize. Thus, in order to support their interpretation, Fuchs, Janssens, and McCormick need to import a sense of "evaluate" which has no foundation in Aquinas, and which is in fact inconsistent with his theory of the good.

SECOND CONCLUSION

Is a proportionalist sense of "evaluate" really so unassimilable as all that? Every teacher with a grade book, who averages test scores at the end of the semester, proves in practice that there is a richer and more nuanced evaluation procedure than the one Aquinas espoused. Would it not be possible to replace the Common Doctor's procedure with another one-if not in the name of "interpreting" him, then frankly in the name of improving on him? And could not one manage some such replacement without destroying, perhaps, the larger architecture of Thomism?

Let us begin the answer with an elementary distinction. The "good" is what we reasonably desire, and the "endurable" is what we put up with. What we reasonably desire is one thing, and what we will find endurable is often another: [51]

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[51] A teacher reasonably desires each of his students to acquire and display a mastery of the course material-which is, in effect, to earn an A. Yet a teacher will find C work, or even worse work, endurable.

Any evaluation procedure which uses in a significant way a ranking of the criteria or a commensurating and averaging of the features looked for is a procedure to find the endurable. For what one reasonably desires is articulated in the whole set of criteria and would be realized in their joint satisfaction. The point of ranking or averaging is rather to allow some criteria to fail of satisfaction without losing more than one will find endurable. A "richer and more nuanced" evaluation procedure, then, reconciles its user to a poorer outcome. That is its whole purpose. [12]

Proportionalists insist on using such a procedure because they think that good human actions differ from evil ones not as the rational (in every relevant respect) differs from the irrational (in some relevant respect) but as more differs from less along a scale, somewhat as one student paper offers more correct answers than another. Proportionalism (1) posits such a scale in pre-moral damages, and then (2) imagines that worse actions differ from better ones as more damage differs from less along this scale, and then (3) imagines that *moral goodness* consists in an action's being better than (or no worse than) its alternatives by that measure. Thus, if taken seriously as an account of moral evaluation, proportionalism identifies what we reasonably desire with an impossible ideal of doing no damage (including no unintentional damage), and so directs us to distinguishes the unattainable good from the attainable but endurable evil, and then directs us to choose those actions which are endurable. In so doing, proportionalism detaches moral goodness from reasonable desirability

[52] Insofar as a teacher's familiar grading system is used to determine who gets an A and who does not, it measures whether all the teacher reasonably desires is present in the student's work. But insofar as the grading system is used to determine who passes or fails, it measures whether a mere portion of what is reasonably desired is there. This portion is what the teacher will find endurable (putting up with the absence of the rest). So if the teacher used his grading system to determine only A's and non-A's, his procedure would be substantially the same as Aquinas describes. By contrast, the use of numbers, the weighting of answers so as to map them to larger or smaller numbers (of points taken off), and the averaging of numbers-these features play a significant role only in discriminating less-than-good-but-still-endurable papers from those which are not even endurable.

and attaches it instead to possible or preferable endurability.
Endurability   becomes the *ratio bani moralis.*

If that move is accepted, "good" as applied to human actions
will not have the *ratio bani* which is applied elsewhere in
Thomism, and nothing of its axiological architecture   will sur-
vive. For under St. Thomas's *ratio,* the "good" (of a being) has
what it takes to be the object of an inclination (in that being). In
the universe of natures, every being has its inclinations, but no
being strives, inclines, or tends merely to what it will endure.
Each strives for a flourishing. [53] In the larger architecture   of
Thomism, man forms a part of the universe of natures. Man, too,
has *appetitus,* and his distinctively human mode of appetition is
reasonable   desire. Therefore, in the larger architecture   of
Thomism, man not only desires to flourish (rather than just
endure) but also finds his desire fulfilled when he abounds in
reasonableness. The distinctively human strength *(virtus)* is the
strength of character whereby a human can keep all of his or her
actions in accord with rationally derived precepts or can even
exceed those precepts in the direction of a God-given charity.
Hence by no stretch of the imagination   will man flourish by
declining to abound in reason, e.g., by settling for an endurable
level of irrationality. Therefore, in the larger architecture   of
Thomism, proportionalism   directs man to act against his nature.
Proportionalism   counsels a certain moderation in the pursuit of
virtue, and Thomism construes such moderation as unnatural
vice.

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[53] Darwin would agree. In the bruising competition of the species, each plant and ani-
mal secures its hold on life only by striving for more than it will find endurable. Survival
depends on striving to flourish.

ST. THOMAS'S FOURTH WAY AND CREATION

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E XPLAINING that what he means by "creating" is "caus-
ing things *ex nihilo,"* Jacques Maritain, the renowned
twentieth-century interpreter of Thomas Aquinas, says:

... it is clear that this very fact, that things are created, is only known
by us once we know that the First Cause exists; consequently, we can-
not make use of it in order to demonstrate the existence of that First
Cause. All we know from the outset is that things are caused. [1]

This remark is made concerning all five ways. At the same time,
Maritain presents the five not only as "typically distinct" from
each other, but as

... distributed in a certain order in which the depth of thought and the
complexity of the discussion increase. In proportion as the mind delves
deeper into the world of experience in order to reach the first starting
point of its thinking, it discerns in the First Being more and more
meaningful aspects, and richer perspectives are disclosed to it. [2]

Now, I agree entirely as to the depth of the starting-points and
the progressively richer perspectives,' but I disagree with
Maritain as to the role of the creature's *createdness* in leading to
the knowledge of God in the Fourth Way. How is it "clear" that
the createdness of things is only known once we know that a first
cause exists? How, in general, does the createdness of things

[1] Maritain, Jacques, *Approaches to God,* tr. Peter O'Reilly (New York: Collier Books,
1962), 64; see *Approches de Dieu* (Paris: Alsatia, 1953), 79.-In this paper, *"ST"* and
"SCG" stand for Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* and *Summa contra gentiles.*

[2] Maritain, *Approaches,* 63; *Approches,* 76-77.

[3] See my paper, "The Number and Order of St. Thomas's FIVE WAYS", *Downside
Review* 92 (1974): 1-18

come to light, and why should it not come to light in things and
so *lead* to the knowledge of the existence of the proper cause of
such an effect? Indeed, can one really arrive at a knowledge of
the existence of a "First *Being"* without having seen, by priority,
the createdness of being?

Let us recall the general plan for a way to God, as presented
in the *Summa theologiae.* We are to reason from the existence of
an effect, better known to us than its proper cause, to the exis-
tence of that proper cause.[4] What is the effect, *seen* as an *effect,*
in the Fourth Way, and to what "proper" cause does it lead us?
The Fourth Way *leads* to a *maximal being,* which is cause of
being for *ALL* beings. The *universality* of this effect is to be
noted. The cause in question is viewed as the cause of a *univer-
sal* effect. Thomas does not content himself with saying that
there is a first being which is the cause of being for all *other*
beings. That, I would say, would not be wrong, but it would be
mild and apt to mislead. Rather, he "goes out of his way," one
might say, to establish that the cause of which he is speaking is
such as to dominate an *entire field* in what I would call a "for-
mal" way. After reasoning to the actual existence of the maximal
being, by what is clearly an efficient/exemplar causal route,[5] he
adds that such a maximal item is the cause of all things which
belong to the same order. He then comes to God, named precise-
ly as he wished to arrive at God in this Fourth Way, viz. as "cause
of being for *all* beings."

The importance of the incorporation of this point about the
universality of the effect can be better apprec\ated if one looks
back at the *Summa contra gentiles.* The *SCG* 1.13 argument
which corresponds to the Fourth Way does not mention the point
about universality at all. **It** uses Aristotle's *Metaph.* 2 only to

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[4] ST 1.2.2: "From any effect one can demonstrate the existence of its proper cause, if,
of course, its effects are better known to us; because, since effects depend on a cause, the
effect being posited, the cause must, by priority, exist."

[5] Here, I am in disagreement with Leo *].* Elders, The *Philosophical Theology of St.
Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 115, who sees in the first stage of the Fourth Way
only formal causality. See my review-article of this work, in *Science et Esprit* 44 (1992):
205-220. So also I am in disagreement with Louis Charlier, "Les cinq voies de saint
Thomas. Leur structure metaphysique," in *L'Existence de Dieu* (Tournai: Casterman,
1963), 213 n. 96.

assure the move from truth to being, and then uses *M etaph.* 4 to
prove the existence of a maximally true thing. It is content to
conclude to God as to a maximal being. ⁶ Then, in *SCG* 2, in the
presentation of God as creator, Thomas proceeds very gradually.
Chapter 6 only goes as far as saying that God is cause of being
for *some* things other than himself. Chapter 15 goes on to show
that everything other than God comes from him. Now, ch. 15 is
well known precisely as the place where one can see the funda-
mental "Fourth Way" thinking more thoroughly worked out. We
have an argument which concludes that God, as maximal being,
is the cause of *all* the items of which "being" *(ens)* is predicated. ⁷

What Thomas Aquinas has done in the Fourth Way, as con-
trasted with its *SCG* 1.13 counterpart, is to add the considera-
tions worked out in *SCG* 2.15. Now, it is a fact that in *SCG* 2
Thomas does not use the term "creation" *(creatio)* until he has
added 2.16, viz., that God used no pre-existent matter in the uni-
versal production. This is of course quite in accord with serious
ecclesiastical usage, which links the vocabulary of "creation"
with the formula: "to introduce something into being without
any pre-existing matter." ⁸ However, the omni-penetrating char-
acter of the proper effect, i.e., its peculiar universality, is already
abundantly clear in 2.15. The point about matter is no more than
a corollary, though one requiring heavy insistence because of the
problem of the difficulty for the human mind to take up the
properly metaphysical standpoint. There is also the enormous
contextual weight of the authority, at that point in the thirteenth
century, of the remarks of Averroes at the beginning of the *In
Phys.* 8." One can see the presence of this problem, not only in
SCG 2.16, the first paragraphs of which take the trouble to *argue*

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⁶ SCG 1.13 (ed. Pera, #114).

⁷ See especially *SCG* 2.15 (# 924).

⁸ See *SCG* 2.16 (# 944) and 2.17 (# 946). It is interesting that in# 944 Thomas uses the
word *producere* rather than the customary *facere.* At *ST!* .45.1 sed contra and 1.45.2 sed
contra, we see the more usual formula. Thomas *criticizesfacere* in *ST* 1.45.2 ad 2, and
already at *SCG* 2.37 (# 1130 e and f), we see why philosophers who saw the createdness
of things might refuse to call it a "making" *lfactio*).

⁹ See Averroes's remarks in his commentary on Aristotle's *Physics,* where he criti-
cizes the Islamic teachers for their doctrine of generation where there is no matter
involved: Averroes, *In Phys.* 8.4 (ed. Venice, 1562, t. IV, fol. 34lrC-F).

the mere *possibility* of production without use of matter, but also in the approach taken in *ST* 1.44.2, where the history of the human mind regarding modes of production is given great prominence (it is not presented in *SCG* 2 until chapter 37, on duration and creation). The *ex professo* reply to Averroes, in Thomas's own *In Phys.,* accuses him precisely of failing to view being universally, falling to take the properly metaphysical standpoint, failing to rise to a knowledge of the cause of "that which is, inasmuch as it is that which is" *(ens inquantum est ens).* [10]

In fact, the whole *positive* issue concerning God as cause even of matter is contained in one tiny paragraph of *SCG* 2.16, which simply points out that matter, after all, does have *being* attributed to it. [11] In *ST* 1.44.2, similarly, the point is that, once one has really risen to the properly metaphysical outlook, the causing of matter by God has already fallen into place.[12]

What is remarkable about the Fourth Way is its capacity to combine the *formal universality* of the aspect of things taken under consideration with the manifestation of the *effect* status of that aspect. It differs from the *Third* Way in this, that in the latter the features considered were *differences* of being, i.e., the possible and the necessary. The *effect* character was first seen in the

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[10] Thomas, *In. Phys.* 8.2 (ed. Maggiolo, 974 [4]-975 [S]). For the vocabulary of causality with regard to *ens inquantum est ens,* see especially 975: "sed si fit totum ens, quod est fieri ens inquantum est ens, oportet quod fiat ex penitus non ente: si tamen et hoc debeat dicijieri." Here, we see once more Thomas's reserve on the wordsjieri and the like as regards creation.

[11] *SCG* 2.16 (# 943).

[12] *ST* 1.44.2 (ed. Ottawa 281al8-26) and *ad* 2. This is also the line taken in the direct criticism of Averroes in Thomas's *In Phys.* 8.2 (ed. Maggiolo, 974): "Nor is [Averroes's contention] in accordance with Aristotle's intended meaning. For he [Aristotle] proves in *Metaph.* 2 that that which is maximally true and maximally a being *[maxime ens]* is the cause of being for all existents *[causa essendi omnibus existentibus]:* hence, it follows that the very *being in potency [esse in potential,* which prime matter has, is derived from the first principle of being *[essendi],* which is the maximal being *[maxime ens]."*

Also of considerable interest for the general point of this paper, is the approach taken in Thomas's *Compendium theologiae* 1.68-69. In ch. 68, the conclusions are practically verbally identical with the conclusion of the Fourth Way; then, the first lines of ch. 69 speak of this already described role of God as "creating": *in creando* (ed. Leonine, ch. 69, line 1).

possible, and was then extended to the necessary almost merely by hypothesis. [13] In the Fourth Way, we have moved beyond such "differences" to consider the form itself in its *universality-we* consider goodness, truth, nobility or perfection, and being. They are what Thomas calls, on at least one occasion, "universal form" <*Jonna universalis).* [14] They are *maximally communicable:* they "get into everything," we might say. Their universality is not merely "extensive" but "intensive." They are common, however, "according to priority and posteriority." They present themselves in *gradation.* This is their *typicalfonnal* appearance. [15]

It is this gradational formal unity, which as available to our observation remains *indefinite* in its ascent towards the more and more perfect, that constitutes the properly metaphysical field of inquiry. On the one hand, it is a "nature with its proper differences" (the possible and the necessary, or, perhaps better, potency and act). On the other hand, it is an *effect* which elicits the question concerning its cause (i.e., it is a gradation of indefinite extent towards the top).

We should keep in mind that in his sermons on the Apostles' Creed given at Naples in Lent, 1273, as regards the existence of God, Thomas relies on purpose vs. chance, considerations related most obviously to the Fifth Way; this is a markedly "providential" line of thinking: God as cause of directed *movement.* On

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[13] I say "almost," since Thomas has in view, not merely the Aristotelian theory of the heavens, but, more metaphysically, his own doctrine of the incorruptibility of the human soul.-On the possible and the necessary described as "differences" proper to that-which-is, see Thomas, *In Periherm.* 1.14 (ed. Leonine [new edition, 1989), lines 438-454); in Thomas's *In Metaph.,* 6.3 (1220), they are called "accidents," obviously in the sense of properties; for presentations of the necessary and the contingent as the "perfect" and the "imperfect" in the order of being, see *ST* 1.79.9.ad 3; for the incorruptible and the corruptible as "grades" of being, *esse,* see *ST* 1.48.2 (305a41-45); see also *Compendium theologiae* 1.74.

[14] See *ST* 1.19.6 (136bl).

[15] See, among many possible texts, Thomas 's *Quaestiones de anima* l.ad 17: " ... though being *[esse)* is most formal of all *[formalissimum inter omnia],* still it is also most communicable *[maxime communicabile],* though it is not communicated in by inferiors and superiors in the same measure. Thus, the body participates in the *esse* of the soul, but not in such a noble way as does the soul" (ed. James H. Robb [Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1968), 63).

the other hand, when the *createdness* of reality is to be
addressed, he immediately uses the image of the house in winter,
with a little warmth felt at the front door, greater warmth as one
goes inside, even greater warmth as one advances to the next
room-with the judgment that *afurnace* radiating all this heat is
present somewhere within. The listener is urged to consider
observable reality as *graded.* In that way, the createdness of real-
ity will be seen. [16]

Reflection on the idea of a "cause of being as being" should
lead us to see why the Fourth Way takes the form it does.
Metaphysics has for its proper field of study being as being. Is
this a unified field for which one can point to a proper cause? [11]

The doctrine of the nature of univocal causality (dogs produc-
ing dogs and cats cats) should be taken into consideration. A uni-
vocal cause *presupposes* the common nature which it communi-
cates in causing individuals of that nature. The dogs which
reproduce are not causes of doghood as doghood, but of dog-
hood-in-this-or-that.   To say that they cause doghood would be to
make them causes of themselves, and thus prior to themselves,
a contradiction in terms. The cause of doghood as doghood must
have a nature nobler than doghood.

Since doghood is a particular nature, it is not necessary that it
belong to everything, and so there is no problem in the concep-
tion of a cause of doghood as   However, what is one to
say of "cause of being as being" ? Clearly, such a cause must have
a nature nobler than being. Or else, "being" does not name a
nature having the kind of community which doghood has. And
one will see the possibility of being's being an *effect* insofar as
one sees the sort of unity it has. Having a unity according to pri-

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[16] Thomas, *In Symbolum Apostolorum expositio,* in *Opuscula Theologica,* vol. 2, ed.
R. Spiazzi, O.P. (Rome/Turin: Marietti, 1954), 193-217. Concerning the existence of God,
see# 869; concerning creation, see # 878.

[17] All five ways are metaphysical, but the Fourth is primary in this regard. All reduce
to the priority of act over potency, and so to the *magis* and *minus* as regards the *ratio
essendi.* See St. Thomas, *De substantiis separatis* c. 7, lines 47-52 *(Opera omnia* t. 40,
Rome: Ad Sanctae Sabinae, 1969): "Manifestum est autem quod cum ens per potentiam
et actum dividatur, quod actus est potentia perfectior et *magis habet de ratione essendi;*
non enim simpliciter esse dicimus quod est in potentia, sed quod est actu" (emphasis
added).

ority and posteriority, or *the more* and *the less,* it reveals both the possibility and the need for a cause; and that cause will be "a being" in a *distinctive* way, a *maximal* in its line. [18]

Maritain says that the Five Ways consider causedness in a general way, without specifying either conservational or creational causality. His interest in this distinction arises from the fact that, as Thomas teaches, *only* God can create, whereas creatures can take part in that causing of being which is conservation. Thus, from a creationist vantage-point, there are no "causal *series."* There is only the one creative cause providing a hierarchy of effects. On the other hand, from a conservational point of view, one speaks quite truly of *causal* hierarchy. [19]

While all this is true, I do not believe it should lead one to see the *Fourth* Way as taking a sort of abstract or neutral position vis-a-vis conservation and creation. Rather, what is essential and primary in the picture is creation, the causing of being in all its universality. Participation in conservation is only intelligible as regards a hierarchy among particular natures as such. For us, making our intellectual journey starting from what sensibly appears and going to the intelligible interiors of things, the radiation of an influence is *causally* hierarchical: we grasp the diffusion of warmth as having a structure such that the immediately preceding part is giving warmth to what is more distant from the original source. We see the act/potency structure inasmuch as we see that, in a heat-distribution event originating at point A, and radiating through B to terminate in C, B would be warm even if C were cut off from it, but C would not be warm if B were cut off from C. So also, we understand substance/accident proportion in such a way that, as regards their proper modes or measures of being, substance can be without accident, but accident cannot be except by the power of substance.

What this ultimately leads to, however, is the firm grasp of potency and act as modes or measures of being, each in itself

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[18] See my paper," 'Something Rather Than Nothing' and St. Thomas' Third Way," in *Science et Esprit* 39 (1987): 71-80, especially 72-73.

To call the cause of beings as beings "a being" requires the *constrnction* of a *somewhat,* though not *altogether,* new notion of *being:* see *ST* 1.13.S (81a38-48).

[19] Maritain, *Approaches,* 64; *Approches,* 77-79.

having a nature such that potency is *proportionate* to act. In the
Fourth Way, the consideration of "the more" and "the less" as
regards the good, the noble, etc., is not of one being *derived* from
the other, but of both of them as *belonging to the same order.*
And it is this rather "spartan" ontological consideration which is
properly operative in the Fourth Way. It is not so much a vision
of a hierarchy of causes as it is of an unmistakable sign of single
causal origin. As such, it has the structure appropriate to the
vision of causality of being as being. The entire "more and less"
zone of a less/more/most structure is grasped as having the sta-
tus of potency, i.e., of an effect, and thus requires the positing of
the *one cause* (act), i.e., a unique level of being, viz., *maximal*
being.

   To sum up, Maritain speaks the way he does because he is
thinking of *causal chains* in *all* the Five Ways. If one is working
with chains of heterogeneous causes, then the lower ones are not
creative. What we know are *particular* causes. Thus, what we
know at the start is that some things are caused by others, and
the creative aspect is not clear. However true this may be of the
other Ways, it is not "clear" concerning the Fourth. The reason is
that our view there is of a hierarchy proper to beings as beings,
and the effect whose proper cause is discovered is being as being.
Thus, it is the *createdness* of things which is *leading* us to affirm
the existence of the cause in question.

BENEDICT, THOMAS, OR AUGUSTINE? THE CHARACTER OF MACINTYRE'S NARRATIVE

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Introduction

I N HIS *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* [1] Alasdair Macintyre continues (with certain modifications) in a similar trajectory established in two earlier works, *After Virtue* and *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Against post-Enlightenment portraits of moral reasoning, he consistently defends a conception of practical rationality which entails the recognition of tradition, authority, and narrative as constitutive components of any rationally determined moral enquiry. Despite the consistent appeal to tradition, there is a significant development within Macintyre's reflections regarding the pre-eminent resources we are to draw upon. At the end of *After Virtue* we are asked to await a "doubtless very different" St. Benedict. In *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* the Thomistic tradition emerges as the superior form of moral enquiry. While Thomism maintains a pre-eminence in *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry,* I suggest that there is an increasingly Augustinian element emerging within his analysis and that this dimension underlies Macintyre 's efforts in ways not previously specified. There is a warrant, then, for seeing within Augustine's efforts the paradigmatic "narrative form of moral enquiry."

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[1] Alasdair Macintyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990). Hereafter *RV*.

That Augustine figures in Macintyre's reception of the
Thomistic tradition is not necessarily striking, for part of what
fuels Macintyre's increasing enthusiasm for St. Thomas is pre-
cisely the latter's capacity to draw upon the best of the
Augustinian tradition of enquiry. Beyond what Macintyre him-
self has overtly recognized as Augustine's contribution to the
thought of St. Thomas, however, I suggest that elements of
Augustine's thought directly influence much of Macintyre 's own
attempts at restoring a kind of tradition-guided enquiry. This
Augustinian strain, moreover, not only serves to highlight fea-
tures of Macintyre's analysis of Thomism, but also brings to
light certain theological presuppositions essential to the kind of
moral enquiry Macintyre hopes to retrieve. The character of
Macintyre's narrative, then, leads us to St. Augustine.

In *After Virtue* it is largely the Aristotelian tradition of enquiry
which he defends against rival post-Enlightenment theories of
morality. He argues that the analytic, linguistic, and phenome-
nological tools brought to bear upon the task of formulating a
coherent conception of the moral life and moral enquiry have
failed miserably, principally for two reasons. The first is that
such contemporary efforts have neglected to realize that moral
enquiry is embedded in a broader context of social practices,
practices which are inevitably historically conditioned; thus a
failure to recognize the historically situated character of moral
enquiry distorts that account. The second reason is related to the
first in that failure to acknowledge the historical character of
such enquiry has resulted in a failure to recognize that much of
our contemporary terms and tools of moral analysis are rem-
nants from previous contexts of enquiry which are no longer
mutually agreed upon nor recognized as relevant.'

What has been lost, among other things, is the teleological
metaphysics which serves as the context for nearly two millennia
in the West. Uproot the stock of ethical norms from this tradition

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² For this notion of "moral remnants" surviving beyond the historical contexts in
which they emerge, see Alasdair Macintyre, "Ought," Chapter 15 in *Against the Self
Images of the Age* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), 136-156, though in a different con-
text and with very different effect.

of enquiry and what remains is simply an amalgam of unrelated moral demands-some divinely sanctioned, some rooted in the passions, some the outburst of emotive whimsy-yet all lacking any coherent exposition.' The only hope is to retrieve something of the Aristotelian tradition of moral enquiry in which the notion of the virtues and the virtuous human person entails a conception of the moral life as bearing a narrative unity, a teleologically ordered whole in which one's actions bear an intrinsic unity and significance to the extent they complement one's *telos.* The narrative unity ascribed to the living of the good life is the narrative unity of a quest-a quest, it turns out, for the good life itself. And hence: "The good life for man is the life spent in seeking for the good life for man, and the virtues necessary for the seeking are those which will enable us to understand what more and what else the good life for man is." [4]

Central to MacIntyre's retrieval of the Aristotelian heritage is the notion of the narrative quality of the moral life. What the concept "narrative" brings to moral analysis is the notion of the human person's life as an ordered, intelligible unity. Actions performed leave an enduring impression on the agent. Furthermore, this intrinsic, incremental sense of development toward (or aversion from) our *telos* presupposes the fundamental notions of accountability, character, identity, and virtue. [5] To be a moral

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[3] Max L. Stackhouse argues that Macintyre's critique simply "reasserts a teleological test, which any attempt to define the issues of morality in deontological terms [i.e., Kantian morality] would automatically fail." But this suggests a kind of extrinsic criticism. Macintyre's thesis is not simply that Enlightenment rationality (and Immanuel Kant specifically) is not teleological; rather, in jettisoning the notion of a teleologically ordered self the Enlightenment project is intrinsically incoherent. It is this sense of the intrinsic incoherence of the Enlightenment project which fuels Chapter 5 in *After Virtue,* "Why the Enlightenment Project Had to Fail." Max L. Stackhouse, "An Overview and Evaluation," *Religious Studies Review* 18/3 Ouly, 1992): 204. Hereafter, Overview.

[4] Alasdair Macintyre, *After Virtue,* 2d ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 204. Hereafter, *AV.*

[5] " It is important to notice," Macintyre says, "that I am not arguing that the concepts of narrative or of intelligibility or of accountability are *more* fundamental than that of personal identity. The concepts of narrative, intelligibility and accountability presuppose the applicability of the concept of personal identity, just as it presupposes their applicability and just as indeed each of these three presupposes the applicability of the two others. The relationship is one of mutual presupposition" *(AV,* 218).

agent is to provide an intelligible account, a coherent narrative of the history of one's actions such that praise or blame, reward or punishment can be justly ascribed to one's self as a whole.

The social contexts in which this kind of narrative enquiry into the moral life can be sustained are few. Thus at the end of *After Virtue* the reader is admonished to adopt a kind of isolationism, to seek "the construction of local forms of community within which civility and the intellectual and moral life can be sustained through the new dark ages which are already upon us." [6] We are to await, Macintyre advises, the arrival of a newer, "doubtless very different," St. Benedict.

In both *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* and *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* Macintyre continues his critique of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment versions of moral enquiry, but the isolationist theme is not present in these later works. The persistent interminability of moral debate and the apparent incommensurability of rival traditions of enquiry no longer present an impasse, but an invitation to confrontation with alternative modes of enquiry. The function of narrative in these later contexts is more inclusive than its earlier version. It takes on a more systematic quality of entire traditions of rationality (as opposed to single individuals) which serves as the foundation from which his later critiques emerge. "What the Enlightenment made us for the most part blind to and what we now need to recover," Macintyre contends, "is a conception of rational enquiry as embodied in a tradition, a conception according to which the standards of rational justification themselves emerge from and are part of a history in which they are vindicated by the way in which they transcend the limitations of and provide remedies for the defects of their predecessors within the history of that same tradition." [7]

The increasing significance of tradition within Maclntyre's analysis is not simply the emergence of a historical sensitivity. Tradition in these latter contexts bears apologetic weight as well,

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[6] *AV,* 245.

[7] Alasdair Macintyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 7. Hereafter, *WJWR.*

for "to justify is to narrate how the argument has gone so far."[8] In these later contexts narrative bears the added dimension of a larger tradition of enquiry in which, if an interlocutor is said to justify a conclusion reasonably, he or she must show how such a thesis advances the discussion in a way that accounts for the best of what has gone before. This is the primary sense in which to justify is to narrate, and it signals within Macintyre's work an increasingly systematic sense of the function of narrative as integral to rational justification. Without losing the sense of the importance of viewing one's life as a narrative whole, later uses of the notion of narrative illustrate the developmental, progressive sense of moral enquiry. In *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry,* Macintyre brings both the personal and the systematic dimensions of narrative to his reflections. Since this is his latest work to date, I intend to focus upon this work, though it should be noted that it continues an analysis-as extensive as it is erudite-that began in his earliest works.

In addition to Macintyre's optimism concerning confrontations between rival versions of enquiry, one obvious development in his thought is the increasing dependence on St. Thomas and, as will be shown, St. Augustine.[9] In *After Virtue,* the two are treated only cursorily while in both *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* and *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry,* he dedicates entire sections to each. It is not unfair to say, then, that alongside his developments concerning dialogue with rival traditions and the systematic employment of narrative, there is a decidedly, if inadvertent, Augustinian component which progressively emerges in Macintyre 's reflections.

I am well aware that it is Thomism and not Augustinianism which Macintyre espouses in his latest works. Still, an investigation of the place of Augustine within his thought is not unwar-

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[8] *WJWR,* 8.

[9] In the postscript to the second edition of *After Virtue,* Macintyre recognizes certain lacunae in his analysis. In the Preface to *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?,* he openly admits to misreading St. Thomas in his earlier work. In this sense his later efforts answer a number of charges leveled against his earlier work. See, for example, Thomas Hibbs, "Macintyre, Tradition, and the Christian Philosopher," *The Modern Schoolman* 68 (March, 1991): 211-223.

ranted, and this is so for two reasons. First, it is a chief contri-
bution of Macintyre's reading of St. Thomas to have brought to
light how St. Thomas 's achievements include incorporating   the
best of the Augustinian tradition. Thomas 's genius precisely lies,
according to Macintyre, in justifying (i.e., narrating) how his
own synthesis relies on the best of what the tradition of enquiry
had supplied thus far. Given Macintyre's portrait of St. Thomas
as incorporating the best of the Augustinian tradition, it is par-
ticularly relevant to investigate the place of Augustine within
this schema.

   The second reason pertains to Macintyre's own methodology.
As indicated earlier, one of the central conditions of the kind of
rational enquiry Macintyre seeks to advance is the ability to nar-
rate how the progress of that enquiry thus far leads to the kind
of theses presently advanced. To justify is to narrate both how
the tradition leads to the kind of synthesis put forward, and how
one's present thesis preserves the best of what has gone before.
To engage in this kind of justification, however, means that the
divisions between the historical and the systematic become
blurred. This blending of the historical and systematic, the tak-
ing on the role of both chronicler and advocate, can make for
some difficulty in interpreting Macintyre 's efforts, since it is not
always clear if Macintyre is simply "telling" the unfolding of
events or advocating a development of the story thus far. On the
other hand, it may well be that such difficulties are rooted in our
inability to keep in mind precisely what it is that he is advanc-
ing: namely, that to advocate *is* to narrate. [10] And to seek an
objective, perspectiveless "telling" of the story *before* one can
advocate a position is to adopt the kind of Enlightenment ratio-
nality he seeks to reject. To advocate a position as rationally
superior to its rival contenders *is* to narrate how that position
both continues within the history of the tradition of discussions
thus far and corrects any defects within those traditions in ways
not previously possible. Macintyre's appeal to the Augustinian

   [10] See also J.M. Soskice, "Myths, Metaphors and Narrative Theology," *Proceedings:
Seventh European Conference on Philosophy of Religion.* Utrecht University, 1988; cited
in Wentzel van Huyssteen, "Narrative   Theology: An Adequate   Paradigm for
Theological Reflection?" *Hervormde teologiese studies 4514* (1989): 767-777.

tradition is not simply of historical interest. It is to build the conditions for a systematic defense of a certain vision of moral enquiry.

Rival Versions of Enquiry

As the title of his latest work indicates, Macintyre identifies three rival versions of moral enquiry, each with its own account as to what constitutes the subject of morality, and each competing in various degrees for allegiance within the contemporary culture, and specifically in the modern liberal university. The "Encyclopaedist method," so called because of its similarities to methods of enquiry exemplified by the compilers of the Ninth Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* has among its features "a guiding presupposition of thought that substantive rationality is unitary, that there is a single, if perhaps complex, conception of what the standards and the achievements of rationality are, one which every educated person can without too much difficulty be brought to agree in acknowledging." [11]

What such a unitary method seeks among other things is to free itself from the imposed religious dogmas of the past, [12] especially in the areas of ethics and natural theology. In this regard morality is seen as its own distinct discipline of enquiry, utterly unrelated to any broader considerations of social and historical context and certainly free of the distortions of religious and metaphysical considerations. The virtue of the Encyclopaedist mind was, then, (and is to the extent that remnants of such a methodology still survive in the modern liberal university) to adopt a "studied neutrality," to let "facts speak for themselves" with regard to the issues at hand, and to take on the *persona* of that particularly modern fiction, the impartial observer. "The Encyclopaedist," Macintyre says, "aims at providing timeless, universal, and objective truths as his or her conclusions, but aspires to do so by reasoning which has from the outset the same properties. From the outset all reasoning must be such as would be compelling to any fully rational person whomsoever.

[11] *RV,* 14.
[12] *RV,* IS.

Rationality, like truth, is independent of time, place and histori-
cal circumstances." [13]

According to Macintyre, the problem of the Encyclopaedists
is not so much that they seek timeless, universal truths. The
problem lies in the portrait of the process of rational enquiry
adopted; they took it for granted "that all rational persons con-
ceptualize data in one and the same way and that therefore any
attentive and honest observer, unblinded and undistracted by
the prejudices of the prior commitment to belief, would report
the same data, the same facts, [and] that it is the data thus
reported and characterized which provide enquiry with its sub-
ject matter." [14]

Yet, while truth may be timeless, the pursuit of it, Macintyre
argues, is inevitably historically conditioned. Every rational tra-
dition of enquiry will have certain characteristics:

It will have some contingent historical starting point in some situation
in which some set of established beliefs and belief-presupposing prac-
tices, perhaps relatively recently established, perhaps of long standing,
were put in question, sometimes by being challenged from some alter-
native point of view, sometimes because of an incoherence identified in
the beliefs, sometimes because of a discovered resourcelessness in the
face of some theoretical or practical problem, sometimes by some com-
bination of these. So the beliefs will be further articulated, amended,
modified, and added to in order that, in a newer, revised form, they
may provide some answer to the question thus raised and in that form
transcend the limitation of their earlier version.
 From then on a tradition will move through stages, at each of which
a justification of the scheme of belief as a whole could be supplied in
terms of its rational superiority to the formulations of its predecessor,
and that predecessor in turn justified by a further reference backward.
But that availability of this type of reference from the present to the
past is not by itself sufficient to constitute a tradition of rational
enquiry. It is necessary also that a certain continuity of directedness
emerge so that theoretical and practical goals to guide enquiry are for-
mulated and at later stages reformulated. [15]

This failure to recognize the historical condition of its own

[13] *RV,* 65.
[14] *RV,* 16-17.
[15] *RV,* 116.

enquiry, indeed of *all* enquiry, prevented the Encyclopaedist from providing a genuine account of that tradition's "rational superiority to the formulations of its predecessors." For part of the task of exhibiting one's perspective as rationally superior to its rival is to provide an account of the history of the enquiry in such a way that both the development and defects of previous attempts can be adequately accounted for. And yet it was precisely this notion of progression and development from previous enquiry which the Encyclopaedist, according to Macintyre, ignored. "So," he says, "from the standpoint of the Encyclopaedist no tradition is rational *qua* tradition; a tradition is and can be in respect of rationality no more than a milieu in which methods and principles are formulated, for it is only methods and principles to which rational appeal can be made." [16] The historical context and tradition of enquiry leading up to the present discussion are accidentally related to the principles advanced and play no constitutive role in the development of an argument.

