DE REGNO

ON KINGSHIP
TO THE KING OF CYPRUS

by
Thomas Aquinas

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TO THE KING OF CYPRUS

[1] As I was turning over in my mind what I might present to Your Majesty as a gift at once worthy of Your Royal Highness and befitting my profession and office, it seemed to me a highly appropriate offering that, for a king, I should write a book on kingship, in which, so far as my ability permits, I should carefully expound, according to the authority of Holy Writ and the teachings of the philosophers as well as the practice of worthy princes, both the origin of kingly government and the things which pertain to the office of a king, relying for the beginning, progress and accomplishment of this work, on the help of Him, Who is King of Kings, Lord of Lords, through Whom kings rule, God the Mighty Lord, King great above all gods.

BOOK ONE

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE WORD 'KING'

[2] The first step in our undertaking must be to set forth what is to be understood by the term king.

[3] In all things which are ordered towards an end, wherein this or that course may be adopted, some directive principle is needed through which the due end may be reached by the most direct route. A ship, for example, which moves in different directions. according to the impulse of the changing winds, would never reach its destination were it not brought to port by the skill of the pilot. Now, man has an end to which his whole life and all his actions are ordered; for man is an intelligent agent, and it is clearly the part of an intelligent agent to act in view of an end. Men also adopt different methods in proceeding towards their proposed end, as the diversity of men's pursuits and actions clearly indicates. Consequently man needs some directive principle to guide him towards his end.

[4] To be sure, the light of reason is placed by nature in every man, to guide him in his acts towards his end. Wherefore, if man were intended to live alone, as many animals do, he would require no other guide to his end. Each man would be a king unto himself, under God, the highest King, inasmuch as he would direct himself in his acts by the light of reason given him

from on high. Yet it is natural for man, more than for any other animal, to be a social and political animal,

Aristotle, *Hist. Anim.* I, 1: 488a 7; *Eth. Nic.* I, 5; 1097b 11; *ibid.* IX, 9: 1169b 18; *Pol.* I, 2:1253a 3. The Aristotelian formula is always that man is a political animal. Unless special reasonssuggested to Aquinas the exact textual reproduction of this Aristotelian principle, he generallyprefers to say that man is a social animal (Seneca, *De Beneficiis*, VII, 1, 7). The combinationsocial and political animal is also found in *Summa* I-II, 72, 4; *In Periherm*. I, 2.

Close to live in a group.

[5] This is clearly a necessity of man's nature.

The source of the teaching in 5-7 is not the Aristotelian Politics but Avicenna, *De Anima* V, 1;cf. Appendix 1. See also *In Eth.* prol. 4 (Appendix 2) where St. Thomas, follows more closelythe Aristotelian doctrine of *Pol.* I, 2: 1252b 30-125 a 1 (see Appendix 3), no longer believes theAvicennian reasoning to capable of demonstrating the conclusion that man is a political animal.Avicenna's argument is used by Aquinas in 4 *Sent.*, 26, 1, 1; *Quod* VII, 17; *CG* III, 85 and *ibid.*128, 129, 136, 147; Summa I-II, 95, 1.

Close For all other animals, nature has prepared food, hair as a covering, teeth, horns, claws as means of defence or at least speed in flight, while man alone was made without any natural provisions for these things. Instead of all these, man was endowed with reason, by the use of which he could procure all these things for himself by the work of his hands. Now, one man alone is not able to procure them all for himself, for one man could not sufficiently provide for life, unassisted. It is therefore natural that man should live in the society of many.
[6] Moreover, all other animals are able to, discern, by inborn skill, what is useful and what is injurious, even as the sheep naturally regards the wolf as his enemy. Some animals also recognize by natural skill certain medicinal herbs and other things necessary for their life. Man, on the contrary, has a natural knowledge of the things which are essential for his. life only in a general fashion, inasmuch as he is able to attain knowledge of the particular things necessary for human life by reasoning from natural principles. But it is not possible for one man to arrive at a knowledge of all these things by his own individual reason. It is therefore necessary for man to live in a multitude so that each one may assist his fellows, and different men may be occupied in seeking, by their reason, to make different discoveries—one, for example, in medicine, one in this and another in that.

[7] This point is further and most plainly evidenced by the fact that the. use of speech is a prerogative proper to man. By this means, one man is able fully to express his conceptions to others. Other animals, it is true, express their feelings to one another in a general way, as a dog may express anger by barking and other animals give vent to other feelings in various fashions. But man communicates with his kind more completely than any other animal known to be gregarious, such as the crane, the ant or the bee.—With this in mind, Solomon says: "It is better that there be two than one; for they have the advantage of their company."'

[8] If, then, it is natural for man to live in the society of many, it is necessary that there exist among men some means by which the group may be governed. For where there are many men together and each one is looking after his own interest, the multitude would be broken up and scattered unless there were also an agency to take care of what appertains to the commonweal. In

like manner, the body of a man or any other animal would disintegrate unless there were a general ruling force within the body which watches over the common good of all members. With this in mind, Solomon says [Eccl. 4:9]: “Where there is no governor, the people shall fall.”

[9] Indeed it is reasonable that this should happen, for what is proper and what is common are not identical. Things differ by what is proper to each: they are united by what they have in common. But diversity of effects is due to diversity of causes. Consequently, there must exist something which impels towards the common good of the many, over and above that which impels towards the particular good of each individual. Wherefore also in all things that are ordained towards one end, one thing is found to rule the rest. Thus in the corporeal universe, by the first body, i.e. the celestial body, the other bodies are regulated according to the order of Divine Providence; and all bodies are ruled by a rational creature. So, too in the individual man, the soul rules the body; and among the parts of the soul, the irascible and the concupiscible parts are ruled by reason. Likewise, among the members of a body, one, such as the heart or the head, is the principal and moves all the others. Therefore in every multitude there must be some governing power.

CHAPTER 2

DIFFERENT KINDS OF RULE

[10] Now it happens in certain things which are, ordained towards an end that one may proceed in a right way and also in a wrong way. So, too, in the government of a multitude there is a distinction between right and wrong. A thing is rightly directed when it is led towards a befitting end; wrongly when it is led towards an unbefitting end. Now the end which befits a multitude of free men is different from that which befits a multitude of slaves, for the free man is one who exists for his own sake, while the slave, as such, exists for the sake of another. If, therefore, a multitude of free men is ordered by the ruler towards the common good of the multitude, that rulership will be right and just, as is suitable to free men. If, on the other hand, a rulership aims, not at the common good of the multitude, but at the private good of the ruler, it will be an unjust and perverted rulership. The Lord, therefore, threatens such rulers, saying by the mouth of Ezekiel: “Woe to the shepherds that feed themselves (seeking, that is, their own interest) : should not the flocks be fed by the shepherd?” Shepherds indeed should seek the good of their flocks, and every ruler, the good of the multitude subject to him.

[11] If an unjust government is carried on by one man alone,

The classification of constitutions in 11-12 is owed to Aristotle, *Pol.* III, 7: 1279a 27 ff. Thebasis of number, however, on which this classification rests, is found inadequate by Aristotlehimself *ibid.* 1279b 38. In later texts, St. Thomas gradually abandoned it; see *In Eth.* VIII, 10(Appendix 4); *Summa* I-II, 95, 4; *ibid.*, 105, 1; II-II, 50, 1, arg. 1; *ibid.*, 61 2; *In Pol.* III, 6(Appendix 5). St. Thomas ends up, just as Aristotle did, with a list of constitutions in which eachfinds its essential characteristic in a certain qualification on account of which political power isawarded: in monarchy and aristocracy, power is given on account of virtue, in oligarchy onaccount of riches, in democracy on account of liberty.

Close who seeks his own benefit from his rule and not the good of the multitude subject to him,

such a ruler is called a tyrant—a word derived from *strength*—because he oppresses by might instead of ruling by justice. Thus among the ancients all powerful men were called tyrants. If an. unjust government is carried on, not by one but by several, and if they be few, it is called an oligarchy, that is, the rule of a few. This occurs when a few, who differ from the tyrant only by the fact that they are more than one, oppress the people by means of their wealth. If, finally, the bad government is carried on by the multitude, it is called a democracy, i.e. control by the populace, which comes about when the plebeian people by force of numbers oppress the rich. In this way the whole people will be as one tyrant.

[12] In like manner we must divide just governments. If the government is administered by many, it is given the name common to all forms of government, viz. polity, as for instance when a group of warriors exercise dominion over a city or province. If it is administered by a few men of virtue, this kind of government is called an aristocracy, i.e. noble governance, or governance by noble men, who for this reason are called the Optimates. And if a just government is in the hands of one man alone, he is properly called a king. Wherefore the Lord says by the mouth of Ezekiel:" "My servant, David, shall be king over them and all of them shall have one shepherd."

[13] From this it is clearly shown that the idea of king implies that he be one man who is chief and that he be a shepherd, seeking the common good of the multitude and not his own.

[14] Now since man must live in a group, because he is not sufficient unto himself to procure the necessities of life were he to remain solitary, it follows that a society will be the more perfect the more it is sufficient unto itself to procure the necessities of life.

Aristotle, *Pol.* I, 2: 1252b 9-30; *In Pol.* I, 1 (Appendix 3). The Aristotelian doctrine is hereadapted to mediaeval realities in almost the same fashion as in some other earlier writings ofAquinas: *In Matth.* XII, 2; *In Ioan.* XIV, 1, 3; *In I Cor.* XI, 4 (p. 333a); *In Hebr.* XI, 3 (p. 414a).In the later writings, Aquinas (a) more clearly emphasizes the fact that the Aristotelian city seeksthe satisfaction of not only the material but also the moral needs of man: *In Eth.* prol. (Appendix2); *Summa* I-II, 90, 2; cf. infra 106. Moreover (b) he treats cities and kingdoms not as specificallydifferent communities each having its own essential characteristics, but as formally equal andonly materially, i.e., historically different realizations of the same idea of "perfect community".Proof of this is the use of the combination city or kingdom in *Summa* II-II, 47, 11; ibid. 50, 1;*ibid.* 3.

Close There is, to some extent, sufficiency for life in one *family of one household*, namely, insofar as pertains to the natural acts of nourishment and the begetting of offspring and other things of this kind. Self-sufficiency exists, furthermore, in one *street*
In Latin *vicus*. This is neither here nor *In Pol.* I, 1 (Appendix 3) the Aristotelian clan-village butthe street of the mediaeval town, called *vicus* (v.g. *Vicus Straminis*). In each street, St. Thomassays *In Pol.* (Appendix 3), "one craft is exercised, in one the weaver's, in another the smith's."Modern towns still preserve the memory of this mediaeval arrangement in street names such asShoemaker Row, Cordwainer Street, Comerslane, Butter Row etc.

Close with regard to those things which belong to the trade of one guild. In a *city*, which is the perfect community, it exists with regard to all the necessities of life. Still more self-sufficiency is

found in a *province*
The word is of Roman imperial origin; cf. St. Isidore, *Etymologiae* XIV, 3, 19. It is also usedin mediaeval Canon Law; see Gratian's *Decretum* c. 2 C. VI, p. 3: an ecclesiastical province isa territory where there are ten or eleven cities, one king... one metropolitan... In St. Albert'scosmography (*De Nat. Locorum* III, 1 ff: IX, 566 ff) Italy "is a province" but it also "containsseveral provinces", viz., Calabria, Apulia, Romana, Emilia, Tuscia, Lombardia. Likewise, Spainis a province and "has several provinces and kingdoms." See St. Thomas' use of the word in *2Sent.*, 10, 1, 3 ad 3; *4 Sent.*, 24, 111, 2 sol. 3; *Sumna* II-II, 40, 1. Nothing is very definite aboutthis notion except that, at any rate, a province is part of a greater and more comprehensive whole.The word is therefore characteristic of a properly mediaeval type of political thinking which stillretains the memory of the Roman Empire. It was soon to be cast out of the political vocabulary.

Close because of the need of fighting together and of mutual help against enemies. Hence the man ruling a perfect community, i.e. a city or a province, is antonomastically called the king. The ruler of a household is called father, not king, although he bears a certain resemblance to the king, for which reason kings are sometimes called the fathers of their peoples.
[15] It is plain, therefore, from what has been said, that a king is one who rules the people of one city or province, and rules them for the common good. Wherefore Solomon says [Eccl. 5:8]: "The king rules over all the land subject to him."

CHAPTER 3

WHETHER IT IS MORE EXPEDIENT FOR A CITY OR PROVINCE TO BE RULED BY ONE MAN OR BY MANY

[16] Having set forth these preliminary points we must now inquire what is better for a province or a city: whether to be ruled by one man or by many.

[17] This question may be considered first from the viewpoint of the purpose of government. The aim of any ruler should be directed towards securing the welfare of that which he undertakes to rule. The duty of the pilot, for instance, is to preserve his ship amidst the perils of the sea. and to bring it unharmed to the port of safety. Now the welfare and safety of a multitude formed into a society lies in the preservation of its unity, which is called peace. If this is removed, the benefit of social life is lost and, moreover, the multitude in its disagreement becomes a burden to itself. The chief concern of the ruler of a multitude, therefore, is to procure the unity of peace. It is not even legitimate for him to deliberate whether he shall establish peace in the multitude subject to him, just as a physician does not deliberate whether he shall heal the sick man encharged to him,

Aristotle *Eth. Nic.* III, 5: 1112b 14 (Latin text). *In Eth.* III, 8: 474; *CG* III, 146; *In Matth.* XII,2. In thus tracing back to Aristotle the idea that peace is the chief social good, St. Thomas wasmisled by the fact that the Latin text of the Ethics translated the Greek EUNOMIA (good lawswell obeyed) by peace.

Close for no one should deliberate about an end which he is obliged to seek, but only about the means to attain that end. Wherefore the Apostle, having commended the unity of the faithful people, says: "Be ye careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." Thus, the more efficacious a. government is in keeping the unity of peace, the more useful it will be. For we call

that more useful which leads more directly to the end. Now it is manifest that what is itself one can more efficaciously bring about unity than several—just as the most efficacious cause of heat is that which is by its nature hot. Therefore the rule of one man is more useful than the rule of many.

[18] Furthermore, it is evident that several persons could by no means preserve the stability of the community if they totally disagreed. For union is necessary among them if they are to rule at all: several men, for instance, could not pull a ship in one direction unless joined together in some fashion. Now several are said to be united according as they come closer to being one. So one man rules better than several who come near being one.

[19] Again, whatever is in accord with nature is best, for in all things nature does what is best. Now, every natural governance is governance by one. In the multitude of bodily members there is one which is the principal mover, namely, the heart; and among the powers of the soul one power presides as chief, namely, the reason. Among bees there is one king bee' and in the whole universe there is One God, Maker and Ruler of all things. And there is a reason for this. Every multitude is derived from unity. Wherefore, if artificial things are an imitation of natural things' and a work of art is better according as it attains a closer likeness to what is in nature, it follows that it is best for a human multitude to be ruled by one person.

