

ARISTOTLE AND THOMAS AQUINAS ON DIVINE AND HUMAN HAPPINESS

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to compare Aristotle's and Thomas Aquinas's doctrines of divine and human happiness. I argue that the doctrine of participation creates a significant difference between the two theories. I proceed by first considering Aristotle's doctrines in the *Metaphysics* and the *Nicomachean Ethics* and indicating points of comparison between his theory and Aquinas's. I then consider Aquinas's doctrines in the *Summa Theologiae* and other works, during which I complete the comparison of those points that I indicated in my consideration of Aristotle's theory. My analysis of Aristotle shows that both God's activity and the essence of the human determines the nature of human happiness, and my analysis of Aquinas shows how beatitude is the final cause of the *Summa Theologiae*. My comparison shows that participation creates a difference between Aristotle's and Aquinas's positions on the content of God's contemplation and the human's relation to the divine in perfect happiness.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

WORKS OF ARISTOTLE

<i>APo.</i>	<i>Posterior Analytics</i>
<i>Cat.</i>	<i>Categories</i>
<i>DA</i>	<i>De Anima</i>
<i>EE</i>	<i>Eudemian Ethics</i>
<i>Meteor.</i>	<i>Meteorology</i>
<i>MP</i>	<i>Metaphysics</i>
<i>NE</i>	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>
<i>Pol.</i>	<i>Politics</i>
<i>Top.</i>	<i>Topics</i>

WORKS OF AQUINAS

<i>1 Sent.</i>	<i>Scriptum super sententiis liber 1</i>
<i>4 Sent.</i>	<i>Scriptum super sententiis liber 4</i>
<i>Comp. The.</i>	<i>Compendium theologiae</i>
<i>De ebdo.</i>	<i>Expositio libri Boetii de ebdomadibus</i>
<i>De Pot.</i>	<i>Quaestiones disputatae de potentia</i>
<i>DV</i>	<i>Quaestiones disputatae de veritate</i>
<i>In Metaph.</i>	<i>In duodecim libros metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio</i>
<i>SLDA</i>	<i>Sententia libri de anima</i>
<i>SLE</i>	<i>Sententia libri ethicorum</i>
<i>ScG</i>	<i>Summa contra Gentiles</i>

<i>ST</i>	<i>Summa theologiae</i>
<i>Super 1 ad Cor.</i>	<i>Super 1 epistolam B. Pauli ad Corinthios lectura</i>
<i>Super 1 ad Tim.</i>	<i>Super 1 epistolam B. Pauli ad Timotheum lectura</i>
<i>Super DT</i>	<i>Super Boetium de trinitate</i>
<i>Super Is.</i>	<i>Expositio super Isaiam ad litteram</i>
<i>Super Psalmos</i>	<i>In psalmos Davidis expositio</i>

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The most prominent of Thomas Aquinas's philosophical and religious authorities upon whom he draws to formulate his doctrine of happiness are Aristotle, Augustine, and Boethius. Aquinas consistently appeals to these three figures in his accounts of divine happiness in the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae* (*ST*) and of human happiness in the *Secunda Pars*. However, this study will not consider Augustine's and Boethius' influence on Aquinas. Rather, the goal of this study is to compare Aristotle's and Aquinas's doctrines of divine and human happiness.

Let me introduce the focus of my comparison with a passage from Louis-Bertrand Geiger's study on participation in Thomas Aquinas:

In Aristotle, apart from the passages where they serve to define the Platonic doctrine, the term μέθεξις or the verb μετέχειν are extremely rare. They almost never have any other meaning than that of the current language. One can not be surprised if it is true that participation does not offer any philosophical content in the eyes of Aristotle. In St. Thomas, on the contrary, the terms: *participatio*, *participare*, and their derivatives, are found on every page.¹

Some studies have compared Aristotle's and Aquinas's doctrines of happiness,² yet the role that participation plays in creating a difference between their theories has not been

¹ L.-B Geiger, *La participation dans la philosophie de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Montréal: Institut d'Etudes Médiévales, 1952, 10-11. This is my own translation.