What such a tradition of enquiry lacked was the possibility of even recognizing "that commitment to some particular theoretical or doctrinal standpoint may be a prerequisite for-rather than a barrier to-an ability to characterize data in a way which will enable enquiry to proceed." This inability to recognize either the significance of the contingent and historical character of enquiry or the significance of any pre-theoretical commitments to rational enquiry-commitments which help identify the subject matter of the enquiry and characterize how progress could be both identified and pursued-left the Encyclopaedist tradition particularly vulnerable to the second mode of moral enquiry, what Macintyre describes as the Genealogical mode.

The Genealogical mode, so named from Friedrich Nietzsche's *Zur Genealogie der Moral,* sought in the latter half of the nineteenth century (and seeks in some current trends in postModernist thought) to unmask the apparent posture of universality and impartiality as a disguised will to power. Macintyre

shows that in Nietzsche's sustained attack upon the academic modes of enquiry, modes aptly embodied in the Ninth Edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica,* what emerged was the notion: "To think and speak of truth, knowledge, duty and right … is to give evidence of membership in a culture in which lack of self-knowledge has been systematically institutionalized." [11] According to the Genealogist what is lacking is the recognition that to desire a truth that is at once fixed, determinate, universal, and binding-the kind of truth pursued by the Encyclopaedist-is "an unrecognized motivation serving an unacknowledged purpose." That purpose turns out to be what Nietzsche was later to characterize as the will-to-power. [18]

Yet it is not simply lack of self-knowledge with which the Genealogist charges the Encyclopaedist. The Genealogist sought to eradicate from the tradition of enquiry its implicit realism. Macintyre continues: "Epistemologically what this lack of self-knowledge and the arguments which are assembled in its support sustain [according to the Genealogist] is a blindness to the multiplicity of perspectives from which the world can be viewed and to the multiplicity of idioms by means of which it can be characterized; or rather, a blindness to the fact that there is a multiplicity of perspectives and idioms, but no single world which they are of or about." [1"]

Moreover, Nietzsche's sustained attack upon the implicit realism signaled a much deeper critique than simply illustrating the lack of awareness of foundations and methodology. Nietzsche's point is rather "that that conception of rationality, indeed the conception of language and its mode of application to the world presupposed by that conception, is itself theological." [20] And so the critique of the Genealogist is that "realism is inherently theistic. [mi] Realism is inherently theistic, Macintyre concurs, in that it "has as its core the view that the world is what it is indepen-

[17] *RV,* 35.
[is] *RV,* 35.
[19] *RV,* 35-36.
[20] *RV,* 67.
[21] *RV,* 67.

dently of human thinking and judging and desiring and willing. There is a single true view of the world and of its ordering, and for human judgments to be true and for human desiring and willing to be aimed at what is genuinely good they must be in conformity with that divinely created order. "[22] It is this inherent connection between realism and theism which makes the former the target of the Genealogist's attacks.

Thus to the extent that the Genealogist accuses the Encyclopaedist of harboring an unexpressed realism-a realism which in turn depends upon the notion of a Creator-to that extent the Genealogist seeks to eradicate the Judeo-Christian tradition. This accounts, according to Macintyre, for the rather vituperative attacks upon the Judeo-Christian tradition within Nietzsche's *corpus,* attacks which have no less vitality in some contemporary post-modern circles. Thus, what both the Genealogist and the Encyclopaedist have in common is the notion that belief (specifically religious belief) must be abandoned in order to clear the way for a more radical critique and advancement of their respective methodologies.

The Genealogist is able to turn the corner on the Encyclopaedist in that he or she holds the mirror to the Encyclopaedist. Under such conditions of self-exposure it becomes clear that the Encyclopaedic methodology, despite the claims to universality and impartiality, is simply one more historically contingent method of enquiry. From this vantage the Encyclopaedist's position collapses under the weight of self-contradiction, for according to its own standards of rationality, standards which entail the refusal of any historically contingent starting point, it is unable to present itself as rational. It thus emerges as grounded not in the universal canons of rationality adopted by all rational agents *qua* rational, but is simply another outburst of an a-rational belief in the self-declared autonomy of impartial, universal, objectivist rationality. It discovers itself to be precisely what it sought to eliminate.

The victory for the Genealogist is short-lived, however, for two reasons. In the first place, the Genealogist apparently fails to

[22] *RV,* 67.

recognize that insofar as the Genealogical critique had exhibited the historical contingency and the arbitrary expression of a veiled will-to-power on the part Encyclopaedist methodology, it has defeated simply *one* method of enquiry and has in no way closed off once and for all the possibilities of other rational traditions of enquiry. As Macintyre says in *After Virtue,* Nietzsche becomes *"the* moral philosopher *if* the only alternatives to Nietzsche's moral philosophy turn out to be those formulated by the philosophers of the Enlightenment and their successors. "[23]

Just as the pretensions of the Encyclopaedists prevent them from conceiving (let alone engaging in dialogue with) any substantive alternative traditions, so the Genealogists are unable to recognize alternative traditions to their own methods of analysis. Each tradition suffers from its own version of myopia: the one through a kind of reductionism in which all contenders were submitted to a scrutiny on grounds other than their own, the other through a certain obsession with attacking those reductionist, objectivist, and universalist agendas.

The other limitation of the Genealogist, according to Macintyre's analysis, pertains to the conception of the self. To return to my analogy of the mirror, one must hold it long enough and consistently enough in order for the Encyclopaedist to see himself or herself in the light of the Genealogist's critique. To do so, however, requires the kind of enduring, unified self, the permanent "I" of any sustained conversation. If the Genealogist seeks to emancipate its hearers from the shackles of objectivist thought, then it itself must take on an enduring *persona,* at least as long as it takes to complete the task. As Macintyre argues: "The function of genealogy as emancipatory from deception and self-deception thus requires the identity and continuity of the self that was deceived and the self that is and is to be.[1][124] And yet it is precisely these supposed metaphysical chimeras which the Genealogist seeks to dismiss.

"Conversations are extended in time," Macintyre argues. And this, in turn, demands that those engaged in conversation have

[23] *AV,* 114.
[24] *RV,* 214.

certain qualities. Among them is some rudimentary notion of a personal identity, an identity which entails the notion of accountability. "To be accountable in and for enquiry," Macintyre notes, "is to be open to having to give an account of what one has either said or done, and then to having to amplify, explain, defend, and, if necessary, either modify or abandon that account, and in this latter case to begin the work of supplying a new one." [25] The progressive character of enquiry and conversation demands, then, some notion of an enduring personal identity. And it is precisely the Genealogical suspension of this requirement by its modern adherents (principally, and in varying degrees, by Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Jacques Derrida) which forfeits any substantive role in the conversation. "So we might conclude," Macintyre says. "that there is *no* way of posing questions about accountability or, correspondingly, about the identity, unity, and continuity of the self within a genealogical framework. "[26]

And yet, if there is no way to attribute accountability, there is no good reason to consider the Genealogical tradition as a viable contender among theoretical projects, vying for allegiance within the contemporary academy. "Make of the genealogist's self nothing but what genealogy makes of it," Macintyre asserts, "and that self is dissolved to the point at which there is no longer a continuous genealogical project." [27]

Thus the Encyclopaedist and Genealogist stand at loggerheads, each with his or her own insulated notions as to what constitutes critical enquiry, and yet each is unable to confront the other in any kind of substantive way. To the Encyclopaedist, the Genealogist appears as one outside the canons of rationality, canons which emerge from an analysis of rationality free of any impediment of contingent beliefs. To the Genealogist, the

[25] *RV,* 201.

[26] *RV,* 208.

[27] *RV,* 54. Macintyre does not use the language of narrative here, but the earlier remarks about the need for a narratively ordered self are relevant. What the Genealogist suspends are the same conditions which make narrative a constitutive principle of moral enquiry. He or she suspends the conception of an enduring self, one whose actions comprise an intelligibly ordered whole.

Encyclopaedist appears unwilling to recognize the true charac-
ter of his or her enquiry as one which simply masks the deeper
desire for control and mastery over others. According to
Macintyre, what characterizes the history of this encounter both
in the latter half of the nineteenth century as well as its continu-
ations in the modern liberal university is neither its erudition nor
its progress, but rather its interminability.

Part of the source of the conundrum lies in the fact that the
historical roots of these two competing methodologies are
embedded in a false dilemma: *"Either* reason is thus impersonal,
universal, and disinterested *or* it is the unwitting representative
of particular interests, masking their drive to power by its false
pretensions to neutrality and disinterestedness."2 [8] This dilemma
conceals, however, a third possibility: "the possibility that reason
can only move towards being genuinely universal and imperson-
al insofar as it is neither neutral nor disinterested, that member-
ship in a particular type of moral community, one from which
fundamental dissent has to be excluded, is a condition for gen-
uinely rational enquiry and more especially for moral and theo-
logical enquiry. "[29]

The impasse is broken between the Encyclopaedist and
Genealogist, then, with the recognition of at least one tradition of
enquiry which avoids the pitfalls of those competing versions. A
willed assent to the parameters of the discussion advanced thus
far does not derail, as the Encyclopaedist might suggest, the pro-
ject of moral enquiry. Nor does it betray, as the Genealogist sus-
pects, a servile acquiescence on the part of a slavish enquirer.
Rather, with this third version of enquiry, a belief in the history
of the progress of enquiry thus far and a commitment to the
moral community of enquiry provide the conditions for the pos-
sibility of rational advancement and reform.

Such a vision of practical rationality, though, is systematical-
ly excluded from the two traditions outlined above. This third

[28] *RV,* 59.
[29] *RV,* 59-60.

rival version of moral enquiry is embodied in the efforts of St. Thomas Aquinas and was championed by still another late nine-teenth-century text, Pope Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris.*

Tradition and Enquiry

It is the mark of a successful "tradition-guided-enquiry," so Macintyre has contended, to engage in rational debate with its contenders in a way that not only accounts for whatever devel-opment such competing traditions might offer, but provides a coherent account of and remedy for the limitations in those other theories.

Thomism, according to Macintyre, shows itself as a superior tradition of moral enquiry in at least three different contexts. The first context is that of the thirteenth century in which enquiry conducted at the University of Paris had become stymied by the apparent impasse between the Augustinians and Aristotelians. The superiority of St. Thomas 's efforts shows itself in its ability to overcome this impasse. The second context is the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the efforts of Pope Leo XIII, Joseph Kleutgen, and others were directed toward chal-lenging the primacy of the two rival traditions of enquiry out-lined above. And to the extent that the modern liberal universi-ty has unwittingly adopted elements of all three versions of enquiry in varying degrees and extent, the third context in which Thomism as tradition-guided enquiry can prove itself as a viable alternative is the modern university-albeit with significant caveats and modifications.

Macintyre's approach to St. Thomas is both historical and systematic. It is historical in that he illustrates the context in which St. Thomas takes up the project of the *Summa theologiae.* Yet it is systematic in that the history of that context leading up to St. Thomas 's efforts exhibits the superiority of his systematic vision of moral enquiry. Indeed, part of the project of introduc-ing narrative as a useful concept into moral analysis is precisely to introduce the significance of historical context, both in terms of providing an account of what has gone before so as to provide a rationale for whatever may be currently pertinent *and* in cre-ating the conditions of any future enquiry that might emerge as

relevant in light of the current and previous efforts. St. Thomas, Macintyre contends, narrates the history of enquiry up to the time of his own reflections and does so in such a way as to show how his own synthesis complements previously exclusive rival traditions of moral enquiry: Aristotelianism and Augustinianism. In so doing, Thomism thereby exhibits its superiority as a tradition of rational moral enquiry. It is vindicated as superior to its contemporaries in such a way that "inadequacies are remedied by using the Bible and Augustine to transcend the limitations not only of Aristotle but also of Plato ... and by using Aristotle as well as Augustine to articulate some of the detail of the moral life in a way that goes beyond anything furnished by Augustine."3° Narrative in this context, then, serves as the paradigm of moral enquiry more broadly construed. Not only does the individual come to place him or herself within a tradition of rational enquiry, but the very conditions as to what constitutes that enquiry as rational are narratively construed.

What Aquinas had gained from the Aristotelian tradition and had used effectively in his own synthesis was, among other things, a comprehensive analysis of practical rationality, the virtues, and the nature of moral enquiry in a way never previously achieved in the Augustinian tradition. Thus Aristotle was invoked to further the project of enquiry into the nature of practical rationality, an enquiry which for St. Thomas had its roots in a tradition other than the Aristotelian tradition of the thirteenth century. What he had gained from the Augustinian (and Biblical) tradition, on the other hand, was a reformulation of both the end of practical rationality and the conditions for the possibility of achieving such an end.

According to Macintyre, despite the erudition expressed in the *Nicomachean Ethics,* it had a tragic quality about it. The happiness which serves as the ordering *telos* of the moral life is not in principle-even on Aristotle's terms-attainable by human beings. The conditions of happiness outlined in the *Nicomachean Ethics* are such that only the Divine can properly

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[30] *RV,* 141.

achieve that status. Given the characteristics of the complete self-sufficiency of happiness, conditions which are essential to Aristotle's analysis, such happiness, "would be more than human."[31] We should, nonetheless, "try to become immortal as far as that is possible and do our utmost to live in accordance with what is highest in us."[32] Commenting on this inherent difficulty Macintyre notes:

Without some rationally warranted belief in, some genuine knowledge of that perfect goodness in relationship to which alone the soul finds ultimate good-that divine goodness by reference to which alone, in Augustine's Platonic terms, the unity underlying and ordering the range of uses and applications of the concept of good can be discovered-the soul would find itself directed beyond all finite goods, unsatisfiable by those goods, and yet able to find nothing beyond them to satisfy it. Permanent dissatisfaction would be its lot:"

As St. Thomas says: "It becomes sufficiently clear how these great minds suffered from being so straitened on every side."[34] So, from the vantage point of the Thomistic tradition, the Christian revelation complemented the Aristotelian enquiry by supplying a more adequate characterization of the nature of the end of practical rationality.

It had also (principally through the efforts of St. Augustine) reformulated the process by which one achieves that end. Thus, while it is true that for Aristotle to be practically well educated means to be skilled in ordering one's passions in accord with the good, no amount of education within the Aristotelian tradition of moral enquiry is sufficient in achieving the ultimate end of human life. For what the Augustinian tradition supplied for the Thomistic synthesis in a way that no Aristotelian (or Platonist) could was the notion of the perverted will, the *mala voluntas,* that fundamental deformation at the center of every human being due to his or her kinship with Adam.

[31] *Nicomachean Ethics,* Book X, Chapter 7; 1177 b27. English translation by Martin Ostwald (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Publishing, 1962), 290. Hereafter, *NE.*

[32] *NE,* 291.

[33] *RV,* 137-38.

[34] *Summa Contra Gentiles,* III, c. 48, in *Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas,* vol. 2, ed. Anton C. Pegis (New York: Random House, 1945), 87.

The Augustinian discovery of the perverted will disturbs "the intelligible scheme through which the individual (tutored exclusively in the tradition of the Greeks) is able to understand him or herself as both directed towards and explicable in terms of that end. "[35] Central to the notion of Aristotelian practical rationality is the notion that virtue is acquired through experience, through repeated intentional performance of virtuous deeds such that one's character begins to be shaped by such behavior. What the Augustinian tradition adds to the Thomistic appropriation of Aristotle is the notion that "there comes a point at which no degree of prudence, or of the other virtues which are required if one is to have and to exercise prudence, will avail to further one's progress towards one's ultimate good."[36] As Macintyre poignantly remarks: "What one discovers in oneself and in all other human beings is something surd and unaccountable in terms of the rational understanding of human nature: a rooted tendency to disobedience in the will and distraction by the passion, which causes obscuring of the reason and on occasion systematic cultural deformation. "'[1]

Once the Augustinian notion of the defective will is introduced into the Aristotelian schema a radically new vision of action and agency becomes necessary.[3] What is required are radically new qualities of character, infused by the free grace of a good God, whereby we may rationally pursue our ultimate end. Such are the freely given gifts ·of faith, hope, and charity. According to Macintyre, the discovery of willful evil does not derail the Thomistic appropriation of Aristotle. Indeed, it complements it:

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[35] *RV,* 140. Cf. *WJWR,* 163 ff., 181.

[36] *RV,* 140.

[37] *RV,* 140. See *WJWR,* 181, 157.

[38] · This Augustinian psychology, which in the place that it assigns to the will is strikingly different not only from Neoplatonism but from any ancient psychology, provides a new account of the genesis of action" *(WJWR,* 154). See also, Albrecht Dihle," Chapter VI: St. Augustine and his Concept of Will," in *The Theory of the Will in Classical Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 123-144.

It is only the kind of knowledge which faith provides, the kind of expectation which hope provides, and the capacity for friendship with other human beings and with God which is the outcome of charity which can provide ·the other virtues with what they need to become genuine excellences, informing a way of life in and through which the good and the best can be achieved. [39]

Viewed from the vantage point of the Augustinian notion of the perverted will, then, grace is the necessary complement in the Thomistic analysis of practical rationality, even though (or better yet, because) that analysis is Aristotelian in character.

Thomas 's *Summa,* then, bears the marks of a superior tradition of rational enquiry in that it is able to take the best of the competing traditions of enquiry thus far advanced, and to reformulate those traditions in such a way that not only are they taken on their own terms (thus avoiding a kind of reductionism) but also in such a way that the defects within each tradition are both accounted for and remedied. Aristotle brought to the Augustinian tradition a precision of enquiry not previously achieved. Augustine (and the Bible), on the other hand, brought to the Aristotelian tradition a complementary vision of the *telos* of practical rationality. The genius of St. Thomas lies in his ability to bring what had become a stalemate of rival traditions to a fruitful synthesis.

In terms of the challenges of the late nineteenth century, Macintyre indicates that the Thomist charges the Encyclopaedist with a certain naivete in rejecting belief (especially religious belief) as a condition of enquiry. For it has been shown that belief in an eternal friendship with a good and loving God can and indeed does serve as the necessary complement toward enquiry into the nature of the moral life. Against the Genealogist, the Thomist can charge that the discovery (or impu-

[39] *RV,* 140. Commenting on the notion of grace as the necessary ingredient to Thomistic moral enquiry, Macintyre notes: "In this respect, although not only in this respect, the structure of the *Summa* is Pauline and Augustinian" *(WJWR,* 181). In light of these remarks it is difficult to understand Stackhouse's comment that Maclntyre's account of Thomas "seems to miss the degree to which the angelic doctor depends on elements of Augustine's teleology ... and thus Maclntyre's account tends to remain in a very Pelagian (or Arminian) mode" (Overview, 207).

tation) of the will-to-power on the part of all traditions of ratio-
nal enquiry is derived from a "misdirection of the intellect by the
will and with the corruption of the will by the sin of pride." [40]
This characterization of all enquiry as rooted in a will-to-power,
then, turns out to be accounted for in the Thomistic analysis as
"an intellectual fiction disguising the corruption of the will." [41] In
illustrating the perversity of the will in its relentless drive for
absolute power and authority, the Genealogical critique unwit-
tingly enters the center of the Thomistic-Augustinian analysis.
And yet in refusing to seek a resolution to such perversion with-
in the tradition of enquiry shaped by the Christian revelation,
the Genealogist falls victim to its own methods of attack, for it is
unable to disqualify itself as simply another manifestation of
will-to-power.

Finally, the third context in which the Thomistic tradition of
enquiry can show itself as superior to its rivals is within the con-
temporary university. One of the aims of his Gifford Lectures
was to raise the question as to whether anything like tradition-
guided enquiry is even possible within the modern university.
For my purposes it is enough to say that serious revisions in the
curricula and philosophical presuppositions of many contempo-
rary universities are required before one can hope to engage in a
sustained program of rational debate and enquiry-the kind of
enquiry, that is, best exemplified in the efforts of St. Thomas.

Augustine and Tradition

According to Macintyre, the Augustinian notion of the per-
verted will is one of the central tenets of the Thomistic moral
enquiry. To the extent that Macintyre has advocated Thomism
as a superior tradition, there is reason to investigate MacIntyre's
use of Augustine in advocating his own version of enquiry. This
is so, moreover, for at least two reasons.

The first lies in the nature of the challenges Thomistic tradi-
tion-guided-enquiry puts to the Encyclopaedist and Genealogist.

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[40] RV,147.
[41] *RV,* 147.

As it turns out, in Macintyre's account of the challenges pre-
sented to these rival versions of enquiry are elements which have
their historical roots in the Augustinian tradition of moral
enquiry. In other words, though it may be Thomism which rises
to meet the challenges of the Genealogist and Encyclopaedist, it
is principally Thomas 's Augustinian ancestry which provides
the lifeblood to his argument.

The second reason for drawing attention to this latent
Augustinianism is to argue that a more careful scrutiny of
Augustine's contribution-or at least Macintyre's account of
Augustine's contribution-points toward the outlines of a reme-
dy to a certain defect within Macintyre 's own analysis.
Macintyre claims that Augustine's principal contribution to tra-
dition-guided enquiry lies in the notion of the perverted will.
While this is true, there is more to Augustine's discussion of the
perverted will than Macintyre indicates.

Macintyre traces the Augustinian features of tradition-guid-
ed-enquiry back to the Platonic tradition in general. From the
Gorgias and the *Republic* emerges the notion that, "the enquirer
has to learn how to make him or herself into a particular kind of
person if he or she is to move towards the knowledge of the truth
about his or her good and about *the* human good." [42] Speaking
about these conditions of a Platonic notion of tradition-guided
enquiry, Macintyre notes:

We also need a teacher to enable us to actualize that potentiality [for
the good], and we shall have to learn from that teacher and initially
accept on the basis of his or her authority within the community of a
craft what precisely what intellectual and moral habits it is which we
must cultivate and acquire if we are to become effective self-moved
participants in such enquiry. Hence there emerges a conception of
rational teaching authority internal to the practice of the craft of moral
enquiry, as indeed such conceptions emerge in such other crafts as fur-
niture making and fishing, where, just as in moral enquiry, they par-
tially define the relationship of master-craftsman to apprentice. [43]

Introduction into the craft of moral enquiry demands that the

[42] *RV,* 60.
[43] *RV,* 63.

beginner enter into a relationship of trust with the community
and its authority. It demands a willingness to be vulnerable to
what has gone before. It demands a trust in persons, authorities
internal to the practice of the enquiry-not with the intention of
instilling a kind of servitude, but a kind of apprenticeship   in
which the standards of excellence are gradually assimilated into
one's own spontaneous   analysis.

    Macintyre   rightly observes that Augustine's   epistemology
was essentially Platonic; but he notes this crucial difference
between   the Augustinian   and Platonic conception   of moral
enquiry:

The intellect and the desires do not naturally move towards that good
which is at once the foundation for knowledge and that from which
lesser goods flow. *The will which directs them is initially perverse and
needs a kind of redirection* which will enable it to trust obediently in a
teacher who will guide the mind towards the discovery both of its own
resources and of what lies outside the mind, both in nature and in God.
Hence faith in authority has to precede rational understanding. And
hence the acquisition of that virtue which the will requires to be so
guided, humility, is the necessary first step in education or in self-edu-
cation.44

    Note well the integral relationships   among the perverse will,
the inability to move naturally toward the good, the need for a
redirection and an obedient trust in a teacher "who will guide the
mind towards the discovery both of its own resources and of
what lies outside the mind, both in nature and in God," and
finally the need for humility as the pre-conditional   virtue for
anyone embarking upon an enquiry into the good within the
Augustinian tradition.

    The contrast with the Encyclopaedic methodology could not
be sharper. "The encyclopaedist aims," Macintyre contends, "at
providing timeless, universal, and objective truths as his or her
conclusions, but aspires to do so by reasoning which has from the
outset the same properties. From the outset reasoning must be
such as would be compelling to any fully rational person what-

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    44 *RV,* 84 (emphasis mine).
    45 *RV,* 65.

soever. Rationality, like truth, is independent of time, place and historical circumstances." [45] In the Augustinian tradition no progress in moral enquiry is possible without first committing oneself in faith to the dramatic narrative of which one's self is a part. To the extent that Thomism has adopted this Augustinian view, it is clear how Thomism comes to meet the Encyclopaedist. Participation in a Thomistic tradition-guided enquiry requires "sharing in the contingencies of its history, understanding its story as one's own, and finding a place for oneself as a character in the enacted dramatic narrative which is that story so far." [46]

The challenge to the Genealogist is equally Augustinian. Earlier it was noted that the Thomist charges the Genealogist with operating not from some privileged position of critique, but with a will perverted by pride. Against this the Thomistic tradition poses a humility required on the part of a beginner in the face of an authorized teacher and before a dramatic narrative from which one learns to discover his or her place in that narrative. While on the surface it is the Thomist who confronts the Genealogist, from the perspective of the narrative it is the Augustinian contribution which fuels the critique.

It is essentially on *Augustinian* grounds, then, that the Encyclopaedist and Genealogist meet their nemesis. For it is the Augustinian dimensions of tradition-guided enquiry which are largely the terms on which the Thomistic tradition is at odds with the Genealogical and Encyclopaedic methods. Again, this would follow since it is part of MacIntyre's project to direct our attention to how St. Thomas takes the best of the Augustinian tradition into his own methods.

But can it be that Thomism has defeated its opponents? Has the Encyclopaedist been defeated simply by charging him or her with a lack of an Augustinian consciousness? Has the Genealogist been defeated with being charged with willful pride? Could not one retort that the defeat is only apparent, in that such charges "stick" only from within that particular narrative of enquiry? Abandon that tradition, and the charges disap-

[46] *RV,* 65.

pear. Incommensurability,   then, appears to have the final word, and in so having it eliminates the conditions for the possibility of a substantive   critique.

Not so, Macintyre   responds:

[In] judging of truth and falsity there is always some ineliminable ref- erence beyond the scheme within which those judgments are made and beyond the criteria which provide the warrants for assertibility within that scheme. Truth cannot be identified with, or collapsed into war- ranted assertibility. And a conception of *what is* which is more and other than a conception of *what appears to be the case in the light of the most fundamental criteria   governing assertibility within any particular scheme* is correspondingly required, that is, a metaphysics of being, of *esse,* over and above whatever can be said about particular *entia* in the light of particular concepts.[47]

This emerging realism indicates a marked development beyond his earlier reflections in *After Virtue.* Many critics charged Macintyre with an implicit relativism insofar as he had not (in their minds) adequately provided a means of adjudicat- ing which historical enquiry, which narrative, is to be advanced over and against another. Rival modes of enquiry, if fully incom- mensurable, cannot provide criteria or methods for resolving the conflict of choosing among them. [48]

For the later Macintyre, however, genuine incommensurabil- ity is a fiction. [49] All traditions of enquiry must submit their the- ses to the tribunal of reality. It is the untamable character of *esse* which prevents any tradition from exercising a hegemony on truth. Reality will inevitably rear its ugly head in defianc.e of any inadequate conception of it. The charge against the rival tradi- tions, then, is not simply that they are outside the parameters of the Thomistic discourse, it is that they are outside the parame- ters in such a way that they invite their own contradiction and incoherence-and   do so because they fail to take into account *what is.*

[47] *RV,* 122.

[48] For a criticism of Maclntyre's early efforts along these lines, see Paul Nelson, *Narrative and Morality: A Theological Inquiry* (University Park: The Pennsylvania University Press, 1987), S4-61; also Jean Porter, *The Recovery of Virtue: The Relevance of Aquinas for Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 82-8S.

[49] See also, *WJWR,* 349-369.

But how does metaphysics fit within the kind of tradition-guided enquiry Macintyre has outlined above? It would seem that metaphysics seeks timeless truths, truths which in turn bear no relation to their place within the history of enquiry, the narrative of discourse leading to the point of discovery. And yet it is the Encyclopaedist who seeks, "timeless, universal, and objective truths as his or her conclusions." [50] How, then, does the Thomist differ from the Encyclopaedist?

The answer lies in distinguishing between timeless truths and pursuits of that truth which seek to flee from history, which seek to ignore the embeddedness in the narrative of enquiry. While it may be that the Thomist seeks eternal, timeless truth, he or she does so within a historical tradition of enquiry. A Thomist's metaphysics is a historically ordered, forever revisable, open-ended tradition of enquiry. The pursuit of *what is* is a historically conditioned pursuit. As Macintyre says of the Thomist, "the rationality in which he or she shares is always, therefore, unlike the rationality of the encyclopaedic mode, understood as a historically situated rationality, even if one which aims at timeless formulation of its own standards which would be their final and perfected form through a series of successive reformulations, past and yet to come." [51]

What this means, then, for moral enquiry is that even an appeal to *what is* does not negate the fundamental narrative quality of tradition-guided enquiry advanced by Macintyre. It means that community, tradition, authority, and humility are all constitutive components of any enquiry into *what is.* It means that one of the conditions for the possibility of enquiry into *what is* is a willingness to trust in a tradition, to trust in the authority of persons as an apprentice might appeal to the master of the craft. Finally, it entails a belief in a canonical narrative of enquiry and a community of interpretation as part of the necessary pre-conditions for any grasp of either *what is* or *what is good.*

A tradition-guided enquiry will not only be vindicated by its

[50] *RV,* 65.
[51] *RV,* 65.

capacity to narrate the discourse up to the present in such a way that defects are both accounted for and remedied, but it will also be partially vindicated (and thus open to further revisions) by better accounting for *what is* in ways that previous traditions could not. And the process by which an individual is initiated into better and better traditions of enquiry will initially demand a certain trust, a belief-in-persons, their canonical narratives and traditions of interpretations prior to a complete understanding of what such a tradition might offer as intelligible. And in growing in one's trust in that tradition, one becomes better skilled in its craft of enquiry.

Creation and Moral Enquiry

Granted that Macintyre has made a case for a narrative form of moral enquiry, many questions remain. And it is precisely at this junction of authority, community, traditions of enquiry, and *what is* that Augustine emerges as the premier tradition-guided enquirer. What does a consideration (even tradition-guided) of *what is* have to do with the narrative of one's moral agency, the configuration of one's self in one's quest for the good and happy life? Are there some conditions in which *what is* is so configured as to include one's own identity within the dramatic narrative which is the story thus far? In the recognition of the account of *what is* is there a recognition of what it means to be a character in that dramatic narrative? Finally, will every tradition-guided enquiry into *what is* supply the condition for the possibility of a narrative of moral identity? It is precisely on these terms that Augustine serves Macintyre 's analysis.

Augustine's *Confessions* depicts not simply an account of a perverted will, as Macintyre suggests; rather it depicts his appropriation of the canonical story of *what is.* In addition, through appropriating the canonical account of *what is,* Augustine re-configures the conception of himself precisely as a moral character in the dramatic narrative of enquiry. Thus the *Confessions* supplies a primary instance in which an enquiry into *what is* signals an encounter with what it means to be a moral character. The *Confessions,* moreover, indicates that Augustine himself was confronted with rival versions of moral enquiry, and

so it appears that not every narrative enquiry (even an enquiry into *what* is) will supply the sufficient conditions of Christian moral agency.

Macintyre neglects to note that there were alternatives to the *mala voluntas* which could have accounted for that inability to achieve the good life, alternatives which at one point seemed plausible to Augustine himself. Under the aegis of the Manichees, our inability to approximate the good life was accounted for on very different terms. From the perspective of their canonical narrative, no authentic moral agency was possible, for the self was merely the plaything of rival, dualistic forces.

And yet for Macintyre as well as Augustine (or perhaps for Macintyre because of Augustine) such a dualism cuts to the quick of moral agency and identity. Central to Macintyre 's approach to moral experience is the notion that we are somehow able to account for our experiences-both successes and failures-as a whole, an intelligible unity whereby praise or blame may be ascribed to ourselves. We describe our moral agency in terms of a narrative of personal identity. For Macintyre, one may recall, it is this kind of continuity of the self which provides the conditions for the superiority of the Thomists against the Genealogists. At the same time, it is this demand for a kind of coherent unity to one's life which eventually leads Augustine to the defeat of the Manichaean position. And so for Augustine and those who follow, it is not the case that any narrative enquiry into *what is* will suffice for the conditions of moral agency. Rather, it will only be in coming to accept the canonical narrative of the Catholic Church, that narrative in which *what is* is entirely good, that Augustine re-created himself as a *moral* character.

Of course Augustine's portrait of himself as a *moral* character was colored by his failure to live with any enduring integrity and this marks the conditions in which the *mala voluntas* becomes so prominent. Yet the *mala voluntas* is not a feature of our authentic condition and hence it does not exhaust the conception of ourselves within the drama of moral enquiry. Augustine came to understand that it is not enough to see that one is unable to live the moral life with integrity. To be a Christian is to see this

inability precisely in terms of a fall, our loss of an original condition in which we are partakers of supreme happiness, i.e., union with Divine Love. More specifically, it is to see that Christ is the Word through whom we are made and the principle by which we are made happy. And thus our inability to pursue our supreme happiness in God was due to something other than the nature of our creation or the nature of the Creator.

Aristotle (and Plato) could not grasp this notion of Divine Love and hence never saw fully the implications of our inability to live the highest form of happiness. The Manichees, on the other hand, never saw our inability to approximate this kind of life as *our* fall, *our* loss; rather, it merely reflected the original chaos inaugurated at the beginning of all things. To Augustine, however, our inability to live a life ordered by supreme happiness in Divine Love signaled a profound loss, a profound failure at the beginning of the human race. Our untutored wills are understood as perverse precisely because he sees (if only in a glass, darkly) the conditions of our authentic state, our union with the Supremely Good Creator who has made us for Himself. From this context the question of *what is,* what is good, and the condition of our selves within the drama of moral enquiry emerges.

The *mala voluntas* does signal an important dimension of the tradition-guided enquiry Macintyre seeks to advance. And it does seem to recognize the kind of bad faith at the heart of the Aristotelian tradition as Macintyre suspects; yet it does so in such a way that the very conditions under which one might come to appropriate such a thesis are altered. Augustine does not merely supply a fuller psychological portrait of the tragic Aristotelian. He does not merely supply a fuller image of the restless heart. Rather, in his appropriation of the canonical account of creation, Augustine grasped the central condition in which one might come to understand one's self as a restless, responsible character within the dramatic quest for moral integrity-*because God has made us for Himself.* It was not until he was able to grasp that the term of supreme happiness (Divine Love) is the same as the principle of all creaturely existence that he was able to recognize the conditions of our present experience pre-

cisely as fallen and thus able to account in more penetrating ways for the limitations of moral growth intimated in rival schemas, including Manicheism. The notion of the *mala voluntas* allowed him to maintain that the term of his existence and the term of his happiness were one and the same. At the same time, the notion allowed him to see that what accounted for his failure to live the good life was not, as the Manichees suspected, some flaw in the divine principle; rather, moral inadequacy was the result of an original refusal to be taken up within divine love. And thus it is the case that to grasp truly *what is,* is to grasp at the same time what it is to be a responsible creature within the drama of the created order. It is in the theology of the good creation that one finds the conditions of our moral enquiry.

None of my reflections is intended to derail MacIntyre's efforts nor to gloss the limitations in Augustine which Thomas was later to rectify. Rather, my intention is to invite a fuller appreciation of the appeals to Augustine within MacIntyre's analysis, thus opening the way for a fuller appropriation. In *After Virtue* we are invited to seek another, albeit different, St. Benedict. In *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* Benedict appears to have stepped aside in order to allow St. Thomas to serve. If my analysis of Macintyre is correct, St. Augustine plays a leading role in the drama of moral enquiry of which we find ourselves a part.