[20] This is also evident from experience. For provinces or cities which are not ruled by one person are torn with dissensions and tossed about without peace, so that the complaint seems to be fulfilled which the Lord uttered through the Prophet [Jer 12:10]: "Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard." On the other hand, provinces and cities which are ruled under one king enjoy peace, flourish in justice, and delight in prosperity. Hence, the Lord by His prophets promises to His people as a great reward that He will give them one head and that "one Prince will be in the midst of them" [Ez 34:24, Jer 30:21].

CHAPTER 4

THAT THE DOMINION OF A TYRANT IS THE WORST

[21] Just as the government of a king is the best, so the government of a tyrant is the worst.

[22] For democracy stands in contrary opposition to polity, since both are governments carried on by many persons, as is clear from what has already been said; while oligarchy is the opposite of aristocracy, since both are governments carried on by a few persons; and kingship is the opposite of tyranny since both are carried on by one person. Now, as has been shown above, monarchy is the best government. If, therefore, "it is the contrary of the best that is worst." it follows that tyranny is the worst kind of government.

[23] Further, a united force is more efficacious in producing its effect than a force which is scattered or divided. Many persons together can pull a load which could not be pulled by each one taking his part separately and acting individually. Therefore, just as it is more useful for a force operating for a good to be more united, in order that it may work good more effectively, so a force operating for evil is more harmful when it is one than when it is divided. Now, the power of one who rules unjustly works to the detriment of the multitude, in that he diverts the common good of the multitude to his own benefit. Therefore, for the same reason that, in a just government, the government is better in proportion as the ruling power is one-thus monarchy is better than aristocracy, and aristocracy better than polity—so the contrary will be true of an

unjust government, namely, that the ruling power will be more harmful in proportion as it is more unitary. Consequently, tyranny is more harmful than oligarchy; and oligarchy more harmful than democracy.

[24] Moreover, a government becomes unjust by the fact that the ruler, paying no heed to the common good, seeks his own private good. Wherefore the further he departs from the common good the more unjust will his government be. But there is a greater departure from the common good in an oligarchy, in which the advantage of a few is sought, than in a democracy, in which the advantage of many is sought; and there is a still greater departure from the common good in a tyranny, where the advantage of only one man is sought. For a large number is closer to the totality than a small number, and a small number than only one. Thus, the government of a tyrant is the most unjust.

[25] The same conclusion is made clear to those who consider the order of Divine Providence, which disposes everything in the best way. In all things, good ensues from one perfect cause, i.e. from the totality of the conditions favourable to the production of the effect, while evil results from any one partial defect. There is beauty in a body when all its members are fittingly disposed; ugliness, on the other hand, arises when any one member is not fittingly disposed. Thus ugliness results in different ways from many causes; beauty in one way from one perfect cause. It is thus with all good and evil things, as if God so provided that good, arising from one cause, be stronger, and evil, arising from many causes, be weaker. It is expedient therefore that a just government be that of one man only in order that it may be stronger; however, if the government should turn away from justice, it is more expedient that it be a government by many, so that it may be weaker and the many may mutually hinder one another. Among unjust governments, therefore, democracy is the most tolerable, but the worst is tyranny.

[26] This same conclusion is also apparent if one considers the evils which come from tyrants. Since a tyrant, despising the common good, seeks his private interest, it follows that he will oppress his subjects in different ways according as he is dominated by different passions to acquire certain goods. The one who is enthralled by the passion of cupidity seizes the goods of his subjects; whence Solomon says [Prov 29:4]: “A just king sets up the land; a covetous man shall destroy it.” If he is dominated by the passion of anger, he sheds blood for nothing; whence it is said by Ezekiel: ‘ “Her princes in the midst of her are like wolves ravening the prey to shed blood.” Therefore this kind of government is to be avoided as the Wise man admonishes [Sirach 9:13]: “Keep far from the man who has the power to kill,” because he kills not for justice’ sake but by his power, for the lust of his will. Thus there can be no safety. Everything is uncertain when there is a departure from justice. Nobody will be able firmly to state: This thing is such and such, when it depends upon the will of another, not to say upon his caprice. Nor does the tyrant merely oppress his subjects in corporal things but he also hinders their spiritual good. Those who seek more to use, than to be of use to, their subjects prevent all progress, suspecting all excellence in their subjects to be prejudicial to their own evil domination. For tyrants hold the good in greater suspicion than the wicked, and to them the valour of others is always fraught with danger.

[27] So the above-mentioned tyrants strive to prevent those of their subjects who have become virtuous from acquiring valour and high spirit in order that they may not want to cast off their iniquitous domination. They also see to it that there be no friendly relations among these so that they may not enjoy the benefits resulting from being on good terms with one another, for as long

as one has no confidence in the other, no plot will be set up against the tyrant's domination. Wherefore they sow discords among the people, foster any that have arisen, and forbid anything which furthers society and co-operation among men, such as marriage, company at table and anything of like character, through which familiarity and confidence are engendered among men. They moreover strive to prevent their subjects from becoming powerful and rich since, suspecting these to be as wicked as themselves, they fear their power and wealth; for the subjects might become harmful to them even as they are accustomed to use power and wealth to harm others.

Although there is no doubt about the fact that *Pol.* I. c. is the source of this, yet the text cannotbe shown to depend literally on this source. A disturbing feature of this paraphrase is that theauthor makes it a point of the tyrant's policy to "forbid marriage". No trace of such a prohibitionis to be found in Aristotle's account or its mediaeval version. St. Thomas is usually very accurateeven in the most trifling details of his quotations.

Close Whence in the Book of Job it is said of the tyrant [15:21]: "The sound of dread is always in his ears and when there is peace (that is, when there is no one to harm him), he always suspects treason."

[28] It thus results that when rulers, who ought to induce their subjects to virtue," are wickedly jealous of the virtue of their subjects and hinder it as much as they can, few virtuous men are found under the rule of tyrants. For, according to Aristotle's sentence [*Eth.* III, 11: 1116a 20], brave men are found where brave men are honoured. And as Tullius says [*Tuscul. Disp.* I, 2, 4]: "Those who are despised by everybody are disheartened and flourish but little." It is also natural that men, brought up in fear, should become mean of spirit and discouraged in the face of any strenuous and manly task. This is shown by experience in provinces that have long been under tyrants. Hence the Apostle says to the Colossians: "Fathers, provoke not your children to indignation, lest they be discouraged."

[29] So, considering these evil effects of tyranny King Solomon says [Prov 28:12]: "When the wicked reign, men are ruined" because, forsooth, through the wickedness of tyrants, subjects fall away from the perfection of virtue. And again he says [Prov 29:2]: "When the wicked rule the people shall mourn, as though led into slavery." And again [Prov 28:28]: "When the wicked rise up men shall hide themselves", that they may escape the cruelty of the tyrant. It is no wonder, for a man governing without reason, according to the lust of his soul, in no way differs from the beast. Whence Solomon says [Prov 28:15]: "As a roaring lion and a hungry bear, so is a wicked prince over the poor people." Therefore men hide from tyrants as from cruel beasts and it seems that to be subject to a tyrant is the same thing as to lie prostrate beneath a raging beast.

CHAPTER 5

WHY THE ROYAL DIGNITY IS RENDERED HATEFUL TO THE SUBJECTS

[30] Because both the best and the worst government are latent in monarchy, i.e. in the rule of one man, the royal dignity is rendered hateful to many people on account of the wickedness of tyrants. Some men, indeed, whilst they desire to be ruled by a king, fall under the cruelty of tyrants, and not a few rulers exercise tyranny under the cloak of royal dignity.

[31] A clear example of this is found in the Roman Republic. When the kings had been driven

out by the Roman people, because they could not bear the royal, or rather tyrannical, arrogance, they instituted consuls and other magistrates by whom they began to be ruled and guided. They changed the kingdom into an aristocracy, and, as Sallust relates [*Bellum Catilinae* VI, 7]: "The Roman city, once liberty was won, waxed incredibly strong and great in a remarkably short time." For it frequently happens that men living under a king strive more sluggishly for the common good, inasmuch as they consider that what they devote to the common good, they do not confer upon themselves but upon another, under whose power they see the common goods to be. But when they see that the common good is not under the power of one man, they do not attend to it as if it belonged to another, but each one attends to it as if it were his own.

[32] Experience thus teaches that one city administered by rulers, changing annually, is sometimes able to do more than some kings having, perchance, two or three cities; and small services exacted by kings weigh more heavily than great burdens imposed by the community of citizens. This held good in the history of the Roman Republic. The plebs were enrolled in the army and were paid wages for military service. Then when the common treasury was failing, private riches came forth for public uses, to such an extent that not even the senators retained any gold for themselves save one ring and the one bulla (the insignia of their dignity).

[33] On the other hand, when the Romans were worn out by continual dissensions taking on the proportion of civil wars, and when by these wars the freedom for which they had greatly striven was snatched from their hands, they began to find themselves under the power of emperors who, from the beginning, were unwilling to be called kings, for the royal name was hateful to the Romans. Some emperors, it is true, faithfully cared for the common good in a kingly manner, and by their zeal the commonwealth was increased and preserved. But most of them became tyrants towards their subjects while indolent and vacillating before their enemies, and brought the Roman commonwealth to naught.

[34] A similar process took place, also, among the Hebrew people. At first, while they were ruled by judges, they were ravished by their enemies on every hand, for each one "did what was good in his sight" (1 Sam 3:18). Yet when, at their own pressing, God gave them kings, they departed from the worship of the one God and were finally led into bondage, on account of the wickedness of their kings.

[351 Danger thus lurks on either side. Either men are held by the fear of a tyrant and they miss the opportunity of having that very best government which is kingship; or, they want a king and the kingly power turns into tyrannical wickedness.

CHAPTER 6

THAT IT IS A LESSER EVIL WHEN A MONARCHY TURNS INTO TYRANNY THAN WHEN AN ARISTOCRACY BECOMES CORRUPT

[36] When a choice is to be made between two things, from both of which danger impends, surely that one should be chosen from which the lesser evil follows. Now, lesser evil follows from the corruption of a monarchy (which is tyranny) than from the corruption of an aristocracy.

[37] Group government [polyarchy] most frequently breeds dissension. This dissension runs counter to the good of peace which is the principal social good. A tyrant, on the other hand, does not destroy this good, rather he obstructs one or the other individual interest of his subjects—

unless, of course, there be an excess of tyranny and the tyrant rages against the whole community. Monarchy is therefore to be preferred to polyarchy, although either form of government might become dangerous.

[38] Further, that from which great dangers may follow more frequently is, it would seem, the more to be avoided. Now, considerable dangers to the multitude follow more frequently from polyarchy than from monarchy. There is a greater chance that, where there are many rulers, one of them will abandon the intention of the common good than that it will be abandoned when there is but one ruler. When any one among several rulers turns aside from the pursuit of the common good, danger of internal strife threatens the group because, when the chiefs quarrel, dissension will follow in the people. When, on the other hand, one man is in command, he more often keeps to governing for the sake of the common good. Should he not do so, it does not immediately follow that he also proceeds to the total oppression of his subjects. This, of course, would be the excess of tyranny and the worst wickedness in government, as has been shown above. The dangers, then, arising from a polyarchy are more to be guarded against than those arising from a monarchy.

[39] Moreover, in point of fact, a polyarchy deviates into tyranny not less but perhaps more frequently than a monarchy. When, on account of there being many rulers, dissensions arise in such a government, it often happens that the power of one preponderates and he then usurps the government of the multitude for himself. This indeed may be clearly seen from history. There has hardly ever been a polyarchy that did not end in tyranny. The best illustration of this fact is the history of the Roman Republic. It was for a long time administered by the magistrates but then animosities, dissensions and civil wars arose and it fell into the power of the most cruel tyrants. In general, if one carefully considers what has happened in the past and what is happening in the present, he will discover that more men have held tyrannical sway in lands previously ruled by many rulers than in those ruled by one.

[40] The strongest objection why monarchy, although it is “the best form of government”, is not agreeable to the people is that, in fact, it may deviate into tyranny. Yet tyranny is wont to occur not less but more frequently on the basis of a polyarchy than on the basis of a monarchy. It follows that it is, in any case, more expedient to live under one king than under the rule of several men.

CHAPTER 7

HOW PROVISION MIGHT BE MADE THAT THE KING MAY NOT FALL INTO TYRANNY

[41] Therefore, since the rule of one man, which is the best, is to be preferred, and since it may happen that it be changed into a tyranny, which is the worst (all this is clear from what has been said), a scheme should be carefully worked out which would prevent the multitude ruled by a king from falling into the hands of a tyrant.

[42] First, it is necessary that the man who is raised up to be king by those whom it concerns should be of such condition that it is improbable that he should become a tyrant. Wherefore Daniel, commending the providence of God with respect to the institution of the king says [1

Sam 13:14]: “The Lord sought a man according to his own heart, and the Lord appointed him to be prince over his people.” Then, once the king is established, the government of the kingdom must be so arranged that opportunity to tyrannize is removed. At the same time his power should be so tempered that he cannot easily fall into tyranny.

Cf. *Summa* I-II, 105, 1. Carlyle (V, 94) correctly observes that, if these remarks had beencompleted, it would have been under terms similar to those on which in the Summa, i.e., a mixedconstitution is recommended.

Close How these things may be done we must consider in what follows.

[43] Finally, provision must be made for facing the situation should the king stray into tyranny.

A similar problem is discussed in *2 Sent.*, 44, 11, 2 (Appendix 6) and *Summa* II-II, 42, 2 ad 3;cf. also *Summa* II-II, 64, 3. For the history of this problem see Carlyle I, 147 ff, 161 ff, 111, 115ff. The considerations of the present chapter should also be read against the background of thehistory of the Italian Communes in the XIIIth century; see *Cambridge Med. Hist.* VI, 179 ff.

Close

[44] Indeed, if there be not an excess of tyranny it is more expedient to tolerate the milder tyranny for a while than, by acting against the tyrant, to become involved in many perils more grievous than the tyranny itself. For it may happen that those who act against the tyrant are unable to prevail and the tyrant then will rage the more. But should one be able to prevail against the tyrant, from this fact itself very grave dissensions among the people frequently ensue: the multitude may be broken up into factions either during their revolt against the tyrant, or in process of the organization of the government, after the tyrant has been overthrown. Moreover, it sometimes happens that while the multitude is driving out the tyrant by the help of some man, the latter, having received the power, thereupon seizes the tyranny. Then, fearing to suffer from another what he did to his predecessor, he oppresses his subjects with an even more grievous slavery. This is wont to happen in tyranny, namely, that the second becomes more grievous than the one preceding, inasmuch as, without abandoning the previous oppressions, he himself thinks up fresh ones from the malice of his heart. Whence in Syracuse, at a time when everyone desired the death of Dionysius, a certain old woman kept constantly praying that he might be unharmed and that he might survive her. When the tyrant learned this he asked why she did it. Then she said: “When I was a girl we had a harsh tyrant and I wished for his death; when he was killed, there succeeded him one who was a little harsher. I was very eager to see the end of his dominion also, and we began to have a third ruler still more harsh—that was you. So if you should be taken away, a worse would succeed in your place.”