² For studies on Aquinas' interpretation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and its influence on his doctrine of happiness generally, see Harry V. Jaffa, *Thomism and Aristotelianism: A Study of the Commentary by Thomas Aquinas on the Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979); Jörn Müller, *Duplex Beatitudo: Aristotle's Legacy and Aquinas's Conception of Human Happiness*, in *Aquinas and the Nicomachean Ethics*, edited by Tobias Hoffman, Jörn Müller, and Matthias Perkams (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), 52-71; Anthony Kenny, "Aquinas on Aristotelian Happiness," in *Aquinas's Moral Theory: Essays in Honor of Norman Kretzmann*, edited by S. MacDonald and E. Stump (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 15-27; T.H. Irwin, "Aquinas, Natural Law, and Aristotelian Eudaimonism," in *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, edited by Richard Kraut (MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 323-341. For studies that explore contemplation in Aquinas and its relation to Aristotelian contemplation, see Mary Catherine Sommers, "Contemplation and Action in Aristotle and Aquinas," in *Aristotle in Aquinas' Theology*, edited by Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering (Oxford: OUP, 2015), 167-185; Adriano Oliva, "La Contemplation des Philosophes selon Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 96 (2012): 585-662. For studies on Aquinas's interpretation of Aristotle's perfect happiness as imperfect happiness, see Don Adams, "Aquinas on Aristotle on Happiness," *Medieval*

sufficiently explored. Recently, however, Wayne Hankey has researched this topic, and his studies show that it is a fruitful area for further research.³ My comparison of Aristotle and Aquinas, building upon Hankey's recent work, will largely focus on how participation creates a difference between their theories of happiness; however, I will also explore significant differences in their theories that do not relate to participation. I will accomplish this comparison by treating Aristotle's theory on its own and indicating points of comparison between his theory and Aquinas's. Then, I will consider Aquinas's doctrines on their own and complete the comparison of those points that I indicated in my consideration of Aristotle's theory.

Let us consider in outline the specific problems and points of comparison that we will examine in each chapter. In chapter two, I will first consider Aristotle's doctrine of divine happiness in the *Metaphysics* (*MP*) in respect to two questions: "What is God's happiness?" and "Does God's happiness include the knowledge of creatures?" The answer to the latter question is contentious, and Aquinas inherits this problem from Aristotle. Aquinas's solution to it, as we will see, leads to a difference between himself and Aristotle on divine happiness. Next, I will consider Aristotle's doctrine of human happiness. The main question that guides my analysis is "What determines the nature of human happiness?" On the one hand, it seems that the essence of the human determines human happiness, and, on the other hand, it seems that God's activity does. Two issues

Philosophy and Theology 1 (1991): 98-118; Anthony Celano, "The Concept of Worldly Beatitude in the Writings of Thomas Aquinas," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 25 (1987): 215-26.

³ W. J. Hankey, "Placing the Human: Establishing Reason by its Participation in Divine Intellect for Boethius and Aquinas," *Res Philosophica* 95, no. 4 (2018): 1-33. W. J. Hankey, "Complectitur Omnem": Divine and Human Happiness in Aristotle and Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*," *Kronos Philosophical Journal* (Forthcoming). W. J. Hankey, "Participatio divini luminis. Aquinas' doctrine of the Agent Intellect: Our Capacity for Contemplation," *Dionysius* 22 (2004): 149-78.

are involved in this question. First, the definition of the human in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (*NE*) seems to be ambiguous: is the human practical intellect or theoretical intellect? Secondly, can the competing claims that the human definition determines happiness and that God's activity determines happiness be reconciled? I will argue that they can be reconciled through the Aristotle's doctrine of *pros hen* homonymy.

However, this solution leads to a problem. It implies that when humans contemplate and attain perfect happiness, human nature loses its distinction from divine nature. This inference involves the same difficulty as we find in *NE* 10.7; namely, that the intellect and the life of contemplation appear to be divine and above the human yet proper to the human. Aquinas's solution to this problem, as we will see, leads to another difference between himself and Aristotle. Finally, in addition to the problems of whether God contemplates creatures and whether a human's nature during contemplation is distinguished from the divine nature, there is a third problem that Aquinas inherits from Aristotle; namely, whether the soul is immortal. Since Aquinas's solutions to these three problems require an extended consideration of Aquinas's doctrines, I will develop these problems in chapter two but leave Aquinas' solutions to chapter three.

In chapter three, I will argue that happiness is the final cause of the *ST* and that Aquinas orders the content of the *ST* according to the neoplatonic *exitus-reditus* pattern (remaining, going-out, and returning). In light of these conclusions, the main question that drives my analysis in chapter three is "How does Aquinas develop the content of the *ST* according to this *exitus-reditus* pattern so that the *ST* achieves its end of demonstrating the nature of and the way to happiness?" To answer this question, I will first examine the "remaining" aspect of this pattern in the *Prima Pars* on God. Secondly, I will consider

humans gone out from God and seeking happiness through their free will and natural powers in the *Secunda Pars*. Finally, we will see how Christ, who unites humans to God in perfect happiness, accomplishes the *reditus* of the *ST* in the *Tertia Pars*.