THE CONCEPT OF POVERTY IN
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS'S
CONTRA IMPUGNANTES DE/ CULTUM
ET RELIGIONEM

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MEDIEVAL CONCEPTIONS of poverty have been given ongoing and serious attention by scholars during this century. The extensive literature on the nature and practice of poverty among the Franciscans bears witness to this. Serious investigation of St. Thomas Aquinas's understanding of poverty, however, is virtually nonexistent. Except for a very recent book by Ulrich Horst,' there are, so far as I know, no monographs or dissertations treating this aspect of Aquinas's thought. The most thorough discussion in English, which falls far short of sustained textual or critical analysis, is given by Philip Mulhern. [2] Apart from an article by Silvana Spirito, which primarily focuses on historical issues, one finds only scattered references and notes in other works. [3]

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[1] Ulrich Horst, *Evangelische Annut und Kirche: Thomas van Aquin und die Annutskontroversen des 13. und beginnenden 14. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1992). This work was published after the present article was completed.

: Philip Mulhern, *Dedicated Poverty* (Staten Island: Alba House, 1973), 116-31.

"II problema della poverta e deIla perfezione religiosa nell'ambito deIie polemiche tra clero secolare e ordini mendicanti," *Atti Del Congresso Internazionale,* ed. Congresso internazionale Tommaso d'Aquino (Napoli: Edizioni domenicane italiane, 1974), 49-57. Worthy of mention is Scott Swenson's concise, but detailed, note on poverty in the *Contra impugnantes (Emerging Concepts of Jurisdiction, Sacramental Orders and Property Rights Among Dominican Thinkers From Thomas Aquinas to Hervaeus Natalis* [Ph.D. Diss., Cornell University, 1988], 265, n.159). For a brief discussion of poverty in

The absence of scholarship in this area stands in marked con-
trast to the lavish philosophical and theological attention given
to many other aspects of Aquinas's thought. If Thomas gave
only a cursory nod to the subject of poverty, this absence might
be understandable.   Over the course of his career, however,
Thomas composed several extended discussions and numerous
shorter notes pertaining to poverty, concentrating particularly on
the nature and practice of poverty in religious life. In addition to
the *Contra impugnantes Dei cultum et religionem,* a relatively
early work devoted to a defense of the mendicant orders and
mendicant poverty, there are extended discussions of poverty in
the *Contra pestiferam doctrinam retrahentium homines a reli-
gionis ingressu,* cc. 14-16, the *Summa contra gentiles,* bk. III,
c.131-35, and the *Summa theologiae (51),* II-II, q. 184, a. 7, q.
186, aa. 3&6, q. 188, a. 7, etc. There are also brief discussions and
references to poverty *(paupertas)* and the poor *(pauper)* in nearly
thirty other works ranging from the *In Sententiarum* to various
Scripture commentaries. [4]

My purpose in this paper is to present a close, but by no means
comprehensive, textual and critical analysis of Thomas 's treat-
ment of poverty in the *Contra impugnantes,* concentrating on the
crucial sixth chapter. [5] I am interested in Thomas's conception of

Summa theologiae, 11-11, q. 188, a. 7, see John D. Jones, *Poverty and the Human
Condition* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990), 317-320. Also see Jones, "Poverty and
Subsistence: St. Thomas and the Definition of Poverty," *Gregorianum* 75 (1994): 135-49.

[4] The *Contra impugnantes dei cultum et religionem* and *Contra pestiferam doctrinam
retrahentes homines a religionis ingressu* are contained in the Leonine *Opera Omnia,* vol.
XLI (Rome: St. Thomas Aquinas Foundation, 1970) and in *Opuscula theologica,* vol. 2,
ed. RM. Spiazzi (Turin: Marietti, 1954). An English translation of both works is con-
tained in *An Apology for the Religious Orders,* ed. John Procter (London: Sands and Co.,
1902), 50-376 and 377-479 respectively. I am using the Blackfriars edition of the *Summa
theologiae* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964-81). By and large, I have followed existing
translations of Thomas 's works, although for the sake of accuracy, I have occasionally
modified them, especially Proctor's translations of the *Contra impugnantes* and *Contra
retrahentes.*

[5] The discussion of poverty is contained chiefly in chapter 6 (cited in the Marietti edi-
tion as 2.5[6]). All citations in my paper will be to this chapter unless otherwise noted.
Following typical form, the chapter contains a set of objections, a *responsio,* and a set of
replies to the objections. In order to direct the reader to particular passages within the
long *responsio* or other extended passages, however, I shall list the paragraph number
and line numbers from the Leonine edition followed by the paragraph number from the
Marietti edition in brackets.

poverty, particularly in relation to the use and possession of goods. I shall take the *Contra impugnantes* as a self-contained work; that is, while I shall make reference to other works for illustrative purposes or to set up problems for analysis, I do not intend to engage in a comparative analysis of the *Contra impugnantes* with other works by St. Thomas. Also, I shall focus on philosophical and conceptual issues, leaving aside a treatment of more specifically theological or historical matters.

This paper is comprised of three sections. In the first section, I shall discuss some significant differences between categorizing poverty in terms of the use of goods, on the one hand, and the possession of goods, on the other, since these two categories are not strictly connected either empirically or logically. Also, I want to consider Thomas 's definition of poverty with respect to modern definitions. Basically, in the *Contra impugnantes,* Thomas adopts a subsistence approach to poverty with reference to the use of goods or what we would call a standard of living. That is, he discusses poverty solely with respect to factors related to maintaining physical subsistence. While this is a very common approach to poverty in our age (e.g., consider the "official" U.S. definition of poverty), it must be distinguished from relational or non-subsistence approaches which define poverty with reference to the factors involved in achieving human welfare in a holistic sense. Both of these approaches, which consider poverty in a "teleological" manner so that poverty lines are determined with reference to what is minimally required to achieve certain conditions, are distinct from definitions of poverty in terms of inequality alone, i.e., as some specified degree of having less than others.

In the second section, I take up Thomas's understanding of actual poverty *(paupertas actualis)* with respect to the use and possession of goods. In particular, I want to show that while Thomas adopts a subsistence definition of poverty, he offers two versions of this definition. That is, Thomas accepts three "standards of living": a state of need *(egestate)* in which people lack to varying degrees the means of subsistence, a state in which people have these means, and a state of wealth in which people have a surplus beyond the means of subsistence (ad 1). One def-

inition of poverty, particularly stringent and "ascetic," restricts
poverty to the first state; the other definition includes the middle
state. I shall also explore tensions between these two accounts by
considering some problems in Thomas's view that involuntary
poverty involves a necessary desire for wealth.

The third section investigates three key notions in Thomas 's
understanding   of (voluntary) poverty: "giving all" *(dans omnia),*
"relinquishing   all" *(relinquens omnia),* and "reserving nothing
for self" *(nihil sibi reservans).* In light of a number of objections
and replies presented in the *Contra impugnantes,* I shall consid-
er the different meanings which these phrases have in respect to
the use and possession of things. I am particularly concerned to
investigate a central question of many of the objections: Can
people not own any possessions, either individually or in com-
mon, and still have access to and use goods? I shall show that,
since in the *Contra impugnantes* Thomas never gives an explicit
account of the nature of "common possessions," his treatment of
this question in the *Contra impugnantes* is ultimately unclear.

I

In order to lay a foundation for my analysis of the *Contra
impugnantes,* I want to discuss some of the conceptual issues
involved in understanding   poverty with respect to the use and
possession of goods. This dispute is important for several rea-
sons. First, questions about the relation of poverty to the posses-
sion and use of goods are crucial in medieval discussions of
poverty, particularly as this relation bears on religious poverty.
For example, while Franciscans generally agreed that they had
neither individual nor common possessions, they were often in
sharp disagreement about the extent of legitimate use of goods,
with the Spirituals insisting on restricted use and the
Conventuals defending more moderate use. This matter was not
merely academic in character; it had profound practical bearing
on the character of the development and expansion of the Order
and its apostolates. [6] For another example, Thomas insists that

[6] M. D. Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty* (London: S.P.C.K., 1961), 68-102.

the poverty of religious orders be proportioned to the proper ends or apostolates of the order *(ST,* II-II, q. 188, a. 7). While he formally distinguishes between various grades of poverty in terms of the possession or ownership of goods, the distinction itself is based on the kinds and scope of goods which orders must use in order to carry out their work.

Second, while in the *Contra impugnantes* Thomas formally poses the question of poverty in terms of the possession of goods, there are a number of texts (to be discussed later in this paper) which treat poverty in terms of the use and not just the possession of goods. Third, it is important to distinguish between defining poverty in terms of the use of goods and defining it in terms of possession because these two modes are not strictly connected either empirically or logically. Fourth, our modern interpretation of poverty in terms of standard of living is more clearly linked with medieval discussions of the use rather than of the ownership of goods.

Aquinas formally defines (voluntary) poverty with respect to the possession and not the use of goods. For example, at the very beginning of the *Contra impugnantes,* the vow of poverty is expressed in terms of renouncing *(abrenuntio)* the possession of earthly wealth *(possessio divitiarum terrenarum)* (c. 1, §1, 77-86 [nn. 8-9]). Further, the discussion poverty in chapter 6 is framed in terms of whether it is licit for religious to join orders which have no common property *(possessiones communes).* So, too, there are several places in chapter 6 where the issue of poverty is framed explicitly with respect to possession alone (so that the issue of use does not arise).[7]

Indeed, there is one text where Thomas apparently disengages the issue of the use of goods from the discussion of the nature of the vow of poverty:

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[7] See for example, §3, 376-388 [n. 216] and §3, 397-426 [nn. 218-220] as well as ad 17,18 (§6, 923-944, [nn. 252-53]) and ad 23 (§6, 1014-1025 [n. 259]). This formal definition of poverty in terms of possession is repeated at *ST,* 11-11, q. 188, a. 7, where Thomas defines poverty as the privation of all property *(privatio omniumfacultatum).*

Through their vow, religious do not renounce the world in the sense
that they are not able to use things ... thus it is not contrary to their
vows if they use wealth or even at times delicacies.•

While this text does not imply that the vow of poverty allows for
the unrestricted use of goods, it does suggest that issues about
use are not central to the question of the nature of religious or
voluntary poverty.

In the *Contra impugnantes,* Thomas offers no specific criteria
for determining the nature of the ownership of or proprietary
dominion over goods. But I gather that for him people own those
goods which they control and can use or disburse according to
their own authority. For example, St. Thomas remarks that bish-
ops "have true dominion over their personal goods" in the sense
that "they can either keep them for themselves or give them to
others as they please."" Religious, by way of contrast, cannot
give things to others without the permission of their superiors
(ST, II-II, q. 32, a. 8). So, too, Thomas writes that "the things
used by religious for their support are not absolutely their own
property, or under their own control, but are ministered to them
for their necessity by those who have the management of such
things." [10]

Thomas does not, however, examine poverty exclusively in
terms of possession; the relation of poverty to the use of goods is
a constant theme in the *Contra impugnantes.* Although the use of
goods is rarely the sole topic of discussion (see ad 20),[11] virtually
all of the responses to the objections (except ad 17, 18 and 23)[12]
either implicitly or explicitly treat the use of goods in relation to
poverty.

[8] Religiosi enim per votum religionis non hoc modo abrenuntiant mundo, ut rebus
mundi uti non possint .... Unde non est contra votus eorum, si utantur divitiis, vel
etiam quandoque deliciis ... (c. 2, §4 [n. 34)). (Chapter 2 is cited in the Marietti edition
as 2.1[2]).)

[9] Propriorum bonorum verum dominium habent ... possunt vel sibi retinere, vel aliis
pro libitu elargiri *(ST,* 11-11, q. 185, a. 7).

[w] Ea quibus utuntur religiosi ad sustentationem vitae, non sunt eorum quantum ad
proprietatem dominii, sed dispensantur ad usum necessitatis eorum ab his qui harum
rerum dominium habent *(Contra retrahentes,* c. 16, ad 9 [n. 858)).

[11] §6, 994-997 [n. 256].

[12] §6, 923-935 [n. 252]; §6, 936-944 [n. 253); and §6, 1014-1025 [n. 259)

Before considering some of the formal differences between use and possession, let me briefly indicate the general framework in which Thomas understands poverty in terms of the use of goods, particularly by comparing and contrasting it with our modern approaches to understanding poverty. My point is not to force Thomas into modern modes of understanding poverty, but simply to clarify Thomas 's approach so that it not be confused with more modern approaches.

In the *Contra impugnantes,* Thomas defines poverty-or what he calls actual poverty *(paupertas actualis)-with* reference to the "means of subsistence" (obj. l), [13] i.e., with what "pertains to sustaining nature" (ad 10) or, equivalently, with what is "necessary for the body" (ad 20). [14] In modern categories, Thomas adopts what is called a subsistence or "absolute" approach to poverty. [15] For us, this approach is contrasted with defining poverty in terms of simple inequality or in terms of non-subsistence factors which typically are historical and contextual or relational in character. So far as poverty is defined in terms of inequality, poverty means some specified degree of having less than others. Paradigm definitions of poverty in terms of inequality set poverty lines as some percentile of income level. The definition of poverty in terms of inequality may, but need not, correlate with what people require to maintain physical subsistence. In part, this is because there is no necessity to choose any given percentile of income as defining a poverty line. One could set a poverty line as anything below the median income or as anything below the fifth percentile of income. More importantly,

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[13] All objections in chapter 6 are located in §1 [n. 200]

[14] Respectively, "victum necessarium, ad naturam sustentandam pertinent" (§6, 758 [n. 245]) and "ad necessitatem corporis" (§6, 995 [n. 256]).

[15] Subsistence approaches are "absolute" only if the requirements for human subsistence are socially and historically constant. For good discussion of the conceptual issues involved in modern and contemporary approaches to poverty, see James Goudy, *Shoot Them if They Won't Work: A Study of Status, Economic Aspirations, and Attitudes Toward Poverty and the Poor* (Ph.D. Diss., Purdue University, 1970), ch. l; Robert Holman, *Poverty: Explanations of Social Deprivation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), 35-83; and Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famine: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), ch.1. For a philosophical analysis of these issues see Jones, *Poverty and the Human Condition,* 92-109.

defining poverty in terms of inequality does not formally connect
poverty lines with standards   of living or with the ability or
inability of the people to realize certain goals, needs, or activities.
(This is particularly the case if poverty lines are applied cross-
culturally. The standard of living made possible by the median
income in the United States is quite different from that made
possible by the median income in Guatemala.)

In contrast, subsistence definitions of poverty are instrumen-
tal or teleological in character and they belong to the general cat-
egory of what I call "insufficiency." Understood instrumentally,
poverty presents a basic blockage or frustration to human life.
Subsistence definitions of poverty take the maintenance of phys-
ical subsistence as the goal or state with respect to which pover-
ty is defined. People are regarded as poor to the extent that they
fail to achieve this subsistence or, perhaps, achieve it but with no
additional surplus. Subsistence approaches to poverty may be
contrasted   with non-subsistence   approaches   which typically
define poverty with respect to the achievement of human welfare
in a more or less holistic sense. Underlying non-subsistence
approaches is the view that subsistence alone often provides too
narrow a basis for understanding the nature of poverty, espe-
cially since people may meet subsistence needs yet still be pro-
foundly thwarted in the realization of their welfare. [16] Such defi-
nitions are typically relational in character given that the
socio-economic requirements .to achieve human welfare are
socially and historically variable. [17]

As I mentioned earlier, there is no direct connection between
the specification of poverty in terms of ownership of goods and
in terms of the use of goods. Consider the following example
which Philip Mulhern gives to portray poverty in religious life.

[16] For brief, but concise, justifications of a relational approach to poverty see Holman,
Poverty, 11; Deborah Offenbacher, "The Proper Study of Poverty," in Chaim Waxman,
ed., *Poverty, Power and Politics* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1968), 41; Peter
Townsend, "The Meaning of Poverty," in Joan Huber and Paul Chalfant, eds., *The
Sociology of American Poverty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 41; and
Jones, *Poverty and the Human Condition,* 110-117.

[17] The reader should note the three grades of poverty set forth in *ST,* II- II, q. 188, a.
7 to see Thomas's adoption of a relational approach to poverty. See Jones, "Poverty and
Subsistence" for a more complete discussion of this matter.

One place in which to weigh the reality of basic poverty in religious life is the infirmary or the home for the aged and retired religious. The care may be as good as money can provide; food, medicine, housing may be first rate, although this is not always so. But the residents have just about what they had at the beginning of their "career". . . . [This basic poverty] shows up most clearly in death. The monk who collected great sums to build a monastery, the sister who administered the funds of a large hospital...are of less concern to the courts than a vagrant who dies with a dollar in his pocket. The dollar was little enough but it belonged to the vagrant; its disposition will occupy the attention of the law. Not so the few effects of the religious. [18]

Mulhern seems to suggest that the religious in question are somehow poorer than the beggar since the beggar has a dollar to his or her name, while individual religious apparently own nothing. Yet, given the description of the standard of living these religious enjoy (which, if not comfortable, is certainly not lacking regarding basic subsistence needs), Mulhern's claim that the religious are poorer than the beggar makes sense only if poverty is defined strictly in terms of the possession of goods and is unrelated to the use of goods. Conversely, if poverty refers to an inadequate standard of living (as lacking the means of subsistence), it seems odd to call people poor who have reasonable access to goods but who technically do not own those goods. Indeed, given our everyday understanding of poverty in terms of standard of living, we would regard beggars as poorer than the religious Mulhern portrays.

By denying that there is any direct connection between ownership of goods and standard of living, I do no.t mean to suggest that there is no relation between them. In everyday life, we would expect people who "have nothing to their name" to be poor, and even destitute. Mulhern's example, however, shows a situation in which this relation need not obtain. Similar situations have occurred not only for religious, [19] but for other classes of individuals as well, for example, children and even slaves. [20] In

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[18] Mulhern, *Dedicated Poverty,* 198.

[19] See §4, 475-485 [n. 225] in which Thomas cites St. Jerome's complaint about religious who were wealthier as religious than they were in secular life.

[20] Consider the Palantine of the Roman empire. See Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), 300-309.

any event, given that there is no strict empirical or necessary log-
ical relation between owning and using goods, definitions of
poverty with respect to use or standard of living will bear no nec-
essary relation to definitions of poverty with respect to posses-
sion of goods. People can be poor in terms of standard of living
who own many goods (e.g., wealthy people who may be reduced
to poverty in a situation where they cannot make use of their
wealth or assets). So, too, people may not own any goods, but
may enjoy a comfortable or even luxurious standard of living.

It seems to me that poverty qua non-ownership of goods is
more directly connected with economic dependency and vulner-
ability than with standard of living. People who do not own
goods depend on others to provide goods for them; such people
use goods at the pleasure of those who provide them and have
control over them. Non-ownership, then, is more directly linked
with mendicancy than poverty (understood as insufficiency). [21]
This contrast between mendicancy and poverty is neatly given
in a comment in the *Gloss* on Ps. 39:18 ("I am a beggar and a
poor person") [22] which reads: "the beggar is one who is dependent
on another; the poor person is one who [does not have] what is
sufficient for himself." [23]   William Hinnebusch gives a fine
description of the dependency which accompanies non-owner-
ship in his portrait of the Dominicans after they renounced cor-
porate ownership of goods in 1220.

[The Chapter of 1220] gave up possessions as well as rents. It closed off
all fixed income, all regular economic resources and placed the Order
in full reliance on divine Providence .... This threw the friars com-

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[21] I do not want to claim that non-ownership is necessarily linked with mendicancy,
since it is possible (in some contexts at least) for people to live simply by foraging and
using only what is wild or not owned by others. Of course, whether people would then
own the goods which they find is another question, a variation of which I shall discuss
later in the paper when considering whether people own the goods which they receive
through begging.

[22] "Ego autem mendicus sum et pauper." Thomas quotes this in Chapter 7 (§8, 750-
51 [n. 289]) and construes the text as describing Christ. (In the Marietti edition, Chapter
7 is listed as 2.6[7].)

[23] Mendicus est qui ab alio petit; et pauper qui sibi non sufficit (c. 7, §8, 753-754 [n.
289]).

pletely on the mercy of their fellowmen. Charity became the sole prop
of their economic existence and the quest for alms in kind became a
necessity. [24]

Let me close this section with some analytical considerations.
While statements of the kind that "X owns Y" clearly and unam-
biguously assert that X has proprietary dominion over Y, the
similar assertions, in English at least, that "X possesses Y" and
"X has Y" do not. So far as "property" and "possessions" have
the same meaning,[25] "X possesses Y" is a simple variant of "X
owns Y." On the other hand, in English at least, "X possesses Y"
could also mean that Y is in X's possession in the sense that X
has use of Y, without necessarily owning Y. Many of the items in
my office at the University are in my possession; I use them, am
responsible for them and, perhaps most importantly, have rela-
tively exclusive access to and use of them. They are, however,
the property of the University.

The statement "X has Y" is similarly ambiguous. On the one
hand it can refer to what someone owns: e.g., she has - that is,
has just purchased- a new car. But the statement can also refer
simply to what someone uses: e.g., he has a place to stay for the
night (someone is letting him stay in a room or shelter). [26] In the
same way, "X does not have Y" could mean either that X does

[24] William A. Hinnebusch, *The History of the Dominican Order* (Staten Island, N.Y.:
Alba House, 1965), vol. I, 153.

[25] I gather that for Aquinas *facultates* and *possessiones* are often used interchange-
ably in an economic sense. He regularly uses the former term in the *Summa theologiae*
and the latter in the *Contra impugnantes.* Outside the economic domain, however, we
might be said to possess many things which we do not own: I may possess good health,
but I certainly do not own my good health.

[26] See Bonagratia de Bergamo, a 14th Century Franciscan, who offers several senses
in which people can be said to have things ("Tractatus de Christi et Apostolorum pau-
pertate," ed. L. Oliger, *Archivum Franciscum Historicum* 22: 324-5). Bonagratia's role
in the Franciscan controversy with Pope John XXII is examined in Decima Douie, *The
Nature and Heresy of the Fratricelli* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1932),
158-160. See also the treatise of Hervaeus Natalis (a 14th Century Dominican and
Master General of the Dominican Order), whose detailed conceptual analysis of evan-
gelical poverty hinges on the multiple meanings in which people can have things ("De
paupertate Christi et Apostolorum," J.D. Sikes, ed., *Archives D'Histoire Doctrinale et
Litteraire du Moyen Age* 12/13 (1937/38): 208-97).

not own, but may have use of, Y or that X does not have access
to Y in order to use it. For example, to claim that Jesus did not
have a house could mean that he did not own the places in which
he stayed or it could mean that he was homeless (i.e., he could
find no place to stay). Both senses of the claim are used in the
Contra impugnantes. [21]

<center>II</center>

This section will be devoted to examining Thomas's under-
standing of "actual poverty." Although St. Thomas formally
defines actual poverty with reference to non-ownership of goods,
I shall focus on the meaning of actual poverty as it relates to the
use of goods, since it is in this regard that there are a number of
complexities and problems in the text. To begin with, Thomas
distinguishes between actual poverty *(paupertas actualis)* and
habitual poverty *(paupertas habitualis).*   The former involves
"stripping oneself of temporal things"; the latter is that by which
"someone condemns temporal things with the heart, even if he
possesses them." [28] Thomas does not offer this as his own dis-
tinction, nor does he name its source. Nevertheless he adopts it
in his exposition. [29]

The concept of habitual poverty seems relatively clear. It
refers to what is often called "detachment" from things: a dispo-
sition of the soul *(praeparatio animi) (ST,* II-II, q. 184, a. 7, ad 1)
by which people are focused on what is eternal in their lawful
use and possession of things (§3, 320-23 [n. 210]). [30] Negatively as

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[27] Cf. §3, 270-277 [n. 204]; §4, 448-455 [n. 223]; and c.7, §12, 1398ff. [n. 341].

[28] Aliquis se rebus temporalibus expoliat ... aliquis rem temporalem contemnit corde,
et si re possideat (§2, 255-57 [n. 202D.

[29] So far as I can tell, i.e., through an inspection of the listings for *paupertas* in the
Index Thomisticus (CD-ROM version), Thomas employs the phrases of habitual pover-
ty and actual poverty only in *Contra impugnantes.* However, he makes a similar distinc-
tion between two kinds of renunciation *(abrenuntiatio)* at *ST,* 11-11, q. 184, a. 7, ad 1. The
phrase *paupertas actualis* is used explicitly in §3, 276 [n. 204]; §3, 284 [n. 205]; §3, 294 [n.
206]; §3, 297 [n. 207]; §3, 315 [n. 209]; §3, 326 [n. 210]; §3, 348 [n. 212]; §3, 367 [n. 214];
§3, 434 [n. 221]; §3, 444 [n. 222]. However, the entire first part of the *responsio* is devot-
ed to showing that "actual poverty pertains to evangelical perfection" *(ad peifectionem
evangelicam pertinere ... paupertatem actualem).*

[30] Habitual poverty is a matter of renunciation *(renuntiare)* which "convenit omnibus,
qui ita licite utuntur omnibus mundanis quae possident, ut tamen mente tendant ad
aeterna." This text is from the *Gloss.*

it were, "detachment" implies that "a person is ready to give up or distribute everything if necessary."·" Such detachment "pertains directly to perfection" *(pertinet directe ad peifectionem)* and, according to the *Contra impugnantes,* it "is necessary for salvation" *(est de necessitate salutis)* (§3, 323-34 [n. 210]).

As we shall   the concept of actual poverty is somewhat more complex and problematic. It will be helpful to review the contexts in which Thomas uses this notion to determine the varying ways in which the concept refers to the use and/or ownership of things. The basic characterization of actual poverty given in the preface to the *responsio* (as quoted above) is framed in terms of non-possession of goods.[32] Several other sections from the first part of the *responsio* also define actual poverty in terms of the renunciation of possessions. For example, various passages in the *responsio* indicate that selling one's possessions and giving them to the poor is the mark of actual poverty.[33] Likewise, other passages indicate that adopting actual poverty is the way to avoid the dangers inherent in possessions.[34]

On the other hand, there are several sections where actual poverty is characterized by an impoverished standard of living and restricted use of goods. So, for example, to describe Christ's poverty, Aquinas quotes the *Gloss* text: "I am so poor that I have no house nor a roof to cover myself" (§3, 284-6 [n. 205]), the thrust of which seems to be that Christ was actually homeless and not that he had the use of a house which he did not own.[35] A similar description of Christ's (and the Apostles') poverty is given by Chrysostom: namely, they were naked, hungry and thirsty. Thomas echoes Chrysostom by describing actual pover-

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[31] Homo sit paratus, si opus fuerit, omnia dimittere vel distribuere *(ST,* 11-11, q. 184, a. 7, ad 1).

[32] In §3, 406-411 [n. 219], Thomas identifies "stripping oneself of mundane things" with possessing nothing *(nihil possidere).* The phrase reads: "ille qui se rebus mundi expoliat."

[33] §3, 290-299 [n. 206] and §3, 330-355 [nn. 211-213].

[34] §3, 376-388 [n. 216] and §3, 436-445 [n. 222].

[35] Recall my earlier observation on the ambiguity of sentences such as "Christ had or did not have a house." The *Gloss* text in question refers to the Gospel saying of Jesus that "foxes have a den ..." (Luke 9:58).

ty as a *penuria rerum,* which in light of other texts where the term *penuria* is used, suggests a state of destitution. [36]

Moreover, the most extended presentation of the distinction between actual and habitual poverty focuses on the issue of use and not possession. This distinction is found in a comment from the *Gloss* on the Lucan text "He who does not renounce all that he possesses cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).[37] *The Gloss* states:

There is a difference between renouncing all and relinquishing all, since renunciation applies to all those who, as they licitly use all the mundane goods which they possess, nevertheless keep their minds focused on what is eternal. However, relinquishing [all] belongs only to the perfect, who set aside all temporal things and are captivated solely by eternity. [38]

Note that habitual and actual poverty are contrasted in terms of licit use of goods which people possess and the setting aside of goods which "perfect people" undertake. It does not seem, however, that setting aside all things involves merely giving up ownership of things while continuing lawfully to use them, for the point of the contrast would be lost. That actual poverty involves renouncing even licit use of goods (and Thomas does not interpret the meaning of "licit use" as it is used in the *Gloss)* is also indicated in §3, 427-435 [n.221], where Thomas comments on the reward of judicial power which Christ gives to those who endure actual poverty. Once again, Thomas approvingly quotes the *Gloss:* those who have relinquished all things and have followed the Lord shall be judges, while those who licitly possess and

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[36] See ad 15 (§6, 871-875 [n. 250)), where Thomas notes that the Apostles and members of the early Church at times sustained great need and penury for the sake of Christ *(multas egestates et penurias sustinuerint propter Christum).* Also, see c.7, §12, 1398-1405 [n. 341), in the third set of responses to objections, where Thomas notes the variation in Jesus' and the Apostles' "standard of living" from penury to abundance.

[37] Qui non renuntiat omnibus quae possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus.

[38] Hoc tamen distat inter renuntiare omnibus et relinquere omnia: quia renuntiare convenit omnibus, qui ita licite utuntur omnibus mundanis quae possident, ut tamen mente tendant ad aeterna; relinquere est tantummodo perfectorum, qui omnia temporalia postponunt, et solis aeternis inhiant (§3, 319-325 [n. 210)).

rightfully use goods shall be judged. [39] In any event, neither of these passages can be understood to characterize actual poverty solely in terms of a non-ownership of goods which has no relation to the use of possessions.

But now the question arises: what use of goods or standard of living defines actual poverty? I shall suggest that Thomas gives two different accounts of actual poverty. One implies that actual poverty consists in a severely restricted use of goods or a living standard of destitution in which people lack what is required for normal physical subsistence. The other broadens the notion of actual poverty to include the state in which people have what is required for such subsistence (but apparently with no surplus or wealth *[divitias]* beyond that). [40]

The first account, which identifies actual poverty with destitution, is given in §3, 389-96 [n. 217], where Thomas cites with approval Chrysostom's remark "how did the lack of corporeal things harm the Apostles? Did they not live in hunger, thirst and nakedness" and then goes on to note that actual poverty *consists* in the penury of things. [41] The identification of actual poverty with destitution or *penuria rerum* is also implied in Thomas's reply to the first objection which is based on the famous prayer from Proverbs 30:9-Give me neither mendicancy or wealth, but let me have the means necessary for myself *(victui meo necessaria)* … lest compelled by need *(egestate compulsusfurer),* I per-

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[39] Qui relinquerunt omnia, et secuti sunt Dominium, hi iudices erunt; qui licita habentes, recte usi sunt, iubicabuntur (§3, 319-25 [n.210]).

[40] The reader should note a certain ambiguity in the notions of possessing or lacking the means of subsistence. People could be said to possess the means of subsistence in the sense that they are barely able to stave off death by starvation, exposure etc., or it could mean that they are able to satisfy basic subsistence needs in a minimal but adequate way. In modern categories, we might express the difference in terms of a diet which avoids starvation and a diet which avoids malnutrition. Conversely, people could be said to lack the means of subsistence when they lack what is required to go on living: e.g., they face more or less imminent death by starvation. On the other hand, lacking the means of subsistence could refer to a state (more or less ongoing) in which, while people are not vulnerable to imminent death, their subsistence needs are at best barely met. I assume that when Thomas characterizes actual poverty as a *penuria rerum,* he includes both senses of lacking the means of subsistence.

[41] Actualis paupertas quae in penuria rerum consistit.

jure the name of God.[42] The objection claims that when religious
(such as those in orders with no common possessions) deprive
themselves of the means of subsistence, they expose themselves
to mendicancy and fall prey to the dangers mentioned in the
prayer.

This objection is noteworthy for the three standards of living
it invokes: a state of mendicancy constituted by a need *(egestate)*
for or lack of what is required for physical subsistence, an inter-
mediate state in which such needs are met, and a state of wealth
(divitias) in which there is some surplus beyond the means of
subsistence. [43]

Thomas deals with this objection by arguing both that it is the
abuse of poverty and mendicancy (and not these things in them-
selves) which is evil and that this abuse includes an unwilling-
ness to endure either. Indeed, he quotes Chrysostom with
approval: "the evil is not to be poor but not to want to be poor"
(ad 1).[44] Thomas indicates that the Proverbs prayer will not be
offered by those enduring voluntary poverty since they are not
subjected to the danger inherent in involuntary or forced pover-
ty *(coacta* or *involuntaria paupertas [inopia]),* as this poverty
"necessarily involves a desire for wealth" (ad 3).[45]

As we saw earlier, the Proverbs text distinguishes three states:
wealth, having what is necessary for one's life (but not more than
that), and mendicancy linked with neediness. The second
state-minimal but sufficient conditions to maintain one's life
–is not considered a state of poverty; otherwise the prayer

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[42] *Mendicus* translates the Hebrew term *rash,* one of the Old Testament terms we
translate as "poverty." The Proverbs text is cited in obj. 1.

[43] It is important to note that the states mentioned in the prayer seem to be expressed
in terms of the use of goods or standard of living and not merely in terms of the posses-
sion of goods. Certainly, the Old Testament authors did not make the elaborate kinds of
distinctions between use and ownership proffered by later Christian theologians.
Moreover (as I shall consider somewhat later), there are texts in which Thomas argues
that religious should aim to achieve the means of subsistence which define the middle
state. He is certainly not implying, however, that they possess, i.e., own, these goods; cf.
ad 6 (§6, 659-666 [n. 240]).

[44] Non pauperum esse malum est, sed non velle pauperum esse (§6, 603-604 [n. 235D.

[45] Quae habet de necessitate desiderium divitiarum annexum (§6, 635-636 [n. 237D.

would make no sense. Now, if we accept Chrysostom's injunction that it is evil not to want to be poor, it would seem that religious should reduce themselves to a state of "nakedness, hunger, and thirst" with no desire to abandon that state-including no desire to have the means necessary for life. This interpretation is suggested by Chrysostom's remark, cited above, that the poverty of Jesus and the disciples-their nakedness, hunger, and thirst -did not hurt them.

This "ascetic" strand of argument, however, is offset by another, admittedly more dominant, strand in which Thomas suggests not only that religious should aim to have the means necessary for life, but that it would be wrong for them to deprive themselves of such means. For example, Thomas distinguishes between "temporal things necessary for sustaining our present life" and "temporal things reserved for providing for necessities in the future" (ad 7).[46] He makes the same point (but even more strongly) in ad 10, where he writes that it is vicious *(vitiosus)* "to deprive oneself beyond that with which it is possible to sustain nature. "[47] This statement is based on the principle that, since "grace is the perfection of nature, nothing which pertains to grace can destroy nature" (ad 10).[48] On the other hand, Thomas notes in the same reply that trust in divine assistance makes it "possible to conserve nature without dominion over temporal possessions." [49] These texts point to a conception of poverty which allows for no ownership or possession of goods, but which

[46] "In rebus temporalibus quaedam sunt quae sunt necessaria ad sustentationem vitae praesentaliter," contrasted with "temporalia quae reservantur ad providendum necessitati corporis in futurum." Certainly a "perfect person" will give up the latter type of goods; nevertheless, for example, "I ought not deprive myself totally of [goods for present subsistence] so that I remain naked, or without the food and drink appropriate to the season" *(non debeo mihi totum eripere, ut scilicet nudus remaneam, vel absque cibo et potu tempore comestionis)* (ad 7 [§6, 667-683 (n. 241)]).

[47] Sibi subtrahat ultra id quod natura sustinere potest (§6, 762 [n. 245]).