Valerius Maximus VI, 2, Ext. 2 (Vincent of Beauvais, *Speculum Historiale* III, 73).

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[45] If the excess of tyranny is unbearable, some have been of the opinion that it would be an act of virtue for strong men to slay the tyrant and to expose themselves to the danger of death in order to set the multitude free. An example of this occurs even in the Old Testament, for a certain Aioth slew Eglon, King of Moab, who was oppressing the people of God under harsh slavery,

thrusting a dagger into his thigh; and he was made a judge of the people [Judges 3:14 ff].

[46] But this opinion is not in accord with apostolic teaching. For Peter admonishes us to be reverently subject to our masters, not only to the good and gentle but also the froward [1 Pet 2:18-19]: "For if one who suffers unjustly bear his trouble for conscience' sake, this is grace." Wherefore, when many emperors of the Romans tyrannically persecuted the faith of Christ, a great number both of the nobility and the common people were converted to the faith and were praised for patiently bearing death for Christ. They did not resist although they were armed, and this is plainly manifested in the case of the holy Theban legion." Aioth, then, must be considered rather as having slain a foe than assassinated a ruler, however tyrannical, of the people. Hence in the Old Testament we also read that they who killed Joas, the king of Juda, who had fallen away from the worship of God, were slain and their children spared according to the precept of the law" (2 Sam 14:5-6).

[47] Should private persons attempt on their own private presumption to kill the rulers, even though tyrants, this would be dangerous for the multitude as well as for their rulers. This is because the wicked usually expose themselves to dangers of this kind more than the good, for the rule of a king, no less than that of a tyrant, is burdensome to them since, according to the words of Solomon [Prov 20:26]: "A wise king scatters the wicked." Consequently, by presumption of this kind, danger to the people from the loss of a good king would be more probable than relief through the removal of a tyrant.

[48] Furthermore, it seems that to proceed against the cruelty of tyrants is an action to be undertaken, not through the private presumption of a few, but rather by public authority.

[49] If to provide itself with a king belongs to the right of a given multitude, it is not unjust that the king be deposed or have his power restricted by that same multitude if, becoming a tyrant, he abuses the royal power. It must not be thought that such a multitude is acting unfaithfully in deposing the tyrant, even though it had previously subjected itself to him in perpetuity, because he himself has deserved that the covenant with his subjects should not be kept, since, in ruling the multitude, he did not act faithfully as the office of a king demands. Thus did the Romans, who had accepted Tarquin the Proud as their king, cast him out from the kingship on account of his tyranny and the tyranny of his sons; and they set up in their place a lesser power, namely, the consular power. Similarly Domitian, who had succeeded those most moderate emperors, Vespasian, his father, and Titus, his brother, was slain by the Roman senate when he exercised tyranny, and all his wicked deeds were justly, and profitably declared null and void by a decree of the senate. Thus it came about that Blessed John the Evangelist, the beloved disciple of God, who had been exiled to the island of Patmos by that very Domitian, was sent back to Ephesus by a decree of the senate.

Eusmus, *Chronicorum* Lib. II.

Close

[50] If, on the other hand, it pertains to the right of a higher authority to provide a king for a certain multitude, a remedy against the wickedness of a tyrant is to be looked for from him. Thus when Archelaus, who had already begun to reign in Judaea in the place of Herod his father, was imitating his father's wickedness, a complaint against him having been laid before Caesar

Augustus by the Jews, his power was at first diminished by depriving him of his title of king and by dividing one-half of his kingdom between his two brothers. Later, since he was not restrained from tyranny even by this means, Tiberius Caesar sent him into exile to Lugdunum, a city in Gaul.

Flavius Iosephus, *De Bello Iud.* II, 80 ff, 93, 111. Archelaus, however, was not exiled toLugdunum (Lyons) by Tiberius, but to "Vienna (Vienne), a town in Gaul" by Augustus(Josephus, *op. cit.* 111; Eusebius, *Chronicorum* Lib. I. St. Thomas was probably misled by the*Glossa Ordinaria In Matth.* ii, 22. The above statement, however is somewhat puzzling in viewof what Aquinas has said in *Catena Aurea, In Matth.* II, 10, and in the commentary to St.Matthew, II, 4.

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[51] Should no human aid whatsoever against a tyrant be forthcoming, recourse must be had to God, the King of all, Who is a helper in due time in tribulation. For it lies in his power to turn the cruel heart of the tyrant to mildness. According to Solomon [Prov 21:1]: "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, withersoever He will He shall turn it." He it was who turned into mildness the cruelty of King Assuerus, who was preparing death for the Jews. He it was who so filled the cruel king Nabuchodonosor with piety that he became a proclaimer of the divine power. "Therefore," he said, "I, Nabuchodonosor do now praise and magnify and glorify the King of Heaven; because all His works are true and His ways judgments, and they that walk in pride He is able to abase" (Dan 4:34). Those tyrants, however, whom he deems unworthy of conversion, he is able to put out of the way or to degrade, according to the words of the Wise Man [Sirach 10:17]: "God has overturned the thrones of proud princes and has set up the meek in their stead." He it was who, seeing the affliction of his people in Egypt and hearing their cry, hurled Pharaoh, a tyrant over God's people, with all his army into the sea. He it was who not only banished from his kingly throne the above-mentioned Nabuchodonosor because of his former pride, but also cast him from the fellowship of men and changed him into the likeness of a beast. Indeed, his hand is not shortened that He cannot free His people from tyrants. For by Isaiah (14:3) He promised to give his people rest from their labours and lashings and harsh slavery in which they had formerly served; and by Ezekiel (34:10) He says: "I will deliver my flock from their mouth," i.e. from the mouth of shepherds who feed themselves.

[52] But to deserve to secure this benefit from God, the people must desist from sin, for it is by divine permission that wicked men receive power to rule as a punishment for sin, as the Lord says by the Prophet Hosea [13:11]: "I will give you a king in my wrath" and it is said in Job (34:30) that he "makes a man that is a hypocrite to reign for the sins of the people." Sin must therefore be done away with in order that the scourge of tyrants may cease.

CHAPTER 8

THAT MUNDANE HONOUR AND GLORY ARE NOT AN ADEQUATE REWARD FOR A KING

[53] Since, according to what has been said thus far, it is the king's duty to seek the good of the multitude, the task of a king may seem too burdensome unless some advantage to himself should result from it. It is fitting therefore to consider wherein a suitable reward for a good king is to be

found.

[541 By some men this reward was considered to be nothing other than honour and glory. Whence Tullius says in the book On the Republic [*De Republica* V, 7, 9]: "The prince of the city should be nourished by glory," and Aristotle seems to assign the reason for this in his Book on *Ethics* [V, 10: 1134b 7]: "because the prince for whom honour and glory is not sufficient consequently turns into tyrant." For it is in the hearts of all men to seek their proper good. Therefore, if the prince is not content with glory and honour, he will seek pleasures an riches and so will resort to plundering and injuring his subjects.

[55] However, if we accept this opinion a great many incongruous results follow. In the first place, it would be costly to kings if so many labours and anxieties were to be endured for a reward so perishable, fo nothing, it seems, is more perishable among human things than the glory and honour of men's favour since it depends upon the report of men and their opinions, than which nothing in human life is more fickle. And this is why the Prophet Isaiah calls such glory "the flower of grass."

[56] Moreover, the desire for human glory takes away greatness of soul. For he who seeks the favour of men must serve their will in all he says and does, and thus, while striving to please all, he becomes a slave to each one. Wherefore the same Tullius says in his book *On Duties* [*De officiis*, I, 20, 68] that "the inordinate desire for glory is to be guarded against; it takes away freedom of soul, for the sake of which high-minded men should put forth all their efforts." Indeed there is nothing more becoming to a prince who has been set up for the doing of good works than greatness of soul. Thus, the reward of human glory is not enough for the services of a king.

[57] At the same time it also hurts the multitude if such a reward be set up for princes, for it is the duty of a good man to take no account of glory, just as he should take no account of other temporal goods. It is the mark of a virtuous and brave soul to despise glory as he despises life, for justice' sake: whence the strange thing results that glory ensues from virtuous acts, and out of virtue glory itself is despised: and therefore, through his very contempt for glory, a man is made glorious—according to the sentence of Fabius:

Livy XXII, 39, 20. The immediate source of this "sentence" is perhaps one of the many"Florilegia" which were so popular in the Middle Ages.

Close "He who scorns glory shall have true glory," and as Sallust [*Bellum Catilinae* 54, 6] says of Cato: "The less he sought glory the more he achieved it." Even the disciples of Christ "exhibited themselves as the ministers of God in honour and dishonour, in evil report and good report" (2 Cor 6:8). Glory is, therefore, not a fitting reward for a good man; good men spurn it. And, if it alone be set up as the reward for princes, it will follow that good men will not take upon themselves the chief office of the city, or if they take it, they will go unrewarded.
[58] Furthermore, dangerous evils come from the desire for glory. Many have been led unrestrainedly to seek glory in warfare, and have sent their armies and themselves to destruction, while the freedom of their country was turned into servitude under an enemy. Consider Torquatus, the Roman chief. In order to impress upon the people how imperative it is to avoid such danger, "he slew his own son who, being challenged by an enemy, had, through youthful impetuosity, fought and vanquished him. Yet he had done so contrary to orders given him by his

father. Torquatus acted thus, lest more harm should accrue from the example of his son's presumption than advantage from the glory of slaying the enemy." [Cf. Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, V, 18.]

[59] Moreover, the desire for glory has another vice akin to it, namely, hypocrisy. Since it is difficult to acquire true virtues, to which alone honour and glory are due, and it is therefore the lot of but a few to attain them, many who desire glory become simulators of virtue. On this account, as Sallust says [*Bellum Catilinae* 10, 5]: "Ambition drives many mortals to become false. They keep one thing shut up in their heart, another ready on the tongue, and they have more countenance than character." But our Saviour also calls those persons hypocrites, or simulators, who do good works that they may be seen by men. Therefore, just as there is danger for the multitude, if the prince seek pleasures and riches as his reward, that he become a plunderer and abusive, so there is danger, if glory be assigned to him as reward, that he become presumptuous and a hypocrite.

[60] Looking at what the above-mentioned wise men intended to say, they do not seem to have decided upon honour and glory as the reward of a prince because they judged that the king's intention should be principally directed to that object, but because it is more tolerable for him to seek glory than to desire money or pursue pleasure. For this vice is akin to virtue inasmuch as the glory which men desire, as Augustine says [*De civ. Dei* V, 12], is nothing else than the judgment of men who think well of men. So the desire for glory has some trace of virtue in it, at least so long as it seeks the approval of good men and is reluctant to displease them. Therefore, since few men reach true virtue, it seems more tolerable if one be set up to rule who, fearing the judgment of men, is restrained from manifest evils. For the man" who desires glory either endeavours to win the approval of men in the true way, by deeds of virtue, or at least strives for this by fraud and deceit. But if the one who desires to domineer lacks the desire for glory, he will have no fear of offending men of good judgment and will commonly strive to obtain what he chooses by the most open crimes. Thus he will surpass the beasts in the vices of cruelty and lust, as is evidenced in the case of the Emperor Nero, who was so effete, as Augustine says [*loc. cit.*], "that he despised everything virile, and yet so cruel that nobody would have thought him to be effeminate." Indeed all this is quite clearly contained in what Aristotle says in his *Ethics* [IV, 7:1124a 16] regarding the magnanimous man: True, he does seek honour and glory, but not as something great which could be a sufficient reward of virtue. And beyond this he demands nothing more of men, for among all earthly goods the chief good, it seems, is this, that men bear testimony to the virtue of a man.

CHAPTER 9

THAT THE KING SHOULD LOOK TO GOD FOR ADEQUATE REWARD

[61] Therefore, since worldly honour and human glory are not a sufficient reward for royal cares, it remains to inquire what sort of reward is sufficient.

[62] It is proper that a king look to God for his reward, for a servant looks to his master for the reward of his service. The king is indeed the minister of God in governing the people, as the Apostle says: "All power is from the Lord God" (Rom 13:1) and God's minister is "an avenger to execute wrath upon him who does evil" (Rom 13:4). And in the Book of Wisdom (6:5), kings are described as being ministers of God. Consequently, kings ought to look to God for the

reward of their ruling. Now God sometimes rewards kings for their service by temporal goods, but such rewards are common to both the good and the wicked. Wherefore the Lord says to Ezechiel (29:18): "Nabuchodonosor, king of Babylon, has made his army to undergo hard service against Tyre, and there has been no reward given him nor his army for Tyre, for the service he rendered Me against it," for that service namely, by which, according to the Apostle, power is "the minister of God and the avenger to execute wrath upon him who does evil." Afterwards He adds, regarding the reward: "Therefore, thus says the Lord God, 'I will set Nabuchodonosor the king of Babylon in the land of Egypt, and he shall rifle the spoils thereof, and it shall be wages for his army.'" Therefore, if God recompenses wicked kings who fight against the enemies of God, though not with the intention of serving Him but to execute their own hatred and cupidity, by giving them such great rewards as to yield them victory over their foes, subject kingdoms to their sway and grant them spoils to rifle, what will He do for kings who rule the people of God and assail His enemies from a holy motive? He promises them not an earthly reward indeed but an everlasting one and in none other than in Himself. As Peter says to the shepherds of the people (1 Pet 5:2,4): "Feed the flock of God that is among you and when the prince of pastors shall appear (i.e. the King of kings, Christ) you shall receive a never-fading crown of glory," concerning which Isaiah says (28:5): "The Lord shall be a crown of glory and a garland of joy to His people."

[63] This is also clearly shown by reason. It is implanted in the minds of all who have the use of reason that the reward of virtue is happiness. The virtue of anything whatsoever is explained to be that which makes its possessor good and renders his deed good. Moreover, everyone strives by working well to attain that which is most deeply implanted in desire, namely, to be happy. This, no one is able not to wish. It is therefore fitting to expect as a reward for virtue that which makes man happy. Now, if to work well is a virtuous deed, and the king's work is to rule his people well, then that which makes him happy will be the king's reward. What this is has now to be considered." Happiness, we say, is the ultimate end of our desires. Now the movement of desire does not go on to infinity else natural desire would be vain, for infinity cannot be traversed. Since, then, the desire of an intellectual nature is for universal good, that good alone can make it truly happy which, when attained, leaves no further good to be desired. Whence happiness is called the perfect good inasmuch as it comprises in itself all things desirable. But no earthly good is such a good. They who have riches desire to have more, they who enjoy pleasure desire to enjoy more, and the like is clear for the rest: and if they do not seek more, they at least desire that those they have should abide or that others should follow in their stead. For nothing permanent is found in earthly things. Consequently there is nothing earthly which can calm desire. Thus, nothing earthly can make man happy, so that it may be a fitting reward for a king.