In chapter three, I also continue my comparison of Aquinas and Aristotle. I will show that, in his Aristotelian commentaries, Aquinas uses the doctrine of participation to solve the three problems which he inherits from Aristotle and that he, therefore, attributes the doctrine of participation to Aristotle. This attribution is interesting since Aristotle criticizes participation in the *MP*. Plato posited that changeable sensible things exist by participation in unchangeable immaterial entities, but Aristotle writes

[i]n respect to ‘participation,’ Plato changed the name only. For the Pythagoreans said that the things which exist by the imitation of numbers, but Plato by participation, changing the name. Yet what the participation or imitation of the forms might be they left to seek in common.⁴

One of my tasks in chapter three, then, will be to show where in Aristotle’s philosophy Aquinas may have found the doctrine of participation. I will argue that he finds it in Aristotle’s doctrine of *pros hen* homonymy, which Aquinas calls analogy. Furthermore, I will also show that Aquinas’s doctrine of participation leads to the two differences between him and Aristotle that I pointed to in my outline of chapter two. Aquinas’s doctrine of participation allows him to differentiate creatures from God and draw them back into God’s beatitude, and participation also allows Aquinas to distinguish human nature from the divine nature when humans attain perfect happiness in the vision of God.

⁴ *MP* 1.6.987b10-14: τὴν δὲ μέθεξιν τοῦνομα μόνον μετέβαλεν· οἱ μὲν γὰρ Πυθαγόρειοι μιμήσει τὰ ὄντα φασὶν εἶναι τῶν ἀριθμῶν, Πλάτων δὲ μεθέξει, τοῦνομα μεταβαλὼν. τὴν μέντοι γε μέθεξιν ἢ τὴν μίμησιν ἥτις ἂν εἴη τῶν εἰδῶν ἀφεῖσαν ἐν κοινῷ ζητεῖν (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, edited by W. D. Ross, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924)). Unless I indicate otherwise, all translations from Greek and Latin texts are my own but are assisted at times by those translations that I include in the bibliography.

CHAPTER 2: ARISTOTLE ON DIVINE AND HUMAN HAPPINESS

2.1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter three, I organize my analysis of Aquinas's doctrine of divine and human happiness according to the order of the *ST*: divine happiness, the relation between human and divine happiness, and human happiness. For the purpose of comparison, I will also organize Aristotle's account in the same manner. I begin by considering divine happiness in the *Metaphysics*, then I will look at human happiness in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and finally I will draw on both works and the *De Anima* to consider the relationship between the two. My purpose in this chapter, then, is twofold: firstly, I will consider Aristotle's theory of happiness in its own right, and, secondly, I will show how his doctrines agree or disagree with Aquinas's, or I will identify a point of comparison but postpone the comparison until the next chapter. Those comparisons which I postpone considering involve Aquinas' solutions to problems that Aristotle's account leaves for the later tradition and which require extended treatment of Aquinas' texts. These problems are the content of God's contemplation, the divinity of human *nous*, and whether the human soul is immortal.

The major tension that drives most of the analysis in this chapter is Aristotle's conflicting answers to the question "what determines the nature of human happiness?" Human happiness seems to be simultaneously determined by, on the one hand, the nature of the human (who can be considered as theoretical *nous* or practical *nous*) and, on the other hand, divine *nous*. At the end of this chapter, I will suggest that these two positions can be reconciled through Aristotle's concept of *pros hen* homonymy. However, I will also show that this solution leads to a marked contrast between Aristotle and Aquinas. In

Aristotle's account of happiness, human nature loses its integrity since he does not distinguish sharply enough between the human and the divine *nous*, whereas in Aquinas's account human nature is preserved through his doctrine of participation.⁵

2.2 *METAPHYSICS LAMBDA*: DIVINE HAPPINESS

2.2.1 The Nature and Happiness of God: Contemplation

My goal in section 2.2 is to consider Aristotle's doctrine of divine happiness, which is found in *NE* 10.8 and *MP* 12.6-9. This topic involves at least two issues, the first of which is the nature of God's happiness. I show that God's happiness is the activity of contemplation and that God is His happiness. The first issue leads to the second; namely, the content of God's contemplation. This second issue is determined by Aristotle's position in *MP* 12.9 that if *nous* is the most divine thing, then it must be a "thinking thinking of thinking" (ἡ νόησις νοήσεως νόησις). Does this mean that God is a Narcissus-like God who only thinks Himself, or does He think creatures as well? Aquinas unequivocally affirms that God has proper knowledge of creatures through knowing Himself, and he attributes this position to Aristotle, but Aristotelian scholars are divided over Aristotle's position. Let us begin with the first issue.