[48] Gratia est perfectio naturae: unde nihil quod ad gratiam attinet, naturam interimit (§6, 755-757 [n. 245]).

[49] Potest enim sine dominio possessionum terrenarum natura conservari (§6, 777-78 [n. 245]).

justifies and in fact commands people to use goods at the level needed to preserve nature.-rn

In sum, I think that Thomas presents two contrasting and, indeed, conflicting accounts of the scope of use of goods which should accompany relinquishing possessions. On the one hand, Thomas offers what we might call a stringent, "ascetic" conception of poverty in which religious will subject themselves to actual poverty as a *penuria rerum,* specified as being naked, hungry, thirsty, and homeless; following Chrysostom's maxim, they will not desire to escape this poverty. According to the second account, however, religious will seek to attain food, clothing, and other goods sufficient to maintain the body and, indeed, will avoid denying themselves what is required to sustain the body. Of course, religious may find themselves without sufficient food and clothing, but they will legitimately seek to acquire such goods through begging or through manual labor.

The tension between these two accounts is well illustrated in Thomas 's claim that a desire for wealth necessarily pertains to involuntary poverty. [51] Let me close this section with an examination of this claim and some of the inconsistencies it raises with Thomas's view of the nature of actual poverty. It is true (analytically) that those who are involuntarily poor desire not to be poor, provided of course, that the involuntariness of the poverty

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[50] Also, see ad 20 (§6, 994-99 [n. 256]): "We petition God to provide us with temporal goods necessary for our nature. Thus, we ought not reject temporal things; rather, they are to be used for the necessity of our body in food and clothing" *(unde temporalia non debemus abiicere, quin eis utamur ad necessitatem corporis in cibo et vestitu).* Incidentally, I am assuming that Aquinas does not restrict the notion of sustaining bodily nature to its most minimal sense (i.e., barely staving off death), otherwise the point of ad 7 makes no sense. If one does not share that assumption, then ad 10 belongs to the argument which identifies actual poverty with destitution.

[51] Inopia involuntaria, quae habet de necessitate desiderium divitiarum annexum (ad 3 [§6, 635-36 (n. 237))). Since this desire is what leads people subjected to such poverty into sin, it seems as if Thomas implies that the involuntarily poor are covetous (i.e, that their desire for wealth is improper). Indeed, Proctor translates the occurrence of *quae habet de necessitate desiderium divitiarum annexum* in ad 5 (§6, 653 [n.239})as "which causes covetousness." But Thomas does not explicitly say that poverty causes covetousness in either ad 1, 3, or 5 where the description of involuntary poverty is given. Moreover, Thomas makes it plain that the poor who beg for what is necessary for life are not covetous (c.7, §12, 1415-1419 [n. 342]).

is a matter of the will. If people are involuntarily poor because of external constraints (they could not escape the poverty even if they wanted to), but nevertheless accept that poverty and would not escape it even if they could, then they presumably would not be involuntarily poor in Aquinas's sense. Thus, I take it that involuntariness solely due to external constraints is not what Aquinas has in mind in his characterization of involuntary poverty.

In any event, while involuntary poverty necessarily involves a desire not to be poor, it is hard to see how it can necessarily involve a desire for wealth, unless poverty and wealth are logically and really opposed to one another. If they were contraries so that there were some state which was neither poverty nor wealth, then the desire not to be poor would not *necessarily* imply a desire to be wealthy, unless Thomas is making some a priori, and unstated, assumptions about the character of those who are subjected to or want to avoid involuntary poverty. [52]

Recall the three "standards of living" given in Prov. 30:9- mendicancy correlated with a lack of subsistence goods, a state involving possession of such goods, and a condition of wealth which involves some surplus beyond subsistence goods. There are basically two ways in which poverty and wealth could be opposed to one another. First, poverty includes the state of mendicancy and the state of minimal sufficiency so that both are opposed to the condition of wealth. Second, poverty is restricted to the state of mendicancy, while wealth includes both the state of minimal sufficiency and wealth (as a surplus beyond minimal sufficiency).

On the face of it, the second option might seem unreasonable. Generally we do not think of wealth as referring to subsistence goods. However, in the *Summa Contra Gentiles,* Thomas uses *divitias* in a very broad sense that includes subsistence goods (bk. III, c. 133). In this context, poverty would be restricted to penury or need with respect to subsistence goods. The only way

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[52] If one recalls Thomas 's apparent agreement with Chrysostom (ad 1) that not wanting to be poor is a sin, then he (Thomas) might very well be making such assumptions.

the voluntarily poor could be free from the desire for wealth is if
they had no desire for the means of subsistence.   Such a view
would conform only to the stringent account of voluntary pover-
ty. It would not conform to the second account in which religious
are justified in seeking subsistence goods. It should be noted that
Thomas does not completely oppose poverty and wealth in III
Cont. Gent., c. 133; for, since the life of contemplation requires
wealth *(divitias)* sufficient for life, then even those who are vol-
untarily poor would desire some wealth. There are, however, no
texts in the *Contra impugnantes* where Thomas uses *divitias* in
this broad sense.

   Consider then,   the first option, in which poverty includes the
state of minimal sufficiency as well as the state of need associat-
ed with mendicancy.   The problem with this option is that it does
not seem to support Thomas 's interpretation   of the thrust of
Prov. 30: 8-9. Basically, Thomas argues that this prayer refers to
involuntary poverty and to those who try to avoid it. But if such
people try to avoid involuntary poverty by seeking a middle state
between poverty and wealth, namely minimal sufficiency, then it
makes no sense to include the middle state within the concept of
poverty. Otherwise, what is the difference between those trying
to avoid involuntary poverty and those voluntarily poor people
who apparently seek, and are generally obliged not to abandon,
a condition of minimal sufficiency? In other words, Thomas's
interpretation   of the Proverbs text makes no sense unless pover-
ty and wealth are opposites, but this opposition blurs precisely
the distinction he wants to make between the voluntarily and
involuntarily poor.

III

   My concern in this section is to discuss Thomas 's response to
a set of objections which comprise nearly half of the total pre-
sented in *Contra impugnantes,* chapter 6. This set is based on an
argument which is both moral and prudential in nature and
which focuses on key facets of Aquinas's notion of (voluntary)
poverty: "giving all" *(dans omnia),* "relinquishing all" *(relinquens
omnia),* and "reserving nothing for self" *(nihil sibi reservans).*
This argument is presented both in strictly rational terms as well

as with recourse to Christian Scripture and tradition. It is presented in schematic form in objection 9:

To give what is to be given as well as what is not to be given is an act of prodigality. But he who gives everything, gives what is to be given and what is not to be given, since he reserves nothing of what ought not to be given for himself.[53]

This objection does not specify exactly what things ought not be given, but it is clear from other objections that the means of physical subsistence are intended (obj. 1 and 5). As a basis for considering the objections related to this formal argument, I want to explore what might be meant by the notions of "giving all," "relinquishing all" and the apparently correlative notion of "reserving nothing for self." As we shall see, these phrases can be understood either with reference to the possession of goods or with reference to the use of goods in such a way that the phrases have quite different meanings and implications for religious life.

A clear instance of "giving everything" is found in the life of St. Francis when, after he was disowned by his father, he renounced all claims to his own inheritance and, in a striking gesture before the citizens of Assisi, stripped himself naked. [54] At that moment, St. Francis relinquished everything in the sense that he had no possessions which he could call his own and, in the more radical sense, that he had no material goods immediately at hand which he could use (at least apart from the air which he was breathing and the mantle which the Bishop gave him to wear). Francis had, one could say, made himself poor.

How, then, might he deal with wants, desires, and needs which require material goods for their satisfaction? Several options are open. First, he could simply forage for such goods, taking only what was wild or unclaimed by others. Second, he could beg from others (solicit goods). Third, he could labor or

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[53] "Dare danda et non danda est actus prodigalitatis. Sed ille qui dat omnia, dat danda et non danda; cum nihil non dandum sibi reservet. Ergo talis peccat vitio prodigalitatis." Objections closely related to 9 include objs. 4-8, 10-15, 19 and 20.

[54] Thomas of Celano, *First Life of St. Francis,* in Marion Habig, ed., *St. Francis of Assisi: Omnibus of Sources* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1972), Book 1,15 (p. 241).

perform some form of service by which he would be compensat-
ed either with various goods, or with money and other items
which he could then exchange for goods. These possibilities
would hold true for any other people, individually or collective-
ly, who might "renounce all."

If a religiously motivated poverty requires or consists in relin-
quishing all things, such a gesture cannot be accomplished on a
one-time basis at the entrance into religious life; rather, it must
be carried out on a daily basis. **If** poverty is understood in terms
of non-ownership, then religious will not "acquire" things in
ways that involve either personal and/or common ownership or
possession (depending on the order to which they belong). Of
course, avoiding possession of goods requires specifying (a) the
criteria for ownership or possession as well as (b) what kinds of
goods can be subjected to ownership or possession: e.g., any
material goods, goods for immediate consumption (the apple
which I just picked off a tree and am now eating), subsistence
goods kept for future use (the grain which I harvested today but
which will not be eaten for three months), durable goods, fixed
goods, etc. Regardless of the resolution of these two issues, so far
as voluntary poverty consists in the non-ownership of goods,
religious will satisfy the demand that they relinquish all things to
the extent that, regardless of what they "acquire," they reserve
nothing for themselves in the sense that they individually and/or
collectively own or possess things.

On the other hand, if poverty is understood with reference to
use-so that people are poor in the sense that they do not have
at hand and cannot get at hand what must be used for various
purposes (with respect to which poverty is defined), then reli-
gious will relinquish all and give all in the sense that they retain
nothing for their own use. Thus, any goods religious might
"acquire" would pass out of their hands, presumably by being
given to the poor. So far as people might eat, drink, or clothe
themselves from what they "acquire," they would retain some-
thing for themselves and, thus, would violate the criterion that
they relinquish *everything* and give *everything* (to the poor).

With these considerations in mind, let me continue with the
objections related to objection 9. Drawing on St. Paul's maxim

"that we are to be content with food and wherewith to cover us" as well as the comment from the *Gloss* that we are not to cast away all things, objection 6 concludes that orders which lack temporal possession *(temporalibus possessiones caret)* cast away all temporal things *(omnino temporalia abiicit).* However, it is not clear whether or not the objection refers simply to renouncing ownership of possessions or, more radically, to giving up the use of things.

The seventh objection, however, seems to employ the more radical interpretation. This objection draws on a comment from the *Gloss* that we are to give a tunic to the poor only if we have (at least) two tunics, since if we have only one and tried to divide it, no one would be able to use it. Giving everything to the poor and reserving nothing for oneself is condemned because one would strip oneself of everything whatsoever *(unusquisque totum eripiat),* leaving nothing at hand to provide for one's subsistence. Surely, this objection makes no sense if "giving all" is restricted exclusively to relinquishing proprietary dominion over things. Moreover, the radical meaning of "casting away all things" is repeated in objs. 11, 12 and 13 where it is argued that people who relinquish all and reserve nothing for themselves expose themselves to starvation and, in fact, commit suicide. Objection 13 is quite blunt about this: "he, who relinquishes all things to enter a religious order without common possessions to sustain him, sins in a certain manner by suicide." [55] If such people expected nevertheless to go on living, they would certainly appear to tempt God to perform miracles (obj.19).

It might seem downright ludicrous and captious for someone to suggest that the criterion of complete non-use be adopted for voluntary poverty, since this would result, sooner rather than later, in suicidal death by starvation (as objections 12-14 properly note). Yet, it does not seem to me that the serious force of these objections can be set aside as an egregious misunderstanding of voluntary poverty, especially so far as the argument relates to religious orders which have no common property. For (a) unless

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[55] Ergo peccat, se ipsum quodammodo occidens, qui omnia relinquit ut religionem intret, in qua communes possessiones non sunt unde sustentunter.

an order devises various strategies whereby the ownership of or proprietary dominion over all of the goods it uses is transferred outside of the order (as with the Franciscans) or to some specific members within the order or (b) unless certain kinds of goods are exempted from ownership-either because of how they are acquired (e.g., through begging) or because of the kinds of goods they are (e.g., subsistence goods used for immediate consumption), then it is hard to see how an order which does not exercise *dominium* over goods either personally or in common will be able to keep any goods which it might acquire in order to use them. The only way to justify the use of such goods seems to lie in arguing that there can be a simple use of things (especially consumable goods) which does not involve dominion over them. [56]

In response to this set of objections, Thomas (not surprisingly) rejects the radical meaning of "giving all," where the phrase is understood in the category of use. Indeed, in his response to objection 6, he notes that the phrase "temporal things are not entirely to be given up" [57] implies that temporal things are to be used for sustaining life in food, clothing, and drink. Of course, this view accords with his observation that religious do not abandon the world in the sense that they cease to use material possessions (ch. 2, §4, 482-486 [n. 34]).[58] In other words, in the category of use, the phrase *dat omnia* does not refer to all things.

On the other hand, Thomas is clear that the phrase "temporal things are not entirely to be given up" does not preclude the complete casting away of all temporal property either individually or in common (ad 6).[59] He thinks that it is both licit and pos-

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[56] Of course, this is precisely the strategy which the Spiritualist Franciscans adopted and which Pope John XXII rejected. See Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty,* 233 and Douie, *Nature and Heresy,* 158.

[57] Temporalia non sunt omnino abiicienda.

[58] See also his response to objection 20.

[59] I take issue with Swenson *(Emerging Concepts of Jurisdiction, Sacramental Orders and Property Rights,* 266, n.159), who cites ad 6 as evidence that Thomas believes that one cannot renounce one's property in goods used for immediate preservation of nature. The text to ad 6 (§6, 659-666 [n.240]) reads as follows: "Ad sextum dicendum, quod illud quod dicitur, quod temporalia non sunt omnino abiicienda, intelligendum, est quin eis

sible for people to live without common possessions. However, can a community use goods without having at least some collective dominion over them? I suggested two possibilities: (a) either the dominion over things does not lie in the hands of people who used those things or (b) some types of temporal goods would not be considered as possessions. There is also a third alternative: (c) some goods could be possessed by the order but this possession would be compatible with the order not having any common possessions.

It seems to me that Thomas's analysis of this matter in the *Contra impugnantes* is unclear in that he does not set forth what he considers to be the criteria for possessing something, nor does he clearly indicate what kinds of goods could possibly count as possessions. I shall discuss alternative (a) by considering a text from the *Contra retrahentes* which contains a much blunter statement of the thrust of the set of objections to which I have referred. The objection runs as follows: "it is impossible that people possess nothing in common or individually, for it is necessary that people eat, drink and be clothed; they could not do this if they had nothing." [60]

Thomas dismisses this objection as "altogether frivolous" *(omnino jrivolum):* "the things used by religious for their support are not absolutely their own property, or under their own control, but are ministered to them for their necessity by those who have the management of such things" (c. 16, ad 9).[61] But while this response *might* meet the objection in one sense-namely, where the dominion over all goods can be transferred to those

utamur ad sustentationem vitae in cibo et potu et vestitu: quod patet ex hoc quod dicitur I Tim. 6, 8: habentes alimenta et quibus tegamur, his contenti simus: non tamen intelligit quin homo possit omnium temporalium proprietatem a se abiicere."

I construe the response to mean that while one should not completely renounce the use of goods, one can renounce possession of *all temporal goods.* [Note: the Marietti edition of the *Contra impugnantes* reads *curam* for *proprietatem,* which is found in the Leonine edition.]

[60] Hoc esse impossibile quod aliquis nihil in communi vel proprio possideat; quia necesse est quod comedant et bibant et induantur; quod facere non possunt, si nihil haberent (c. 14, obj.9).

[61] Swenson rightly notes the similarity of this position to that held by the Franciscans (265, n.159).

who do not use them-it does not completely solve the problem
since it implicitly accepts the notion that management must be
exercised over the goods which a group has at its disposal. Yet,
if those goods are not formally controlled by someone outside the
group, it is hard to see how the group will not have common pos-
sessions if, after all, the management of the goods lies in the
hands of the group. It is hard to see how allowing some members
of the group to manage goods for the others can solve the prob-
lem of the group having no common possessions.

This general problem arises in Thomas's position that Jesus
and his disciples had no common possessions (§4, 446-455 [n.
223)), yet had a common purse. In response to the objection that
Jesus and the disciples had a purse which Jesus administered,
Aquinas argues that the money which was reserved therein was
not obtained from some personal possessions which Jesus had, [62]
but rather was obtained through alms from the women who
ministered to him (ad 14).[63] Thomas gives a similar analysis of
the money which the disciples administered (ad 15).[64]

Even if we grant that the money in the purse was not con-
tributed from anything Jesus owned, this does not deal with the
more important issue of whether the money or goods which
Jesus and the disciples received through alms became their (com-
mon) property *after* they had been given to them. Thomas's
response to objection 15 works only if money and other goods
received through alms do not become the property of those who
receive the alms. This seems an odd position to take, especially
since Thomas affirms more than once in the *Contra impugnantes*
that religious who preach and teach are entitled to be supported
by alms, even though they cannot enforce that entitlement if they
are not given alms. [65] Moreover in the *Summa theologiae,*

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[62] Non tamen earn de aliquibus propriis possessionibus habebat.

[63] §6, 850-865 [n. 249].

[64] §6, 866-882 [n.250].

[65] See, e.g., chapter 7, ad 9 (§10, 1164-1170 [n.327JHMarietti: ad 10)-in the
responses to the first group of objections and ad 4 (§12, 1457-1463 [n. 344]) in the
responses to the third group of objections.

Thomas writes "something becomes one's own through the generosity of the donor." [66]

While many people ministered to Jesus and the disciples, providing them with money and other goods, it certainly seems that Jesus decided how those things were to be used. In other words, it seems that money given to Jesus either became his property or he became the custodian of it on behalf of the disciples. The latter alternative seems to be Thomas's position (ad 15).[67] But if this is so, it is not clear to me why Jesus and the disciples did not have common possessions.

The same reasoning seems to apply to other things which the disciples used, e.g., clothing. Even if they received such things through alms, surely the donors did not exercise proprietary dominion over those things after they were given away. Of course, this would not hold for all of the goods which Jesus and the disciples used. A house is something which they could have used but which would have remained in the control of the people who owned it. We might say they were given the use of the house but not the house itself. But in the case of money, food, and clothes, it seems as if they were given these things and not merely the use of them. So, too, if they used money to purchase items for their own use, it is hard to see why those goods would not count as common possessions.

In other words, the argument which might be used to explain why alms given to individual religious are not the property of those religious after they receive them-namely, that they do not own those things since their superiors dictate the use of them - does not apply to Jesus individually or to him and the disciples collectively. Indeed, it is difficult to see how the argument would work for any relatively independent religious (or secular) community, unless some people within the community had complete control over the goods of the community and the other members of the community were completely dependent upon them for decisions regarding the use of the goods. But even in this case, it

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[66] Fit autem aliquid alicuius ex liberalitate donantis (11-11, q. 187, a. 4).

[67] Hinnebusch notes that Aquinas apparently held a deposit of money for the use of other Friars *(History,* I,160).

is not clear why the community itself does not have goods in common, since those who control the goods do so on behalf of the community and as members of the community.

Let us, then, consider alternative (b): the concept of possession or ownership does not extend to all temporal goods (either according to their kind or the conditions under which they are used). The only explicit support for this alternative in *Contra impugnantes* chapter 6 is Thomas 's distinction between goods "necessary for the present sustenance of life" and "temporal goods reserved for providing in the future for the necessities of the body" (ad 7).[68] Thomas includes possessions and money in the latter category. As we indicated above, in light of the *Gloss* text stating that people should part with a tunic only if they have two, the seventh objection concludes that totally stripping oneself of everything whatsoever *(unusquisque totum eripiat)* is wrong. The thrust of Thomas 's distinction, then, is to deny that giving all one's possessions *(dare omnia sua)* amounts to totally stripping oneself of everything, since goods used for the immediate preservation of nature do not count as possessions in the first place.

If an order makes use *only* of goods needed for present subsistence, then exclusion of such goods from the class of possessions solves the problem of how an order can use goods and renounce all common possession of goods. In light of his analysis of actual poverty, Thomas. apparently thinks that such restricted use is possible and licit. It is difficult, however, to determine how much weight to place on this distinction. While I can find no other text in *Contra impugnantes* chapter 6 which formally contradicts it-that is, which explicitly regards goods used for present subsistence as possessions-the clear impression created in many other texts is that goods used for present subsistence can

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[68] Rebus temporalibus quaedam sunt quae sunt necessaria ad sustentationem vitae praesentaliter (§6, 668-670 [n. 241]) ... temporalia quae reservantur ad providentiam necessitati corporis in futurum (§6, 676-678 [n.241D. (In *Contra retrahentes,* c. 15, Thomas cites lands, vineyards, or any other fixed property as goods which the disciples were forbidden to possess in common. But whether these goods merely exemplify common possessions or define the set of common possessions is not made clear.)

count as possessions and are among the things renounced as pos-
sessions by religious.

For example, Thomas interprets the phrase "not all things are
to be cast away" to imply that we are to use things for the sup-
port of nature; he denies that it means that we cannot give up all
temporal property (ad 6). It seems "natural" to read this distinc-
tion as implying that it is possible for people to use but not pos-
sess goods for present subsistence. So, too, when Thomas extols
the virtue of possessing nothing *(possidere nihil)* (§3, 397-411
[nn. 218-219]), it is much less forced to take the phrase literally
than as meaning "possessing none of the things which can be
possessed," which is how the phrase would be read in light of the
distinction from ad 7.

Further, Thomas's responses to objections 11 and 12 seem
oddly framed if he adhered strictly to the distinction from ad 7.
Both objections reject relinquishing all things because doing so
exposes people to starvation and suicide. In both cases, Thomas
responds that people who give up everything for the sake of
Christ do not face suicide or starvation since God will assist
them. The clear sense of this response is that present subsistence
goods are included in "everything." If the distinction from ad 7
were employed, however, one would have expected Thomas to
say that those who give up everything do not face starvation
because they only give up their possessions, not goods used for
present subsistence needs.

Moreover, the exclusion of goods used for present subsistence
from the class of possessions raises serious conceptual problems.
It seems odd, to say the least, that the food, clothing, and drink
which people are now using or consuming are not possessed by
anyone either individually or collectively. It also seems odd to
say that the food which people stored for future use (and which,
as such, is among their possessions) ceases to be their possession
when they eat it. For example, with regard to objection 7, it does
not make sense to suggest that the coat which I constantly use is
not a possession, while the coat which I save for future use is a
possession.

Regardless of the extent to which Thomas accepts this dis-
tinction in the *Contra impugnantes,* he does not hold it in the

Summa theologiae. For example, Thomas makes it clear that,
except in cases of extreme emergency, monks may not give alms
without the permission of their superior precisely because monks
have no property (11-11, q. 32, a. 8). Presumably, this principle
extends to all alms including food, drink, and clothing which are
listed among the seven kinds of alms (11-11, q. 32, a. 2). So too, in
his discussion of the legitimacy of common possessions, he
regards subsistence goods as capable of being counted as per-
sonal or corporate possessions (11-11, q. 188, a. 7, ad 3 and 4).

Let us, then, consider the third alternative: some goods could
be possessed by the order, but this possession would be compat-
ible with the order not having any common possessions. Despite
its conceptual implausibility, this alternative seems to have been
chosen by the Dominicans.   After all, despite the renunciation of
common possessions at the Chapter of 1220, the Dominicans
generally maintained control of and title to their priories and, for
example, manuscripts and books acquired by the order.[69] It
would not be surprising if St. Thomas held this view when he
wrote the *Contra impugnantes,* but he does not discuss it in the
Contra impugnantes. Indeed, one of the lacunae in the *Contra
impugnantes* is that Thomas offers virtually no discussion of
poverty with reference to non-subsistence goods; moreover he
talks about possessions and property as if the meaning and scope
of these terms is self-evident (at least to those who would be
reading the work). Of course, on this issue the Dominicans dif-
fered notably from the Franciscans, as the latter claimed they
did not own their priories or any other goods since they trans-
ferred ownership of them to people outside the order. While the
Dominican position avoids the contrivance of the Franciscan
position, it still seems conceptually ad hoc.

To sum up: The central purpose of chapter 6 is to show that
religious life without common possessions (e.g., as found in men-

[69] Hinnebusch, *History,* I, 158. and 160. Hinnebusch writes: "[The order] permitted
the brethren to obtain manuscripts by buying them ... not considering the holding of
books for personal use, even beyond the immediate necessities of study, against poverty
or the common possession of goods ... the ownership of the collection remained with the
priory."

dicant orders) is licit. Thomas certainly thinks such life is possible, for he cites several historical examples of groups living without common possessions. [70] Apparently he also found this mode of life conceptually intelligible and consistent, since in the *Contra impugnantes* he never discussed the nature of and criteria for common property. Given this lacuna as well as his ambiguous specification of poverty in terms of use and possession, it seems to me that the entire defense of mendicant poverty in the *Contra impugnantes* is, in the long run, unresolved.

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[70] §4, 446-4 74 [nn. 223-224]; §4, 486-503, [nn. 226-227D.

THE ARISTOTELIAN FIRST PRINCIPLE
OF PRACTICAL REASON

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INTRODUCTION*

I N THE *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q. 94, a. 2,[1] Thomas Aquinas identifies what is often spoken of as "the first principle of practical reason"-that is, "that good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided." Thomas explains:

All other precepts of the natural law are based upon this: so that whatever the practical reason naturally apprehends as man's good (or evil)

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[1] l shall use a number of abbreviations: *ST= Summa Theologiae;An.Post. =Posterior analytics; An.Pr.* =*Prior analytics; DA* =*De anima; EE* =*Eudemian ethics; EN* = *Nicomachean Ethics; GA* =*De generatione animalium;* lnsomn. =*De insomniis; Int.* = *De interpretatione; Metaph.* =*Metaphysics; MM= Magna moralia; Phys.* =*Physics; R.* =*Republic; Rhet.* =*Rhetorica; SE* =*Sophistici elenchi;* FPPR =the first principle of practical reason; PNC = the principle of non-contradiction. I also use a number of transliterated Greek terms such as *akolasia* (depravity), *akolastos* (depraved person), *akrasia* (weakness of will), *akrates* (person subject to weakness of will), *egkrateia* (continence in spite of temptation), *egkrates* (person who remains continent in spite of temptation), and *phronesis* (practical wisdom). I use them for brevity's sake and since they have also found their way into the standard philosophical vocabulary, at least in Aristotelian studies. I also speak in this essay as if Aristotle was the author of *MM.* For an argument in favor of a qualified understanding of this thesis, see note 14. For the Greek text of the works of Aristotle I have for the most part used the Oxford Classical Texts. The one major exception is Susemihl's edition of the *MM:* Franz Susemihl, ed., *Aristotelis: Magna moralia* (Leipzig: Tuubner, 1883). For most (but not all) of the translations from Aristotle, I have made use of Jonathan Barnes, ed., *The Complete Works of Aristotle: the Revised Oxford Translation,* 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). For English translations of Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae,* I have used the translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1920).

belongs to the precepts of the natural law as something to be done or avoided. Since, however, good has the nature of an end, and evil, the nature of a contrary, hence it is that all those things to which man has a natural inclination, are naturally apprehended by reason as being good and consequently as objects of pursuit, and their contraries as evil, and objects of avoidance. Wherefore according to the order of natural inclinations, is the order of the precepts of the natural law.'

As its name suggests, the first principle of practical reason (FPPR) is no incidental tenet. Thomas compares it in this same article to the first principle of theoretical reason, better known as the principle of non-contradiction (PNC): "that the same thing cannot be affirmed and denied at the same time." [3]   On the other hand, it is also commonly acknowledged that Thomas's (philosophical) ethical theory is Aristotelian. How is it then that we never hear of an Aristotelian first principle of practical reason, either in the secondary literature or (as it seems) in Aristotle himself?

I shall argue in this essay that there is such a principle in Aristotle's ethical theory and that it has the logical status that Thomas attributes to it. It is none other than the well-known paradoxical Socratic principle that no one deliberately does wrong [4]-understood in a certain way. (I shall refer to this principle as "the Socratic Principle.") I shall also argue that Aristotle has a fairly elaborate theory about how, psychologically, a person accommodates himself to a violatiqn of the first principle of practical reason. I shall leave one issue unaddressed: whether (as in the question from *ST* above) Aristotle's **FPPR** includes "all other precepts of the natural law." It will be apparent, however,

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[2] The best exegesis of this article of *ST* is Germain Grisez, "The First Principle of Practical Reason: A Commentary on the *Summa Theologiae,* 1-2, Question 94, Article 2," *Natural Law Forum* 10 (1965): 168-201. See especially 187-190, where Grisez explains that FPPR is the principle of all human action-even of morally bad acts. See also Alan Donagan, *The Theory of Morality* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1977), 60-1.

[3] ST1-11, q.94, a.2, *corpus.* Thomas refers to Aristotle's *Metaph.,iv,3,* so we can presume he does not mean to exclude the fuller formulation found at lOOSbl9-20: "the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject in the same respect."

[4] *Gorgias* 466a4-48lb5; *Meno* 78a6-b2; *Protagoras* 352al-357e8.

in many of my remarks that I think that here too Thomas draws on Aristotle.

The basis, especially of my initial comments, will be an exegesis of the first part of *Nichomachean Ethics,* book five, chapter 9, a passage that has not been well understood-and   not without cause on the part of the text, for it is quite obscure. [5] Having completed this exegesis, I shall turn (in section II) to the question of the relationship between the first principle of practical reason and the principle of non-contradiction. Finally, in section III, I shall examine the psychological accommodation mentioned above.

I. AN ETHICAL SQUARE OF OPPOSITION

Aristotle begins *EN,v,9* by saying that one might ask (or "puzzle") whether being done injustice and doing injustice have been well-defined. The back-reference here is to the immediately preceding chapter in which Aristotle says that true injustice must be voluntary and that by voluntary he means "any of the things in a man's own power which he does with knowledge, i.e., not in ignorance either of the person acted on or of the instrument used or of the end that will be attained … *"(EN,* v,8,1135a23-5). When these conditions are not met, says Aristotle in *EN,v,7,* a person might do unjust *things* but he is not unjust: he does not, in the full sense of the word, do injustice (EN,v,8,1135a15-18).

That Aristotle's puzzlement has primarily to do with the possibility of willingly being done injustice is clear from some lines taken   from Euripides   which he now quotes (i.e., at EN,v,9,1136a13-14). They speak apparently of a mother who was to some extent willing to be killed by her son:" 'I slew my mother, that's my tale in brief.' 'Were you both willing, or unwilling both? "' [6] It also becomes clear at EN,v,9,1136b2 that this in turn has to do with the issue of weakness of will *(akrasia).*

What follows in *EN,* v,9,1136a16ff., then, although couched sim-
ply in terms of justice and injustice, pertains as much to "soli-
tary" justice and injustice-Le.,   justice and injustice one does to
oneself.

   As a preliminary   move in resolving this issue of the nature of
doing injustice and being done injustice, Aristotle sets out a sort
of ethical square of opposition:

Is it truly possible voluntarily to be done injustice or is it all involun-
tary, as all doing injustice is voluntary? And so is it all one way or the
other, as also all doing injustice is voluntary, or is it sometimes volun-
tary, sometimes involuntary? So, too, with being done justice, for all
acting justly is voluntary, so that it would seem reasonable to set things
out similarly in either case-that being done injustice and being done
justice are either voluntary or involuntary. It would seem absurd how-
ever in the case of being done justice if *all* were voluntary, for some are
done justice involuntarily. [7]

We can represent the points made here schematically: [8]

        a: do-injusticev   c: do-justicev
        b: be-done-injusticei?   d: be-done-justice?

Aristotle is wondering whether, given that active justice and
injustice seem always to be voluntary actions, for the sake of
symmetry we should say that the corresponding passive states
are similarly of unitary character-Le.,   that *all* being done injus-
tice is involuntary (which is more likely than that it should all be
voluntary) and that *all* being done justice should be voluntary

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[7]EN,v,9,1136a15-23. The word avnKeicrllat at 1136a20 cannot be taken in the sense
of "to be opposed logically," for, on the one hand, if we consider the relationship between
passive and active justice or injustice, then being done justice would have to be (accord-
ing to this supposition) all involuntary (i.e., opposed to the voluntariness of doing justice)
and 1136a21-23 would make no sense. On the other hand, if the supposed opposition is
between the voluntary-involuntary   character of being done injustice and being done jus-
tice, 1136a21-23 is again at least out of place. For these lines presuppose that, up until
the point at which they are introduced, the voluntary-involuntary character of being
done injustice is still indeterminate. The sense of avnKei.crllat that Aristotle uses must
therefore be local one: see H. Bonitz, *Index Aristotelicus,* v.5 of *Aristotelis Opera* (Berlin:
Reimer, 1870), 64a15-19. It strongly suggests that Aristotle is employing a diagram of
some sort.
   •The superscript letter "v" represents "voluntary"; superscript "i" represents "invol-
untary."

(which Aristotle seems to regard as more likely than that it should all be involuntary). He replies in the negative, for it is clear, he says, that "some are done justice involuntarily" [EN,v,9,1136a22-3].

At this point Aristotle introduces another puzzle:

One might raise this question also: whether every one who has suffered what is unjust [1:0 aoucov] is being unjustly treated or is it with suffering as it is with acting. For with respect to both [i.e., the passive and the active] it is possible to partake of just things 'l:c0V oumirov] incidentally, and similarly it is clearly so also with unjust things [E7tt 'l:c0V aoix:rov].For to do unjust things [1:0 'l:U0tKCX7tpcl1:'1:Etv]is not the same as to act unjustly [aoix:eiv], nor is to suffer unjust things [Cioix:a] the same as to be done injustice. It is similar with doing and being done justice. (EN,v,9,1136a23-29)

Aristotle is clearly referring back, once again, to the two previous chapters. There he has very carefully distinguished between acts of injustice and what is unjust, acts of justice and what is just ('tO a8iK11µa Ka\ 'tO a8tKOV Kat 'tO 8tKairoµa Kat 'tO 8tKatOV-*EN,v,* 7,1135a8-9). "What is unjust" is only incidentally (Ka'ta an act of injustice; "what is just" is only incidentally an act of justice. Subsequently, he speaks of all these things in the plural. Since the idea is that certain things might be objectively just or unjust but not subjectively (i.e., actually) so, I translate the plural of 'tO Ci8tKOV (what is unjust) as "unjust things" and the plural of 'tO 8iKmov (what is just) as "just things."

The syncopation of this passage ("For with respect to both ... ")does indeed suggest that Aristotle has a diagram of some sort before him which is bearing the weight of his explanation. [9] He has already concluded that *d* in the above square of opposition would be mislabeled simply as voluntary and has therefore in effect answered in the negative his question of EN,v,9,1136a18: Is it not the case that "being done justice and

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[9] The repetition at EN,v,9,1136a29 suggests the same thing. Here Aristotle seems quite literally to be pointing a second time to what he has already spoken of at EN,v,9,1136a25-6. See also the words ciicmep Kai tO alltKelv nav EJCouatov at EN,v,9,1136a17, which Bywater feels constrained to bracket. See also note 7.

being done injustice are either voluntary or involuntary"? Both *b* and *d* should therefore be split into two compartments: the voluntary and involuntary.

But how is this splitting to be conceived? In a way analogous, it seems, to the way in which involuntary justice and injustice are understood in *EN,* v,7-8. Involuntary justice and injustice involve things that are only incidentally just and unjust: as a German might say, they are *Nebenformen* ("side-instances" or "variants") of the real thing. It seems that we are to understand a similar thing of their passive counterparts. We end up then with the *following,fairly* symmetrical revised square, in which the two central columns represent the central cases of justice and injustice and the columns off to either side are incidental versions of the same. I use the abbreviations: AJ =active justice; PJ = passive justice; AI = active injustice; PI = passive injustice. The superscript letters v and i again signify involuntary and involuntary.