[64] Again, the last perfection and perfect good of anything one chooses depends upon something higher, for even bodily things are made better by the addition of better things and worse by being mixed with baser things. If gold is mingled with silver, the silver is made better, while by an admixture of lead it is rendered impure. Now it is manifest that all earthly things are beneath the human mind. But happiness is the last perfection and the perfect good of man, which all men desire to reach. Therefore there is no earthly thing which could make man happy, nor is any earthly thing a sufficient reward for a king. For, as Augustine" says, "we do not call Christian princes happy merely because they have reigned a long time, or because after a peaceful death they have left their sons to rule, or because they subdued the enemies of the state, or because they were able to guard against or to suppress citizens who rose up against them. Rather do we call them happy if they rule justly, if they prefer to rule their passions rather than nations,

and if they do all things not for the love of vainglory but for the love of eternal happiness. Such Christian emperors we say are happy, now in hope, afterwards in very fact when that which we await shall come to pass. But neither is there any other created thing which would make a man happy and which could be set up as the reward for a king. For the desire of each thing tends towards its source, whence is the cause of its being. But the cause of the human soul is none other than God Who made it to His own image. Therefore it is God alone Who can still the desires of man and make him happy and be the fitting reward for a king.

[65] Furthermore, the human mind knows the universal good through the intellect, and desires it through the will: but the universal good is not found except in God. Therefore there is nothing which could make man happy, fulfilling his every desire, but God, of Whom it is said in the Psalm (102:5): "Who satisfies your desire with good things." In this, therefore, should the king place his reward. Wherefore, King David," with this in mind, said (Ps 72:25,28): "What have I in heaven? And besides You what do I desire upon earth?" and he afterwards adds in answer to this question: "It is good for me to adhere to my God and to put my hope in the Lord God." For it is He Who gives salvation to kings, not merely temporal salvation by which He saves both men and beasts together, but also that salvation of which He says by the mouth of Isaiah (51:6): "But my salvation shall be for ever," that salvation by which He saves man and makes them equal to the angels.

[66] It can thus also be verified that the reward of the king is honour and glory. What worldly and frail honour can indeed be likened to this honour that a man be made a "citizen with the Saints and a kinsman of God" (Eph 2:19), numbered among the sons of God, and that he obtain the inheritance of the heavenly kingdom with Christ? This is the honour of which King David, in desire and wonder, says (Ps 138:17): "Your friends, O God, are made exceedingly honourable." And further, what glory of human praise can be compared to this, not uttered by the false tongue of flatterers nor the fallacious opinion of men, but issuing from the witness of our inmost conscience and confirmed by the testimony of God, Who promises to those who confess Him that He will confess them before the Angels of God in the glory of the Father? They who seek this glory will find it and they will win the glory of men which they do not seek: witness Solomon, who not only received from the Lord wisdom which he sought, but was made glorious above other kings.

CHAPTER 10

WHAT DEGREE OF HEAVENLY BEATITUDE THE KING MAY OBTAIN

[67] Now it remains further to consider that they who discharge the kingly office worthily and laudably will obtain an elevated and outstanding degree of heavenly happiness.

[68] For if happiness is the reward of virtue, it follows that a higher degree of happiness is due to greater virtue. Now, that indeed is signal virtue by which a man can guide not only himself but others, and the more persons he rules the greater his virtue. Similarly, in regard to bodily strength, a man is reputed to be more powerful the more adversaries he can beat or the more weights he can lift. Thus, greater virtue is required to rule a household than to rule one's self, and much greater to rule a city and a kingdom. To discharge well the office of a king is therefore a work of extraordinary virtue. To it, therefore, is due an extraordinary reward of happiness.

[69] Again, those who rule others well are more worthy of praise than those who act well under

others' direction. This applies to the field of all arts and sciences. In the speculative sciences, for instance, it is nobler to impart truth to others by teaching than to be able to grasp what is taught by others. So, too, in matters of the crafts, an architect who plans a building is more highly esteemed and paid a higher wage than is the builder who does the manual labour under his direction; also, in warfare the strategy of the general wins greater glory from victory than the bravery of the soldier. Now the ruler of a multitude stands in the same relation to the virtuous deeds performed by each individual as the teacher to the matters taught the architect to the buildings, and the general to the wars. Consequently, the king is worthy of a greater reward if he governs his subjects well than any of his subjects who act well under him.

[70] Further, if it is the part of virtue to render a man's work good, it is, it seems, from greater virtue that one does greater good. But the good of the multitude is greater and more divine than the good of one man. Wherefore the evil of one man is sometimes endured if it redounds to the good of the multitude, as when a robber is killed to bring peace to the multitude. God Himself would not allow evils to be in the world were it not for the fact that He brings good out of them for the advantage and beauty of the universe. Now it belongs to the office of the king to have zealous concern for the good of the multitude. Therefore a greater reward is due to the king for good ruling than to the subject for acting according to rule.

[71] This will become clearer if considered in greater detail. For a private person is praised by men, and his deed reckoned for reward by God, if he helps the needy, brings peace to those in discord, rescues one oppressed by a mightier; in a word, if in any way he gives to another assistance or advice for his welfare How much the more, then, is he to be praised by men and rewarded by God who makes a whole province rejoice in peace, who restrains violence, preserves justice and arranges by his laws and precepts what is to be done by men?

[72] The greatness of kingly virtue also appears in this, that he bears a special likeness to God, since he does in his kingdom what God does in the world; wherefore in Exodus (22:9) the judges of the people are called gods, and also among the Romans the emperors received the appellative *Divus*. Now the more a thing approaches to the likeness of God the more acceptable it is to Him. Hence, also, the Apostle urges (Eph 5:1): "Be therefore imitators of God as most dear children." But if according to the saying of the Wise Man (Sirach 13:9), every beast loves its like inasmuch as causes bear some likeness to the caused, it follows that good kings are most pleasing to God and are to be most highly rewarded by Him.

[73] Likewise, if I may use the words of Gregory [*Regula Pastoralis* I, 9]: "What else is it (for a king) to be at the pinnacle of power if not to find himself in a mental storm? When the sea is calm even an inexperienced man can steer a ship straight; when the sea is troubled by stormy waves, even an experienced sailor is bewildered. Whence it frequently happens that in the business of government the practice of good works is lost which in tranquil times was maintained." For, as Augustine says [*De civ. Dei* V, 24], it is very difficult for rulers "not to be puffed up amid flattering and honouring tongues and the obsequiousness of those who bow too humbly, but to remember that they are men." It is said also in Sirach (31:8,10): "Blessed is the rich man who has not gone after gold nor put his trust in money nor in treasures, who could have transgressed with impunity and did not transgress, who could do evil and did not do it." Wherefore, having been tried in the work of virtue, he is found faithful and so, according to the proverb of Bias [Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* V, 3: 1130a 1]: "Authority shows the man." For many who seemed virtuous while they were in lowly state fall from virtue when they reach the pinnacle of power. The very difficulty, then, of acting well, which besets kings, makes them more worthy of greater reward;

and if through weakness they sometimes do amiss, they are rendered more excusable before men and more easily obtain forgiveness from God provided, as Augustine says (*De civ. Dei*, V, 24), they do not neglect to offer up to their true God the sacrifice of humility, mercy, and prayer for their sins. As an example of this, the Lord said to Elias concerning Achab, king of Israel, who had sinned a great deal: "Because he has humbled himself for My sake, I will not bring the evil in his days."

[74] That a very high reward is due to kings is not only demonstrated by reason but is also confirmed by divine authority. It is said in the prophecy of Zachariah (12:8) that, in that day of blessedness wherein God will be the protector of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (i.e. in the vision of eternal peace), the houses of others will be as the house of David, because all will then be kings and reign with Christ as the members with their head. But the house of David will be as the house of God, because just as he carried out the work of God among the people by ruling faithfully, so in his reward he will adhere more closely to God. Likewise, among the Gentiles this was dimly realized, as in a dream, for they thought to transform into gods the rulers and preservers of their cities.

CHAPTER 11

WHAT ADVANTAGES WHICH ARE RENDERED TO KINGS ARE LOST BY THE TYRANT

[75] Since such a magnificent reward in heavenly blessedness is in store for kings who have acted well in ruling, they ought to keep careful watch over themselves in order not to turn to tyranny. Nothing, indeed, can be more acceptable to them than to be transferred from the royal honour, to which they are raised on earth, into the glory of the heavenly kingdom. Tyrants, on the contrary, who desert justice for a few earthly advantages, are deprived of such a great reward which they could have obtained by ruling justly. How foolish it is to sacrifice the greatest and eternal goods for trifling, temporal goods is clear to everyone but a fool or an infidel.

[76] It is to be added further, however, that the very temporal advantages for which tyrants abandon justice work to the greater profit of kings when they observe justice.

[77] First of all, among all worldly things there is nothing which seems worthy to be preferred to friendship. Friendship unites good men and preserves and promotes virtue. Friendship is needed by all men in whatsoever occupations they engage. In prosperity it does not thrust itself unwanted upon us, nor does it desert us in adversity. It is what brings with it the greatest delight, to such an extent that all that pleases is changed to weariness when friends are absent, and all difficult things are made easy and as nothing by love. There is no tyrant so cruel that friendship does not bring him pleasure. When Dionysius, sometime tyrant of Syracuse, wanted to kill one of two friends, Damon and Pythias, the one who was to be killed asked leave to go home and set his affairs in order, and the other friend surrendered himself to the tyrant as security for his return. When the appointed day was approaching and he had not yet returned, everyone said that his hostage was a fool, but he declared he had no fear whatever regarding his friend's loyalty. The very hour when he was to be put to death, his friend returned. Admiring the courage of both, the tyrant remitted the sentence on account of the loyalty of their friendship, and asked in addition that they should receive him as a third member in their bond of friendship. [Cf. Valerius Maximus IV, 7, Ext. 1; Vincent of Beauvais, *Specul. Doctrinale* V, 84.]

[78] Yet, although tyrants desire this very benefit of friendship, they cannot obtain it, for when they seek their own good instead of the common good there is little or no communion between them and their subjects. Now all friendship is concluded upon the basis of something common among those who are to be friends, for we see that those are united in friendship who have in common either their natural origin, or some similarity in habits of life, or any kind of social interests. Consequently there can be little or no friendship between tyrants and their subjects. When the latter are oppressed by tyrannical injustice and feel they are not loved but despised, they certainly do not conceive any love, for it is too great a virtue for the common man to love his enemies and to do good to his persecutors. Nor have tyrants any reason to complain of their subjects if they are not loved by them, since they do not act towards them in such a way that they ought to be loved by them. Good kings, on the contrary, are loved by many when they show that they love their subjects and are studiously intent on the common welfare, and when their subjects can see that they derive many benefits from this zealous care. For to hate their friends and return evil for good to their benefactors—this, surely, would be too great a malice to ascribe fittingly to the generality of men.

[79] The consequence of this love is that the government of good kings is stable, because their subjects do not refuse to expose themselves to any danger whatsoever on behalf of such kings. An example of this is to be seen in Julius Caesar who, as Suetonius relates [*Divus Iulius* 67], loved his soldiers to such an extent that when he heard that some of them were slaughtered, "he refused to cut either hair or beard until he had taken vengeance." In this way, he made his soldiers most loyal to himself as well as most valiant, so that many, on being taken prisoner, refused to accept their lives when offered them on the condition that they serve against Caesar. Octavianus Augustus, also, who was most moderate in his use of power, was so loved by his subjects that some of them "on their deathbeds provided in their wills a thank-offering to be paid by the immolation of animals, so grateful were they that the emperor's life outlasted their own" [Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* 59]. Therefore it is no easy task to shake the government of a prince whom the people so unanimously love. This is why Solomon says (Prov 29:14): "The king that judgeth the poor in justice, his throne shall be established forever."

[80] The government of tyrants, on the other hand, cannot last long because it is hateful to the multitude, and what is against the wishes of the multitude cannot be long preserved. For a man can hardly pass through this present life without suffering some adversities, and in the time of his adversity occasion cannot be lacking to rise against the tyrant; and when there is an opportunity there will not be lacking at least one of the multitude to use it. Then the people will fervently favour the insurgent, and what is attempted with the sympathy of the multitude will not easily fail of its effects. It can thus scarcely come to pass that the government of a tyrant will endure for a long time.

[81] This is very clear, too, if we consider the means by which a tyrannical government is upheld. It is not upheld by love, since there is little or no bond of friendship between the subject multitude and the tyrant, as is evident from what we have said. On the other Aand, tyrants cannot rely on the loyalty of their subjects, for such a degree of virtue is not found among the generality of men, that they should be restrained by the virtue of fidelity from throwing off the yoke of unmerited servitude, if they are able to do so. Nor would it perhaps be a violation of fidelity at all, according to the opinion of many,' to frustrate the wickedness of tyrants by any means whatsoever. It remains, then, that the government of a tyrant is maintained by fear alone and consequently they strive with all their might to be feared by their subjects. Fear, however, is a weak support. Those who are kept down by fear will rise against their rulers if the opportunity

ever occurs when they can hope to do it with impunity, and they will rebel against their rulers all the more furiously the more they have been kept in subjection against their will by fear alone, just as water confined under pressure flows with greater impetus when. it finds an outlet. That very fear itself is not without danger, because many become desperate from excessive fear, and despair of safety impels a man boldly to dare anything. Therefore the government of a tyrant cannot be of long duration.

[82] This appears clearly from examples no less than from reason. If we scan the history of antiquity and the events of modern times, we shall scarcely find one government of a tyrant which lasted a long time. So Aristotle, in his Politics [V, 12: 1315b 11-39], after enumerating many tyrants, shows that all their governments were of short duration; although some of them reigned a fairly long time because they were not very tyrannical but in many things imitated the moderation of kings.

[83] All this becomes still more evident if we consider the divine judgment, for, as we read in Job (24:30), "He makes a man who is a hypocrite to reign for the sins of the people." No one, indeed, can be more truly called a hypocrite than the man who assumes the office of king and acts like a tyrant, for a hypocrite is one who mimics the person of another, as is done on the stage. Hence God permits tyrants to get into power to punish the sins of the subjects. In Holy Scripture it is customary to call such punishment the anger of God. Thus in Hosea (13:11) the Lord says: "I will give you a king in my wrath." Unhappy is a king who is given to the people in God's wrath, for his power cannot be stable, because "God does not forgets to show mercy nor does He shut up His mercies in His anger" (Ps 76:10). On the contrary, as we read in Joel (2:13): "He is patientand rich in mercy and ready to repent of the evil." So God does not permit tyrants to reign a long time, but after the storm brought on the people through these tyrants, He restores transquillity by casting them down. Therefore the Wise Man" says (Sirach 10:17): "God has overturned the thrones of proud princes and hath set up the meek in their stead."