The subject of the inquiry of *MP* 12 is the principles and causes of substance. Aristotle divides substance into three types: perishable sensible substance, eternal sensible substance, and immutable substance (which is a truncated way of saying 'eternal immaterial substance,' for since it is immutable, it is also immaterial and eternal) (*MP*

⁵ Hankey, "Placing the Human," 1-33.

12.1). In *MP* 12.1-5 Aristotle treats the first two types of substance, and in *MP* 12.6-7 he aims to demonstrate the existence of “a certain eternal and immutable substance.”⁶ Let us consider, then, *MP* 12.6-7.

According to Aristotle, there must be an eternal substance, for “since substances are first among beings, if all substances are perishable, then all things are perishable.”⁷ Yet, motion and time are neither generated nor destroyed, and therefore there must exist some eternal cause of motion. Furthermore, since motion is eternal, “it is necessary that such a principle exists whose substance is actuality,”⁸ for if this principle possesses an essence with potentiality, then it may not exist, and therefore the motion that depends on it will not be eternal. From its pure actuality, it follows that this principle must be immaterial⁹ since matter is potentiality, and it also follows that this principle is immutable, for since it does not possess potentiality, it cannot be otherwise than it is.

As an object of desire, this immutable principle moves without being moved as an object of desire. Rational desire, for Aristotle, as for Aquinas, is the result of a thought process, and thought in turn is moved by the intelligible, and therefore the principle of desire is the intelligible. Furthermore, Aristotle argues that the primary intelligible is the good by employing two series of contraries; however, without going into the details of this series,¹⁰ we may still understand his general argument. One series is the intelligible, and within this series substance is first, and within substance the simple and actual substance is first; namely, the immutable principle in question. Since that which is first in

⁶ *MP* 12.6 1071b4-5: ἀίδιον τινα οὐσίαν ἀκίνητον.

⁷ *MP* 12.6 1071b5-6: οὐσίαι πρῶται τῶν ὄντων, καὶ εἰ πᾶσαι φθαρταί, πάντα φθαρτά.

⁸ *MP* 12.6 1071b19-20: δεῖ ἄρα εἶναι ἀρχὴν τοιαύτην ἧς ἡ οὐσία ἐνέργεια.

⁹ *MP* 12.6.

¹⁰ For a discussion of this series, see André Laks, “*Metaphysics Λ 7*,” in *Aristotle’s Metaphysics Lambda: Symposium Aristotelicum*, edited by Michael Frede and David Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 224-5.

a class is the best, this primary intelligible substance is the good and the first desirable. Therefore, this substance is a final cause, but a final cause as that towards which something aims rather than as a beneficiary.¹¹

In *MP* 12.6-7, then, Aristotle argues that there exists a type of substance which is eternal, immutable, pure actuality, the unmoved cause of motion as final cause, the first intelligible, the good, and the first object of desire. In *MP* 12.7, Aristotle concludes that “heaven and nature hang upon a principle such as this.”¹² Aristotle’s subsequent consideration of the life and happiness of this principle is illuminated by Richard Bodéüs’ study *Aristotle and the Theology of the Living Immortals*. He argues that Aristotle, in *MP* 12 and his other writings, does not break from his inherited polytheistic religion and endorse a monotheism; rather, he assumes and uses the received opinions about the gods in his philosophy. In light of this view, we should also recognize that Aristotle’s use of θεός can refer both to an individual god or the class of gods.¹³

In *NE* 10.8, Aristotle uses the received opinions about the gods to reason about the nature of perfect human happiness. He makes these two assumptions in his argument: “we assume that the gods are most of all blessed and happy”¹⁴ and “all assume that the [gods] live and are, therefore, active.”¹⁵ Therefore, since “the life of men are blessed

¹¹ Laks, “*Metaphysics* Λ 7,” 226-227 for the interpretation of Aristotle’s distinction of types of final cause.