	AIV	AJV	*AJ'*
PP		P}"	PJi

Just as AI; and AJi are not properly speaking doing injustice and doing justice, so PP and PJ; are not properly speaking being done injustice and being· done justice. Looking at the injustice side of the scheme, that understanding seems fairly plausible when we consider public injustice but implausible when we consider solitary injustice (i.e., *akrasia);* on the other hand, the justice side seems plausible when we consider solitary justice but implausible when we consider public justice. That is, if a person wants to be done an injustice, it seems not quite right to say that the person performing the action is really doing an injustice; the prevalence of *akrasia,* however, suggests that people are quite often willing accomplices in actions that are to their own worst interest. On the other hand, if a person does the right thing for himself but reluctantly, it is not quite right to say that he is a good person, since a good person voluntarily embraces what is good; if, however, a person does not welcome just punishment,

this seems just as much an instance of being done justice as the instance in which a person accepts such punishment willingly. It is also a good deal more common!

These implausibilities can, I think, be dealt with. I shall discuss the first shortly. With the respect to the second, it may be that Aristotle-if he adverted to the problem at all-would have invoked the opinion of Socrates, who in the *Gorgias* suggests that properly speaking one should welcome just chastisement. To resist it is to see it not as justice but as injustice-which it is not. I shall come back to this.

In any case, immediately after the longer passage most recently quoted, Aristotle says: "For it is impossible to be done injustice without someone being unjust or to be done justice without someone being just" (EN,v,9,1136a29-30). This is meant to explain (yap-EN,v,9,1136a30) the idea that, just as when we are done just things incidentally we are not really done justice, so also when we are incidentally done unjust things it is not the same as to be done injustice. [10] It is difficult to understand at first precisely what bearing this has on the square of opposition but this becomes clearer at the end of the section under consideration (i.e., EN,v,9,1136b9-14).

At EN,9,1136a31, Aristotle comes back to the "definition" of doing and being done injustice with which he began the chapter (i.e., the definition given at EN,v,8,1135a23-5: the agent must know whom he is injuring, with what, etc.), but this time he does so in the same breath in which he talks about the weak-willed man (the *akrates):* "This is one of our puzzles: whether it is possible for him to do himS'elf injustice" (EN,v,9,1136a34-5). J. A. Stewart, one of several interpreters who find difficulties in this remark, says of these latter words: "[they] come in strangely here.

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[10] See Rhet.,i,13,1373a27-8, where Aristotle defines being done injustice as "suffering unjust things from a willing agent." *Rhet.,i,13* contains much that is pertinent to the present study. Note too that at EN,v,ll,1138a4-14 Aristotle is insistent that an injustice requires a patient. In the case of suicide, since it is an injustice, it is the state which is done the injustice.

They seem to refer back to a list of αιτορουμeνα: but no list has been given." [11]   But Aristotle has signalled one *aporia* at EN,v,9,1136a10 (i.e., the present one) and a second one at EN,v,9,1136a23. This is clear evidence that the whole of this section of *EN,v,9* is meant by Aristotle to be applied especially to the problem of *akrasia.*

So, Aristotle is asking, What are we to make of the *akrates* who voluntarily harms himself? It would seem that "he is voluntarily done injustice-that   is, it would be possible for him to do himself injustice" (EN,v,9,1136a33-4). It is clear from the context that Aristotle thinks it absurd (and obviously so) that a person might willingly harm himself: it is a "puzzle" that needs resolution. Thus, the first implausibility spoken of above is not, in Aristotle's eyes, an implausibility at all. In fact, this is the Socratic Principle which becomes in Thomas (and, as I argue, in Aristotle) FPPR.

It is also absurd, suggests Aristotle at EN,v,9,1136bl-3, for "someone willingly, through weakness of will, to be harmed by another acting voluntarily, so that he would be voluntarily done injustice." This remark shows that Aristotle regards the square of opposition as a tool for analyzing not just solitary doing oneself injustice but also the public version of the same as well. It also points to an aspect of Aristotle's ethical theory that most moderns find unpalatable. He tends to regard taking less than one is due as a fault: it goes hand in hand, he believes, with ostentation. The person who voluntarily accepts injustice in fact balances the books in praise that his supposedly selfless act elicits: he should simply be honest about this.

So perhaps the original definition (of EN,v,8) was wrong, suggests Aristotle at EN,v,9,1136b3-4, and it is necessary "to add to 'harming another, with knowledge of the person acted on and of the instrument used and of the manner,' the phrase: 'contrary to the wish of the person acted on.'" What does this accomplish? we might ask. It rules out the case in which the person involved *wants* the injustice-and   therefore excludes the "obvious" absur-

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[11] J. A. Stewart, *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle,* 2 vols. {Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), v.l, 517. See also Franz Dirlmeier, *Aristoteles: Nikomakische Ethik* {Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1967), 428, note 115,3.

dity of a person willingly harming himself or being harmed and wanting precisely the harm itself. This absurdity is by definition prevented from entering ihto the scheme-or, at least, it is shunted off to the side, as in the revised square of opposition above. Of course, the non-philosopher (and certainly the modern non-philosopher) coming at these questions would say that any absurdity lies in the notion that weakness of will might not be possible. Aristotle's absurdity only exists given the axiom-the first principle-that we always seek what we think good.

The argument concludes (ouv-EN,v,9,1136b5) with a couple of sentences that indicate quite clearly that Aristotle's solution to the puzzles discussed involves the notion of "unjust things." Having said that we need to add to the definition of doing injustice the idea that the patient is unwillingly on the receiving end, Aristotle remarks:

Then a man may be voluntarily harmed and [voluntarily] suffer unjust things, but no one is voluntarily done injustice. For no one wishes [this], not even the incontinent man; one acts rather contrary to one's wish. For no one wishes for what he does not think good; the incontinent man, however, does things which he thinks he ought not to do. (EN,v,9,1136b5-9)

The distinction in the first sentence here ("a man may ... [voluntarily] suffer unjust things, but no one is voluntarily done injustice") only makes sense given something like the square of opposition I have identified. Aristotle can now legitimately speak of Piv, but only because it has been put off to one side and associated with unjust things.

At the end of the section under consideration, we find a very important couple of remarks, again regarding the possibility of doing oneself injustice. Aristotle quotes Homer's lines about Glaucus who gave away "gold for brass"-thereby seemingly doing himself injustice. [12] Aristotle insists that this could not be

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[12] As Stewart paraphrases this passage, the man "does not make his own loss or ruin his end; nay, he may have his own good in the form of popularity or honour distinctly in view" *(Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics,* v.l, 512). See also Dirlmeier, *Aristoteles: Nikomakische Ethik,* 428. Aristotle makes this type of argument in a number of places, including the final section of *EN,v.9.* See also MM,i,33,1195bl7-24; and also EN,ix,8 where even the selflessness of laying down one's life is an act done in order to secure nobility for oneself.

true injustice since "there must be someone to treat him unjust-ly" (EN,v,9,1136b13). We can now see clearly what bearing Aristotle's remark at EN,v,9,1136b29-31 about the necessity of an agent of either justice or injustice has on the square of oppo-sition. In the case in which a person seemingly takes less than his due, there is not real injustice since real injustice requires two parties. I shall return to this, for it pertains to how Aristotle understands the psychology of the *akrates,* as I shall explain in section II.B and in the conclusion.

II. AN ETHICAL PRINCIPLE OF NON-CONTRADICTION

It is clear that in *EN,v,9* Aristotle considers the Socratic Principle as *a* first principle of his ethical theory. First principles are "most certain, best known, most believable, non-hypotheti-cal, with respect to which it is not possible to err." [13] The way Aristotle employs-or, rather, presupposes-the Socratic Principle shows that he regards it in this way. [14] But I have not yet shown that the Socratic Principle enjoys the same status in

[13] See Bonitz, *Index,* 112al5-2 l.

[14] I could just as easily have used *MM,i,33* to show that the Socratic Principle plays the role of a background assumption (in a similarly formal treatment). Indeed, the par-allel structure of these two passages is well worth pointing out, for this sort of deeper cor-respondence argues more for an Aristotelian origin for *MM* than any thematic resem-blances. (Stylistically, as is well known, the two works are quite some distance apart.) So then, at MM,i,33,1195a8 begins a discussion of the distinction between objective and actual justice and injustice. (Note though that objective morality is here determined by law. Cp. *Rhet.,i,13.)* Then we find an initial definition of morally significant action in terms of knowledge of "whom, with what, and for what" (see MM,1195a27f0. Then (beginning at *MM,1195b5)* the issue of voluntarily being done injustice is introduced (1t01:Epovfa:ovi:a E<Htv aouceicr0m), followed by a discussion of the person who takes less than he deserves but derives other benefits in the form of glory, friendship, etc. Then we find the problem of *akrasia* and a revised definition, precisely the revision proposed in *EN,v,9-i.e.,* that no one wishes to be done an injustice. This is followed by two sen-tences (MM,1195b31-34) that, like the sentence atEN,v,9,1136b5-9, are incomprehensi-ble without presuming something like the square of opposition. The chapter goes on to discuss in more detail the case of *akrasia,* mentioning explicitly the soul as divided into parts (MM,1196a26-28). Neither the structure nor the content of the two passages is *exactly* the same; but the similarities are sufficient, I think, to discern in each passage the same author at work-if possibly across the distance of a student's note-taking and reworking. See J. M. Cooper, "The *Magna moralia* and Aristotle's moral philosophy," *American Journal of Philosophy* 94 (1973): 327-49.

practical reason that PNC enjoys in theoretical reason. This can be done in a preliminary way (in section II.A) by pointing to a number of passages in which Aristotle establishes a connection between the Socratic Principle and PNC. This leads into a discussion of the psychological effects of denying the principle. I address this issue by first clearing away one incorrect interpretation of the square of opposition (section 11.B), and then discussing the psychological effects themselves (section Ill). Over the course of this discussion, it will become quite apparent, I think, that the Socratic Principle does indeed enjoy the same status in practical reason that PNC enjoys in theoretical reason. In other words, it is FPPR.

A. *Some texts pointing to FPPR*

There are a number of places where, in connection with the problem of *akrasia* (which, as we now know, Aristotle thought a problem precisely because of the Socratic Principle), Aristotle speaks of contradiction.

For instance, in a disputed and partially corrupt passage in EE,viii,1, he nonetheless undoubtedly associates contradiction with the *akrates.* Apparently as an objection to the idea that the *akrates* might have reason and yet act against it, Aristotle says: "But if so, supposing appetite to be strong, it will twist him and he will draw opposite conclusions [A,oytci'tat'tavav'tia]." [15]

But also in *EE,ii,7,* we find a very compact formulation of the Socratic Principle which bears a definite affinity to Aristotle's formulation of PNC:

[W]hat a man does voluntarily he wishes, and what he wishes to do he does voluntarily. But no one wishes what he thinks to be bad; but surely the man who acts incontinently does not do what he wishes, for to act incontinently is to act through appetite contrary to what the man thinks best; whence it results that the same man acts at the same time both voluntarily and involuntarily; but this is impossible. (EE,ii,7 ,1223b5-10).'[0]

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[15] EE,1246b14-15. See Woods (1992), 160-61. The word £vaviia appears too at EE,1246bl 9 and b29.

[16] cilcrie iiμa   iov amov Eteovia teat ateovia itpanetv• *ioino* ı)' al>uvmov (EE,1223b9-10). See also a bit later: iiμa apa 0   *i0* amo   Eterov teat iitemv (EE,ii,7,1223b17). We find similar language also at EN,vii,2,1146a27-31 (see also 1146a5-6).

Especially noticeable here is the language of formal proof. What is impossible? For the *same* man at the *same* time to act both voluntarily and involuntarily. [11] Why is this impossible? Since "no one wishes what he thinks to be bad" and "what a man does voluntarily he wishes, and what he wishes to do he does voluntarily." All this recalls the most succinct of the formulations of PNC: "the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject in the same respect" *(Metaph.,iv,3,* 1005b 19-20).

In fact, in the chapter of the *Metaphysics* immediately following this formulation of PNC, Aristotle comes very close to saying that PNC applies in the moral sphere. In ridiculing those who deny PNC, he says:

Why does [a man] not walk early some morning into a well or over a precipice, if one happens to be in his way? Why do we observe him guarding against this, evidently not thinking that falling in is alike good and not good? (Metaph.,v,4,1008b15-17) [1-]

In effect, Aristotle is here restating the Socratic Principle: what a person regards as good he cannot also, at the same time, regard as not good.

If, however, *Metaph.*,iv,4, seems to suggest identity between the Socratic Principle and PNC, *atEN,vi,2* Aristotle makes quite explicit how they differ.

What affirmation and negation are in thinking, pursuit and avoidance are in desire; [19] so that since moral excellence is a state concerned with choice, and choice is deliberate desire, therefore both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice'is to be good, and the latter must pursue just what the former asserts. Now this kind of intellect and of truth is practical; of the intellect which is contemplative, not practical nor productive, the good and the bad state are truth and fal-

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[17] For similar language, see EN,v,11,1138a18-24.

[18] Both intellectual parts, i.e., the *epistemikon* and the *logistikon,* aim at truth: EN,vi,2,1139b12.

[19] See also DA,iii,7,431A9-10where Aristotle also says that to perceive pleasure and pain is something like affirming and denying.

sity (for this is the function of everything intellectual); while of the part which is practical and intellectual the good state is truth in agreement with right desire. (EN,1139a21-31)

The differences between theoretical and practical reason must certainly determine ways in which their respective non-contradiction principles have effect. The objects of theoretical reason have an existence independent of the subject; accordingly, if a person holds contradictory propositions, the effect is that it becomes impossible for him to have a fully comprehensive grasp of objective truth. The objects of practical reason, on the other hand, are things yet to be: they are, that is, objects of deliberation.20 The effects of contradicting oneself in the practical sphere cannot therefore be to diminish one's grasp of objective truth; they show up rather in the way the person is oriented, practically, toward the future. He will be divided within himself with respect to desires, wishes, and beliefs, such as have a bearing on what he should and would do.21 He will be, that is, in varying degrees, psychologically fragmented.

Practical self-contradiction can have an effect in the theoretical sphere. As Aristotle notes in *Metaph.,iv,4,* if a person enunciates his inconsistent understanding of what is good, he will violate PNC. Within the practical sphere itself, however, there is a separate first principle-as there must be, since its objects, not yet being the case, cannot be said to be either true or false 22

20 EN,vi,1,1139a3-8; see Carlo Natali, *La saggezza di Aristotle,* vol. 16 of *Elenchos: collana di testi e studi sul pensiero antico* (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1989), 75-6. Aristotle does however acknowledge at EE,i,8,1217b25-41 that the objects of ethics are not unconnected with the objects of the other sciences-i.e., being as found in the various categories. As he says at EE,1217b29-30: "the good is in each of these modes." At *MM,i,17,* 1189a12ff., Aristotle emphasizes that choice is among alternatives. See especially MM,i,17,1189a27, where he says that the options open to choice set up a controversy: i.e., an avn/..oyiav: ·teiiv avnA.oyiav itapaotoovi:wv7t01:Epovi:oui:oij 1:0\Ji:oaipei:ov.

21 "[A] man's friendship toward himself is at bottom friendship toward the good" (EE,vii,6,1240bl 7-18).

12 See *Int.,ix;* cp. G. E. M. Anscombe, "Aristotle and the sea battle," in *Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing/Minneapolis: University of Minnesota press, 1981), v.1, 44-55. For this general understanding of practical reason, see in the same volume, 66-77, "Thought and action in Aristotle: What is 'practical truth'?"

B. *An incorrect interpretation of the square of opposition*

The psychological fragmentation of those who contradict
themselves practically turns up any number of places in
Aristotle. An especially clear statement is found at EE,vii,6:

[L]oving and being loved ['to <l>tA.e'icr0m1cal. <l>tAf:'iv] requires two sepa-
rate individuals. Therefore a man is a friend to himself rather in the
sense in which we have described the incontinent and continent as will-
ing or unwilling, namely in the sense that the parts of his soul are in a
certain relation to each other. (EE1240al4-17)'

This splitting of the soul into an active and a passive part is, of
course, reminiscent of the square of opposition. [23] Slightly later,
Aristotle relates it directly to the personal fragmentation of those
who are less than good:

All these things [i.e., marks of unity] we find in the relation of the good
man to himself. In the bad man, e.g., the incontinent, there is variance,
and for this reason it seems possible for a man to be at enmity with
himself; but so far as he is single and indivisible, he is an object of
desire to himself. Such is the good man, the man whose friendship is
based on excellence, for the wicked man is not one but many, in the
same day other than himself and fickle. (EE,vii,6,1240bll-l 7)

But this approach raises certain questions about how we are
to understand this fragmentation-and   indeed how we are to
understand   the square of opposition. Two chapters after the
square of opposition, Aristotle seems to identify the parts
involved in injustice toward oneself-that   is, the active and pas-
sive parts, which he also in *EN,v,9* associates with *akrasia-as*
the rational and non-rational parts of the soul:

Metaphorically, and in virtue of a certain resemblance there is a justice,
not indeed between a man and himself, but between certain parts of
him; yet not every kind of justice but that of master and servant or that
of husband and wife. For these are the ratios in which the part of the
soul that has reason stands to the irrational part; and it is with a view
to these parts that people also think a man can be unjust to himself, viz.

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[23] At EE,vii,1240al 9-20 Aristotle says explicitly that this question of Jove of self is to
be treated in the same way as the question whether one can do oneself injustice.

because these parts are liable to suffer something contrary to their desires; there is therefore thought to be a mutual justice between them as between ruler [apxovtt] and ruled [apxoµ£vcp].(EN,v,11,1138b5-13)

As tidy an account as this provides, it presents a number of conceptual difficulties if it is to be connected up with the square of opposition of *EN,v,9.* Consider again that square:

A]'

PJV

Presuming that the parts of the soul of the *akrates* are to be fit into this schema, with which of the sectors shall we associate his "reasoning part"? With which the irrational? It would seem at first that the rational part should be located at AJv-for it (voluntarily) seeks to impose the right thing-to-do on the irrational part. But in that case, since the passive element must obviously fall beneath the active, *akrasia* would not be doing oneself injustice-which is the basic presupposition of Aristotle's treatment.

So, let us say that in *akrasia* the rational part finds itself in the position of PI;. But Aristotle says repeatedly in his ethical works that the rational part of the soul is predominant. 24 Indeed, this principle seems to be his second great inheritance from the Academy: reason is not "dragged about like a slave." 25 On the other hand, if the irrational part of the soul must always be in the passive position, it is difficult to see how we can be held responsible for its actions, since we are responsible only for those actions of which we are the authors (i.e., for which we are active). 26

The problem, though, is not in the square of opposition but in the introduction of the rational and irrational parts of the soul. This only becomes clear in EE-where we also learn that the square of opposition can be used to analyze not only public jus-

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24 For instance: EN,i,13,1102b30-l, 1103al-3; EE,ii,l,1219b36-1220a4, 10-11, viii,1,1246bll-12.

25 EN,vii,2,1145b21-24, vii,3,1147b13-17; EE,viii,1,1246b19-21,34. His first inheritance is the Socratic principle itself which is not, however, unconnected with the second.

26 *EN,iii,1.*

tice and injustice and *akrasia* but also continence in spite of temptation (i.e., *egkrateia).*

Although in EE,ii,l, Aristotle puts forward his standard analysis of the soul whereby the intellectual part governs the irrational, [21] in *EE,ii,8* he makes it very clear that in *akrasia* and *egkrateia* we must maintain the unity of the soul. He says:

Whence men apply the language [of compulsion] to the soul as a whole, because we see something like the above in the elements of the soul. Now of the parts of the soul this may be said; but it is the whole soul, whether in the continent or the incontinent, that voluntarily acts; and neither acts on compulsion, but one of the elements in them does, since by nature we have both. (EE1224b24-29)

Aristotle takes a similar position at EE,vii,6,1240a13-2 l, where he discusses love toward oneself by dividing the soul into two parts, since (as he says) love involves relations between two ele-ments. He is very careful to say that this is merely an analogy (EE,vii,6,1240a13) and concludes the section by remarking: "so far then as the soul is two, these relations can in a sense belong to it; so far as these two are not separate, the relations cannot belong to it." [28]

If we apply these ideas within the square of opposition, the difficulties we experienced understanding *akrasia* in its left-cen-tral column disappear: the rational part is not relegated to the Pii position, since the soul acts as a whole. This is necessary in fact precisely in order to maintain responsibility of the agent for his own incontinence.

That Aristotle makes the remarks he does at *EE,ii,8* both about the *akrates* and about the *egkrates* also suggest a solution to the difficulties we experienced on the right side of the square of opposition. That side of the square comports more readily

[27] *EE,* 1220a4-12.

[28] EE,vii,6,1240a20-21. Also in EE,viii,1 Aristotle appears to criticize the notion of explaining *akrasia* in terms of the rational working against the irrational in any strong sense. At EE,1246b12-25, he toys with this approach, throwing it over as absurd at EE,1246b26. AtEE,ii,8,1224a30-b15 he argues that it is not appropriate to speak of force with respect to the *egkrates* and the *akrates,* force being what comes from outside a per-son. The *akrates* seems to be subject to force, but we can speak this way only 1ca6' oμot6tTlta. Note the similar expression at EN,v,11,1138b5-6. See also EE,ii,8,1224b29-25a2.

with the concepts of *egkrateia* and *phronesis.* That is, when a person does justice to himself, although reluctantly, we have an instance of A}" combining with PJ;; when a person gladly does himself right, we have an instance of A}" combined with *PJ'.* The square of opposition then does not represent the internal conflict of the *akrates* or *egkrates* at all but is simply an aid in understanding what an actual instance of *akrasia* or *egkrateia* is-and how it is possible.

It seemed to me when I first began studying these texts that all this constituted evidence that *EE* contained in this respect a more developed theory than *EN,v,9* and therefore *EE* might be later than *EN.* It is true that even in the passage quoted above from the end of *EN,v,11,* about the rational and irrational parts of the soul, Aristotle sounds a cautionary note, saying that he speaks "metaphorically, and in virtue of a certain resemblance"; but this chapter bears marks of having been added later. [29] What demonstrates clearly, however, that Aristotle, even in EN,v,9, did not conceive of the soul as split are his remarks on Glaucus at EN,1136b9-13. For there he says that Glaucus's giving away "gold for brass" is not truly an act of injustice since "there must be someone to treat him unjustly." Clearly he wants to maintain the unity of the acting person even within the square of opposition; and, in fact, it is on account of this unity and the fact that a single (unified) person cannot voluntarily do himself injustice that the square of opposition takes the shape that it does. [30] If the *akrates,* for example, could within himself accommodate the voluntary suffering of injustice, there would be no need to set Plv off to the side.

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[29] The cobbled-together nature of the chapter is widely acknowledged: see Alexander Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle,* 2 vols., 4th revised ed. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1885), 97; see also Franz Dirlmeier, *Aristoteles: Nikomakische Ethik,* 435-9; see also Dirlmeier, *Aristoteles: Magna Moralia* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1958), 328.

[30] It seems to me that someone connected with *MM* does not have this well worked out. Natali, *La saggezza di Aristotele,* 72-3, perceptively calls attention to a confusion in *MM* about where to put *phronesis:* in the upper or lower part of the soul. The answer is either "in neither" or "in both." The soul acts as a unit. (On the genuineness of *MM,* see note 14.)

Ill. PSYCHOLOGICAL ACCOMMODATIONS

What then are the effects of a violation of FPPR on the subject? We are now in a position to assess Aristotle's position more knowledgeably. It will be useful, however, before proceeding further, to remind ourselves of something that Thomas says about FPPR, which is part and parcel of the analogy he draws between it and PNC. That is, for Thomas FPPR is not simply a rule which we are free to follow or not, as we wish. As with PNC, it is in a sense impossible to violate FPPR-in the sense, that is, that we *can* violate, for instance, the moral precept "thou shalt not commit adultery." Speaking of PNC, Aristotle says that it is "impossible for anyone to believe the same thing to be and not to be … ; for what a man says, he does not necessarily believe." [31] A similar thing can be said with respect to FPPR: it is impossible for anyone at the same time both to regard something as good and in the same respect as not to be pursued.

It is easier to get this idea across if we think of the effects of self-contradiction on a person. These effects in either the theoretical or the practical sphere are in certain respects very similar. To assimilate a theoretical contradiction into one's thinking, one must break the system containing it into two parts. It is impossible in the strongest sense to *hold 'p, q, r, s, t* and not-P'-for it is impossible to conceive of what the world would be like if both *p* and *not-p* were true in the same respect. But one can in a weaker sense hold (for example) *'p, q* and *r'* and *'s, t,* and *not-p,'* not bothering-or not knowing how-to reconcile the inconsistency.[32] So also with practical reason: a person is able to assimilate a practical contradiction-considering something as to-be-pur-

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[31] *Metaph.,iv,3,1005b23-25.*

[32] Aristotle devotes *An.Pr.,ii,21,* to a consideration of cases of just this sort-i.e., to the question of how a person can in fact hold an inconsistent set of propositions. His answer is the one I give here; see, for example, An.Pr.,ii,21,67a5-8. The final section of the chapter (An.Pr.,ii,21,67b12-26) is especially interesting insofar as there he asks whether someone can believe that "the essence of good is the essence of bad." His answer is that one can do this, although only Kata   (An.Pr.,ii,21,67b25). And he adds, "we must consider this matter better." Perhaps we have the fulfillment of this promise in one of the texts considered in the present study.

sued and not-to-be-pursued in the same respect-only insofar as he is able to tolerate internal division. He does not bother or does not know how to get rid of the inconsistency; he simply puts his different practical attitudes toward *g* into different categories. [33]

But what does this mean, to put opposing attitudes into "different categories"? This is precisely the question we encountered above when we considered the square of opposition in connection with the "parts of the soul." It is again in *EE* that Aristotle's most direct confrontation with this issue occurs-that is, in a very compressed passage in *EE,vii,6.*

Aristotle begins the passage (at EE,1240b12-14) by saying quite explicitly that it is only insofar as a person is fragmented that he can be incontinent: "In the bad man, e.g. the incontinent, there is variance, and for this reason it seems possible for a man to be at enmity with himself." [34] Then Aristotle proceeds to explain how in effect this occurs.

He concedes for the sake of argument that it is possible to divide a person into units, in the manner of certain unnamed Sophists. [35] A good man, says Aristotle, has no argument with any of his own units.

The good man does not revile himself at one and the same time, as does the incontinent man, nor does the later revile the earlier as does the regretter, nor does the earlier revile the later as does the liar. In gener-

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[33] For the sake of simplicity, here and in what follows I assume that g is a "basic good"-i.e., something that is always good. FPPR applies, however, also to non-basic goods. For instance, it may be good on Monday to visit Mr. M but (for some reason) without value to visit him on Friday. Nonetheless, it is impossible at the same time (e.g., _Monday)to regard in the same respect as good and not-good visiting Mr. M. In the above paragraph, it should also be understood that at least *p* and not-p are necessary propositions. See on this note 39, below. The notion of basic good I am operating with here is developed in John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), 59-99. I think that the notion of basic goods can be found in Aristotle. I shall not argue for this position here, except to point to some pertinent passages on the basis of which I *would* argue: EN,i,7,1097a25-b5; i,8,1099al5-16; iv,7,ll27a28-30; v,l,ll29b4-8; MM,i,18,ll 90a3-4.

[34] Notice here that Aristotle considers *all* the bad to be at variance with themselves. (See also Plato, R.,352a5-8.) This must include the *akolastos* who does what he should not without the regrets experienced by the *akrates.*

[35] For another (somewhat less vague) report of this type of argument see *Philebus* 14cll-e4

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al, if it is necessary to define things as the Sophists do, it is as if 'Coriscus' was also good Coriscus-for it is clear that the same unit [36] of them all is good. For when they accuse themselves, they kill themselves; but each seems to himself good.[37]

I give the Greek as well, since it is not easy:

6 *B' a:yaeos* ou0' aµa AOlBopELTat EaUT<j), WO"iTEp 0 aKpaTtjs, OUTE 6 UaTEpos T<j) rrp6TEpov, warrEp 6 µETaµEA'lTIKOS,OUTE 6 Eµrrpoa0Ev niJ UaTEpov, warrEp 6 \jJEUaT'lS· oXws TE EI BE'i warrEp ol ao<j>wTal Blop(-(oualv, warrEp To Kop(aKos Kal Kop(aKos arrouBa'ios. *BilXov* yap ws To ffUTO *rroaov* arrouBruov aUTWV, EiTEL *OTaV* E)'KaAEO"WO"lVffUTOLS, aTIOKTIV-*vUaO"lV* auTous· ciUa BoKEl rras auTOS *aimji* ciya06s.[38]

The text raises a number of questions, the addressing of which will tell us a great deal about how Aristotle understands the psychology of his various ethical types.

The questions center around the words 'tO au'to nocrov ("the same unit"-EE,vii,6,1240b26)--which have good manuscript backing, although in one manuscript nou ("somewhere"?) is found after nocrov. The word nocrov ("unit"-or, perhaps, "quantity") suggests that Aristotle is conceiving of a time-line (t_1, t_2, t_3, t_4, etc.).[39] Assuming again that g is something to be pursued, the regretter says to himself, for example, at t_1 that he wants not-g but at t_4 that he wants g-and he reviles at t_4 his former "self." The liar on the other hand says to himself at t_1 that he wants not-g and at t_4 that he wants g but he despises at t_1 the prospect of wanting g at the (or perhaps a) later time. This approach

[36] Franz Dirlmeier, *Aristoteles: Eudemische Ethik:* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1962), 79, translates to auto 1t6aov(EE,vii,6,1240b26) as *dasselbe Quantum-which* works better in German than in English.

[37] A similar passage is found at EE,ii,8,1224b16-21.

[38] EE,vii,6,1240b21-28. R. R. Walzer and *J.* M. Mingay, *Aristotelis:* Ethica Eudemia (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), put 0A.roc; te ... <11toooa1ovai.>trovin round brackets. I do not think this helps make sense of the passage at all. Plato uses the word A.otooperoin a very similar context at R.,iv,440bl.

[39] Unless we are dealing, for example, with necessary propositions, in the theoretical sphere, locating contradictory propositions at different positions on a time-line is not an assimilation. It may be that at t_1 $p$is true but at t_4 false. In the practical sphere, however, with the sort of practical entities I am concerned with here-i.e., basic goods-, this expedient is not available. See above, note 33.

works fairly well with the regretter and the liar but not with the *akrates* who, it seems, at the same time wants both g and not-g.

It seems to me therefore that it is not quite right to associate rt6crov *strictly* with time. But with what should we associate it? In other places in Aristotle, Coriscus (employed as an example) is segmented sometimes according to time-units ("Coriscus in the Lyceum," "Coriscus in the *agora"-Phys* .,vi, 11,219b20-21), sometimes according to qualities that apply to him ("musical Coriscus," "musical and just Coriscus"-Metaph.,v,6,1015b19-20).[40] I would propose therefore that the units of which Aristotle speaks in this passage in *EE* are *references* to Coriscus (or whomever). [41] Thus, with respect to the passage under considera-tion, the regretter might include "Coriscus at t_1 wanting not-g" and "Coriscus at t_4 wanting g and regretting his former self"; and the *akrates* might include "Coriscus wanting g" and "Coriscus wanting not-g but subordinating this want."

The second problem has to do with the word a\no in the same phrase (-co au-co rt6crov-EE,vii,6,   1240b26). Aristotle says that the unit "Coriscus" (what I shall call "unqualified 'Coriscus' ") represents good Coriscus "for it is clear that the same unit of them all [i.e., of the *akrates,* the regretter, the liar, and the good man] is good." We find the unqualified unit in several of the Aristotelian texts which deal with the sophistry. [42] Here Aristotle tells us that this unqualified "Coriscus" represents good Coriscus. He gives a reason for this: "For when they accuse

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[40] See also *An.Post.,24,85a24-5:*   GA,iv,3,767b24-32; *Metaph.,vi,2,1026b16-18;* SE,i,S,166b28-36, i,14,173b26ff, i,22,178b39-179al, i,24,179b26-33. For a device of this type using the names MilClcaA.o<; and i\ptcrroµEVT\<; instead of the more common KopicrICo<;, see An.Pr.,i,33,47b15-32. There Aristomenes appears as "Aristomenes" and "Aristomenes as an object of thought"; Miccalus appears as "Miccalus," "musical Miccalus"-and dead Miccalus!

[41] I speak here of "references" rather than "referring expressions," since in this whole discussion, as often in Aristotle, we encounter an ambiguity between expression and thing referred to. The paradoxes generated by the segments of Coriscus do not arise if we consider only the expressions. We should assume too that these references are true: that, for example, when talk is of "musical Coriscus," it picks out Coriscus at a time when he is musical.

[42] For instance: An.Pr.,i,33,47b29-32; Metaph.,vi,2,1026b16-18; SE,i,S,166b32-33, i,24,178b39-179al.

themselves, they kill themselves; but each seems to himself
good."

Our first inclination is certainly to associate unqualified
"Coriscus" (="good Coriscus") with the Coriscus-unit in each of
the ethical types in which a good Coriscus reviles his other self,
the idea being that the reviling is what makes him good. But this
cannot be right for a number of reasons. First, the only reviling
that we know the liar does he does at t_1 when he is reviling him-
self as wanting g-and at that point he is not being good but
lying. Nor is there reason to assume that at t_4 he (having become
good) reviles his former self: he might, for instance, want g at t_4
for base motives and be unconcerned about his previous state.
Second, although, for instance, the regretter and the *akrates*
seem each to contain a good unit, it is not the same unit in both
cases-or, at least, it is not clear how it could be. Third, the
phrase "each seems to himself good" does not really call for the
location of "good Coriscus" at one of the specific units already
spoken of. The idea seems to be rather that, *whatever* Coriscus
does, he considers himself good. This attitude would seem to
extend over Coriscus's whole lifetime. I would suggest therefore
that, for Aristotle, if not for the Sophists, unqualified
"Coriscus"-who is "good Coriscus" in the sense that he "seems
to himself good"-is present in each Coriscus-unit. [43] We might
indeed think of unqualified "Coriscus" as "Coriscus himself."

All this has bearing, of course, on how Aristotle conceives of
the psychology of his various ethical types. In the first instance,
we have confirmation that, although he does conceive of the eth-
ical types with the exception of the good man as fragmented,
Aristotle is insistent always that they not be conceived of as so
fragmented that they become disunited (and thereby forfeit cul-
pability).

Secondly, although this fragmentation is *associated* with the
passions, it is not *constituted* by a separation between the ratio-

[43] It is probably right therefore not to read nou at EE,vii,6,1240b26. The manuscript
that has this seems (understandably) to be presupposing a time-line of some sort and to
be attempting to bring sense to the passage by locating "good Coriscus" not at any one
time-point but "somewhere" along the line.

nal and irrational parts of the soul. Aristotle mentions at EE,vii,6,1240b34-i.e.,   almost immediately after the passage we have been analyzing-the way in which the mind can be out of harmony with the passions; but the gist of EE,vii,6,1240b11ff. is certainly that fragmentation occurs not between such parts but between the various aspects of a person of which we might speak. These aspects involve desires and wants-in short, practical orientation-and might also involve talk of either the same or different times. The only other stipulation is that they involve "Coriscus," i.e., the person who, as one person, always pursues the good (or what he regards as good).