[84] Experience further shows that kings acquire more wealth through justice than tyrants do through rapine. Because the government of tyrants is displeasing to the multitude subject to it, tyrants must have a great many satellites to safeguard themselves against their subjects. On these it is necessary to spend more than they can rob from their subjects. On the contrary, the government of kings, since it is pleasing to their subjects, has for its protection, instead of hirelings, all the subjects. And they demand no pay but, in time of need, freely give to their kings more than the tyrants can take. Thus the words of Solomon are fulfilled (Prov 11:24): "Some (namely, the kings) distribute their own goods (doing good to their subjects) and grow richer; others (namely, the tyrants) take away what is not their own and are always in want." In the same way it comes to pass, by the just judgment of God, that those who unjustly heap up riches, uselessly scatter them or are justly deprived of them. For, as Solomon says (Eccles. 5:9): "A covetous man shall not be satisfied with money and he who loves riches shall reap no fruit from them." Rather, we read in Proverbs (15:27): "He who is greedy of gain troubles his own house." But to kings who seek justice, God gives wealth, as He did to Solomon who, when he sought wisdom to do justice, received a promise of an abundance of wealth."

[85] It seems superfluous to speak about fame, for who can doubt that good kings live in a sense in the praises of men, not only in this life, but still more, after their death, and that men yearn for them? But the name of wicked kings straightway vanishes or, if they have been excessive in their wickedness, they are remembered with execration. Thus Solomon says (Prov 10:7): "The memory of the just is with praises, and the name of the wicked shall rot," either because it

vanishes or it remains with stench.

CHAPTER 12

WHAT PUNISHMENTS ARE IN STORE FOR A TYRANT

[86] From the above arguments it is evident that stability of power, wealth, honour and fame come to fulfil the desires of kings rather than tyrants, and it is in seeking to acquire these things unduly that princes turn to tyranny. For no one falls away from justice except through a desire for some temporal advantage.

[87] The tyrant, moreover, loses the surpassing beatitude which is due as a reward to kings and, which is still more serious, brings upon himself great suffering as a punishment. For if the man who despoils a single man, or casts him into slavery, or kills him, deserves the greatest punishment (death in the judgment of men, and in the judgment of God eternal damnation), how much worse tortures must we consider a tyrant deserves, who on all sides robs everybody, works against the common liberty of all, and kills whom he will at his merest whim?

[88] Again, such men rarely repent; but puffed up by the wind of pride, deservedly abandoned by God for their sins, and besmirched by the flattery of men, they can rarely make worthy satisfaction. When will they ever restore all those things which they have received beyond their just due? Yet no one doubts that they are bound to restore those ill-gotten goods. When will they make amends to those whom they have oppressed and unjustly injured in their many ways?

[89] The malice of their impenitence is increased by the fact that they consider everything licit which they can do unresisted and with impunity. Hence they not only make no effort to repair the evil they have done but, taking their customary way of acting as their authority, they hand on their boldness in sinning to posterity. Consequently they are held guilty before God, not only for their own sins, but also for the crimes of those to whom they gave the occasion of sin.

[90] Their sin is made greater also from the dignity of the office they have assumed. Just as an earthly king inflicts a heavier punishment upon his ministers if he finds them traitors to him, so God will punish more severely those whom He made the executors and ministers of His government if they act wickedly, turning God's judgment into bitterness. Hence, in the Book of Wisdom (6:5-7), the following words are addressed to wicked kings: "Because being ministers of His kingdom, you have not judged rightly nor kept the law of justice nor walked according to the will of God, horribly and speedily will He appear to you, for a most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule; for to him that is little, mercy is granted, but the mighty shall be mightily tormented." And to Nabuchodonosor it is said by Isaiah (14:15-16): "But you shall yet be brought down to hell, into the depth of the pit. They who see you shall turn toward you and gaze on you" as one more deeply buried in punishments.

[91] So, then, if to kings an abundance of temporal goods is given and an eminent degree of beatitude prepared for them by God, while tyrants are often prevented from obtaining even the temporal goods which they covet, subjected also to many dangers and, worse still, deprived of eternal happiness and destined for most grievous punishment, surely those who undertake the office of ruling must earnestly strive to act as kings towards their subjects, and not as tyrants.

[92] What has been said hitherto should suffice in order to show what a king is, and that it is good for the multitude to have a king, and also that it is expedient for a ruler to conduct himself

towards the multitude of his subjects as a king, not as a tyrant.

CHAPTER 13

ON THE DUTIES OF A KING

[93] The next point to be Considered is what the kingly office is and what qualities the king should have. Since things which are in accordance with art are an imitation of the things which are in accordance with nature (from which we accept the rules to act according to reason), it seems best that we learn about the kingly office from the pattern of the regime of nature.

This methodical principle should not be considered as St. Thomas' last word in the matter. Themethod of the *Summa* II-II, 47, 10-12 (on governmental prudence) is distinctly different. See M.-C. CHENU, *Bull. Thom.* VI, 576, n. 2.

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[94] In things of nature there is both a universal and a particular government. The former is God's government Whose rule embraces all things and Whose providence governs them all. The latter is found in man and it is much like the divine government. Hence man is called a microcosm.

Cf. Aristotle, *Phys.* VIII, 2: 252b 26; St. Gregory, *Homil. in Evang.* II, 29. On the history of thisnotion which is found "in two different streams of thought", viz. the Neoplatonic and theAristotelian systems, see Muller-Thym 14 ff. "On the rare occasions where St. Thomas uses[this] formula (*In Phys.* VIII, 4; *Summa* I, 96, 2 et al.), he wishes it to be taken rather in the sensein which the providence exercised by reason over the members of the body and the use of thefaculties is likened to the providence which God exercises in the world." If the idea of themicrocosm is extended to mean that God is in the world as the soul is in the body, then the soulwould no longer be the form of the body in the Aristotelian and Thomistic sense; rather it wouldbe a detached substance in its own right. See *Summa* I-II, 17, 8 in 2 and ad 2; *ibid.* 110, 1 ad 2.

Close Indeed there is a similitude between both governments in regard to their form; for just as the universe of corporeal creatures and all spiritual powers come under the divine government, in like manner the members of the human body and all the powers of the soul are governed by reason. Thus, in a proportionate manner, reason is to man what God is to the world. Since, however, man is by nature a social animal living in a multitude, as we have pointed out above,' the analogy with the divine government is found in him not only in this way that one man governs himself by reason, but also in that the multitude of men is governed by the reason of one man. This is what first of all constitutes the office of a king. True, among certain animals that live socially there is a likeness to the king's rulership; so we say that there are kings among bees. Yet animals exercise rulership not through reason but through their natural instinct which is implanted in them by the Great Ruler the Author of nature.

[95] Therefore let the king recognize that such is the office which he undertakes, namely, that he is to be in the kingdom what the soul is in the body, and what God is in the world.' If he reflect

seriously upon this, a zeal for justice will be enkindled in him when he contemplates that he has been appointed to this position in place of God, to exercise judgment in his kingdom; further, he will acquire the gentleness of clemency and mildness when he considers as his own members those individuals who are subject to his rule.

CHAPTER 14

WHAT IT IS INCUMBENT UPON A KING TO DO AND HOW HE SHOULD GO ABOUT DOING IT

[96] Let us then examine what God does in the world, for in this way we shall be able to see what it is incumbent upon a king to do.

[97] Looking at the world as a whole, there are two works of God to be considered: the first is creation; the second, God's government of the things created. These two works are, in like manner, performed by the soul in the body since, first, by the virtue of the soul the body is formed, and then the latter is governed and moved by the soul.

[98] Of these works, the second more properly pertains to the office of kingship. Therefore government belongs to all kings (the very name rex is derived from the fact that they direct the government), while the first work does not fall to all kings, for not all kings establish the kingdom or city in which they rule but bestow their regal care upon a kingdom or city already established. We must remember, however, that if there were no one to establish the city or kingdom,' there would be no question of governing the kingdom. The very notion of kingly office, then, comprises the establishment of a city and kingdom, and some kings have indeed established cities in which to rule; for example, Ninus founded Ninevah, and Romulus, Rome. It pertains also to the governing office to preserve the things governed, and to use them for the purpose for which they were established. If, therefore, one does not know how a kingdom is established, one cannot fully understand the task of its government.

[99] Now, from the example of the creation of the world one may learn how a kingdom is established. In creation we may consider, first, the production of things; secondly, the orderly distinction of the parts of the world. Further, we observe that different species of things are distributed in different parts of the world: stars in the heavens, fowls in the air, fishes in the water, and animals on land. We notice further that, for each species, the things it needs are abundantly provided by the Divine Power. Moses has minutely and carefully set forth this plan of how the world was made. First of all, he sets forth the production of things in these words: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen 1:1). Next, he declares that all things were distinguished from one another by God according to a suitable order: day from night, higher things from lower, the sea from the dry land. He next relates that the sky was adorned with luminaries, the air with birds, the sea with fishes, the earth with animals; finally, dominion over earth and animals was given to men. He further states that, by Divine Providence, plants were made for the use of men and the other animals.

[100] Of course the founder of a city and kingdom cannot produce anew men, places in which to dwell, and the other necessities of life. He has to make use of those which already exist in nature, just as the other arts derive the material for their work from nature; as, for example, the smith takes iron, the builder wood and stone, to use in their respective arts. Therefore the founder of a city and kingdom must first choose a suitable place which will preserve the inhabitants by its

healthfulness, provide the necessities of life by its fruitfulness, please them with its beauty, and render them safe from their enemies by its natural protection. If any of these advantages be lacking, the place will be more or less convenient in proportion as it offers more or less of the said advantages, or the more essential of them. Next, the founder of a city and kingdom must mark out the chosen place according to the exigencies of things necessary for the perfection of the city and kingdom. For example, when a kingdom is to be founded, he will have to determine which place is suitable for establishing cities, and which is best for villages and hamlets, where to locate the places of learning, the military training camps, the markets—and so on with other things which the perfection of the kingdom requires. And if it is a question of founding a city, he will have to determine what site is to be assigned to the churches, the law courts, and the various trades! Furthermore, he will have to gather together the men, who must be apportioned suitable locations according to their respective occupations. Finally, he must provide for each one what is necessary for his particular condition and state in life; otherwise, the kingdom or city could never endure.

[101] These are, briefly, the duties that pertain to the office of king in founding a city and kingdom, as derived from a comparison with the creation of the world.

CHAPTER 15

THAT THE OFFICE OF GOVERNING THE KINGDOM SHOULD BE LEARNED FROM THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT

[102] Just as the founding of a city or kingdom may suitably be learned from the way in which the world was created, so too the way to govern may be learned from the divine government of the world.

[103] Before going into that, however, we should consider that to govern is to lead the thmig governed in a suitable way towards its proper end. Thus a ship is said to be governed when, through the skill of the pilot, it is brought unharmed and by a direct route to harbour. Consequently, if a thing be directed to an end outside itself (as a ship to the harbour), it is the governor's duty, not only to preserve the thing unharmed, but further to guide it towards this end. If, on the contrary, there be a thing whose end is not outside itself, then the governor's endeavours will merely tend to preserve the thing undamaged in its proper perfection.

[104] Nothing of this kind is to be found in reality, except God Himself, Who is the end of all. However, as concerns the thing which is directed to an end outside itself, care is exercised by different providers in different ways. One might have the task of preserving a thing in its being, another of bringing it to a further perfection. Such is clearly the case in the example of the ship; (the first meaning of the word gubernator [governor] is pilot.) It is the carpenter's business to repair anything which might be broken, while the pilot bears the responsibility of bringing the ship to port. It is the same with man. The doctor sees to it that a man's life is preserved; the tradesman supplies the, necessities of life; the teacher takes care that man may learn the truth; and the tutor sees that he lives according to reason.

[105] Now if man were not ordained to another end outside himself, the above-mentioned cares would be sufficient for him. But as long as man's mortal life endures there is an extrinsic good for him, namely, final beatitude which is looked for after death in the enjoyment of God, for as the Apostle' says (2 Cor 5:6): "As long as we are in the body we are far from the Lord."

Consequently the Christian man, for whom that beatitude has been purchased by the blood of Christ, and who, in order to attain it, has received the earnest of the Holy Spirit, needs another and spiritual care to direct him to the harbour of eternal salvation, and this care is provided for the faithful by the ministers of the church of Christ.

[106] Now the same judgment is to be formed about the end of society as a whole as about the end of one man. If, therefore, the ultimate end of man were some good that existed in himself, then the ultimate end of the multitude to be governed would likewise be for the multitude to acquire such good, and persevere in its possession. If such an ultimate end either of an individual man or a multitude were a corporeal one, namely, life and health of body, to govern would then be a physician's charge. If that ultimate end were an abundance of wealth, then knowledge of economics would have the last word in the community's government. If the good of the knowledge of truth were of such a kind that the multitude might attain to it, the king would have to be a teacher. It is, however, clear that the end of a multitude gathered together is to live virtuously. For men form a group for the purpose of *living well*

Aristotle, *Pol.* I, 2: 1252b 30; *ibid.* III, 9: 1280b 33. The source of what follows is againAristotle, Pol. III, 9: 1280a 25-1281a 10. Especially derived from the Stagirite are (a) thedefinition of "good life" which is "virtuous life" (1280b 5-10), (b) the remark about slaves andanimals (1280a 32), (c) the remark that the exchange of material goods does not make a society,i.e., a state (1280a 25, b 23: Aristotle's criticism of Plato.)

Close together, a thing which the individual man living alone could not attain, and *good life* is virtuous life. Therefore, virtuous life is the end for which men gather together. The evidence for this lies in the fact that only those who render mutual assistance to one another in living well form a genuine part of an assembled multitude. If men assembled merely to live, then animals and slaves would form a part of the civil community. Or, if men assembled only to accrue wealth, then all those who traded together would belong to one city. Yet we see that only such are regarded as forming one multitude as are directed by the same laws and the same government to live well.

[107] Yet through virtuous living man is further ordained to a higher end, which consists in the enjoyment of God, as we have said above. Consequently, since society must have the same end as the individual man, it is not the ultimate end of an assembled multitude to live virtuously, but through virtuous living to attain to the possession of God.

[108] If this end could be attained by the power of human nature, then the duty of a king would have to include the direction of men to it. We are supposing, of course, that he is called king to whom the supreme power of governing in human affairs is entrusted. Now the higher the end to which a government is ordained, the loftier that government is. Indeed, we always find that the one to whom it pertains to achieve the final end commands those who execute the things that are ordained to that end. For example, the captain, whose business it is to regulate navigation, tells the shipbuilder what kind of ship he must construct to be suitable for navigation; and the ruler of a city, who makes use of arms, tells the blacksmith what kind of arms to make. But because a man does not attain his end, which is the possession of God, by human power but by divine according to the words of the Apostle (Rom 6:23): "By the grace of God life everlasting"—therefore the task of leading him to that last end does not pertain to human but to divine government.

[109] Consequently, government of this kind pertains to that king who is not only a man, but also God, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who by making men sons of God brought them to the glory of Heaven. This then is the government which has been delivered to Him and which "shall not be destroyed" (Dan 7:14), on account of which He is called, in Holy Writ, not Priest only, but King. As Jeremiah says (23:5): "The king shall reign and he shall be wise." Hence a royal priesthood is derived from Him, and what is more, all those who believe in Christ, in so far as they are His members, are called kings and priests.