¹² *MP* 12.7 1072b13-14: ἐκ τοιαύτης ἄρα ἀρχῆς ἤρτηται ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ φύσις

¹³ Richard Bodéüs, *Aristotle and the Theology of the Living Immortals*, translated by Jan Garrett (NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), 1-5, 8. Although Bodéüs makes this point, he thinks that *Lambda* does not “conform to the idea that the Greeks themselves had of a god” (Bodéüs, *Living Immortals*, 22). To explain this, he argues that the immaterial principle(s) in question is not among the gods of the Greek religion but is analogous to it, and therefore Aristotle brings in conceptions of Greek gods to reason about them (e.g., 1072b24-30) (ibid., 22-29). I do not adopt his interpretation on this point.

¹⁴ *NE* 10.8 1178b8-9: τοὺς θεοὺς γὰρ μάλιστα ὑπελήφασιν μακαρίους καὶ εὐδαίμονας εἶναι· (Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea*, edited by I. Bywater, Oxford Classical Texts (London: OUP, 1890)).

¹⁵ *NE* 10.8 1178b18-19: ἀλλὰ μὴν ζῆν γε πάντες ὑπελήφασιν αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐνεργεῖν ἄρα·

insofar as they possess a certain likeness of [the god's] activity,"¹⁶ Aristotle searches for the activity of the gods. He excludes both productive and practical activity and concludes, "what is left but contemplation? So that the activity of the god, which surpasses in blessedness, is contemplative, and of human activities, therefore, the one which is most akin to this is most blessed."¹⁷

In *MP* 12.7, Aristotle assumes both of these opinions about the gods; namely, that they are alive and happy. So, he begins simply by looking for what the life of this principle is like, but whereas he argues from the nature of God's happiness to the nature of human happiness in *NE* 10.8, he argues from the nature of the human life to God's life here:

Its life is like the best life we possess for a short time, for it always possesses this life, but this is impossible for us.... [Thinking] is in actuality when it possesses its object so that this rather than [the receptivity of thought] seems to be the intellect's divinity, and contemplation is the most pleasant and best.¹⁸

We should note, however, that reasoning from the human to the divine is what Kosman calls a reverse attribution; namely that, since human thinking has what we judge to be divine characteristics, it is the clearest "icon" of the divine essence.¹⁹ Ontologically, as we will see in the conclusion of this chapter, human life is like God's life, not the reverse.

Since human happiness is contemplative activity and the divine possesses such activity, Aristotle then compares human and divine happiness: "If, therefore, the god is always happy in this way, as we are sometimes, it is amazing. If the god is even happier,

¹⁶ *NE* 10.8 1178b26-7: τοῖς δ' ἀνθρώποις, ἐφ' ὅσον ὁμοίωμα τι τῆς τοιαύτης ἐνεργείας ὑπάρχει....

¹⁷ *NE* 10.8 1178b21-23: τί λείπεται πλὴν θεωρία; ὥστε ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐνέργεια, μακαριότητι διαφέρουσα, θεωρητικὴ ἂν εἴη· καὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων δὴ ἡ ταύτη συγγενεστάτη εὐδαιμονικωτάτη.

¹⁸ *MP* 12.7: 1072b14-24: διαγωγὴ δ' ἐστὶν οἷα ἡ ἀρίστη μικρὸν χρόνον ἡμῖν οὕτω γὰρ αἰεὶ ἐκεῖνο: ἡμῖν μὲν γὰρ ἀδύνατον.... ἐνεργεῖ δὲ ἔχων, ὥστ' ἐκεῖνου μᾶλλον τοῦτο ὁ δοκεῖ ὁ νοῦς θεῖον ἔχειν, καὶ ἡ θεωρία τὸ ἥδιστον καὶ ἄριστον.

¹⁹ Aryeh Kosman, *The Activity of Being: An Essay on Aristotle's Ontology* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2013), 215-17.

it is yet more amazing. But it is this way.”²⁰ Why does God possess always what we possess temporarily? This is so because God is essentially the actuality of thought, and therefore God is also his life and happiness:

Life belongs to God, for the actuality of the intellect is life, and God is this actuality. God’s essential actuality is life, best and eternal. Therefore, we say that God is a living thing which is eternal and best, so that continuous and eternal life belong to God, for this is God.²¹

2.2.2 Thinking Thinking of Thinking: The Content of God’s Thought

In *MP* 12.7, Aristotle concludes that God’s happiness and God Himself are life and active thinking. Now, because God’s happiness is active thinking, the object of active thinking enters His happiness. However, in *MP* 12.9, Aristotle raises a number of *aporiai* concerning the divine aspect of intellect, one of which concerns the nature of the object of divine thought, and so let us consider this *aporia*.