CONCLUSION

Our results are somewhat negative in character. We know that the souls of the *akrates* and *egkrates* are fragmented without being fragmented into parts-in any case, certainly not into rational and irrational parts. A segmentation, it would seem, might occur anywhere that it might truthfully be said of "Coriscus" that he has a practical attitude toward something in the possible future. In order to avoid the suggestion that psychological fragmentation is into parts, we might speak rather of "aspects." [44] But it must also be acknowledged that the nature of these aspects is not entirely clear in Aristotle. What we do know about them is that, insofar as one puts into them opposing practical attitudes, they allow one to assimilate practical contradictions. That is: they allow one to "avoid violating FPPR," insofar as such violation is even possible.

How does this work? One cannot within the same aspect *want* both of two incompatible things: if I might use some unconventional language by way of analogy, both of two incompatible possibilities cannot be "lit up" in one's soul. If a person could be two persons, incompatible wants would present no problem: person1 could want g and person 2 could want not-g. But since a single, unified person cannot (in a strong sense) both want and not want g, when he acts with respect to g, he must turn one want

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[44] I suspect that our difficulty in grasping Aristotle's point is connected with the Aristotelian confounding of linguistic entity and thing spoken about. See above, note 41.

off. This, I think, is what Aristotle has in mind when, in *EE,v,9,* he puts off to one side of the square of opposition certain practical attitudes, calling them incidental.

A person might be voluntarily on the passive end of an injustice but only insofar as he considers it (in some aspect of himself) *not* an injustice. A person might do himself injustice (i.e., fall prey to *akrasia)* insofar as when he acts against *g* his orientation toward *g* is not active. A person on the passive end of a just act, if he is so involuntarily, does not appreciate the act for what it is: something to be pursued. For him, it is that only incidentally. [45] **If** this just act is something he (as *egkrates)* imposes on himself, it is all the more obvious that he should remove this contradiction in his practical thought.

It is clear from this analysis, I think, that, first, the aspects of a soul that are in conflict have nothing at all to do with the way the square of opposition is divided into active and passive sectors. The use of active and passive sectors is rather a way of speaking about *akrasia* and *egkrateia* (etc.) in terms of justice and injustice. Secondly, the square of opposition is put forward by Aristotle in order to preserve what he, like Thomas Aquinas, regards as the truth that is the basis of all moral action: "that good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided."

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[45] Aristotle says at EE,vii,6,1240b33-34 that the self-contradiction that comes with *akrasia* is only possible with *choice:* children, for example, are not subject to *akrasia.* Thus, in a fuller treatment we would have to tie practical reason to choice. But that is the subject of another essay.

THE SPLENDOR OF ACCURACY.· HOW ACCURATE?

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I N THE introduction to the collection of essays published under the title *The Splendor of Accuracy: An Examination of the Assertions made by Veritatis Splendor,1* Joseph Selling and Jan Jans write that the "central question that needs to be posed to the text of *Veritatis Splendor"* concerns the audience and situation its author has in mind (p. 9). They maintain that it appears to be addressed to "universal pastors (priests trained in seminaries) who (should) have one set of universal solutions to every conceivable pastoral problem one might face, anywhere, anytime" (p. 9). Assuming that this is indeed the case, they then say that the "best way to interpret what *Veritatis Splendor* says" is "from the point of view of the pastors and their educators" and that the Encyclical finds serious problems here (p. 9). Notwithstanding the unmistakable implication of the book's title, the subtitle, and, as we shall see, several of its main essays, the editors claim that neither they nor the contributors to the volume "wish or intend that this study be understood as a challenge or a rebuke to the teaching of the magisterium in the encyclical" (p. 10). Rather, they wish to "respond to the assertions made in the encyclical that give the impression of pointing to serious problem areas in contemporary Roman Catholic moral

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[1] Joseph Selling and Jan Jans, eds., *The Splendor of Accuracy : An Examination of the Assertions made by Veritatis Splendor* (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing House; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1994).

theology as it is being researched and taught in any number of
seminaries, universities and institutions of higher learning" (p.
10).

I believe that Selling and Jans seriously misconstrue the pur-
pose of *Veritatis Splendor.* It is surely *not* intended to equip
priests trained in seminaries with "one set of universal solutions
to every conceivable pastoral problem one might face, anywhere,
anytime." Rather its stated purpose is to set forth clearly "certain
aspects of doctrine which are of a crucial importance in facing
what is certainly a genuine crisis" *(VS,* n. 4) and to address this
crisis by presenting "the principles of a moral teaching based
upon Sacred Scripture and the living apostolic Tradition, and at
the same time to shed light on the presuppositions and conse-
quences of the dissent which that teaching has met" (n. S). In par-
ticular, the "central theme" of the Encyclical, as identified by
John Paul II himself, is to reaffirm the Church's teaching that
there are *"intrinsically evil acts"* prohibited "always and without
exception" by universally valid and immutable moral prohibi-
tions (n. 115).

John Paul II likewise emphasizes that the *"morality of the
human act depends primarily and fundamentally on the 'object'
rationally chosen by the deliberate will"* (n. 78) and that "reason
attests that there are objects of the human act which are by their
nature 'incapable of being .ordered' to God because they radical-
ly contradict the good of the person made in his image" (n. 80).
Human acts specified by objects of this kind are the intrinsical-
ly evil acts prohibited by absolute moral norms, the teaching
which constitutes, as has been noted, the "central theme" of the
Encyclical. Thus the pope repudiates, as incompatible with
Catholic teaching, those moral theories which deny that one can
judge an act immoral because of the kind of "object" freely cho-
sen and consequently deny that there are intrinsically evil acts of
this sort and, corresponding to them, absolute moral norms (cf.
nn. 74-77, 79). While repudiating these theories, John Paul II
does not name any contemporary Catholic theologians who
espouse them.

Some contemporary moral theologians who advocate the pro-
portionalist method of making moral judgments are among the

contributors to this volume, namely, Joseph Selling himself, Louis Janssens, and Bernard Hoose. In their contributions, Selling and Hoose name other theologians known for their advocacy of this moral theory, e.g., Joseph Fuchs and Richard A. McCormick. The purpose of the essays by Selling, Janssens, and Hoose seems to be, as shall be seen, to show that John Paul II, in his "assertions," has misunderstood what is going on in contemporary moral theology. Thus this review of *The Splendor of Accuracy* will focus on the contributions by these authors, centering on their examination of the "assertions" in *Veritatis Splendor* to the effect that there are certain sorts of human acts, specified by the objects freely chosen, that are intrinsically evil and that, corresponding to these intrinsically evil acts, there are absolute moral norms.

Before considering them, however, some brief comments should be made about the other essays in the volume. Of these, the one by Brian Johnstone is quite different in tone from the others; those by Gareth Moore and Jan Jans, however, seem intended to call features of the Encyclical into question and, in the case of Jan Jans 's contribution, indirectly to support the positions of the theologians associated with the views espoused by Selling, Janssens, and Hoose.

Gareth Moore's essay is called "Some Remarks on the Use of Scripture in *Veritatis Splendor"* (pp. 71-98). Moore argues that John Paul II's use of the story of the rich young man in Matthew 19:16-21 "appears motivated by a desire.not simply to listen to what Jesus says, but to stress one particular mode of biblical discourse among several, namely, the legal" (p. 81). He tries to show that this approach "distorts the natural sense of the passage" {p. 81), whose "central meaning," according to Moore, is to show that the encounter between Jesus and the rich young man "provides an example of the power of riches over those who own them and an occasion for the teaching of Jesus on how hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven {19:23ff.),"a central meaning that "the encyclical all but ignores" (p. 74).

Moore's critique here focuses on the alleged "legalistic" use of this passage by John Paul II, but this distorts the use to which John Paul II puts the passage. In reality, the pope repeatedly

emphasizes, in his reflection on this passage from Matthew's
Gospel, the religious and existential significance of the question
addressed to Jesus by the rich young man when he asked,
"Teacher, what good must I do to have eternal life?" (Matt 19:16).
The pope explicitly says, "For the young man the *question* is not
so much about the rules to be followed, but *about the meaning of
life. . . .* This question is ultimately an appeal to the absolute
Good which attracts and beckons us; it is the echo of a call from
God who is the origin and goal of man's life" (n. 7). It is, he con-
tinues, *"an essential and unavoidable question for the life of
every man,* for it is about the moral good which must be done
and about eternal life" (n. 8). He emphasizes that the question is
in reality "a *religious question . ...* the goodness that attracts and
at the same time obliges man has its source in God and indeed is
God himself" (n. 9).

It is surely true that, in reflecting on this passage, John Paul II
stresses the importance of keeping the commandments.
Nonetheless, he is at pains to show that the commandments,   in
particular, the precepts of the Decalogue concerning our neigh-
bor, are *not* legalistic prohibitions arbitrarily imposed on us.
Rather, they "are really only so many reflections on the one com-
mandment about the good of the person, at the level of the many
different goods which characterize his identity as a spiritual and
bodily being in relationship with God, with his neighbor, and
with the material world .... The commandments of which Jesus
reminds the young man are meant to safeguard *the good* of the
person, the image of God, by protecting his *goods"* (n. 13). More
could be said on this point, but it should be plain enough that the
Encyclical is not here using Scripture legalistically.

Brian Johnstone's "Erroneous Conscience in *Veritatis
Splendor* and the Theological Tradition" (pp. 114-135) is, as
noted already, quite different in tenor from the other contribu-
tions. Johnstone in no way criticizes "assertions" in the
Encyclical. Rather he simply wishes to present the Encyclical's
teaching on erroneous conscience and to situate it in relation to
a wider moral theological tradition. He points out that in the
Encyclical John Paul II says that "the Church's Magisterium
does not intend to impose on the faithful any particular theolog-

ical system, still less a philosophical one" *(VS,* n. 29, cited by Johnstone on p. 114). He shows that the teaching of the Encyclical on erroneous conscience strongly reflects the influence of the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas (pp. 118-123).

Although the Encyclical does reject some contemporary understandings of conscience, it does not repudiate all non-Thomistic theological understandings of erroneous conscience and its binding character, for example, the teaching found in the writings of St. Alphonsus di Ligouri, whose own understanding of this matter differs from that of St. Thomas and whose position was adopted by many authors of approved manuals of theology in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The school of St. Alphonsus and other schools of thought on erroneous conscience, while providing accounts of the erroneous conscience different from that of St. Thomas followed by John Paul II, are not incompatible with magisterial teaching and raise important questions that merit consideration (pp. 124-134).

Johnstone's essay is, in short; an instructive study and is not intended to call into question the substantive claims of *Veritatis Splendor.*

Jan Jans's contribution, the final essay in the volume, is entitled "Participation-Subordination: (The Image of) God in *Veritatis Splendor"* (pp. 153-168). According to Jans, the relationship between God and man (or the way in which man is the "image of God") is presented in two quite different ways in the Encyclical. According to one model, which he calls "participation," "God only proposes in the commandments what is good for human persons" so that "the proper contribution of the Magisterium is to make visible those truths which Christian conscience already ought to know" (pp. 166-167). On this model, which could also be called the participated theonomy model, God, through the natural law, "calls man to participate in his own providence, since he desires to guide the world-not only the world of nature but also the world of human persons-through man himself, through man's reasonable and responsible care" *(VS,* n. 43, cited on p. 157).

But according to another model which Jans believes he finds in the Encyclical, and which he calls "subordination," John Paul

II, following in the footsteps of Leo XIII, stresses "the essential
subordination of reason and human law to the Wisdom of God
and to his law" *(VS,* n. 44, cited on p. 157). On this model, God
has the authority to "impose duties, to confer certain rights and
to sanction certain behavior" *(VS,* n. 44, cited on p. 157). This
"subordination" model is rooted in a hierarchical view of reality
which, Jans asserts, is "in the last resort ... based upon the
antagonism 'not human persons, but God': God alone-not the
human person-has the power to decide what is good and evil,
and since God is the Author of the Law and the Commandments
these are to be accepted and submitted to" (p. 163).

Jans acknowledges that "one might argue that such moral vol-
untarism must not in and of itself mean heteronomy"-a het-
eronomous morality was rejected by John Paul II himself inn. 41
of the Encyclical (p. 163). But Jans believes that he can detect the
tension between these two models in the Encyclical, which clear-
ly favors the "participation" model. According to him the pas-
sages in the document reflecting the "subordination" model are
principally those critical of some "contemporary" developments
in moral theology. Jans holds that some of the theologians
"whose work is 'evaluated' by *Veritatis Splendor"* are actually
engaged in overcoming the "antagonism between God as ruling
king and human beings as obedient servants" (p. 168), and that
overcoming this antagonism "calls for a revision of some tradi-
tional understandings and interpretations of God's creative pres-
ence in the realm of 'nature', as well as a revaluation of the con-
crete norms following from this perspective" (p. 169). He sug-
gests, in short, that in reaffirming some "traditional understand-
ings" John Paul II is, despite·the general thrust of the Encyclical
toward the "participation" model, echoing the "subordination"
model.

Jans believes that the "hermeneutical key" to understanding
the Encyclical and the "tension" in it between the participation
and subordination models is to be found in an address given by
the pope to the participants of the second international congress
on moral theology, held in Rome to celebrate the twentieth
anniversary of *Humanae vitae* in 1988. In that talk John Paul II
affirmed that the teaching of Paul VI is not invented by human

beings but inscribed by God's creative hand into the nature of the human person and confirmed in revelation. He likewise held that those who repudiate the norm taught by *Humanae vitae* refuse the obedience of their intelligence to God, preferring the light of their own reason against the light of divine Wisdom.Jans holds that this address reflects the "subordination" model and that its echoes are found in *Veritatis Splendor.*

Jans's essay is of remarkable ingenuity. Nonetheless, his analysis of the Encyclical is questionable. The pope certainly affirms that God is the sovereign arbiter of good and evil and that human persons are to obey his law. Jans regards this as a kind of "moral voluntarism." But there is not a trace of voluntarism in the Encyclical. In affirming that God's law is the supreme norm of human life, John Paul II does no more than did the Fathers of Vatican Council II in *Dignitatis humanae,* n. 3. In maintaining that we are to obey this law, he does no more than the Fathers of Vatican II in *Gaudium et spes,* n. 16, where they say that "in the depths of his conscience man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself and which he must obey." Here it seems worth noting that both the Old Testament and the New Testament are full of language that makes it clear that human reason is subordinate to the wisdom of God and his law. Jans considers this position, which he attributes to Leo XIII and which he believes he finds in *Veritatis Splendor,* a "moral voluntarism." He nevertheless admits that this view does not of necessity lead to the heteronomous morality which the Encyclical rejects.

The "tension" Jans discovers in the Encyclical between the "participation" and "subordination" models is, I suggest, his own invention. There is no inner tension or contradiction between "participation" and "subordination." For example, through God's grace we, his *creatures,* really become divinized, sharing in his divine nature just as surely as his only-begotten Son-made-man truly shares in our human nature. We are in truth members of the divine family by reason of our sharing, our participation, in God's divine nature. Yet within this family we remain creatures, with created human natures, just as God's only-begotten Son-made-man remains God, with his uncreated nature. And as

creatures, as children of God, we are in truth subordinate to him.

Now to the essays of Selling, Janssens, and Hoose, which directly confront the "central theme" of the Encyclical, namely, the reaffirmation of *"the universality and immutability of the moral commandments,* particularly those which prohibit always and without exception *intrinsically evil acts" (VS,* n. 115), i.e., kinds of human behavior specified by the object of moral choice which "are by their nature 'incapable of being ordered' to God because they radically contradict the good of the person made in his image" (n. 80).

Selling's essay, the longest in the volume, is called "The Context and Arguments of *Veritatis Splendor"* (pp. 11-70). In sketching the background and context to the Encyclical, Selling flatly states that those who accepted the challenge of Vatican II and "began the work of reconstructing moral theology on the basis of scripture and tradition rather than natural and canon laws ultimately came to be known as 'revisionists'" (p. 12). In other words, according to Selling the only theologians who seriously sought to renew moral theology according to the mind of Vatican Council II are the "revisionist" theologians, unnamed in the encyclical but identified by him as including people like Louis Janssens, Joseph Fuchs, and Bernard Haering. According to Selling, consequently, only "revisionist" theologians have sought to carry out the task assigned moral theologians by Vatican II.

It is also surprising that Vatican II, according to Selling's account, thinks that moral theology sho.uld disregard natural law as one of its sources; the actual documents of the Council frequently appeal to the "universally binding principles of natural law" (cf. *Gaudium et spes,* nn. 74, 79-80), refer to the "law" men discover in the depths of their conscience (ibid., n. 16), and speak eloquently of mankind's intelligent participation (=natural law) in the "highest norm of human life," namely God's "divine law— eternal, objective, and universal, whereby he governs the entire universe and the human community according to a plan conceived in wisdom and in love" *(Dignitatis humanae,* n. 3). Selling's observations here indicate his way of approach.

Equally surprising is his claim, in the introductory material,

that "nearly everything that" Pope Pius XII's Encyclical *"Humani Generis* stood for was reversed by the close of the Second Vatican Council" (p. 19). Selling here implies that the notion of theology and its work set forth in that Encyclical was repudiated by the Council Fathers. But a Council document explicitly concerned with the teaching of theology, not least of moral theology, makes the teaching of Pius XII's Encyclical its own. *Optatam totius* emphasizes that in order for the work of Catholic theology to be carried out rightly, it must be done "in the light of faith and under the guidance of the Church's Magisterium" (n. 16). Precisely at this point in the directives for the "renewal" of theology, we find a footnote referring to the teaching of Pius XII in *Humani Generis.* Moreover, the passage in this Encyclical to which *Optatam Totius* explicitly calls attention contains the following statements of Pope Pius XII:

Nor must it be thought that what is contained in encyclical letters does not of itself demand assent, on the pretext that the popes do not exercise in them the supreme power of their teaching authority. Rather, such teachings belong to the ordinary magisterium, of which it is true to say: 'he who hears you, hears me' (Lk 10:16); very often, too, what is expounded and inculcated in encyclical letters already pertains to Catholic doctrine for other reasons. But if the supreme pontiffs in their official documents purposely pass judgment on a matter of debate until then, it is obvious to all that the matter, according to the mind and will of the same pontiffs, cannot be considered any longer a question open to discussion among theologians

Selling's strategy is evident. In his view John Paul II's *Veritatis Splendor* is a document analogous to Pius XII's *Humani Generis.* Just as the latter has now, so Selling avers, been rejected, so too, the implication goes, will John Paul II's Encyclical be repudiated in the future.

With regard to the question of human acts and their moral assessment, Selling finds "rather bizarre" the concepts of freedom and the will found in the following statement of *Veritatis Splendor:* "Some authors do not take into sufficient consideration the fact that the will is dependent upon the concrete choices which it makes: these choices are a condition of its moral goodness and its being ordered to the ultimate end of the person" (n.

75, as given in the translation provided by Selling, p. 47). Here I want to note that the Latin text (and the official English translation) is more precise than the translation Selling provides. The Latin reads: "Nonnulli non satis aspiciunt voluntatem definitis *implicari* delectionibus, quas ipsa operatur" (translated, in the authorized translations, as "some authors do not take into consideration the fact that the will *is involved in* the concrete choices which it makes"). The point is that the person's moral character is dependent on his specific free choices. Selling believes that the idea that the action of the will is dependent upon its choices for its goodness is a "relatively new idea that has developed in the literature in order to substantiate the theory of the 'basic goods'" (p. 47).

The position found in *Veritatis Splendor,* n. 75, however, is hardly a "relatively new idea." Earlier in the Encyclical, John Paul II had stressed that we determine *ourselves* through our freely chosen acts. He emphasized that "freely chosen deeds do not produce a change merely in the state of affairs outside of man but, to the extent that they are deliberate choices, they give moral definition to the very person who performs them, determining his *profound spiritual traits"* (n. 71). They are a *"decision about oneself* and a setting of one's own life for or against the Good, for or against the Truth, and ultimately for or against God" (n. 65). The pope notes that the precise point he is making has been "perceptively noted by Saint Gregory of Nyssa." The pope then cites a beautiful passage from Gregory's *De Vita Moysis* (II, 2-3, *PG* 44, 327-328):

All things subject to change and to becoming never remain constant, but continually pass from one state to another, for better or worse.... Now, human life is always subject to change; it needs to be born anew. . . . But here birth does not come about by a foreign intervention, as is the case with bodily beings ... ; it is the result of free choice. Thus *we are* in a certain way our own parents, creating ourselves as we will, by our decisions. *(VS,* n. 71)

Moreover, St. Thomas's entire understanding of morality involves, centrally, the concept that Selling finds bizarre and novel: good *acts* build up the *virtues,* which are precisely what constitute the goodness of the person; vice consists precisely in

bad actions, considered independently of any other effect (cf. *Summa contra Gentiles,* III, c. 10).

In short, the understanding of free choice and its relation to the will found in John Paul Il's statements is neither as "bizarre" nor as "relatively new" as Selling asserts.

As noted, Selling believes that the "bizarre" and "novel" notion of the significance of free choices in determining man's moral character has been developed to substantiate the theory of the "basic goods." He contends (p. 67) that the use of the term "good" as a substantive in the Encyclical, i.e., to designate "goods" of human persons that one ought not freely choose to damage, harm, or destroy, signifies that the Encyclical has been profoundly influenced by the "novel" doctrine of "basic goods" developed principally by Germain Grisez and John Finnis (cf. p. 67, note 52). Selling says that he and other theologians are "comfortable" with using the word "good" as an adjective, but that its use as a substantive is unusual.

But the use of "good" as a substantive identifying real goods perfective of human persons is not novel; it is central to the thought of St. Thomas. In fact, St. Thomas held that "God is offended by us only because we act contrary to our own good," [2] and in discussing the primary precepts of the natural law he said that, since the very foundational practical proposition on which the whole natural law is founded is that "good is to be done and pursued and evil is to be avoided," "reason naturally apprehends as good, and thus to be pursued by action everything for which man has a natural inclination." [3] He goes on to list one *bonum* (substantive, not adjectival) after another (human life itself, knowledge of the truth, especially truth about God, life in fellowship with others). In many places in the *Summa theologiae* he

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[2] Non enim Deus a nobis offenditur nisi ex eo quod contra nostrum bonum agimus *(Summa contra gentiles,* III, c. 122).

[3] Omnia ilia ad quae homo habet naturalem inclinationem ratio naturaliter apprehendit ut bona, et per consequens ut opere prosequenda ... *(Summa theologiae,* 1-11, q. 94, a. 2). Here *"bona"* probably is used adjectivally, but, as noted in my text, St. Thomas goes on immediately to enumerate one *bonum* (substantive) after another.

refers to "goods," i.e., *bona,* which have and *bona* which do not
have a necessary connection with beatitude (e.g., I, q. 82, a. 2),
temporal *bona* (e.g., life) and spiritual *bona* (11-11, q. 11, a. 4), etc.
Indeed, his whole treatment of law and of the goodness of the
will is placed under the aegis of the Psalmist's question, often
repeated by St. Thomas, "Quis ostendit nobis *bona?"* (Ps. 4:6;
cited in *Summa theologiae,* 1-11, q. 19, a. 4; q. 91, a. 2; also I, q.
84, a. 5). In addition, St. Thomas is very clear that one loves
one's friends by seeking what is good for them, the goods per-
fective of their personhood (cf. 1-11, q. 28, a. 4).

Thus Selling's claim that the Encyclical's use of the term
"good" as a substantive, i.e., to identify real goods of human per-
sons (e.g., innocent human life, the marital communion, and so
forth) is novel and unique to the recent "basic goods" theory is
simply false.

It is important to recognize that the inaccuracy of Selling's
characterization of the position of the Encyclical corresponds to
the inaccuracy of his portrayal of the theory of basic goods. In
fact, in his antipathy to the line of reasoning that underlies the
theory of basic goods, Selling distorts it beyond recognition. For
example, in one passage he lists various beliefs, such as that it is
natural to accumulate possessions beyond one's needs, to strati-
fy society into leaders and followers, to destroy one's enemies, to
accept that whites are superior to nonwhite persons, and then
declares: "That is the 'basic goods theory'-when one looks
below the surface" (p. 68). Such a characterization of the theory
of basic goods is simply untenable. Selling's interpretations, both
of the Encyclical and of the theory of basic goods, can thus be
seen to be quite unreliable.

Louis Janssens, emeritus professor of moral theology at the
University of Leuven, contributes an essay entitled "Teleology
and Proportionality: Thoughts About the Encyclical *Veritatis
Splendor"* (pp. 99-113).

The Encyclical, as we have seen, teaches that one can judge
that an act is intrinsically evil if the moral "object," i.e., the
object rationally chosen and willed, is not referable to God
because it radically contradicts the good of the person made in
his image, and that it is not necessary to consider circumstances

and the end for whose sake the act is chosen in order to recognize acts of this kind as immoral.

The thrust of Janssens's paper is to argue that the Encyclical is mistaken in its central teaching-and mistaken in its rejection of the theory that one can judge an action morally *bad only* if one takes into account *not only* the object *but also* the circumstances in which it is done and the end for whose sake it is chosen. (The Encyclical, of course, teaches that one can judge an action to be morally *good* only if all its elements, object, end, and circumstances, are good.) Janssens's thesis is that an appeal to proportionality is "unavoidable for evaluating human acts," and that this assessment of proportionality is teleological in character, i.e., that it can be made only by taking into account the end for whose sake the action is undertaken, and that one cannot judge an act to be morally *bad* without making this teleological assessment of the proportionality of the means, i.e., of the object, to the end.

In developing this thesis, Janssens first appeals (pp. 100-102) to the *Vatican Declaration on Euthanasia* (1976) for support. He emphasizes that this document sharply distinguished between "disproportionate" and "proportionate" treatments of dying persons. The latter are morally obligatory, whereas the former can be rightly withheld or withdrawn. Moreover, the judgment that a particular treatment is "disproportionate" or "proportionate" can only be made by assessing and balancing the harms and benefits it promises. Janssens thinks that this proves his point.

It is, however, pertinent to ask whe'ther the use of the terms "disproportionate" and "proportionate" in this Vatican document requires acceptance of the moral methodology Janssens advocates and which the Encyclical rejects, since the Encyclical holds that one can judge an act intrinsically evil on the basis of its moral object, i.e., the object rationally chosen, without considering circumstances and the end for whose sake it is chosen, if this object is known to be contrary to the good of human persons.

If we examine the document to which Janssens appeals for support, we find that this document does not support the methodology Janssens advocates. For *prior* to considering the reasons for judging that some means of medical treatment are

disproportionate or proportionate, the *Declaration* had affirmed that euthanasia or mercy killing is intrinsically immoral, not because it is "disproportionate" but simply because it is the inten.tional killing of an innocent human being: "nothing and no one," the document maintained, "can in any way permit the killing of an innocent human being."[4]

Janssens appeals to the teaching of the *Declaration on Euthanasia* to support his claim that one can judge actions to be morally good or bad *only* by assessing teleologically the overall benefits and harms of an action. For him this is the criterion for making all moral judgments. Clearly this is not the methodology employed by the *Declaration* because, as has just been seen, it rules out absolutely as intrinsically immoral any act specified by its object as the killing of an innocent human being. There is no need of a "teleological assessment" in making a moral judgment of this kind. The *Declaration* surely speaks of means that are "proportionate" or "disproportionate," but in doing so it is no way employing "proportionalism" in the same way as is Janssens. Not all appeals to "proportionate" reason are propor-tionalistic in Janssens's sense of that term. John Finnis puts the matter well. He notes that this *Declaration*

makes three references to proportion. (i) Medical experts can judge when the pain and suffering imposed on a patient by certain techniques are "out of proportion with the benefits which he or she may gain from such techniques" [graviora quam utilitates quae inde ei afferri possunt]; as the reference to *medical* expertise makes clear, this judgment about

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[4] Here I should note that when the *Declaration* was published in 1976 I wrote to Archbishop Jerome Hamer, then secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. I thanked him for the document and its reaffirmation of the intrinic evil of all acts of intentionally killing innocent beings, even for reasons of mercy. But I said that, although I understood how the document used the terms "proportionate" and "dispro-portionate," I was concerned that some proponents of the proportionalist method of making moral judgments (e.g., Janssens) might appeal to this language of the document to support this moral position. In his reply Archbishop Hamer, after thanking me for my letter, stressed that the Congregation repudiated proportionalism (as was evident in its affirmation of the moral absolute proscribing intentionally killing innocent human beings) and that any appeal to the document to support this moral theory would be utter-ly inappropriate.

disproportion pertains to points on a single scale, i.e., the scale of pain and suffering: the matters on each side of the comparison are restricted to *pain and suffering* and *relief from pain and suffering.* (ii) Medical experts may also judge that "the investment in instruments and personnel is disproportionate to the results foreseen" [non respondet effectibus qui praevidentur]; this should be regarded as an invitation to the *medical* expert (whose judgment is being discussed at this point in the Declaration) to consider the proposed "investment in instruments and personnel" in the light not of an open-ended calculus of all the good effects of keeping this patient alive (which would involve a senseless weighing of incommensurables), but rather of his normal system of priorities-a system which is established not by calculus but by commitment. (iii) Refusal to undergo risky or burdensome treatment is not the equivalent of suicide, but rather may be a "wish to avoid the application of a medical procedure disproportionate to the results that can be expected" [cura vitandi laboriosum medicae artis apparatum cui par sperandorum effectuum utilitas non respondeat]; this, too, should be taken as a reference, not to a calculation of moral obligation by weighing the incommensurable goods of a longer life and freedom from pain, but to a person's choice (not unrestrained by consideration of his existing moral responsibilities, e.g., to his family), a choice by which that patient establishes for himself what counts (for him) as *par utilitas* (literally: equivalent benefit) in these respects. [5]

In short, an appeal to proportionality is not proportionalist in the sense in which Janssens uses this term if it expresses some prior moral judgment or assessment or refers to the implications of some prior commitment relative to which a proposed choice would be proportionate or fitting, or disproportionate or unfitting.

This distinction between an appeal to proportionality understood as a norm necessary to evaluate the morality of all human acts (Janssens's claim) and making *some* judgments of proportionality in the light of moral priorities is clearly made by the bishops of the United States in their Pastoral Letter on War and Peace, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*

[5] John Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1983), 106-107. On legitimate uses of "proportionalism" and how such uses are profoundly different from the use of "proportionalism" as a method for making moral judgements, see Germain Grisez, "Against Consequentialism," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 23 (1978): 49-62

(1983). The bishops, appealing to the norm that military force
must be used discriminately, first rule out as *absolutely immoral*
intentionally   attacking   noncombatants,   i.e.,   innocent   human
beings. An intrinsically evil act of this kind is absolutely exclud-
ed by the principle of discriminate use of force. But they go on to
discuss the principle of "proportionality." In explaining it they
say:

When confronting choices among specific military options, the ques-
tion asked by proportionality is: once we take into account not only the
military advantages that will be achieved by using this means but also
all the harms reasonably expected to follow from using it, can its use
still be justified? We know, of course, that *no end can justify means evil
in themselves, such as the executing of hostages or the targetting of non-
combatants* [i.e., acts intrinsically evil by reason of the object rational-
ly chosen and willed; cf. *Veritatis Splendor,* n. 78]. Nonetheless, even if
the means adopted is not evil in itself, it is necessary to take into
account the probable harms that will result from using it and the *jus-
tice* of accepting those harms. (n. 105)

Here the bishops are clearly *not* advocating the moral methodol-
ogy championed by Janssens, namely, that "an appeal to propor-
tionality is unavoidable for evaluating the morality of human
acts" (Janssens, p. 100). They hold, with the entire Catholic tra-
dition, which *Veritatis Splendor* correctly summarizes, that one
can know that it is *always* wrong intentionally to kill innocent
human beings without appealing to proportionality. But they are
maintaining that, in the light of moral norm of *justice,* one can
determine   whether or not *unintended   harms,* i.e., *unchosen*
harms anticipated to result as an unintended *effect* of one's freely
chosen act, can be tolerated or accepted.

   In the balance of his essay Janssens basically reiterates the
thesis of his enormously influential 1972 article "On tic Evil and
Moral Evil" *(Louvain Studies* 4 [Fall, 1972): 115-156) in which he
argued that the proportionalist method of making moral judg-
ments (the method he advances in this article and the method
repudiated in *Veritatis Splendor)* was central to the teaching of
St. Thomas. According to Janssens, for St. Thomas one could not
make a moral judgment about a human act without taking into
account not only the "object" (which J anssens in his 1972 article

identified with the "external act" considered as a material event) but also the proportionality of the means chosen (the "object") to the final end intended by the agent, which served as the "form" of the entire moral act. Here Janssens basically reiterates this thesis, illustrating it by St. Thomas 's teaching on killing in self-defense (p. 109). According to Janssens in his 1972 article, Aquinas taught that one could rightly "intend" the death of the assailant (an ontic evil) as the "means" to defend oneself from unprovoked attack, an interpretation of the relevant Thomistic text *(Sum. theo.,* II-II, q. 64, a. 7) not faithful to the text.

It is not necessary to treat this matter at length here. I have previously shown in detail how Janssens has radically miscon-strued Thomas's teaching on the morality of human acts [6] and need not here rehearse what was said there. Briefly put, while insisting that one must consider not only the object chosen but also the circumstances in which it is chosen and the end for whose sake it is chosen in order to determine whether an act is morally *good (bonum ex integra causa),* St. Thomas, contrary to Janssens 's contention, taught that if one knows that *any* element in the act is bad, one can judge the act morally *bad (malum ex quocumque defectu),* and he insisted that the morality of the act derives first and foremost from the object freely chosen. If this object is bad, then it cannot be made good by reason of the end for whose sake it is chosen.

In his contribution Janssens insists that "official church docu-ments [=documents of the Magisterium] maintain that contra-ception ... and homosexual acts are intrinsically evil according to their object. *All of these terms refer simply to factual events"* (p. 110; emphasis added). This is patently false. These terms do *not* refer simply to mere factual events but to making a choice of a "factual event." As we have seen already, John Paul II explicit-ly denies that the "moral object" refers to factual events. Rather it refers to the intelligible proposal adopted by choice (what St. Thomas called the external act as *specified morally* by the "sub-

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[6] See my "Aquinas and Janssens on the Moral Meanung of Human Acts," *The Thomist* 48 (1984): 566-606.

ject matter with which it is concerned" or the *materia circa quam,* not the mere material event, or *materia ex qua).* Thus contraception is *not* a material event but is rather any freely chosen act which, either in anticipation of a genital act, in its accomplishment, or in its natural consequences, *"intends to impede procreation"* (cf. *Humanae vitae,* n. 14). Thus, Janssens is setting up a straw man in his critique of the Encyclical. He fails to show inaccuracies in its "assertions."

In summary, Janssens's contribution plays on the differences between legitimate uses of "proportionality" and the use to which he seeks to put it. It seriously misinterprets the teaching of St. Thomas to support the thesis that an appeal to proportionality is necessary to evaluate a human act morally, and fails to come to grips with the central teaching of the Encyclical.

Bernard Hoose's essay, "Circumstances, Intentions, and Intrinsically Evil Acts" (pp. 153-168) is an effort to show that, *pace* the contrary teaching of John Paul II in *Veritatis Splendor,* one can make moral judgments *only* by considering circumstances and (further) intentions.