[110] Thus, in order that spiritual things might be distinguished from earthly things, the ministry of this kingdom has been entrusted not to earthly kings but to priests, and most of all to the chief priest, the successor of St. Peter, the Vicar of Christ, the Roman Pontiff. To him all the kings of the Christian People

Populus Christianus, i.e., the institutional unity of all Christians, whose head is the Pope"holding the apex of both powers, spiritual and temporal": *2 Sent.*, 44, exp. text. (Appendix 8).All-important in Aquinas' political thought, this notion was for the first time criticized by theDominican John of Paris, A.D. 1302; see *CG* 4, 76 (Appendix 7) and John of Paris' correctionsof this text (*loc. cit.*).

Close are to be subject as to our Lord Jesus Christ Himself.
Ps.-Cyril of Alexandria: [*Romano Pontifici*] *primates mundi tamquam ipsi Domino Iesu Christoobediunt*. The text is quoted in *C. Impugn.* 3 (IV, 29); *4 Sent.*, 24, III, 2 sol. 2; Cf. *ErroresGraecorum* 2. The *Liber Thesaurorum* from which this authority was drawn is a compilation oftexts of the Greek Fathers, made by Aquinas' contemporary and confrère Bonacursius (*Script.O.P.* I, 156, 159). In regard to the doctrine cf. *2 Sent.*, 44, exp. text. (Appendix 8); *4 Sent.* 37,exp. text.; *CG* IV, 76 (Appendix 7); *Summa* II-II, 60, 6 ad 3. Best interpretation of this passage:Gilson, *Dante* 183 ff, 206 ff; *Id., La philosophie au MA* 570 ff.

Close For those to whom pertains the care of intermediate ends should be subject to him to whom pertains the care of the ultimate end, and be directed by his rule.
[111] Because the priesthood of the gentiles and the whole worship of their gods existed merely for the acquisition of temporal goods (which were all ordained to the common good of the multitude, whose care devolved upon the king), the priests of the gentiles were very properly subject to the kings. Similarly, since in the old law earthly goods were promised to the religious people (not indeed by demons but by the true God), the priests of the old law, we read, were also subject to the kings. But in the new law there is a higher priesthood by which men are guided to heavenly goods. Consequently, in the law of Christ, kings must be subject to priests.

[112] It was therefore also a marvellous disposition of Divine Providence that, in the city of Rome, which God had foreseen would be the principal seat of the Christian priesthood, the custom was gradually established that the rulers of the city should be subject to the priests, for as Valerius Maximus relates [*De Bello Gallico* VI, 13, 5]: "Our city has always considered that everything should yield precedence to religion, even those things in which it aimed to display the splendour of supreme majesty. We therefore unhesitatingly made the imperial dignity minister to religion, considering that the empire would thus hold control of human affairs if faithfully and constantly it were submissive to the divine power.

[113] And because it was to come to pass that the religion of the Christian priesthood should especially thrive in France, God provided that among the Gauls too their tribal priests, called Druids, should lay down the law of all Gaul, as Julius Caesar relates in the book which he wrote about the Gallic war.

CHAPTER 16

THAT REGAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE ORDAINED PRINCIPALLY TO ETERNAL BEATITUDE

[114] As the life by which men live well here on earth is ordained, as to its end, to that blessed life which we hope for in heaven, so too whatever particular goods are procured by man's agency—whether wealth, profits, health, eloquence, or learning—are ordained to the good life of the multitude. If, then, as we have said, the person who is charged with the care of our ultimate end ought to be over those who have charge of things ordained to that end, and to direct them by his rule, it clearly follows that, just as the king ought to be subject to the divine government administered by the office of priesthood, so he ought to preside over all human offices, and regulate them by the rule of his government.

[115] Now anyone on whom it devolves to do something which is ordained to another thing as to its end is bound to see that his work is suitable to that end; thus, for example, the armourer so fashions the sword that it is suitable for fighting, and the builder should so lay out the house that it is suitable for habitation. Therefore, since the beatitude of heaven is the end of that virtuous life which we live at present, it pertains to the king's office to promote the good life of the multitude in such a way as to make it suitable for the attainment of heavenly happiness, that is to say, he should command those things which lead to the happiness of Heaven and, as far as possible, forbid the contrary.

[116] What conduces to true beatitude and what hinders it are learned from the law of God, the teaching of which belongs to the office of the priest, according to the words of Malachi (2:7): "The lips of the priest shall guard knowledge and they shall seek the law from his mouth." Wherefore the Lord prescribes in the Book of Deuteronomy (17:18-19) that "after he is raised to the throne of his kingdom, the king shall copy out to himself the Deutoronomy of this law, in a volume, taking the copy of the priests of the Levitical tribe, he shall have it with him and shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, and keep his words and ceremonies which are commanded in the law." Thus the king, taught the law of God, should have for his principal concern the means by which the multitude subject to him may live well.

[117] This concern is threefold:, first of all, to establish a virtuous life in the multitude subject to him; second, to preserve it once established; and third, having preserved it, to promote its greater perfection.

[118] For an individual man to lead a good life two things are required. The first and most important is to act in a virtuous manner (for virtue is that by which one lives well); the second, which is secondary and instrumental, is a sufficiency of those bodily goods who se use is necessary for virtuous life. Yet the unity of man is brought about by nature, while the unity of multitude, which we call peace, must be procured through the efforts of the ruler. Therefore, to establish virtuous living in a multitude three things are necessary. First of all, that the multitude be established in the unity of peace. Second, that the multitude thus united in the bond of peace,

be directed to acting well. For just as a man can do nothing well unless unity within his members be presupposed, so a multitude of men lacking the unity of peace will be hindered from virtuous action by the fact that it is fighting against itself. In the third place, it is necessary that there be at hand a sufficient supply of the things required for proper living, procured by the ruler's efforts.

[119] When virtuous living is set up in the multitude by the efforts of the king, it then remains for him to look to its conservation. Now there are three things which prevent the permanence of the public good. One of these arises from nature. The good of the multitude should not be established for one time only; it should be in a sense perpetual. Men, on the other hand, cannot abide forever, because they are mortal. Even while they are alive they do not always preserve the same vigour, for the life of man is subject to many changes, and thus a man is not equally suited to the performance of the same duties throughout the whole span of his life. A second impediment to the preservation of the public good, which comes from within, consists in the perversity of the wills of men, inasmuch as they are either too lazy to perform what the commonweal demands, or, still further, they are harmful to the peace of the multitude because, by transgressing justice, they disturb the peace of others. The third hindrance to the preservation of the commonweal comes from without, namely, when peace is destroyed through the attacks of enemies and, as it sometimes happens, the kingdom or city is completely blotted out.

[120] In regard to these three dangers, a triple charge is laid upon the king. First of all, he must take care of the appointment of men to succeed or replace others in charge of the various offices. Just as in regard to corruptible things (which cannot remain the same forever) the government of God made provision that through generation one would take the place of another in order that, in this way, the integrity of the universe might be maintained, so too the good of the multitude subject to the king will be preserved through his care when he sets himself to attend to the appointment of new men to fill the place of those who drop out. In the second place, by his laws and orders, punishments and rewards, he should restrain the men subject to him from wickedness and induce them to virtuous deeds, following the example of God, Who gave His law to man and requites those who observe it with rewards, and those who transgress it with punishments. The king's third charge is to keep the multitude entrusted to him safe from the enemy, for it would be useless to prevent internal dangers if the multitude could not be defended against external dangers.

[121] Finally, for the proper direction of the multitude there remains the third duty of the kingly office, namely, that he be solicitous for its improvement. He performs this duty when, in each of the things we have mentioned, he corrects what is out of order and supplies what is lacking, and if any of them can be done better he tries to do so. This is why the Apostle exhorts the faithful to be "zealous for the better gifts" (1 Cor 12:31).

[122] These then are the duties of the kingly office, each of which must now be treated in greater detail.

PART II

CHAPTER 1

THAT IT BELONGS TO THE OFFICE OF A KING TO FOUND THE CITY

[123] We must begin by explaining the duties of a king with regard to the founding of a city or

kingdom. For, as Vegetius [*De Re Militari* IV, prol.] declares, “the mightiest nations and most commended kings thought it their greatest glory either to found new cities or have their names made part of, and in some way added to, the names of cities already founded by others.” This, indeed, is in accord with Holy Scripture, for the Wise Man says in Sirach (40:19): “The building of a city shall establish a name.” The name of Romulus, for instance, would be unknown today had he not founded the city of Rome.

[124] Now in founding a city or kingdom, the first step is the choice, if any be given, of its location. A temperate region should be chosen, for the inhabitants derive many advantages from a temperate climate. In the first place, it ensures them health of body and length of life; for, since good health consists in the right temperature of the vital fluids,

Aristotle, *Physics* VII, 3: 246b 4. *In Phys.* VII, 5, 3; *Summa* I-II, 49, 2 ad 1. “Long beforeAristotle, probably before Hippocratess, it was held that, corresponding to the four elements, fire,air, water, earth, and the four qualities, hot, cold, moist, dry, are the four humors of the body,viz., blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. These three sets of elements, qualities andhumors could then be brought, by permutation and combination, into a complex system ofarrangements, based upon the following scheme: hot + moist = blood; hot + dry = yellow bile;cold + moist = phlegm; cold + dry = black bile, the different combinations giving the qualitativeaspects of disease, and, by the same token, of the physiologic action of drugs. The wholearrangement made up the ‘humoral pathology’ which regarded health and disease as the properadjustment or imbalance respectively of the different components mentioned, and the schemewas further elaborated by Galen and the Arabian physicians, in that remedies and theircompounds were classified in numerical scales according to the ‘degree’ or relative proportionsof their several qualities.” Garrison 77.

Close it follows that health will be best preserved in a temperate clime, because like is preserved by like. Should, however, heat or cold be excessive, it needs must be that the condition of the body will be affected by the condition of the atmosphere; whence some animals instinctively migrate in cold weather to warmer regions, and in warm weather return to the colder places, in order to obtain, through the contrary dispositions of both locality and weather, the due temperature of their humours.

[125] Again, since it is warmth and moisture that preserve animal life, if the heat is intense the natural moisture of the body is dried up and life fails, just as a lantern is extinguished if the liquid poured into it be quickly consumed by too great a flame. Whence it is said that in certain very torrid parts of Ethiopia a man cannot live longer than thirty years.

St. Albert relates the same fact in *De Natura Locorum* II, 3: IX, 563.

Close On the other hand, in extremely cold regions the natural moisture is easily frozen and the natural heat soon lost.

[126] Then, too, a temperate climate is most conducive to fitness for war, by which human society is kept in security. As Vegetius tells us [*De Re Militari* 1, 2], “all peoples that live near the sun and are dried up by the excessive heat have keener wits but less blood, so that they possess no constancy or self-reliance in hand-to-hand fighting; for, knowing they have but little blood, they have great fear of wounds. On the other hand, Northern tribes, far removed from the

burning rays of the sun are more dull-witted indeed, but because they have an ample flow of blood, they are ever ready for war Those who dwell in temperate climes have, on the one hand, an abundance-of blood and thus make light of wounds or death, and, on the other hand, no lack of prudence, which puts a proper restraint on them in camp and is of great advantage in war and peace as well.

[127] Finally, a temperate climate is of no little value for political life. As Aristotle says in his Politics [VII, 7: 1327b 23-32]: "Peoples that dwell in cold countries are full of spirit but have little intelligence and little skill. Consequently they maintain their liberty better but have no political life and (through lack of prudence) show no capacity for governing others. Those who live in hot regions are keen-witted and skilful in the things of the mind but possess little spirit, and so are in continuous subjection and servitude. But those who live between these extremes of climate are both spirited and intelligent; hence they are continuously free, their political life is very much developed, and they are capable of ruling others." Therefore, a temperate region should be chosen for the foundation of a city or a kingdom.

CHAPTER 2

THAT THE CITY SHOULD HAVE WHOLESOME AIR

[128] After deciding on the locality of the kingdom, the king must select a site suitable for building a city.

[129] Now the first requisite would seem to be wholesome air, for civil life presupposes natural life, whose health in turn depends on the wholesomeness of the air. According to Vitruvius [*De Architectura* I, 4], the most healthful spot is "a high place, troubled neither by mists nor frosts and facing neither the sultry nor the chilly parts of the sky. Also, it should not lie near marsh country." The altitude of the place contributes to the wholesomeness of the atmosphere because highlands are opento all the breezes which purify the air; besides, the vapours, which the strength of the sun's rays causes to rise from the earth and waters, are more dense in valleys and in low-lying places than in highlands, whence it is that the air on mountains is rarer. Now this rarified air, which is the best for easy and natural breathing, is vitiated by mists and frosts which are frequent in very damp places; as a consequence, such places are found to be inimical to health. Since marshy districts have an excess of humidity, the place chosen for the building of a city must be far from any marshes. "For when the morning breezes come at sunrise to such a place, and the mists that rise from the swamps join them, they will scatter through the town the breath of the poisonous beasts of the marshes mingled with the mist, and will render the site pestilential." "Should, however, the walls be built in marshes that lie along the coast and face the north (or thereabouts) and if these marshes be higher than the seashore, they would seem to be quite reasonably built, since, by digging ditches, a way will be opened to drain the water of the marshes into the sea, and when storms swell the sea it will flow back into the marshes and thus prevent the propagation of the animals there. And if any animals come down from higher places, the unwonted saltiness of the water will destroy them."

[130] Further provision for the proper proportion of heat and cold must be made when laying out the city by having it face the correct part of the sky. "If the walls, particularly of a town built on the coast, face the south, it will not be healthy," since such a locality will be cold in the morning, for the rays of the sun do not reach it, but at noon will be baked in the full glare of the sun. As to

places that face the west, at sunrise they are cool or even cold, at noon quite warm, and in the evening unpleasantly hot, both on account of the long-continued heat and the, exposure to the sun. On the other hand, if it has an eastern exposure, in the morning, with the sun directly opposite, it will be moderately warm, at noon it will not, be much warmer since the sun does not reach it, directly, but in the evening it will be cold as the rays of the sun will be entirely on the other side. And there will be the same or a similar proportion of heat and cold if the town faces the north. By experience we may learn that the change from cold to heat is unhealthy. "Animals which are transferred from cold to warm regions cannot endure but are dissolved," "since the heat sucks up their moisture and weakens their natural strength;" whence even in salubrious districts "all bodies become weak from the heat."

[131] Again, since suitable food is very helpful for preserving health, we must further judge of the salubrity of a place which has been chosen as a town-site by the condition of the food which grows upon its soil. The ancients were wont to explore this condition by examining the animals raised on the spot. For man, like other animals, finds nourishment in the products of the earth. Hence, if in a given place we kill some animals and find their entrails to be sound, the conclusion will be justified that man also will get good food in the same place. If, however, the members of these animals should be found diseased, we may reasonably infer that that country is no healthy place for men either.