In this *aporia*, Aristotle lays out the possible objects of divine thinking thus: “it must think itself or something other, and if something other, then it must think the same thing always or something different.”²² He concludes that “it thinks itself, if it is the strongest, and thinking is a thinking of thinking”²³ (I will often refer back to this conclusion in what follows). What does Aristotle mean by “thinking is a thinking of thinking?” Two answers have been given. First, some hold that Aristotle is referring to self-reflexivity. This is a thinking that is both subject and object; namely, a thinking that

²⁰ *MP* 10.7 1072b24-26: εἰ οὖν οὕτως εὖ ἔχει, ὡς ἡμεῖς ποτέ, ὁ θεὸς ἀεὶ, θαυμαστόν: εἰ δὲ μᾶλλον, ἔτι θαυμασιώτερον. ἔχει δὲ ὧδε.

²¹ *MP* 10.7 1072b26-30: καὶ ζωὴ δὲ γε ὑπάρχει: ἢ γὰρ νοῦ ἐνέργεια ζωὴ, ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἡ ἐνέργεια: ἐνέργεια δὲ ἢ καθ’ αὐτὴν ἐκείνου ζωὴ ἀρίστη καὶ αἰδῖος. φαμὲν δὲ τὸν θεὸν εἶναι ζῶον αἰδῖον ἄριστον, ὥστε ζωὴ καὶ αἰὼν συνεχῆς καὶ αἰδῖος ὑπάρχει τῷ θεῷ: τοῦτο γὰρ ὁ θεός.

²² *MP* 12.9 1074b22-23: ἢ γὰρ αὐτὸς αὐτὸν ἢ ἕτερόν τι: καὶ εἰ ἕτερόν τι, ἢ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀεὶ ἢ ἄλλο.

²³ *MP* 12.9 1074b33-35: αὐτὸν ἄρα νοεῖ, εἴπερ ἐστὶ τὸ κράτιστον, καὶ ἔστιν ἡ νόησις νοήσεως νόησις.

thinks its own activity of thinking as object. Second, some hold that Aristotle is referring to an epistemic reflexivity. This is an act of cognition which is of an object other than itself and simultaneously of this act grasping its object. In this case we know that we know or understand that we understand. Some proponents of each interpretation maintain that God is narcissus-like (God is only aware of Himself), and other proponents of each hold that God thinks things other than Himself.²⁴

The standard interpretation holds that “thinking thinking of thinking” refers to self-reflexivity and that this interpretation implies a narcissus-like God.²⁵ This account reasons that since Aristotle says “it is clear, then, that [the divine aspect of intellect] thinks what is most divine and most honorable,”²⁶ and since God Himself is most honorable and is the activity of thinking, then God’s active thinking is the object of His active thinking. Yet, if God thinks Himself reflexively, then it does not necessarily follow that He only thinks Himself. Joseph Gerbasi argues that

Mind’s knowledge of its contrary form is contained within its knowledge of itself, just as the art of medicine knows both health and sickness. Moreover, the contrary to Mind is not a material potentiality but a formal privation.... The free self-determination of the divine intellect thinks this privation as its contrary to itself, but is not determined by it. Moreover, the divine’s various privations are the intelligible objects of desire that as desired determine the actual motion of all natural beings. It makes sense, then, to say that, for Aristotle, Mind thinking itself is no different than Mind thinking the logical structure of nature.²⁷

²⁴ For an overview of the positions on both sides, see Thomas De Koninck, “Aristotle on God as Thought Thinking Itself,” *Review of Metaphysics* 47 (1994): 471-515; and Lloyd P. Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2005), 196-197.

²⁵ For sketches of the standard interpretation, see Kosman, *the Activity of Being*, 221-3; Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists*, 197; Jacques Brunschwig, “*Metaphysics* Λ 9: A Short-Lived Thought-Experiment?” in *Aristotle’s Metaphysics Lambda: Symposium Aristotelicum*, ed. Michael Frede and David Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 287-8.

²⁶ *MP* 12.9 1074b25-26: δῆλον τοίνυν ὅτι τὸ θεϊώτατον καὶ τιμώτατον νοεῖ....

²⁷ Joseph Gerbasi, “The Metaphysical Origin of the Two-fold Conception of Human Selfhood in Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics” (master’s thesis, Dalhousie University, 2014), 39-40.