Hoose centers attention on n. 80 of *Veritatis Splendor* where John Paul II appeals to the teaching of Vatican Council II in *Gaudium et spes,* n. 27 to show that there are "intrinsically evil acts" specified by the objects rationally willed and chosen. This text from *Gaudium et spes* includes some actions described in morally evaluative terms (e.g., *"subhuman* living conditions," *"arbitrary* imprisonment," *"degrading* conditions of work'). It also includes others described in merely descriptive terms (e.g., "abortion," "euthanasia," "voluntary suicide'). Among the acts described in non-morally evaluative language are "deportation" and "mutilation." It should be noted, however, that "deportation" appears immediately after *"arbitrary* imprisonment," so that one might infer that the "deportation" deemed immoral by *Gaudium et spes* is *"arbitrary* deportation."

Nonetheless, Hoose focuses on the fact that no morally descriptive adjective precedes "deportation" and "mutilation," and he then goes on to argue that one cannot say that "deportation" is *intrinsically* evil insofar as there can be *just* deportations. Similarly, he argues that in the Catholic tradition

approved authors had spoken of justifiable "mutilation." He then concludes that, since these kinds of actions cannot be determined to be immoral without taking into account circumstances and ends, *no* actions can be determined intrinsically evil merely on the basis of the object chosen (e.g., deportation), but can only be evaluated *morally* if one takes into account not only the object chosen but also the circumstances and intentions (i.e., the moral method repudiated by *Veritatis Splendor).*

I think it is easy to see the glaring *non sequitur* involved in Hoose's argument. He rightly notes that *some* actions, described in non-morally evaluative terms (e.g., deportation) cannot be judged morally wrong without considering circumstances and intentions, but then concludes that *no* actions described in such way can be judged immoral without considering circumstances and intentions.

From all that has been said, one can conclude, I believe, that the essays by Selling, Moore, Jans, Janssens, and Hoose contained in this collection are seriously flawed and thus fail in their attempt to show inaccuracies in "the assertions made by *Veritatis Splendor."*

BOOK REVIEWS

The Perfection of the Universe According to Aquinas: A Teleological Cosmology. By OLIVA BLANCHETTE. University Park, Penn.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992. Pp. xvii + 334. $35.00 (cloth).

This work represents a significant and most welcome contribution to Thomistic interpretation as well as to the broader study of medieval philosophy. While its tone is unpretentious, its theme, the structure and purpose of the whole created universe, is crucial for Aquinas's philosophy. Those familiar with Thomas's corpus know how often this theme appears-frequently supplying the foundation for the argument-and know equally well how elusive it becomes when one seeks an extended treatment of it. Hence, to have recognized the chief elements of the larger picture, to have identified and collected the pertinent texts, and to have ordered and synthesized them as this book has done represents a major and lasting scholarly achievement. Moreover, while primarily concerned with Aquinas's own philosophical thought, the book also places him in conversation with a number of classical and modern thinkers, from Plato and Aristotle to Hegel and Collingwood.

Blanchette begins his study by clarifying the very notion of perfection (Chapter 1). It first refers, in the order of our conceptions, to the completion of a process. A thing is *perjectum,* "thoroughly made," when its process of generation is finished. Motion, in fact, is precisely a passage from imperfection to perfection. By extension, the term can then be applied apart from motion to anything which lacks nothing it should have, or, as in the case of God, which lacks nothing at all. Analyzing the Greek and Latin terms connected with generation and perfection *(poiein/facere; genesthai/fieri; teleion/perfectum; telos/finis; teleiosislperfectio)* Blanchette shows why it is that for the Greeks the infinite usually signified imperfection, while Aquinas was able to conceive of an infinity which was perfection.

For the present study, a crucial distinction among the kinds of perfection is that between first and second perfection, i.e., between a being's "ontological" perfection, the complete generation of its nature with all its natural powers, and its "operational" perfection, the activities carried out by means of those powers. Only in its operations does a being attain its ultimate perfection, which always lies in a relation to something exterior to itself. This fundamental distinction between first and second perfection underlies the basic

structure of the book. Part One describes the universe in its first perfection, i.e., the constituent parts whose presence gives it its integrity. Part Two takes up the activities of the parts which taken together constitute the order within the universe and by which the universe attains to its external good, God himself.

At the level of first perfection, the universe is considered to be perfect first of all simply because it is *the* universe, i.e., the whole of what is (Chapter 2). As a whole, it is perfect (complete) in comparison to any of its parts. Thus it is *a priori* impossible to have plural universes, since each "universe" would in fact be only a part of the whole which was the universe. Second, simply as a body, the universe enjoys the perfection of having all three dimensions. Third, not having any bodies outside it, the universe does not share the imperfection of being limited by bodies external to it, as does every particular body. Finally, in containing the perfection of each kind of being, the universe possesses a universal perfection not shared by any one kind of being. These perfections belong to the universe simply *qua* universe.

Beyond these, however, we can speak of the perfection of *this* universe. As Blanchette points out, for Aquinas there is no "best of all possible worlds" in the sense that God could not create a better one. Yet we can speak of the perfection (or completeness) of this world that God, for reasons not accessible to human reason, actually chose to create. The perfection of this universe is such that were any new essential parts, i.e., new species, added, it would no longer be the same universe, but rather a new universe of which the old now constituted a part. One could, however, increase the accidental (improve or increase the number of individuals within species) and so increase the *intensity* of the perfection, but the essential structure would remain unchanged. As Blanchette points out, this seems to disallow the possibility of an evolution of species within Aquinas's universe.

The following chapter shows how the perfection of the universe requires *integrity,* the condition of all its parts coming together suitably. This implies on the one hand that there be some one principle which causes the universal order, and, on the other hand, a diversity of parts (species) and even a multiplicity of individuals. The diversity of species, intended by God for the perfection of the universe, implies a hierarchy in which some beings will be better than others. The final cause of diversity, ultimately, is to have the universe represent the divine goodness; since no one creature can accomplish this fully, diversity is called for. Aquinas distinguishes between perfection in the present state of the universe wherein all species constitute essential parts, and that of its final state at the end of time when there will remain only the principal parts: the separate substances, the heavenly bodies, human individuals, and the four elements.

Blanchette concludes his description of the universe's first "ontological" perfection with an analysis of causality (Chapter 4). Inasmuch as the universe is ordered and this order arises in the action of some beings on others (action

and passion), causality provides, as it were, the texture of the universe. Of particular importance here is the universal causality of the heavenly sphere which is the cause of the universal order in the terrestrial world. The recognition of a universal order requires positing such a cause beyond all particular causes; Blanchette remarks here that it is characteristic of modern Darwinism to restrict its explanations to particular causes.

The theme of causality leads into that of activity, and this is treated in Part Two according to three different levels which together make up the universe's second perfection. First is the activity of physical bodies as such, that is, their local motion (Chapter 5). Simply as a body, each body attains its perfection by achieving its natural place. The inclination to this place produces the natural rectilinear motions of the simple elements toward or away from the earth's center. In contrast, the circular motions of the heavenly bodies are not directed to any one place and so cannot be natural; hence the need for an exterior mover. These basic motions give rise to all other motions, including those of generation. Seen from this perspective an evolution of species might be possible as part of the temporal process through which the essential species of the universe are generated.

The second order of activity is that of generation as it occurs over time (Chapter 6). Aquinas accepted Aristotle's understanding of the heavenly sphere as the universal cause of all generation; nevertheless, he departs significantly from Aristotle in that the generations occurring in the terrestrial realm are not just a sort of by-product of the sphere's motion but rather its primary goal. Moreover, all of material generation from the lowest level upwards aims at the production of rational beings. Thus, on Aquinas's view, the purpose of the motion of the heavenly sphere is ultimately the production of a determinate number of human beings. When that number is reached, the motion of the sphere will end. As Blanchette points out, this view of motion and generation clearly puts man at the middle of the universe and demotes the heavenly bodies to a sub-human level. There is, for Aquinas, an anthropic principle informing the whole universe.

Given this last view, it becomes clear that the most perfect activity of the universe, that in which its perfection principally lies, is the activity of its principal parts, the rational beings (Chapter 7). Intellectual beings, being both material and spiritual, occupy a central place in the universe. As immaterial and capable of intellectual activity, the soul can become all things *(quodammodo omnia);* in so doing it overcomes the particularity of each created being and gathers the universe together, so to speak, within itself. In this way the rational being has a special affinity with the whole universe and its perfection, for through it the universe achieves a unity beyond what it could achieve by its physical interactions. It is not only by intellectual activity, however, that the rational creature perfects the universe. It is called to participate in divine providence and activity to promote the good of the materi-

al world and of other rational beings. This latter is accomplished by adhering to justice, dedicating oneself to the common good of all rational creatures. Through the knowing and loving of rational beings, which constitutes the universe's intrinsic common good, the universe attains its extrinsic common good which is God himself. Thus Blanchette can give the following summary of the Thomistic universe: "For him (Aquinas], the universe is ultimately a community of intellectual beings, each intelligent and free, all capable of the highest good, moving toward completion through an activity in which this community expresses and perfects itself' (300). We have, in the end, a sort of "kingdom of ends," a universe which is, at its peak, ethical.

It is worth noting a few key ideas that run throughout Blanchette's treatment. First, the notion that human intelligence cannot explain the universe as a whole. This particular universe is created as a result of God's free-will (vs. all emanationist accounts) and hence there is no necessary rational explanation available to the human intellect for its being as it is (vs. Hegel). This is the "voluntaristic" side of Thomas's account. Still, it is possible, given this universe, to say why such or such thing is required for the perfection of a being or even for the universe. This gives rise to Thomas's "rationalism," his conviction that the intellect can penetrate the world and arrive at necessary truths about it.

Second is the understanding of how the unity of a whole that is made up of several distinct substances rests on the interaction of these substances. A universe of multiple beings without activity would not be a true universe. Neglecting this point, one might consider the order of the universe, its highest perfection, in a static sense, and then take it as distinct from the activity of the rational beings. Rather, the order of the universal is found most fully in the very activity of its rational members.

Third is the distinction Blanchette draws between the *idea* of the universe with its perfection and the *model* which at a given historical period represents that idea. This distinction allows him to speak of those elements of Aquinas's larger view which remain valid when some particular understanding of the universe is altered or even replaced by discoveries in the physical sciences. Given the replacement of the Aristotelian cosmology which Aquinas largely accepted, this is clearly necessary if the book's theme is to have a more than historical value. Such a distinction, moreover, highlights the real philosophical issue of what constitutes a universe as such and what sort of perfection must it have. Here, one wishes that Blanchette might have said a bit more about how and to what extent the idea, the "logic of perfection," is independent of a given model. For example, he makes it clear that when the universe is said to be perfect because it contains all that is, this sort of perfection would apply to any model of the universe (102-3). But this independence seems to derive from the almost tautological nature of such perfection (94). It seems, however, more problematic when we come to the perfection which the

universe enjoys as an *ordered* whole. What happens if the model does not present a universal order, as seems to have been the case for the last three centuries? Should we then remove the corresponding perfection from our *idea* of universe's perfection? Or is there some metaphysical reason for asserting that the universe is an ordered whole, regardless of any particular model? If the latter, it would be interesting to have at least a sketch of how we would arrive at this position.

On the whole, certainly, the book provides an invaluable overview of the Thomistic universe for anyone working on Aquinas's cosmology, metaphysics, or even ethics. Blanchette is to be commended for his clear and orderly presentation of the material, especially the many subdivisions within the chapters. The quotations of Thomistic texts are almost all in English, well translated by Banchette himself. The placing of key phrases in Latin within parentheses helps in some measure to overcome the lack of the original text in the footnotes. Finally, the book's selected bibliography as well as its indices (index of names, analytical index, and index of citations) render the book an even more useful tool.

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Freedom and Creation in Three Traditions. By DAVID B. BURRELL, C.S.C. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993. Pp. xi + 225. $29.95 (cloth).

According to the author, this book, *Freedom and Creation in Three Traditions,* is a comparative work designed "to illustrate the worth of explicitly tradition-directed inquiry, as well as the fruitfulness of comparative inquires in philosophical theory" (6). In addition, among other things, the author contends that, "because the pressure of comparative perspectives demands that we mine hitherto unsuspected reaches of what we have thought we know," not only the author but also the "traditional disciplines of philosophy and theology may each be enriched by the forays of such inquiry" (6). Specifically, the three traditions to which Burrell is referring are the Jewish, Islamic, and Christian; and, as the title of this book suggests, the central topics of consideration used as the basis for a comparison among these traditions are the respective notions of freedom and creation.

In order to achieve his goals, Burrell places his discussion within the general context of the notion of creation, which, as he rightly observes, "is notoriously difficult to classify" (7). In so doing, he divides the work into nine chapters; which he entitles as follows: 1) "The Context: Creation"; 2) "On

Characterizing the Creator"; 3) "On Characterizing Creation"; 4) "On Characterizing the Relation: Jewish, Christian, Muslim"; 5) "God's Acting in the World God Creates"; 6) "Creatures Acting in a Created World"; 7) "On the Relations between the Two Actors"; 8) "Sin and Redemption"; 9) "The God Realized in Renewed Creation."

Having placed his discussion within the general context of the notion of creation, Burrell begins his analysis by comparing and contrasting this notion in St. Thomas and Moses Maimonides vis-a-vis the necessitarianism of Aristotle as interpreted by lbn Sina. In so doing, Burrell stresses that what predominates in both Maimonides and Aquinas is a notion of God as a "free originator" of all creation not in relation to an "exegesis of the opening chapters of Genesis" but in relation "to the rest of the Bible and the subsequent tradition of Judaism and Christianity" (12).

This "distillation" having been noted, Burrell then examines the distinctive features of the notion of creation as this is influenced by the "faith assertion" of the three respective religious traditions-Jewish, Christian, and Islamic. Within Judaism Burrell finds emphasis placed upon the need to interpret creation against the background of the "covenant" with Israel (19). In Aquinas and Barth he understands this activity to be interpreted against the background of the relation of the Father to His Eternal Word (19-21); and within Islam he finds the regulating theme in the conviction of God's absolute sovereignty vis-a-vis the created order.

In chapter 2, Burrell goes into more precise detail regarding the specific ways in which God is characterized as a creator within the three traditions. Within Judaism, once again, he focuses upon Maimonides and finds the decisive point which determines the Rabbi's reasoning "against accepting what Aristotle was said to have taught regarding the origins of the universe" to have been the philosopher's contention that "the world exists in virtue of necessity, that no nature changes at all, and that the customary course of events cannot be modified with recourse to anything" (28). According to Burrell," ... what offends him about such a contention is that 'it destroys the Law in its principle, necessarily gives the lie to every miracle, and reduces to inanity all the hopes and threats that the Law held out ... "' (28). Furthermore, in Burrell's view, from the theological presumption that God is a free originator of everything, Maimonides is led to draw the philosophical conclusion that it must be the very nature of God to exist. Consequently, Maimonides's use " ... of Avicenna's distinction between *essence* and *existence* offers a way of parsing the claim that 'His existence is necessary always' ... as but another way of saying that it 'has no cause for its existence'" (30). Within Aquinas Burrell finds a completion of "the grammar of divinity" (31), in particular regarding the way existence and essence are to be understood in God and creatures; and to make the position of Aquinas regarding the relation of essence and existence clearer he explains this against the background of lbn Sina's teaching on the matter.

All this having been done, Burrell begins to make the notion of creation more precise by relating the created order to the Creator-first regarding the notions of act, possibility, and necessity; and then by characterizing the relation within the context of the three traditions. Within this latter context Burrell finds certain central facts to be present. Within Judaism this is the covenant; within Christianity it is the Word made Flesh; and within Islam, as represented by such thinkers as al-Ghazali and the Asharites, it is the omnipotence of God.

After finishing the above analysis, the author turns to an examination of the structure of the religious narratives of the traditions in order to focus attention both upon how each respectively understands God's action within creation and the free action of creatures in relation.to God. Within each tradition Burrell finds some difficulty grappling with what he calls "the zero-sum impasse" of created freedom-as-autonomy in the face of an omnipotent freely originating God. Within Islam he notes this difficulty in particular within the Mutazilite school between the Qadarites and the Asharites-the former accepting and the latter rejecting the notion "that rational creatures are the originators of their actions by a power created by God" (76-83). Within Judaism he again turns to Maimonides, whose views on these matters he finds heavily developed in reaction to the aforementioned Islamic debates (84). Finally, within Christianity Burrell refers to Augustine's notion of freedom; and he considers this notion both as it is understood by Scotus (88-94) and "as it has been employed by Aquinas to 'make explicit' what Aristotle left in umbrage: the inner dynamics of voluntary human action" (87).

In Chapter 7, Burrell turns to what he calls "explicit philosophical reflection" regarding the relations between divine and human free agency within each of the three traditions which are the focus of his study (95). In so doing, he intentionally "gravitates toward Aquinas as the most credible spokesman for any of the traditions" for several reasons: 1) he intends to "focus on the philosophical tools needed to explicate the unique relations obtaining between existents who are creatures and their creating source"; 2) "Thomas incorporated into his synthesis the results of three centuries of prior labor by Muslim and Jewish thinkers on the very issues which confronted him"; and 3) "because of his metaphysical acumen, perhaps also a function of his prior tutelage, he was able to transform the inherited Hellenic schemes in such a way as to exploit the implications of *creation ex nihilo* and so create a specifically 'Christian philosophy' that would also prove of considerable use to Jew or Muslim alike" (95-96). Interestingly, the main "philosophical tool" for which Burrell appears primarily to tum to Aquinas seems to be a rather decidedly theological one-namely, Aquinas's faith conviction that human beings need an infused knowledge (such as that of the Trinity) in order to have the correct idea of creation. With this tool in hand, Burrell notes that, even though Aquinas's faith dependence is distinctively Christain, nonethe-

less, all three traditions share the same conclusion that "… God produced creatures not because he needed them, nor because of any other extrinsic reason, but on account of His own goodness." Then he concludes this Chapter by considering four issues which he finds to be relevant to his treatment-namely: "l) causality: primary and secondary, the cause of being and causes of manners of being; 2) eternity and time as a corollary of creator/creature; 3) the efficacity of providence with respect to a world subject to failure; 4) the relative merits of a metaphysics which privileges the possible or the actual to explicate this unique relation" (96).

Chapters 8 and 9 deal with "the pattern of love (or friendship) as an analogy for the interaction involved" between God and created, voluntary agents (96). Chapter 8 considers this interaction against the background of the notions of sin and redemption and of the distinctive ways in which each of the three traditions understands these ideas; and, once again, Burrell stresses: the Jewish tendency to interpret these notions in relation to "the covenant with Abraham and Torah with Moses" (143); the Christian inclination to interpret these same ideas against the background of "the person and actions of Jesus" (146); and the Muslim propensity to view these same issues in relation to the "Warning and Guidance" of the Qur'an (150). In Chapter 9, he notes that, despite their differences, within each of the three traditions, there is an analogous, threefold pattern of elaboration utilized by each tradition in its discourse about the relation of the Free Creator to His free creation-namely, *"source, word,* and *community"* (161-171); and he concludes, with Aquinas: "It is the trinitarian structure of God's saving action which can serve as an operative pattern to correct the principal tendencies to self-destruction endemic to each of the three traditions which we have been considering" (183).

In my opinion, both generally and specifically, Burrell's treatment of his chosen topic is an excellent piece of scholarship-one which could not be matched by many thinkers today. First of all, the topic which he is examining is not an easy one, even from the perspective of one tradition and one area of expertise. Burrell, however, is able to move back and forth between philosophy and theology not only within his own tradition, but he displays an exceptional grasp of the problem from the perspective of other theological traditions as well-even to the point that he recognizes the difficulty of talking about the *kalam* as theology (196, note 8), which is a subtle problem of which few scholars tend to be aware. Secondly, the topic which Burrell examines is one of major philosophical and theological import which, in all its parts, demands both tremendous linguistic and historiographical skills to articulate. Yet, despite these complexities, Burrell is able not only to formulate the issue under consideration with clarity, succinctness, and precision but also, utilizing these same intellectual skills, to achieve all the goals which he has established for himself.

There are, however, a couple of areas in the work where I find it difficult to understand the author's point. For example, I think it would have been helpful for Burrell to explain more precisely within his text what he means by Christian philosophy. The more I study this notion the more I become convinced this is simply an analogous concept for a particular way of doing theology-namely, of using the habit of philosophical argumentation within the context of theological investigation. Burrell, however, seems to think that Christian philosophy is something other than the theological use of the habit of philosophical argumentation (for instance, that it is a "logical system"-see 55); but when he gives instances of Aquinas's application of Christian philosophy (for example, 21) what is formal in Aquinas's activity seems to be the habit of theological reasoning illuminating that of philosophical reasoning. Certainly, however, against the background of Burrell's overall purpose, these issues are of minor import and do not detract from the metaphysical beauty of Burrell's scholarship-which, as I have already noted, is difficult to match.

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Theology and Narrative: Selected Essays. By HANS W FREI. Edited by George Hunsinger and William C. Placher. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. Pp. 274. $35.00 (cloth).

To review a collection of ten essays, with introduction and afterword by the editors, poses several challenges. One temptation is to attempt the impossible: to give an adequate reading of each of the essays as well as an assessment of the work of the editors as to their choice of materials and their comments upon them. One risks writing a dozen reviews rather than one. Another temptation is to offer either a synthetic view of the collection, thereby imposing a unity which may not be entirely warranted by the essays themselves, or a highly selective view according to a single theme which the reviewer takes as most important or interesting. *Theology and Narrative* demands a following of ancient advice: *pecca fortiter.*

The reader can be exceedingly grateful for the fine "Introduction" by William Placher, and the brief but clear introductions to each essay. In his usual lucid and flowing style, he offers us much more than a mere chronological precis of the essays. His remarks offer an albeit brief but thorough synthetic and critical view of the work of Hans Frei. In fact, I would suggest, his introduction is itself an excellent "book review." By contrast, the "Afterword" by George Hunsinger is principally focussed outside this col-

lection. He takes the first essay of the collection, "Remarks in Connection
with a Theological Proposal," as the light by which to interpret "the princi-
pal work by which he [Frei] is known to us not as an intellectual historian or
as a commentator on the theology of others but as a theologian himself' (235).
That work, *The Identity of Jesus Chri-st,* is the subject of a careful analysis for
its "polemic," "method," and "content." Hunsinger applies the same grid to
The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative (chiefly in the footnotes), and in sketchy
form to the other posthumous collection of writings by Frei, *Types of Chmtian
Theology.*

    Hunsinger is at his best in laying out the argument of *Identity.* There is lit-
tle doubt that to understand Frei one must grasp and evaluate the theological
positions from which he takes his distance, the methods by which he makes
their problems his own, and the deep principles which guide his solutions, at
least as evidenced in the Christology he proposes, and by implication in the
rest of the doctrinal areas of Christian thought. The excursus in footnote thir-
teen on the relation of meaning and truth in the gospel narratives, and the
relation of faith and history that it presupposes, deserves a careful reading.
To clarify the argument of *Identity* is no small job, and Hunsinger offers many
felicitous insights. However, whether one can do so without integrating the
historical work of *Eclipse,* the initial stance found in Frei's doctoral disserta-
tion, and the admittedly fragmentary but nonetheless definite position taken
in *Types* I doubt. That is not to ask of a short afterword more than it can pos-
sibly do, but to suggest that a fuller work is much hoped for.

    After a brief biography of Frei, the "Introduction" by Placher confines
itself somewhat more to the essays presented in the volume. It does so, how-
ever, by offering the reader two helpful sections on the background to Frei's
work in the authors Erich Auerbach and Gilbert Ryle. Despite their brevity
these sections are valuable aids to the reader unfamiliar with the literary and
philosophical theory upon which Frei is dependent. As Placher himself
notes, H. Richard Niebuhr is a third essential component of the background,
and the essay by Frei himself, the last in the collection, is a welcome state-
ment of his appreciation and understanding of at least part of Niebuhr's work.
As Placher suggests, Frei's important movement away from an emphasis on
the formal characteristics of biblical realistic narrative as normative to an
appreciation of its function as the rules of discourse within the common life
of the Church both locates a shift which frees his theological work from an
unnecessary constraint but, needless to say, opens it into an area of com-
plexity which he was yet to engage fully. In addition, Placher notes that a fun-
damental question for Frei's project is whether it resolves itself into a form of
deconstruction (one might add, in another direction, into the kind of funda-
mentalist reading of the biblical text he was so careful to avoid).

    How can such a collection be best read? The introduction, I have sug-
gested, is truly introductory, and while the afterword takes the reader far

afield it does so with ultimately helpful materials. The essays of Frei are themselves arranged roughly historically, with only one very early essay (the sixth, on Barth) placed later in the collection, obviously to be a companion with the essay in which Frei reconsiders Schleiermacher and a possible *rapprochement* between him and Barth. They could be simply read in the order presented. But, as Hunsinger shows well with his use of the other early essay "Remarks in Connection with a Theological Proposal" to clarify the argument of *Identity,* there is much to be said for reading both early essays first. If nothing else, they pose a clarity and freshness which becomes increasingly rare as Frei contends with, in Hunsinger's words, "the concrete and complex embeddedness in the matrix of the whole, with all the subtle interrelations and contrasts which that embeddedness seemed to entail" (236).

It might be well, before proposing a scheme for reading, to name briefly that complex whole. Simply put, it was a conviction that matters of method and matters of doctrine are inextricable. There is no settling the difficulties of clear doctrinal exposition, appropriate development, and pastoral application without attention to the content and claims of doctrine itself, and vice versa of course. This is most evident in Frei's chosen test case of the doctrine of the person and work of Christ, in which decisions as to the appropriate use of general theories of human nature and interpretation of the Scriptures, as well as the tradition of reading and applying them, are ingredients. This is not strange. In the acts of God in Christ which constitute human salvation the what and how are coincident. There are those who might argue that this is not the statement of the Scriptures or the formula of the early tradition, or that even if it is, it need not be held normative. Frei would not agree, and labored at length to unravel the threads of argument and presupposition, of historical and contemporary reasons which account for the divergence of opinion. His deepest convictions may not have been easily visible, and Hunsinger is correct to observe that the few written works which remain are themselves as complex as the problems Frei engages and his appreciation of their subtleties. Frei quite evidently tried very carefully to understand alternative perspectives and claims, and hence I am somewhat hesitant about Hunsinger's use of the title "Polemic" to name Frei's relation to and presentation of the last three centuries of Western Christian theology. If doctrine and method are inextricable, so is the effort of taking account of the ruling discourse while proposing an alternative conversation. Essential to that conversation is testing the grammar of two basic Christian claims: Jesus is Lord; Jesus is risen. With these matters in mind, let me briefly review the contents of *Theology and Narrative.*

One can profitably begin by reading the short piece "Of the Resurrection of Christ." With a very clear focus and in a very brief space, Frei employs for us his basic analysis and critique of current views and presents his own basic position (see especially 205). The reader familiar with Frei's work will find many hints of his more technical writings, and the reader unfamiliar will

undoubtedly discover a multitude of questions to be answered by further reading. Of particular importance here, I think, is the function of the piece as a commentary on a confession of faith. Though his life's work was within the university context, there can be little doubt of the deep faith which shines through the texts. I would recommend also reading the other two essays that were contributed by Frei to the same commentary on the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England and that make passing mention of a very early entry in *A Handbook of Christian Theology* published in 1958 on the subject of natural and revealed religion which is valuable for its succinct observations.

Next, an early short essay, "Karl Barth: Theologian," will introduce the reader to all the preoccupations of Frei's later work, as well as signal his indebtedness to the work of Barth in general. His wonderment about the success or failure of Barth's theology (174-75) occasions remarks about the central task of theology, and about its ironic character, which provide a glimpse of Frei's own motivation and style. Following these two short essays taken as the *ouverture* to what follows, one might profitably read the "Remarks in Connection with a Theological Proposal." The editors rightfully note that this early essay announces all of the themes of Frei's career:

> the distinction between explanation and description, and a decided preference for the latter, across a number of academic disciplines; the plea for modest, non-speculative interpretive devices in expounding scripture; the nontheological modes of conceptual analysis used to elucidate the logic and content of dogmatic theology; the distrust of apologetic strategies that dissolve into the worst fonns of relativism; the insistence on the particularity of the synoptic gospel narratives and the figure of Jesus as they depict him (26-7),

It ends with a succinct statement of the coincidence of meaning and truth, as Frei finds it to be given in the account of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. He admits that "the question of the transition from the aesthetic, nonapologetic understanding to the truth claim_.__historical,metaphysical, and existential" must be addressed, but he takes his place alongside Anselm, Calvin, and Barth, offering the following remark about the story of Jesus as given in the gospels: "Understanding it aesthetically often entails the factual affirmation and existential commitment that it appears to demand as part of its own storied pattern" (44).

To understand this remark, the reader must labor through "Theological Reflections on the Accounts of Jesus' Death and Resurrection," an earlier version of the argument presented in *The Identity of Jesus Christ.* Here, the reader unfamiliar with Frei might wish to read parts one to four of Hunsinger's "Afterword" before, or in conjuction with, a reading of this rather dense piece of writing. In sum, Frei argues that the unique identity of Jesus as clarified by the use of formal elements of identity description requires both a notion of identity and a reading of the New Testament which "quests for the historical Jesus" inevitably cannot sustain. In a somewhat ironic remark he offers the following summation: "I believe further that this descriptive availability, identity, and continuity (of Jesus) represents not a transformation of

Jesus into a myth but the demythologization of the savior myth in the person of Jesus" (75). And put in other words: "... there is a kind of logic in a Christian's faith that forces him to say that disbelief in the resurrection of Jesus is rationally impossible" (87).

Four other essays in the collection will aid the reader to discover more clearly the hermeneutical problems involved in the sort of Christology which Frei has proposed. "Theology and the Interpretation of Narrative" has an important discussion of the meaning of the "literal sense." This is furthered in the essay previously published and much discussed, "The 'Literal Reading' of Biblical Narrative in the Christian Tradition: Does it Stretch or Will it Break?" which contains remarks on recent literary criticism, particularly deconstructionism, and on phenomenological hermeneutics. Of particular note are the concluding pages (143ff) in which one can detect a movement away from the formal characteristics of realistic narrative (and Frei's association with New Criticism) towards a notion of the literal sense in connection with communal discourse (and Frei's association with the work of George Lindbeck). "Conflicts in Interpretation" continues this trend, and the short piece in response to Carl Henry is valuable for its somewhat blunt but clear remarks on a whole range of issues that the three other more technical essays discuss.

Finally, there are the two late works, on the convergence of Barth and Schleiermacher as reconstructed by Frei, and on H. Richard Niebuhr. Both are instances of the kind of generous, even if critical, reading Frei could offer, and of the continual reassessment he was engaged in throughout his life. While both selections offer remarks on historical figures, hermeneutical issues, and philosophical matters, I would like to highlight the glimpse of a discussion of the Trinity in the first (82ff.) and the remarks on Christian ethics in the second. Pervading both are hints of the same topic which engaged him in his doctoral dissertation, how to speak about revelation in Christian thought and life.

Another "review" of this collection might take as itg theme the importance of its contents for many contemporary theological discussions. Most obviously, anyone interested in questions about ways of reading the Bible, about the presuppositions of recent efforts to search for the historical Jesus, about the use of literary theory in conjunction with Christology, and about hermeneutical questions generally will find them placed in a large historical and theological context. Those wishing to explore the implications of Frei's work for all forms of theological construction, and for theological education as well, will find this volume a distinct convenience. There now lacks only an edition of Frei's doctoral disseration to make available the resources for a broad discussion of the shape and significance of his work. Such a comprehensive study would be not only of historical interest, but might be able to lay out more clearly the lines of possibility in which Frei's work, in conjunction with that of George Lindbeck, can be properly said to be an inspiration for other

generations of theologians across denominational lines.

Both Placher and Hunsinger at the end of their essays choose quotations from within Frei's own writings to give a synoptic portrait of the man and his work. Placher chooses a remark about Niebuhr's sense of vocation as a theologian (20), and Hunsinger one about knowledge of that seemingly elusive reality, a person's identity (257). However one might come away from this challenging collection of essays, further confused or more enlightened, more in agreement or disagreement, I think every reader will recognize the coincidence of intellectual perspicuity and generosity with passionate faith.

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Reasoned Faith. Edited by ELEONORE STUMP. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993. Pp. x + 364.

As the editor remarks in her "Introduction," it is not so long ago that the analytical philosophy of religion consisted very largely of discussions of the meaningfulness of religious language, and of arguments about the existence of God. Nowadays it is more adventurous, ranging over such topics as creation, providence, and God's responsibility for sin.

According to Robert Merrihew Adams, the statement "truth is subjectivity," though one of the most famous, is also one of the most misunderstood in Kierkegaard's writings. He argues that, taken in context within the *Concluding Unscientifu: Postscript,* the statement is by no means incompatible with the objective truth of religious belief. From the point of view of the *Postscript,* a member of an idolatrous community who prays to her God with "the entire passion of the infinite" has *more* of the truth than one who prays in a false spirit from within Christendom; but this implies that the latter does have *some* truth. Whatever the deficiencies in her faith, she is clearly admitted to be in possession of the true concept of God objectively speaking (22-3). Adams maintains, quite rightly in the reviewer's opinion, that the *Postscript* is excessively pessimistic about the integration of the ideals of subjectivity and objectivity, of passionate commitment on the one side and rational assessment of evidence on the other, in religious faith (21).

A useful distinction is made by Scott MacDonald between "occurrent" and "dispositional" belief; this seems to resolve some of the more puzzling paradoxes about the relation of the more cognitive and propositional side of faith to other aspects which may be thought essential to it. The demons alluded to by St. James (2:19) might believe dispositionally that their highest fulfillment

was to be found in obeying the divine will, and so performing acts of charity and service to other creatures. But to avoid the inconvenience of acting in such a way, they could think of God occurrently as just a powerful being who makes burdensome demands (55). For MacDonald, the cognitive component of faith has only two elements, belief that certain propositions are true, and belief that the kind of response of the will which is also essential to faith may be grounded on these (56). "We can make sense of Christian faith if we think of it simply as belief that Christianity is true plus an appropriate volitional response to that truth" (69). Against mainline Christian accounts like those of Augustine and Aquinas, he sees no good reason to suppose that one cannot have faith in propositions for which one has conclusive proof, but only in those for which one's justification is relatively weak. He provides interesting grounds for contradiction of a view which has been expounded by both Robert Adams and John Hick, that only such uncertainty can ground the trust which is essential to the relationship which human beings ought to have to God (59). "My ability to love and trust my wife, to commit myself without reservation to her well-being and to the goals and purposes we have chosen as definitive of our common life seem in no way dependent on my being uncertain about what she is like or what she will do" (60).

On the question of how faith ought to be related to the demands of reason, Robert Audi remarks that, up to the middle 1970s, it was usual to assess the rational requirements of faith in evidentialist terms; but this is no longer so. (The reviewer believes that the older assumption was quite correct, and that the new-fangled notion that there might be a rationality to faith which is somehow of a non-evidentialist sort is largely sophistry and illusion. But this is by no means to impugn the interest of this article as a whole.) Audi suggests that a rational faith, if it were "volitional" rather than "doxastic," might result in one's praying in the hope of being heard by God, even without confident belief that this will happen. "Even if there should be neither cogent arguments for God's existence nor experiential grounds adequate to warrant unqualifiedly believing that God exists, rational faith is possible" (89). This kind of faith would have *some* cognitive constraints; it would be incompatible, for instance, with a definite belief that God did not exist (78).