[132] Just as a temperate climate must be sought, so good water must be made the object of investigation. For the body depends for its health on those things which men more frequently put to their use. With regard to the air it is clear that, breathing it continuously, we draw it down into our very vitals; as a result, purity of air is what conduces most to the preservation of men. But of all things put to use as nourishment, water is used most frequently both as drink and food. Nothing therefore, except good air, so much helps to make a district healthy as does pure water.

[133] There is still another means of judging the healthfulness of a place, i.e., by the ruddy complexion of the inhabitants, their sturdy, well-shaped limbs, the presence of many and vivacious children, and of many old people. On the other hand, there can be no doubt about the deadliness of a climate where people are misshapen and weak, their limbs either withering or swollen beyond proportion, where children are few and sickly, and old people rather scarce.

CHAPTER 3

THAT THE CITY SHOULD HAVE AN ABUNDANT SUPPLY OF FOOD

[134] It is not enough, however, that the place chosen for the site of a city be such as to preserve the health of the inhabitants; it must also be sufficiently fertile to provide food. A multitude of men cannot live where there is not a sufficient supply of food. Thus Vitruvius [I, 5] narrates that when Dinocrates, a brilliant architect, was explaining to Alexander of Macedon that a beautifully laid out city could be built upon a certain mountain, Alexander asked whether there were fields that could supply the city with sufficient grain. Finding out that there were not, he said that an architect who would build a city on such a site would be blameworthy. For "just as a newborn infant cannot be fed nor made to grow as it should, except on the nurse's milk, so a city cannot have a large population without a large supply of foodstuffs."

[135] Now there are two ways in which an abundance of foodstuffs can be supplied to a city. The first we have already mentioned, where the soil is so fertile that it amply provides for all the

necessities of human life. The second is by trade, through which the necessaries of life are brought to the town in sufficient quantity from different places.

[136] It is quite clear that the first means is better. The more dignified a thing is, the more self-sufficient it is, since whatever needs another's help is by that fact proven to be deficient. Now the city which is supplied by the surrounding country with all its vital needs is more self-sufficient than another which must obtain those supplies by trade. A city therefore which has an abundance of food from its own territory is more dignified than one which is provisioned through trade.

[137] It seems that self-sufficiency is also safer, for the import of supplies and the access of merchants can easily be prevented whether owing to wars or to the many hazards of the sea, and thus the city may be overcome through lack of food.

[138] Moreover, this first method of supply is more conducive to the preservation of civic life. A city which must engage in much trade in order to supply its needs also has to put up with the continuous presence of foreigners. But intercourse with foreigners, according to Aristotle's *Politics* [V, 3: 1303a 27; VII, 6: 1327a 13-15], is particularly harmful to civic customs. For it is inevitable that strangers, brought up under other laws and customs, will in many cases act as the citizens are not wont to act and thus, since the citizens are drawn by their example to act likewise, their own civic life is upset.

[139] Again, if the citizens themselves devote their life to matters of trade, the way will be opened to many vices. Since the foremost tendency of tradesmen is to make money, greed is awakened in the hearts of the citizens through the pursuit of trade. The result is that everything in the city will become venal; good faith will be destroyed and the way opened to all kinds of trickery; each one will work only for his own profit, despising the public good; the cultivation of virtue will fail since honour, virtue's reward, will be bestowed upon the rich. Thus, in such a city, civic life will necessarily be corrupted.

[140] The pursuit of trade is also very unfavourable to military activity.' Tradesmen, not being used to the open air and not doing any hard work but enjoying all pleasures, grow soft in spirit and their bodies are weakened and rendered unsuited to military labours. In accordance with this view, Civil Law" forbids soldiers to engage in business.

[141] Finally, that city enjoys a greater measure of peace whose people are more sparsely assembled together and dwell in smaller proportion within the walls of the town, for when men are crowded together it is an occasion for quarrels and all the elements for seditious plots are provided. Hence, according to Aristotle's doctrine,

Pol. VI, 4: 1318b 9-15. William of Moerbeka translated this passage thus: *optimus enimpolmIus, qui terrae cultivus est . . . ubi vivit multitudo ab agricultura vel pascuis ... Non vacans,ut non saepe congregationes faciat. Propterea . . . aliena non concupiscunt, sed delectabilius estipsis laborare quam politizare et principari* (Susemihl 466 f.) St. Thomas misunderstood thewords *congregationes facere* which he took to mean "the crowding and dwelling of the peoplewithin the walls of the town," while Aristotle speaks of civic assemblies.

Close it is more profitable to have the people engaged outside the cities than for them to dwell constantly within the walls. But if a city is dependent on trade, it is of prime importance that the citizens stay within the town and there engage in trade. It is better, therefore, that the supplies of

food be furnished to the city from its own fields than that it be wholly dependent on trade.
[142] Still, trade must not be entirely kept out of a city, since one cannot easily find any place so overflowing with the necessaries of life as not to need some commodities from other parts. Also, when there is an over-abundance of some commodities in one place, these goods would serve no purpose if they could not be carried elsewhere by professional traders. Consequently, the perfect city will make a moderate use of merchants.

CHAPTER 4

THAT THE CITY SHOULD HAVE A PLEASANT SITE

[143] A further requisite when choosing a site for the founding of a city is this, that it must charm the inhabitants by its beauty. A spot where life is pleasant will not easily be abandoned nor will men commonly be ready to flock to unpleasant places, since the life of man cannot endure without enjoyment. It belongs to the beauty of a place that it have a broad expanse of meadows, an abundant forest growth, mountains to be seen close at hand, pleasant groves and a copiousness of water.

[144] However, if a country is too beautiful, it will draw men to indulge in pleasures,' and this is most harmful to a city. In the first place, when men give themselves up to pleasure their senses are dulled, since this sweetness immerses the soul in the senses so that man cannot pass free judgment on the things which cause delight. Whence, according to Aristotle's sentence [*Eth. Nic.* VI, 5: 1140b 11-21], the judgment of prudence is corrupted by pleasure.

[145] Again, indulgence in superfluous pleasure leads from the path of virtue, for nothing conduces more easily to immoderate increase which upsets the mean of virtue, than pleasure. Pleasure is, by its very nature, greedy, and thus on a slight occasion one is precipitated into the seductions of shameful pleasures just as a little spark is sufficient to kindle dry wood; moreover, indulgence does not satisfy the appetite for the first sip only makes the thirst all the keener. Consequently, it is part of virtue's task to lead men to refrain from pleasures. By thus avoiding any excess, the mean of virtue will be more easily attained.

[146] Also, they who give themselves up to pleasures grow soft in spirit and become weak-minded when it is a question of tackling some difficult enterprise, enduring toll, and facing dangers. Whence, too, indulgence in pleasures is detrimental to warfare, as Vegetius puts it in his *On the Art of Knighthood* (*De re militari* I, 3) "He fears death less who knows that he has had little pleasure in life."

[147] Finally, men who have become dissolute through pleasures usually grow lazy and, neglecting necessary matters and all the pursuits that duty lays upon them, devote themselves wholly to the quest of pleasure, on which they squander all that others had so carefully amassed. Thus, reduced to poverty and yet unable to deprive themselves of their wonted pleasures, they do not shrink from stealing and robbing in order to have the wherewithal to indulge their craving for pleasure.

[148] It is therefore harmful to a city to superabound in delightful things, whether it be on account of its situation or from whatever other cause. However, in human intercourse it is best to have a moderate share of pleasure as a spice of life, so to speak, wherein man's mind may find some recreation.

APPENDIX

SELECTED PARALLEL TEXTS

1. *Contra Impugnantes Dei Cultum et Religionem*, ch. 5

Avicenna says: Nature did not give covering to man (as she gave hair to other animals), nor means of defence (as the oxen received horns and the lions claws); nor did nature prepare man's food (except the mother's milk). Instead of all this man was endowed with reason to provide for these things, and with hands to execute the providence of reason, as the Philosopher says.

> AVICENNA *De Anima* (*Sextus Naturalium*) V, 1: fol. 22rb: Man's actions possess certain properties which proceed from his soul and are not found in other animals. The first of these is that man's being in which he is created, could not last if he did not live in society. Man is not like other animals, each of which is self-sufficient for living with what it has by its nature. One man, on the contrary, if he were alone and left to rely on nothing but what he has by nature, would soon die, or at least his life would be miserable and certainly worse than it was meant to be. This is because of the nobility of man's nature and the ignobility of the nature of other beings... It is necessary for man to add certain things to what nature gives him: he must needs prepare his food and also his clothing; for raw food, not treated by art, is unbecoming to him: he would not be able to live well with it. Likewise does he have to treat certain materials and make them into garments, while other animals have their covering by nature. First of all, then, man needs the art of agriculture, and, in the second place, many other arts. Now, one man would be unable to acquire all these necessaries of life, if he were alone... He can do so, however, in society where one bakes the other's bread and the latter in turn weaves the former's clothes, and one man imports wares from far-away lands for which he receives remuneration from the produce of another man's country. These are the most evident among many other reasons why it is necessary for man to possess the natural ability to express to his fellowmen what is in his mind.... Thefirst and the easier means of doing this is through the voice... [the other, a more laborious one, being through gesture ...] Nature bestowed upon man's soul the faculty to compose out of sounds a sign which is capable of being understood by others. Other animals also utter sounds by which they are able to indicate their wants. Yet these sounds have but a natural and confused signification indicating only in a general way what is wanted or not wanted. Human sounds, on the contrary, may distinctly signify an infinite range of wants. Hence they in their turn are infinite in number.—Cf. Plato, *Republic* II, 11 ff. (369B ff); Aristotle, Politics III, 9: 1280a 25 ff.

2. *In Libros Ethicorum Aristotelis Expositio,* Lib. I, lect. 1

Man is by nature a social animal, since he stands in need of many vital things which he cannot come by through his own unaided effort (Avicenna). Hence he is naturally part of a group by which assistance is given him that he may live well. He needs this assistance with a view to life

as well as to the good life. First, with a view to life, i.e., to having all those things which are necessary for life and without which this earthly lifecannot be lived. In this regard, assistance is given to man by the group called the household of which he is part. For everyone has from. his parents birth, nourishment and education. Also all the members of the household or family help one another in regard to the necessities of life. Assistance of another kind comes to man by another group of which he is part, assistance, that is, in view of the perfect fullness of life, in other words, that man may not only live but also live well, being equipped with all the things that make for the perfection of living. For this purpose, assistance comes to man from the civil group of which he is part. This assistance concerns not only man's corporal needs inasmuch as there are in a city many crafts which one household could not develop, but also his moral needs. Public power, indeed, by making itself feared, puts restraint upon those insolent youths who could not be corrected by paternal admonitions. [See *Summa* I-II, 95, 4.]

3. *In Libros Politicorum Aristotelis Expositio*, Lib. I, lect. 1. [*Pol.* I, 2; 1252b 12: The definition of the household.]

The Philosopher shows here for what purpose the community of the household is instituted. It is to be borne in mind that every human communication is built upon certain doings of men. Thereare some things which need to be done every clay, such as eating, seeking protection from the cold, and such like. Other things do not have to be done daily, such as trading, fighting the enemy, and such like. Now it is natural for men to communicate and to help one another in both these kinds of work. Therefore, Aristotle says, the household is a community naturally instituted for the life of every day, i.e., for those works which have to be done daily.

[*Ibid.* 1252b 15: The definition of the clan-village, called *vicus* in the mediaeval Latin translation.]

Here the Philosopher speaks about the [next] community, viz., the vicus. He calls vicus the first communication arising out of several households. It is the first communication after the household, since there is to follow another one, viz., the city. The vicus is not instituted for the life of every day, as was the household, but with a view to needs not recurring daily. The members of this community do not come together to communicate concerning those things which are to be done daily, such as eating, and sitting by the fire, and such like, but concerning external works transcending the daily round of necessities.

[*Ibid.* 1252b 16: The *vicus* appears to be most natural.]

The Philosopher says that the neighbourhood or vicinity of houses (which is the *vicus*) appears to be a most natural form of community; for nothing is more natural in the realm of live beings than the propagation of many from one: and this constitutes the cluster of homes (*vicinia domorum*.)

[Ibid. 1252b 27: The definition of the city.]

The Philosopher shows that in the nature of a city there are three essential characteristics. His first point is to determine what are the material elements of the city. Just as the *vicus* is composed of several households, so is the city composed of several *vici*. The second affirmation [concerns the formal characteristic of a city.] The city is the perfect community. This, Aristotle explains thus: Since every communication, whenever it is found among men, is ordained to something necessary for life, that community will be the perfect community which is ordained to the end

that man may have the fullness of human life: and this is the city. For it is in the city that man finds the satisfaction of whatever needs human life may have in the circumstances in which it is lived (*sicut contingit esse*). Thus the city is composed of several vici in one of which the Smith's craft is exercised, in another the weaver's craft, and so on. It is clear then that the city is the perfect community. In the third place, the Philosopher shows to what end or purpose the city is instituted. Its origin, indeed, may be ascribed to the purpose of simply living, inasmuch as men find in it the things which make their life livable at all. But once it exists, it will provide men with the means not only to live but also to live well, inasmuch as, by the laws of the city, life is made to be virtuous life.

[*Ibid*. 1253a 7: The reason why man is a political animal.]

The Philosopher demonstrates from a consideration of man~s proper operation that man.is a civic animal (animal civile), even more so than bees or other gregarious animals. This is the reason: We say that nature makes nothing in vain, because she always works for a definite purpose. When, therefore, nature endows a being with something which, of itself, is ordained to an end, it is evident that this end is proposed to that being by nature. Now, we see that certain animals possess the faculty of making sounds, while man alone, above all other animals, has the faculty of language. Even when certain animals may utter the language of man, they do not speak in a proper sense, since they do not understand what they say but are merely trained to utter these sounds. Yet there is a difference between language and simple sound. A sound is the sign of grief and pleasure, and consequently of other passions, such as anger and fear which, as is said in the second book of the *Ethics* [3: 1104b 14] are all ordained to pleasure and grief. Therefore the faculty of sound is given to other animals, whose nature attains to the point at which they have the perceptions of pleasure and grief; and this is what they signify to one another by certain natural sounds, the lion by roaring and the dog by barking, instead of which we have our interjections. Human language, on the other hand, signifies what is advantageous and what is harmful. From this it follows that it signifies what is just and what is unjust. For justice and injustice consist in this, that several persons are adjusted, or not adjusted, to one another in respect of things advantageous or harmful. So language is proper to men, since it is a peculiarity of theirs in comparison with the rest of the animal world that they possess the knowledge of good and evil, of the just and the unjust, and of other similar relations.... In these things men communicate one with another naturally. Since, therefore, this communication constitutes the household and the city, man is naturally a domestic and a civic animal.

4. *In Libros Ethicorum Aristotelis Expositio*, Lib. VIII, lect. 10

[*Eth. Nic.* VIII, 10; 1160a 31-35: The classification of the constitutions.]