Gerbası’s interpretation of God’s self-reflexive thought is sympathetic to Aquinas’s in that Gerbası holds that God knows other things through knowing Himself. However, Aquinas explains how God has knowledge of other things differently than Gerbası and with principles foreign to Aristotle. In his *Metaphysics* commentary, Aquinas writes that God understands Himself most perfectly and that

the more perfectly a principle is thought, the more perfectly its effect is thought in it, for what has a principle is contained in the power of the principle. Therefore, since heaven and all nature depend on the first principle, God, it is clear that God by knowing Himself, knows all things.²⁸

I expand upon Aquinas’s reasoning in this passage in the next chapter.²⁹ There, we will see that Aquinas uses the notion of participation to explain how God knows creation through knowing His essence, and I will also argue that Aquinas implicitly attributes participation to Aristotle in this passage of his *Metaphysics* commentary.

Jacques Brunschwig maintains that Aristotle refers to both self-reflexivity and epistemic reflexivity in the conclusion to his *aporia* about the object of divine thought. To show this, Brunschwig points to the difficulty that Aristotle raises concerning this conclusion: “Yet, it appears that science and perception and opinion and discursive thought are always of something else and of themselves as a secondary activity.”³⁰ Brunschwig argues that this difficulty is a criticism of epistemic reflexivity, and thus

²⁸ *In Metaph.* 12 lect. 11 n. 2615: perfectissime ergo intelligit seipsum. Quanto autem aliquod principium perfectius intelligitur, tanto magis intelligitur in eo effectus eius: nam principiata continentur in virtute principii. Cum igitur a primo principio, quod est Deus, dependeat caelum et tota natura, ut dictum est, patet, quod Deus cognoscendo seipsum, omnia cognoscit. (Thomas Aquinas, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis exposition*, edited by M. R. Cathala and R. M. Spiazzi (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1950)).

²⁹ For a defense of Aquinas’ interpretation of “thinking thinking of thinking,” see Patrick Atherton, “The Validity of Thomas’ Interpretation of ΝΟΗΣΙΣ ΝΟΗΣΕΩΣ (*NOESIS NOESEOS*) (*Metaphy.* Λ 9, 1074b34-45),” *Atti del Congresso Internazionale Tommaso nel suo settimo centenario*, I (Napoli: Edizioni Domenicane Italiane, 1975), 156-62.

³⁰ *MP* 12.9 1074b35-36: φαίνεται δ’ αὐεὶ ἄλλου ἢ ἐπιστήμη καὶ ἡ αἴσθησις καὶ ἡ δόξα καὶ ἡ διάνοια, αὐτῆς δ’ ἐν παρέργῳ.

either the phrase “intellect thinks itself” or “thinking thinking of thinking” in the conclusion to which this criticism relates must refer to such reflexivity. Therefore, since he thinks that the former phrase clearly refers to self-reflexivity, he concludes that the later phrase must refer to epistemic reflexivity.³¹

In Aristotle’s reply to this new difficulty, which we will analyze below, Brunschwig maintains that Aristotle gives an interpretation of epistemic reflexivity that, if applied to the divine, allows for God to know multiple things. Yet, he argues that Aristotle, by the end of *MP* 12.9, thinks God is narcissus-like and, therefore, that Aristotle does not mean to apply this solution to God.³² He concludes that “(a) The doctrine of Λ 9 is a Narcissus-like theology. (b) It is substantially different from the doctrine of Λ 7, which is a theology of God’s omniscience (or rather omni-intellection). (c) Λ 9 is a provisional draft, later on supplanted by Λ 7.”³³

Along with Brunschwig, Aryeh Kosman holds that the difficulty that Aristotle raises with his conclusion concerning the object of divine thought shows that the phrase “thinking thinking of thinking” does not refer to self-reflexivity but that it refers to epistemic reflexivity.³⁴ However, Kosman disagrees with Brunschwig in two respects. First, Kosman holds that Aristotle does not refer to self-reflexivity at all in *MP* 12.9; divine thought is not its own object.³⁵ Secondly, Kosman holds that Aristotle does indeed apply the solution of the difficulty with epistemic reflexivity to God’s thought and, therefore, that the narcissus-like interpretation is incorrect.

³¹ Brunschwig, “*Metaphysics* Λ .9,” 288-290.

³² *Ibid.*, 296-7.

³³ *Ibid.*, 304.

³⁴ Kosman, *The Activity of Being*, 224.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 225.