Peter van lnwagen brings new light to the overworked topic of how Jews and Christians are to understand the Biblical accounts of creation, against the background of modern scientific knowledge of the origins of the universe and of humanity. He distinguishes two extreme positions, which he labels "genesiac literalism" and "saganism," and repudiates both of them. He suggests that what *Genesis* is right about-that it is not the case that there are many gods whose wills may be in conflict with one another; or that kings but not ordinary folk bear the divine image; or that it is proper to worship heavenly bodies-is of fundamental importance to all human beings everywhere, and that what it is wrong about is not of such importance (104). Furthermore, until an age of high sophistication, truths relating to such matters as sin and

moral knowledge can be communicated to human beings only in the form of concrete stories (106). No doubt eventually the Holy Spirit could have produced an "abstract" *Genesis* without factual error (the reviewer is inclined to say that She *has* done so, or at least is in the course of doing so, by means of the corrective supplied by modem palaeontology); but it is difficult to see in what respect it would have been an improvement on the "concrete, suggestive, effective" document that we have. And what would have been the point? "Only this: that a few saganists in our own time would have had to find some other excuse to reject the Word of God than its disagreement with the fossil record" (108). The article ends with some salutary reminders that many eminent authorities are now unhappy with Darwin's account of the causal mechanisms underlying evolution on purely *scientific* grounds (127).

A curious meditation on the beginning of *Genesis,* from rather a different point of view, is provided by Harry G. Frankfurt. This reviewer can only make sense of it as a kind *offeu d'esprit;* it is certainly fascinating and thought-provoking as such. The first two verses (we are told) inform us that before the first creative act-the making of light-there were already three entities, the earth, the deep, and the spirit of God. In other words, there is no question of a "creation out of nothing" (130). It even looks as though God becomes God, as opposed to merely "the spirit of God," by imposing form on "the earth" and "the deep," and so making them describable in terms of intelligible speech (132). "This first creative act both transforms a dark world into a lighted one and transforms the spirit of God into God" (134). God realizes and defines God by imposing order on chaos, and indeed needs humanity to accept the imposed order, for the completion not merely of the creation of the world, but of the divine being itself (140).

Of what is as a whole an extraordinarily rich collection, William Alston's paper seems to the reviewer to be among the finest. Plainly the terms we use of God are derived from our discourse about creatures, particularly human beings. However, God is so different from creatures that it seems impossible for the terms to be used in quite the same sense in the two cases. But if that is so, just how is one to articulate the difference? Among the many historical solutions to the problem, that of Thomas Aquinas stands out for its depth, complexity, and subtlety (145). Yet it seems irretrievably flawed. The trouble is, according to Alston, that Aquinas "has disavowed any attempt to be specific about what knowing or willing come to in the divine case, except that they constitute a 'higher mode' of the sort of thing we have in human knowing or willing.... By his own admission he is in no position to spell out the respects of similarity and dissimilarity between divine and human causal agency, willing, and so on" (173). Aquinas's teaching on the subject seems to derive from his doctrine of the divine simplicity-that there is no real distinction between the divine being and any of the divine attributes. This doctrine, as Alston sees it, has to be rejected (178). (The reviewer considers that at least "understanding" and "will" have to be understood in the same sense

as between God and creatures. Human understanding is in very restricted potency [to put the matter in Aristotelian terms] what divine understanding is in infinite act; human will is extremely narrow in extent and power, while whatever happens in the cosmos-with qualifications where free created agents are concerned-is due to the divine will. The doctrine of God's simplicity should be retained, if at all, only so far as it is consistent with the account just summarized.)

A claim that is quite common among theists, that the primary object of religious faith is "not the final and most profound reality," which is somehow behind, above, or beneath it, is investigated by George Mavrodes. He discusses two versions of the claim, in the work of Paul Tillich and John Hick, and concludes that, seductive as it may seem, it is viable in neither form. Such "Gods above the Gods ... may, on the one hand, be construed in a way which makes them irrelevant to religious life and experience. Kicked upstairs, they can thenceforth largely be ignored. On the other hand, they may be construed in ways that make them religiously attractive. In that case, they are likely to be assimilated by some allegedly lower gods that belong to the particular religions" (203).

In another important paper, Richard Swinburne raises the question of how God is related to time, and defends what he calls the "simple, naive, initial answer ... that God is everlasting" (204). The most well-publicized alternative, that God is as it were present to all events, even when to us they are past or future, he rejects as incoherent. His own account, he insists, does not have the inconvenient consequence often attributed to it, of making God a prisoner of time; since "the unwelcome features of time--the increases of events that cannot be changed, the cosmic clock ticking away as they happen, the uncertainty about the future--may indeed invade God's time; but they come by invitation, not by force-and they continue for such periods of time as God chooses that they shall" (221-2).

The problem of how divine perfection is to be reconciled with divine freedom is discussed in a pair of papers by William Rowe and Thomas Morris. Rowe asks, How can God be at once free, and unable to do anything which is not for the best? (223) He concludes that God's perfection rather severely limits the scope of divine freedom in creation, and suggests that one might get out of the difficulty either by giving up the libertarian idea of freedom as applied to God, or by maintaining that God might be better than God actually happens to be (233). Morris approaches the problem from a somewhat different angle, contrasting the conception of God as "ultimate in causation" to that of God as "ultimate in value" (234). "How could a perfectly wise, good, and powerful being," he asks, "choose to create anything less than a perfect world?" (235) In opposition to Rowe, he argues that, since the very idea of "the best of all possible worlds" is incoherent, God cannot be faulted for failing to create such a thing (244).

"What is hope," demands William Mann, "that it should be in the com-

pany of faith and love?" (251). Some passages in Luther's commentary on
Romans tacitly imply an indictment of hope. As Luther sees it, if one is in the
highest rank of the elect, one will have an unalloyed desire to conform to the
will of God, which entails desiring to be damned if that is what God wishes
(256). However, Aquinas seems right in arguing that charity, as a state of
friendship with God, presupposes hope. "I cannot enter into a relationship of
amicitia with you as long as I despair of the possibility, deeming myself
unworthy of obtaining the good that the relationship would bestow" (279). (It
should be mentioned in passing that Mann's paper is a regular feast from a
purely literary point of view.)

Peter Abelard's views on the atonement are commended, in the teeth of
contemporary fashion, by Philip Quinn. As he says, Abelard's critics object
to his so-called "exemplarism" on the ground not that it is utterly wide of the
mark, but that it is insufficient as an exhaustive account (282). In one famous
text, Abelard is often taken to be saying that our redemption consists in the
love Christ manifests by suffering for us; and some of his translators have ren-
dered the passage accordingly. But, argues Quinn, Abelard's Latin is not nec-
essarily, or even most naturally, to be read in this sense; and comparison with
what Abelard writes elsewhere shows that it ought not to be so taken. His
meaning appears rather to be that our redemption consists in the love wrought
in us by Christ's passion (289). In one place, Abelard actually defends a
straight penal substitution theory (290). Bernard's claim, that Abelard's views
amounted to Pelagianism, is quite unjust; it can only appear plausible if one
takes some of his more extreme statements in isolation, and then exaggerates
them (292).

Marilyn Adams's paper on hell makes the case for universalism with a
splendid compound of moral passion and rigorous argument. She takes par-
ticular exception to the views of William Craig, who espouses the tradition-
ally standard view that a very substantial proportiop of human beings are to
suffer eternal damnation. Adams reminds us of all the "traumas, impair-
ments, disasters and hardships" which people have to struggle against in this
life; for example, the physical and sexual abuse endured from childhood
onwards by youths in the gangland of South Central Los Angeles. "I do not
find it credible that all such antemortem situations contain grace sufficient
for faith in and cooperation with God (Christ) were it not for the creature's
incompatibilist free refusal" (319). Adams admits that her own universalism
is supported by only a selection of the texts relevant to the subject in the New
Testament; but reasonably urges that the same applies to the views of her
opponents. Some serious people, as she says, reject universalism on the
grounds that it is apt to lead to religious and moral indifference. But she finds
in her own pastoral experience "that the disproportionate threat of hell . . .
produces despair that masquerades as skepticism, rebellion, and unbelief'
(325).

The final contribution, by the editor, assesses Aquinas's treatment of the

sufferings of Job, which she finds instructively different from the sort of account which would come naturally to people of our own time. We are apt to wonder how a good God could possibly permit the many and frightful evils which infest the world. Aquinas, however, believed that all human beings are afflicted with "a terminal cancer of soul," for which pain and suffering are the divinely-appointed remedies (340). If we are not cured, we will lose for ever the ultimate bliss of communion with God. At this rate we are to expect that the best people are precisely those who are liable to suffer the most (342). Aquinas would agree with Pope Gregory, who says that it is frequently difficult to understand the ways of providence, but never more so than "when things go ill with good people and well with bad people" (343). Stump concludes that what Aquinas's interpretation of Job, and his overall account of evil, has to show us is "that our approach to the problem of evil is a consequence of our attitude towards much larger issues, such as the nature of human happiness and the goal of human life" (356).

The reader will have inferred that this is a remarkable volume. None of the contributions is to be sneezed at, and some are very impressive indeed.

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Christ the 'Name' of God: Thomas Aquinas on Naming Christ. By HENK J. M. SCHOOT. Nijmegen: Peeters Leuven, 1993. Pp. 231 (Paper).

The hiddenness of God in Christ and "the relation between the Word Incarnate and human words for this Word" animate this study of Aquinas's christological epistemology; it is a study of Aquinas's understanding of "the mystery of Christ, and [of] human ways of signifying him" (1). And because "all human understanding and signification fails *[sic]* to reach Christ as he is," Schoot believes that all christological knowledge is primarily negative and heavily reliant on analogy (1). He applies to the names of Christ what another author (Mark Jordan) has applied to the divine names: "the surest approach to the divine is by the scrutiny of linguistic failure" (153).

The structure of the book reflects these insights. In the first chapter the author stresses the negative character of christological language by reflecting upon Aquinas's use of *mysterium* in christology.

The second chapter is an analysis of his use of "the concepts of signification, supposition, predication and reduplication," in the context of the most current knowledge of medieval grammar and logic (7). It is here that the author stresses Aquinas's strongly linguistic approach to christology, as well as the distinction between supposition ("standing for") and predication ("sig-

nification"), which will be crucial to his analysis of the hypostatic union in later chapters. In fact, "the whole of christology is built on the distinction between signification and supposition" (55). Schoot believes that Aquinas, following medieval "modist" grammarians, thought that "a fundamental parallel exists between different modes of signification, modes of understanding and modes of being" (43), and hence a linguistic approach is often a decisive entry into questions of theological (and christologiocal) epistemology and metaphysics. In this context, the author examines the distinction Aquinas made between a number of modes of signification.

Chapter Three is devoted to Aquinas as a biblical theologian. His use of biblical names of Christ {over ninety in his commentary on *Isaiah* alone) suggests that "a large part of Aquinas' treatment of the person and life of the Word Incarnate is devoted to a discussion of names" (104), and that the fact that Christ is a mystery "is rooted in (his] being the 'name' of God" (105). Schoot finds that "Aquinas employs the same rules concerning signification examining those names as he does concerning the divine names" (193).

Chapter Four applies the key insights of Aquinas's "theory of supposition to the theology of Christ incarnate" (194). Following an analysis of such key concepts as first and second substance, *esse, suppositum, singularis, particularis,* and *individuum,* Schoot concludes that

> The subject-term having both signification and supposition expresses a linguistic unity that Aquinas deems analogous to the unity in Christ. Just like words that have different significations can be one in their supposition for one and the same supposit, Christ can be called one since two natures are united in one person. The mode of signifying Christ is analogous to Christ's mode of being. (194-5)

He holds that this distinction between supposition and signification is the "linguistic parallel" to the distinction between being and essence (120), and that since the unity of Christ finally escapes all human signification, it "can only be approached by human supposition" (156). Aquinas's principal concern here is "to safeguard, in all interpretation and construction, the unity of Christ (198), and Schoot demonstrates that "Aquinas' linguistic treatment of the names of Christ and the hypostatic union employs the same basic ideas that are used in his treatment of the divine names: analogous signification, divine simplicity, and mixed relation" (197). Indeed, the theory of the *communicatio idiomatum* "is for christology what the 'theory' of analogy is for the doctrine about God" (139).

The next chapter discusses the *esse* of Christ, and the importance of Aquinas's affirmation that he *est creatura,* even though he does not possess a subsistent, personal human act of being. In this densely written and brief chapter, Schoot denies that Aquinas changed his view between the *Quaestio Disputata De Unione Verbi lncamati* and the *Summa Theologiae.* Rather, the author holds that Aquinas always thought that Christ possessed a human *esse* in the sense of "second substance," that which permits an essence to exist by

itself, but which does "not contribute to the personal being itself' (164). Further, since Christ's human nature is "attached" to the personal *esse* of the Word by means of a mixed relation, nothing can be "be lacking to the *being* of Christ's human nature. In fact, whoever objects that a personal *human* being is lacking in Christ violates the distinction between supposition and signification" (164).

The final chapter makes explicit the connection between naming God and naming Christ: "all true naming of God is related to the hypostatic union as its paradigm" (169), and in particular the author shows what he believes to be the connection between the naming of God and the relation between the three types of created knowledge in the soul of Christ.

Perhaps the most accessible and theologically rewarding chapter is the first, and it is worthwhile to develop some of its insights. Schoot stresses that Aquinas rarely speaks of *mysterium* in regard to the Godhead; rather, it is for him the paramount *christological* term, because it connotes both hiddenness and disclosure, the thing signified and that which signifies. According to Schoot, Aquinas understood Christ's humanity (and his entire human life) to be a mode of signifying God, a mode in which God is at once hidden and disclosed, as in a *mysterium.* Since the Godhead itself is absolutely pure light in which nothing is hidden, the term does not properly apply to it. One can only properly speak of mystery when the divine light is disclosed through creaturely reality, and the paradigmatic revealing/veiling is the humanity of Christ. The author then develops four modes of revelatory hiddenness that are important for Aquinas, and which may be expressed as follows: the Word is hidden in the articles of faith, in the Old Testament, in the eucharist, and in his human nature.

In his consideration of the articles of faith, Schoot again stresses that the formal object of faith (the First Truth) is not a *mysterium* in itself, but only inasmuch as it is understood by us, only inasmuch as God is revealed to us as the material object of faith. God is revealed to us *as* a mystery, in a mysterious, and hence hidden, way. The mystery that is Christ is also revealed in the Old Testament in a mysterious way: those things that it refers to literally, "refer mysteriously to the mystery of Christ" (27), and are unlocked by the spiritual senses of scripture. Christ, especially in his passion, is also revealed/hidden in the mystery of the eucharist under the signs of bread and wine: they, too, mysteriously and hence hiddenly reveal him. Thus *"mysterium* is something hidden with the hiddenness of the propositions of faith and also with the hiddenness of the spiritual signification of Scripture" (28), as well as with the eucharistic species. And all of those modes of hiddenness reflect the primary hiddenness of the Word in his humanity. He ends this treatment with the following analogy, in which the second (italicized) term is the mysterious mode of signifying the *res signifzcata:* The First Truth is signified by the *propositi.on of faith,* Christ is signified by the *Old Law,* the Incarnate Word is signified by his *human nature,* and the passion of Christ is

signified by *bread and wine* (39). Schoot sums up the concept of *mysterium* operative here by saying that it is "something hidden, voiced truly but inadequately, spiritually signified by the Old Testament and now fulfilled in Christ and the sacrament of the eucharist" (38).

Despite the meticulous scholarship displayed in this work, students of Aquinas's theological epistemology and christology may well be struck by what seem to be gratuitous harmonizations between theology and christology (the parallel between the analogy of being and the *communicationem idiomatum,* making the hypostatic union paradigmatic in the naming of God), the overwhelming weight given to the signification/supposition distinction, and the seeming reduction of the principles of christology to linguistic rules. In addition, the complex and often turgid style serves to obfuscate certain important questions, such as Aquinas's understanding of Christ's *esse.* Is Aquinas being forced into a theological mold that he himself would not recognize?

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An Introduction to the History of Exegesis, vol. III: St. Augustine. By
    BERTRAND DE MARGERIE, S.J. Petersham, Mass.: St. Bede's
    Publications, 1993. Pp. xi+ 169 (paper).

    Unfortunately, today many scholars and general readers neglect the work of the Fathers of the Church. One often hears that the writings of the Fathers have become less relevant or less important because there has been so much progress in Scripture studies and because the Fathers did not really try to find out what the inspired writer meant to say-for they relied on allegory.

    St. Augustine's exegesis poses a particular difficulty in terms of its reliance on allegory. Augustine was strongly influenced by the allegorical exegesis of bishop Ambrose and recounts in his *Confession.5*(VI, iv, 6) how he used to hear Ambrose teaching in his sermons, as though he were most diligently teaching a rule: "The letter kills, but the spirit gives life."

    Father de Margerie admits that Augustine did indeed suffer from "excessive allegorism" (126), but he insists that this is no reason to give up entirely on Augustine. Instead, with keen scholarly analysis he shows that, in spite of some defects, Augustine did in fact give us some really fine work in Scripture study.

    Father de Margerie stresses that according to Augustine the purpose of all Scripture is to teach love: "... the plenitude and the end of the Law and of

all the sacred Scriptures is the love ... of a Being which is to be enjoyed and of a being that can share that enjoyment with us" (20; from *De Doctrina Christiana,* I, xxv, 39). This love is taught even at the beginning of Scripture: " ... on a subjective level, Moses wrote for the love of all men" (30).

But how could this be? "It seems to us nowadays that Augustine failed to perceive adequately the progressive nature of the disclosure of religious truths by the God who revealed them" (30). Father de Margerie responds to this objection by pointing out that given the belief that Moses had been given a transient, "face to face vision of the Divine being ... and that this experience was granted him precisely in favor of the universal Church," it makes sense to assume that "the prophet and maker of the old Law received knowledge, during this vision and through divine revelation, of how future interpretation of the Law he was issuing-like that which Jesus was to issue-would extend even to enemies the love of one's neighbor" (31).

Augustine was led to this view in the light of the varied interpretations being proposed in his own time for Genesis (48). Father de Margerie admits that "Augustine himself limits the scope of his theory concerning the plurality of literal meaning to a few rather exceptional verses of scripture" (65).

Augustine believed, however, that Moses had received most remarkable gifts:

> I cannot think that Moses Your most faithful servant was given by you lesser gifts than I should have wished and longed to have for myself if I had been born at the same time as he .... I should have wished that you would grant me such a skill in writing, such an art for the construction of what I had to say, that those ... who can grasp so much [how God creates] would find fully contained in the few words of your servant whatever truths they had arrived at in their own thinking; and if in the light of truth some other man saw some further meaning, then that too would be discoverable in those same words of mine. (50; from *Confessions* XII, xxvi, 36)

Furthermore, "Augustine acknowledges in *De Genesi ad litteram* that Moses beheld God face to face, and in the *Confesswns* that the biblical law-giver had a foreknowledge of the interpretations readers would draw from what he wrote in Genesis 1:1" (52-53). This was needed, Augustine thinks, so that Moses could actually *intend* all the interpretations that others would later find in his words.

Today there is much discussion of the possible plural literal sense. The Second Vatican Council, in *Dei verbum* §12, had an opportunity to affirm or deny this plural literal sense, but intentionally passed it by. Yet the same Council in *Lumen gentium* §55 nonetheless used the very same principle in speaking of Gen. 3:15 and Is. 7:14: "These primeval documents, as they are read in the Church and understood in the light of later and full revelation, gradually bring before us the figure of the Mother of the Redeemer." In other words, the Holy Spirit, the chief author, surely could have more in mind than what the human author saw. Vatican II refrains from asserting that the author did or did not see in these texts all that the Church now sees. Father de

Margerie tells us that Augustine surely held that Genesis contains such a plural sense, with the added affirmation that Moses, whom Augustine considers to be the author of the Pentateuch, thanks to a transient beatific vision, personally foresaw and intended all the interpretations that would later be given.

In keeping with his careful and cautious approach, near the end of the book Father de Margerie admits the limitations of Augustine, limitations which Augustine himself often perceived. "First, Augustine's *strictly exegetical works* are rather limited.... His sustained commentaries are few, those which have reached us concern Genesis, Job, the Letters to the Galatians and part of that to the Romans, the Gospel, and the First Letter of John" (126). Secondly, Augustine had only a slight knowledge of Biblical Greek. He usually worked from the Latin Bible. He seldom referred systematically to the Greek. Further, he had "but a smattering of Hebrew, acquired indirectly through his familiarity with Punic" (126). Finally-a very large admission- "he, along with nearly all the Fathers, failed to analyze adequately the literal meaning of numerous texts he sought to interpret" (126).

In spite of such limitations, Augustine and the other Fathers do provide us with many insights into sound doctrine. This is especially useful since so many of the errors of today, advertised as new, are merely ancient mistakes rejected centuries ago by the Fathers. Therefore we are all indebted to Father de Margerie for helping to call us back to what is so very good in the Fathers.

Father de Margerie has rendered a singular service to scholarship in his first two volumes of study of Patristic exegesis. The present volume, the third, is a worthy successor to the first two.

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The Primacy of Love: An Introduction to the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas. By PAUL J. WADELL, C.P. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1992. Pp. 162. $11.95.

Friends of God: Virtues and Gifts in Aquinas. By PAUL J. WADELL, C.P. American University Studies, Series VII: Theology and Religion, vol. 76. New York: Peter Lang, 1991. Pp. x + 148.

Drawing from the virtue-ethics orientation of his earlier work, *Friendship and the Moral Life* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), Paul Wadell has written two books that seek to accomplish two distinctly different

objectives: to produce a work that can serve as a general introduction to Thomas Aquinas's teaching about ethics, and to produce a monograph that urges a different approach to the interpretation of Thomas's ethical teaching. But both books share a common interest of Wadell's: showing that Thomas's ethics is an ethics of genuine affection. Whether he is judged to have reached the two objectives is a question that is likely to be answered differently by moralists, depending upon the issues and approaches that shape their own understanding of Thomistic moral theology. At the very least, Wadell has produced two well-crafted books that are trend-setting works in a long and promising career, works whose approach is surely to become familiar as more and more writers emphasize virtue ethics with regard to the moral teaching of Aquinas. And at most, Wadell has shown himself to be both a fine teacher of Thomas's ethical thought and an incisive scholar in identifying the subterranean movements of the Common Doctor's thought. I shall consider *The Primacy of Love* first, which, although it appeared second, is a good intelligible backdrop for presenting the more sophisticated and important argument of *Friends of God.*

Waddell's introduction to Thomas's ethics is not really a synopsis of the *Secunda pars* of the *Summa theologiae,* though the lion's share of the material he employs is from there, and in something of its original order. It is rather a sympathetic, almost affectionate, portrait of Thomas's ethical teaching. The book does not introduce the reader to the technicalities of Thomas's thought, or to the bewildering debates surrounding the practical syllogism and natural law that have characterized the secondary literature in the second half of this century. Wadell-and others, I imagine-would consider this a strength of the book, since its goal is to encourage readers to go to Thomas's texts themselves. The introductory chapter quickly presents Thomas's life, relying upon Weisheipl and Pieper, notes briefly the outline and nature of the *Summa theologiae,* and most importantly addresses something that characterizes Wadell's whole perspective on Thomas's moral teaching: the intimate, indeed inseparable, link between his moral and spiritual teaching (17-21). Using the life-stance Thomas shows us in his famous *non ni.si te, domine* experience ("Nothing else but you, Lord") as an intelligible entrance-point into his whole reason for writing the *Summa theologiae,* Wadell reins in his reader of Thomas's moral teaching away from the mechanical "nut-and-bolts" to which we are otherwise accustomed, and rather directs that reader to consider Thomas's rationale for the whole project: "Thomas wrote the *Summa* because he loved God, and like all great lovers he believed he had something fabulous to share" (19).

Proceeding loosely according to the order of the *Prima secundae,* Wadell investigates the nature of human happiness, noting how Thomas's investigation leads him to assert that only God is humanity's happiness (Wadell never really engages Thomas's heavy emphasis upon the cognitive element of

human happiness). He then quickly imports some of the treatment of charity
(from I-II, 65, and II-II, 23) into the discussion, noting how Thomas terms
charity as a "kind of friendship with God" (63-78). Returning to the original
order of the *Prima secundae,* Wadell bypasses the account of morality (I-II,
18-21), and very ably addresses the human emotions-an element of
Thomas's teaching rarely mentioned in the literature, even by Thomistic
moralists. The virtues are treated next, along with the Gifts, and then finally
he concludes, emphasizing that love, and especially the love of God, is the
"cornerstone of Thomistic ethics" (145).

Veteran readers of Thomas's ethics, particularly of the *Secunda pars* of the
Summa theologiae, might wonder how an introduction to Thomas's ethics can
afford not to treat of any number of important topics: the constitution of
human acts, the treatment of morality, law, or even grace. Likewise, the
emphasis upon charity would seem to call for the other two theological
virtues, faith and hope. And the desire to highlight love of God results in lit-
tle treatment being given to what concrete items-the defining objects of the
various virtues and vices-aid or endanger the moral agent in seeking God.

But Wadell's goal of providing his reader with an attractive introduction to
Thomas's ethics does not commit him to addressing all the various and diffi-
cult issues that continue to confound even professional readers of Aquinas.
And he has served his reader well by instructing that person, and reminding
us, that Thomas's ethics is surely radically incomplete if it is considered with-
out reference to the role of the emotions relative to the virtues and the gifts,
or, even more importantly, if considered without reference to the love of God
that arguably gives shape to Thomas's *theological* ethics, and surely ground-
ed his own moral life.

This theological emphasis continues in *Friends of God,* a more sustained
account of Thomas's teaching. Here Wadell is concerned to demonstrate the
following thesis: Thomas's moral teaching in the *Summa theologiae,* particu-
larly that of the *Prima secundae,* must be read under the rubric of charity if
his treatment of the passions, the virtues, and the Gifts, is to be understood
fully. Starting, accordingly, with a consideration of charity, Wadell notes how
Thomas appropriated Aristotle's teaching on friendship in the *Nicomachean
Ethics,* yet how he in moral theology bases the primary instance of "friend-
ship" upon the primary relationship that exists between God and human per-
sons. Wadell again emphasizes how human happiness is to be found in union
with God, but again does this with almost no reference to the intellective for-
mality of that union-I shall return to this later.

Turning to consider the role of the passions in the moral life, Wadell
argues that the passion of love is primary, and, further, that our learning to
love things in the right way is essential to our happiness. And learning to love
God is, of course, learning to love what is most important, bar none. To do all
this well we need the virtues, which are dispositions of the various passions,

and, Wadell notes, which are all to be informed by charity if a truly integrated moral life is to be achieved. A discussion of charity as the "form" of the virtues naturally follows, and in it Wadell points out how, for Thomas, charity in many ways becomes the standard of goodness for all the virtues it informs.

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit enter the discussion at this point, though, Wadell insists, not as an appendage. As Wadell sees them, the Gifts are, once charity is granted its proper role as ultimate defining source of virtues, genuine, efficacious means of loving God, and through them, of attaining to human happiness (127-133). Seen in this light, the Gifts form a truly integral part of Thomas's moral theology. The book comes to a close at this point, without a final summation, but Wadell's thesis has been so clearly defined throughout the book that the reader is at every tum referring the current treatment to the book's larger aims.

About the strength of the book a few comments are in order. Methodologically, the book does not in any serious way engage some of the disputes concerning charity (e.g., with Lombard) and the Gifts (e.g., with William of Auxerre) that quite likely shaped some of Thomas's treatment, and no sustained account is given to the trends that Thomas's treatment of charity underwent in the course of his writing career. The lacunae present in *The Primacy of Love* are found here, too. Thus no treatment is given to Thomas's teaching on law, though a prime candidate for "reading the text under the rubric of charity" would obviously and fruitfully have been Thomas's account of the New Law-and the Old Law's "forward glance" to the New Law could have been excitingly illuminated by employing this reading.

Wadell's not having addressed the ultimately intellectual basis of Thomas's treatment of human happiness results, I worry, in an emotivism that threatens to undercut what it is in human nature that makes us really interesting to God: our likeness to him tlirough intellect. This absence of intellect in the book leaves Wadell without access to any number of texts and tools that could actually give his point greater cogency: qq. 19-24 (on God), q. 59 (on angels), qq. 82-83 (on humans) in the *Prima pars,* as well as any number of questions in the *de actibu.shumani.s* section of the *Prima secundae* (qq. 6-21), all ground "love" in the will, which is in turn grounded in intellect-Wadell prefers texts in the treatment of the passions, which are acts that human beings have in common with the lower animals (1-11, q. 6, prol.). I say this, not to be pedantic, but rather to point out that, for Thomas, the act of charity, being an act of the will, is the fullest sense of the term "love" in the vocabulary of his moral theology. But this love of God lasts, while faith and hope do not, precisely because, in eternal beatitude, "we will become like him, for we see him as he is" (1 Jn 3:2), a seeing that is an unmediated intellectual vision of God himself, whom we become more like, through knowledge. And

knowing God, particularly in eternal blessedness, explains that and why he is so much to he loved. Thomas's intellectualism has a greater role in his moral theology.

   But Wadell's point is still well-taken. The love of God is operative through-out Thomas's moral instruction in the *Summa theologiae,* and treatments of his teaching on the passions and the virtues that do not see them as linked in some real way to charity are doomed to incompleteness. Both *The Primary of Love* and *Friends of God* are genuine contributions in this regard. I am not sure whether they achieve the golden mean of presenting Thomas's moral teaching "dot-on," hut I am sure that embracing the tenor of these hooks will help us to achieve that mean in due time.

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English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors. By CHRISTOPHER HAIGH. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993. Pp. 300. $19.95 (paper).

Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity and Confessional Polemic in Early Modem England. By ALEXANDRA WALSHAM. The Royal Historical Society Studies in History, vol. 68. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1993. Pp. xiii + 142. $53.00 (cloth).

   The revision of the history of the English Reformation continues at great pace in these two recent hooks. The first, by Christopher Haigh, is one-vol-ume account of the English Reformation that clearly attempts to replace A. G. Dickens's masterful *The English Reformation.* which has held the field since 1964. Haigh admirably succeeds in this attempt. His style is very read-able, forceful, and compelling-reminiscent   of Hilaire Belloc's headlong his-torical narrative, hut without Belloc's confessional loyalties (Haigh is not a Catholic) or oversimplification. This is not a facile account of a complicated Reformation. Haigh knows what the complications are and does not hesitate to discuss them.

   The hook gets its name from the author's thesis that the English Reformation was the result of political accidents and coincidences, lurching along to an Elizabethan "Settlement," which succeeded only because Henry VIII died eight months too late, because Mary Tudor died too soon, or because Elizabeth lived too long. In other words, the English Reformation did not *have* to happen; it was not inevitable; it could have been (and was)

reversed any number of times. Grand, long-term causes and patterns (e.g. the popularity of Lollardy, the corruption of the Church) are dismissed as the hindsight of propagandists. In fact, the Reformation happened largely because the people involved did not know that it was happening; they had not read A. G. Dickens on the subject.

There are excellent critiques of church warden accounts and will preambles, similar to the critiques offered by Duffy in his recent *Stripping of the Altars* (Yale, 1992), and caution is urged in seeing in this evidence too much enthusiastic Protestantism. People may have stopped mentioning the saints and the Virgin in their wills, not necessarily because they were convinced Protestants, but more probably because it had become illegal to mention such things. Characters such as Colet, who have long been viewed as being incipient Protestants, are given a more convincing reading by Haigh: "Colet was not a proto-Protestant, disgusted with the ecclesiastical structure and the sacramental system; he was a high clericalist, anxious to maintain the privileges of priests by raising their prestige." Chesterton said this years ago, of course, in his comment that Chaucer (who was resurrected as a hero by the Reformers) did not criticize monks because he wanted to destroy monasticism; he only wanted to improve the monks.

The book is not without its shortcomings. Haigh overstates the de-construction of the Reformation. While it is true that there were lurches and reactions and reversals, there was also a continuum which appeared with each separate Reformation, which can be traced to a previous one, be it Henrician or Edwardian. When Edward came to power, the monasteries, convents, friaries, religious orders, shrines, and chantries were gone. When Mary came to power, much of the artwork was gone and people had become wary of giving money towards prayers for the dead-not because they stopped believing in prayers for the dead, but because they were afraid another government would simply confiscate the money. This meant a change in attitude, in practise. Conservative bishops only slowed the process, and eventually lost. When Elizabeth came to power, there was already a liturgy and body of legislation which had previously been enacted and needed only to be put back in place. Each Reformation may have been separate and piecemeal, but each one depended on and built on what had gone before.

But what *was* the Reformation in England? On this Haigh is somewhat confusing. On one page he seems to insist that politics was primary:

> It was politics which made the difference, politics which provided the dynamic of change, politics which made English Reformations instead of the Reformation in England. . . . English Reformations were about changing minds as well as changing laws, but it was the changing laws which made the changing of so many minds possible. (p. 20)

So far so good, but on p. 14 he has said something which sounds contradictory: "What made English people Protestant-some English people Protestant-was not the three political Reformations, but the parallel evan-

gelical Reformation."

The confusion, however, is more apparent than real and stems more from the confusing nature of the English Reformation itself. Was it a puritan evangelical revolt, a political change of power, a mere ecclesiastical break with Rome? It could not be all three. Haigh claims that the people carried on despite the politicians and the new theologians. They clung to some rituals and some beliefs despite the preaching of the godly. And what had changed at the end of the day for the typical Englishman, Haigh claims, was not very much. "Some reformations," he concludes. The radical Reformation of Cranmer and Latimer did not succeed at all. Some people went into recusancy, while most conformed reluctantly to the established Church. There was not much difference between them. For the majority and for Haigh, Catholicism had simply slipped a little. He sees continuity, not in theological content so much as in the majority who rejected the negative aspects of Reformation and struggled on.

Haigh does not discuss the relative merits or demerits of conformity. Unlike Duffy, he does not care if the people conformed or not; but he does care that the story of how the Reformation happened has been told inaccurately for too long. Protestantism was not thick on the ground before the Reformation, nor was Catholicism unpopular or little-practised, nor was Protestantism welcomed. In fact, it seems rather to have been more widely opposed; if it had been up to the people, there would not have been an English Reformation. All this has become evident from the same evidence which made A. G. Dickens so famous.

There is possibly a little too much looking-over-the-shoulder at the great Dickens, but then Haigh is looking at centuries of inaccurate British history. He has made sure that the history of the English Reformation will not be told so inaccurately again.

Alexandra Walsham's book takes the question of conformity head-on. She contends that many, if not the majority, of conforming churchgoers in Elizabeth's reign were theologically or instinctively Roman Catholic, and were caught between the rock of conversion and the hard place of bankruptcy, social ostracism, or even death. She then provides a very helpful summary of the debate which raged between the government (which was amazingly minimalistic in its enforcement of conformity) and its more enthusiastic parsons, as well as the debate within Roman Catholicism itself.

While this would be sufficient for a useful book, Walsham moralizes about conformity and decides that it was the best way to go. John Fisher and Thomas More are thus necessarily viewed as extremists who mistakenly went too far. (Haigh, incidentally, agrees that Fisher could have accomplished much more by dissembling and staying on in Rochester to prevent the radical Hilsey from his place.) There are many problems with this position. It presumes, first of all, that the religion did not change, or did not change *that* much. If it did change substantially, as the Romans believed, then conformi-

ty may not be looked on so benignly.

But even more cogently, the politics and theology of resistance are over-looked. While it should be admitted that the majority will follow the path of least resistance, in this case, survival, and that some compensation should be made for their weakness (as early popes did with the apostates under the various Roman persecutions), this should not be held up as the ideal. To canonize weakness is to go too far. Martyrs exist not to elicit sympathy from the populace so much as to define the religion. A religion which conforms *as a matter of principle* is no religion at all.

Despite their flaws, these two books mark a refreshing improvement in the way the history of the English Reformation is being told.

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