There are three species of constitutions and an equal number of corruptions or deviation-forms. The right constitutions are, first, kingship, i.e., the rule of one man; second, aristocracy, i.e., the rule of the best (this kind of civic order is indeed ruled by the virtuous men); thirdly, timocracy. Such a third species will have to be assumed, although not all agree to do so, as is said in the fifth (?) book of the *Politics* [IV, 3: 1290a 22]. Timocracy is fittingly called so from the [Greek] word *timae* which means remuneration (*pretium*); for under this constitution the poor are remunerated for attending, and the rich fined for not attending, the civic assemblies, as is said in

the fourth book of the Politics.

St. Thomas refers to *Pol.* V, 13: 1297a 17 ff, 20. Manifestly the translation of the word *timae*by *pretium* made it impossible for him to understand this Aristotelian teaching. The wordtimocracy is derived from *timema*, i.e., valuation of property (in Latin *census*). Timocracy thusis the rule of those who are equals, in virtue of coming up to a certain moderate propertyqualification. Aquinas is quite aware of the insufficiency of his commentary on timocracy, forin none of his other writings does he make use of this notion.

Close Others call this constitution by the generic name polity, since it is that of the rich and the poor alike; compare the fourth book of the *Politics*.
[*Ibid.* 35-36: Their respective value.]

Comparing these constitutions the Philosopher says that the best is kingship, since under this form of government one man, and the best of all, holds power. The least good is timocracy which is the ruling of the mediocre. Between these extremes lies aristocracy in which a few of the best are ruling but with less power of action than is invested in one man acting well and possessing the plenitude of power.

[*Ibid.* 1160a 36-b 12: On kingship and tyranny.]

...Tyranny is the deviation-form or corruption of kingship. [Thus these forms stand to each other in the opposition of contrariety.] In regard to this point, Aristotle shows, first, that both forms are of the same genus, for both are monarchies, i.e., one-man governments. Second, he brings out their differences, saying that they differ most widely, from which it appears that they are contraries. For contraries, being of the same genus, are most widely distant one from the other. What the difference is between tyranny and kingship, the Philosopher declares by saying that, in this regime, the tyrant looks to his own advantage, while the king has his eye on that of his subjects. This is further evidenced in what follows: The true king, Aristotle says, is sufficient for governing by his own resources and, therefore, should possess all good things: the goods of the soul, -those of the body, and external goods; and he should possess them in such abundance that he be worthy and, at the same time potent, to hold power. If he is such, he needs nothing further and so will not be tempted to care for his own advantage as do those who still are in need. The king will be the benefactor of his subjects, which is the attribute of those who have an overflowing abundance of good things. If a king is not such a man, he is rather a *clerotos*, as Aristotle says, which means he is king [not naturally but] by the decision of the lots. On the other hand, the tyrant, since he pursues his own interest, is the very contrary of the king. Hence it is clear that tyranny is the worst deviation-form. For it is the contrary of the best that is worst and a man passes over from kingship, i.e., the best form, to tyranny which is a de-o pravity of monarchy, i.e., one-nign rule; in other words, it is the bad king who becomes a tyrant. Tyranny, then, the Philosopher concludes, is the worst form of government.

[*Ibid.* 1260b 12-16: The corruption of aristocracy.]

Aristocracy, in its turn, passes over into oligarchy, i.e., the dominion of a few. This happens on account of the badness of the rulers who do not distribute according to worthiness the goods which belong to the city but snatch away either all or a great deal of them, for their own use and in order to enrich themselves and their friends. Thus it comes about that instead of the most worthy (who are the rulers in an aristocracy) there are now a few and bad man at the head of the

city.

[*Ibid.* 16-22: The corruption of timocracy.]

Timocracy, according to the Philosopher, is corrupted into democracy, i.e., the power of the people. These forms are coterminous, i.e., close to each other. They are alike in two regards. First, timocracy (meaning the constitution characterized by a certain system of remunerations) as well as democracy are forms of government in which the many have power; second, in either constitution the criterion of estimating who are "the best people" is the same (*omnes qui sunt in honoribus constituti sunt aequales*). The difference between them consists in that timocracy keeps in view the common good of both the rich and the poor, while democracy knows only of the good of the poor. Hence democracy is the least bad of the deviation-forms. Its distance from timocracy which is a right constitution is very small indeed.

5. *In Libros Politicorum Aristotelis Expositio*, Lib. III, lect. 5-6.

[*Pol.* III, 6; 1279a 17-21: The distinction between right and wrong constitutions.]

The Philosopher propounds the distinction between right and unjust constitutions. Since don-Anion over free men is ordained to the interest of the subjects, it is clear that, when a constitution makes the holders of power aim at the common interest, it is a right constitution, judging by the standards of absolute justice. When, on the contrary, a constitution looks only to the interest of those who possess political power, it is a wrong constitution and a perversion of the right form. For there is, in this case, no absolute justice, i.e., justice for all, but only relative justice, namely, for those who are atthe top. They therefore exercise dominion over the city by using the citizens as slaves to the rulers' own advantage; and that is against justice, since the city is a community of freemen, the slaves not being citizens at all.

[*Ibid.* 7; 1279a 25-32: The classification of the constitutions.]

Here the Philosopher classifies the constitutions... A constitution, he says, is the ordering, in a city, of those who have power and those who are subjected (*ordo dominantium in civitate*). Therefore, the criterion for classifying the constitutions will be found in the diversity of those who possess the power. They are either One, or Few, or Many. Further, in each case, there are two different possibilities. Power is held either for the common advantage, and in this case the constitution will be right; or for the advantage of the holders themselves, and in this case the constitution will be a perversion, no matter whether power is vested in one, or a few, or many. For this is the alternative: either the subjects are not citizens: [then they have no part in the common utility]; or they [are citizens and] have their share in the common good.

[*Ibid.* 1279a 32- b 4: The names of the right constitutions.]

Now the Philosopher proceeds to declarethe names of these constitutions. . . . If there is dominion of one man directed towards the common interest, the constitution is called monarchy, in the general use of language. If a few are holding the power and using it for the common good, this is an aristocracy, so-called because political power is held by the best, i.e., the virtuous men, or again because it is used for the best interest of the city and of all citizens. Finally, if many have power and exercise it with a view to the common interest, the constitution is commonly called polity which is the generic name of all constitutions. There is a good reason for this usage which gives to this form the generic name. It is easy to find in a city one man or a few who are of

outstanding virtue. But it is very difficult indeed for there to be many who attain to the perfection of virtue. Most likely, however, one virtue will be common to a greater number of men, viz., military bravery. This is the reason why under this constitution warriors and those who carry arms are at the top.

[*Ibid.* 6-10: The names of the perverted constitutions.]

...They are as follows: The perversion of kingship is called tyranny; the perversion of aristocracy, oligarchy (which means: power of the few); finally democracy (meaning; power of the people, or rather the vulgar mass) is the perversion of that polity in which the many dominate but on the basis of at least one virtue, viz., military bravery. Hence, Aristotle concludes, tyranny is the dominion of one man aiming at his own interest; oligarchy is the dominion of a few aiming at the interest of the rich; democracy is the dominion of many aiming at the interest of the poor. None of these constitutions takes thought for the common good.

[*Ibid.* 8; 1279b 34-1280a 6: The criterion of number is not adequate.]

[After closer examination of these definitions] it appears that, in the case of democracy the large number of the holders of power is an accidental circumstance; and likewise, in the case of oligarchy the small number is merely accidental. For it is nothing but a fact that everywhere there are more poor than rich people. The above mentioned names, therefore, owe their origin [not to a universally valid reason but] simply to a fact which happens to be true in most of the cases. Since, however, a specific differentiation cannot be obtained on the basis of what is merely accidental, it follows that, per se, the distinction between oligarchies and democracies cannot be made in virtue of the larger or smaller number of the rulers. Rather their specific difference results from the difference between poverty and riches. If a regime is ordained to the increase of the possessions of the rich, its very species is determined by this end and it is for this reason that it differs specifically from a regime whose end is liberty, which regime is democracy. Hence, wherever the rich hold political power, no matter whether they are many or few, there will be oligarchy; and wherever the poor hold this power, there will be democracy; and that the latter are many and the former few is nothing but an accidental circumstance. For only a few have riches yet all partake of liberty. This is why both classes fight each other. The few want to dominate for the sake of their possessions and the many want to prevail upon the few since they believe that, by the criterion of liberty, they have just as good a right to political power as the rich.

6. *Scriptum Super Libros Sententiarum* II, dist. 44, q. II, a. 2.

[The problem is whether Christians are bound to obey secular powers, especially tyrants.]

The procedure in discussing this problem is this: It seems that they are not bound to this obedience... The fourth argument [in favour of this position) runs as follows: It is legitimate for anyone, who can do so, to re-take what has been taken away from him unjustly. Now many secular princes unjustly usurped the dominion of Christian lands. Since, therefore, in such cases rebellion is legitimate, Christians have no obligation to obey these princes. —The fifth argument: If it is a legitimate and even a praiseworthy deed to kill a person, then no obligation of obedience exists toward that person. Now in the *Book on Duties* [*De Officiis* I, 8, 26] Cicero justifies Julius Caesar's assassins. Although Caesar was a close friend of his, yet by usurping the empire he proved himself to be a tyrant. Therefore toward such powers there is no obligation of obedience.

On the other hand, however, there are the following arguments proving the contrary position: First, it is said: Servants, be in subjection to your masters (1 Pet. 2:18.) Second, it is also said: He who resists the power, withstands the ordinance of God (Rom. xiii, 2.) Now it is not legitimate to withstand the ordinance of God. Hence it is not legitimate either to withstand secular power.

Solution and determination. Obedience, by keeping a commandment, has for its [formal] object the obligation, involved in the cominandment, that it be kept. Now this obligation originates in that the commanding authority has the power to impose an obligation binding not only to external but also to internal and spiritual obedience—"for conscience sake", as the Apostle says (Rom. xiii, 5.) For power (authority) comes from God, as the Apostle implies in the same place. Hence, Christians are bound to obey the authorities inasmuch as they are from God; and they are not bound to obey inasmuch as the authority is not from God.

Now, this not being from God may be the case, first, as to the mode in which authority is acquired, and, second, as to the use which is made of authority.

Concerning the first case we must again distinguish two defects: There may be a defect of the person acquiring authority inasmuch as this person is unworthy of it. There may also be a defect in the mode of acquiring authority, namely, if it is obtained by violence, or simony, or other illegitimate means.

As to the first of these defects, we say that it does not constitute an obstacle against acquiring lawful authority. Since, then, as such, authority is always from God (and this is what causes the obligation of obedience), the subjects are bound to render obedience to these authorities, unworthy as they may be.

As to the second of those defects, we say that in such a case there is no lawful authority at all. He who seizes power by violence does not become a true holder of power. Hence, when it is possible to do so, anybody may repel this domination, unless, of course, the usurper should later on have become a true ruler by the consent of the subjects or by a recognition being extended to him by a higher authority.

The abuse of power might take on two forms. First, a commandment emanating from the authority might be contrary to the very end in view of which authority is instituted, i.e., to be an educator to, and a preserver of, virtue. Should therefore the authority command an act of sin contrary to virtue, we not only are not obliged to obey but we are also obliged not to obey, according to the example of the holy martyrs who preferred death to obeying those ungodly tyrants.

The second form of abusing power is for the authority to go beyond the bounds of its legal rights, for instance, when a master exacts duties which the servant is not bound to pay, or the like. In this case the subject is not obliged to obey, but neither is he obliged not to obey.

Consequently... to the fourth argument the answer is this: An authority acquired by violence is not a true authority, and there is no obligation of obedience, as we said above.

To the fifth argument the answer is that Cicero speaks of domination obtained by violence and ruse, the subjects being unwilling or even forced to accept it and there being no recourse open to a superior who might pronounce judgment upon the usurper. In this case he that kills the tyrant

for the liberation of the country, is praised and rewarded.

See however *Summa* II-II, 42, 2 arg. 3 and ad 3; *ibid.* 64, 3.

Close

7. *Contra Gentiles* IV, 76.

...It is evident that, although there are many different peoples in different dioceses and cities, yet there is one Christendom (*Populus Christianus*), just as there is one Church. Therefore, just as there is one bishop appointed to one particular people in order to be the head of them all, so in the whole of Christendom one must be the head of the whole Church....

> JOHN OF PARIS thought ftt to correct this text in the following way: It is evident that, although there are many different peoples in different dioceses and cities, in which the bishops hold authority in matters spiritual, yet there is one Church of all the Faithful and one Christendom. Therefore, just as there is one bishop in every diocese appointed to be the head of the particular church of that people, so in the whole Church and in the whole of Christendom, there is one supreme bishop, viz., the Pope. —*De Potestate Regia et Papali* (A.D. 1302), ch. III.

8. *Scriptum, Super Libros Sententiarum* II, dist. 44, Expositio textus.

[The problem is whether we should obey a superior authority more than an inferior one.]

If the position be taken that such is indeed our duty, this seems not to be true.... For [fourth argument] spiritual power is higher than secular power. If, then, it were true that we must obey more the superior power, the spiritual power would have the right always to release a man from his allegiance to a secular power, which is evidently not true.

Solution and determination. Two cases are to be considered in which we find the superior and the inferior authorities standing in different relations one to the other. First, the inferior authority originates totally from the superior authority. In this case, absolutely speaking and in all events, greater obedience is due to the superior power. An illustration of this is the order of natural causes: the first cause has a stronger impact upon the thing caused by a second cause than has this very second cause, as is said in the *Liber De Causis* [1]. In this position we find God's power in regard to every created power, or likewise the Emperor's power in regard to that of the Proconsul, or again the Pope's power in regard to every spiritual power in the Church, since by the Pope all degrees of different dignities in the Church are distributed and ordered. Whence papal authority is one of the foundations of the Church, as is evident from Matthew 16:18. So in all things, without any distinction, the Pope ought to be obeyed more than Bishops and Archbishops; (more also by the monk than is the abbot).—The second case to be considered is, that both the superior and the inferior powers originate from one supreme power. Their subordination, thus, depends on the latter who subordinates one to the other as he pleases. As to this case we say that here one power is superior to the other only in regard to those matters in view of which they have been so suborclinated one to the other by that supreme power. Hence in these matters alone greater obedience is due to the superior than to the inferior. An example of

this is our relation to the authorities of a Bishop and an Archbishop, both of which descend from the papal authority.

The answer then... to the fourth argument is this. Spiritual as well as secular power comes from the divine power. Hence secular power is subjected to spiritual power in those matters concerning which the subjection has been specified and ordained by God, i.e., in matters belonging to the salvation of the soul. Hence in these we are to obey spiritual authority more than secular authority. On the other hand, more obedience is due to secular than to spiritual power in the things that belong to the civic good (*bonum civile*). For it is said Matthew 22:21: Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. A special case occurs, however, when spiritual and secular power are so joined in one person as they are in the Pope, who holds the apex of both spiritual and secular powers. This has been so arranged by Him who is both Priest and King, Priest Eternal after the order of Melchisedech, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Whose dominion shall not pass away, and his kingdom shall not be destroyed for ever and ever. Amen. [Conclusion of the second book of the *Scriptum*; this explains the doxological ending.]