Let us now consider Aristotle's solution to the difficulty that he raises with his conclusion about the object of divine intellect:

In some cases, the knowledge (ἡ ἐπιστήμη) is the thing itself (τὸ πρᾶγμα). For instance, in the productive sciences without matter, the substance and the essence, and in the theoretical sciences, the account (ὁ λόγος) or the thinking is the thing itself. Therefore, since thought and the object of thought are not different in those things which have no matter, they will be the same, and thinking will be one with what is thought.³⁶

In the speculative sciences, then, since the thinking is one with the object of thought, thinking is not of something else and only of itself incidentally, but the thinking of the object of thought is identical with the thinking of thinking. Kosman maintains that in this way thought thinks itself without becoming the object of thought, a concept which is distinct from self-reflexivity (when thinking thinks itself by becoming the explicit object of thought). In respect to God's thinking, Kosman writes,

The failure to mark this distinction has led some to regard Aristotle's view as the errant nonsense of supposing one might think a thought that is a nothing but the thinking of it, or to worry (as others have) that Aristotle's theology posits a god supremely narcissistic and wrapped (as one scholar puts it) in eternal self-contemplation. But these thoughts are errant nonsense; thought thinking itself signifies merely the activity of thinking, independent of the nature of its object and solely in terms of one central feature: the self-presence of the subject that is a condition of its consciousness.³⁷

For Kosman, "[a]ll cognition is objective; that is, it is intentional," but this does not hold for divine thinking on Kosman's view: "thinking thinking of thinking" is the isolated activity of thinking. Gerson, however, holds that both divine and human thought is intentional, and thus gives content to God's epistemically reflexive thinking:

Whether for humans or for God, in theoretical science, thinking is both intentional object and activity. Therefore, we need not suppose that just because the

³⁶ *MP* 12.9 1075a1-5: ἡ ἐπ' ἐνίων ἡ ἐπιστήμη τὸ πρᾶγμα, ἐπὶ μὲν τῶν ποιητικῶν ἄνευ ὕλης ἢ οὐσίας καὶ τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι, ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν θεωρητικῶν ὁ λόγος τὸ πρᾶγμα καὶ ἡ νόησις; οὐχ ἑτέρου οὐδ' ὄντος τοῦ νοουμένου καὶ τοῦ νοῦ, ὅσα μὴ ὕλην ἔχει, τὸ αὐτὸ ἔσται, καὶ ἡ νόησις τῷ νοουμένῳ μία.

³⁷ Kosman, *the Activity of Being*, 230.

intentional object of God's thinking is thinking that God's thinking has not content. In the case of these sciences, human thinking is thinking of thinking as well. We differ from God not because we alone have content but because we are not identical in essence with our thinking.³⁸

Aristotle leaves the problem of the content of God's contemplation for later interpreters, and they have wrestled with it. Aquinas inherits the problem and gives a solution that is not found among the modern scholarship considered here: he attributes participation to Aristotle, as we will see in the next chapter. Furthermore, Aquinas, in his own treatment of God's happiness, will explicitly differentiate what God knows from Him and then draw it back into His happiness according to the neoplatonic *exitus-reditus* pattern. This marks a major difference between Aquinas and Aristotle.

2.3. NICOMACHEAN ETHICS I: THE GENERAL DEFINITION OF HUMAN HAPPINESS

2.3.1 The Good Analyzed in Terms of Ends: A Dominant End

Let us now turn to Aristotle's doctrine of human happiness, which I consider in sections 2.3 and 2.4. Aquinas adopts Aristotle's analysis of happiness and the supreme good in *NE* 1,³⁹ and so it will be useful to make clear the points on which their doctrines of human happiness agree before we consider in the rest of the chapter the points on which their doctrines diverge. Therefore, here, I will give an exposition of Aristotle's search for the general definition of happiness in *NE* 1.1-7. First, we will consider Aristotle's analysis of the supreme good in terms of ends, and I side with those who view

³⁸ Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists*, 199.

³⁹ Jörn Müller, *Duplex beatitudo*, 52-71.

happiness as a dominant end (a single good) rather than an inclusive end (an aggregate of many goods).⁴⁰ Second, we will examine Aristotle's *ergon* argument in which he argues that human happiness is virtuous rational activity, and I will argue that this implies that human happiness is determined by the human essence.

Aristotle begins the *Nicomachean Ethics* by affirming the proposition that "the good is that at which all things aim."⁴¹ As such, the good is an end. For, in *NE* 1.7.1-2, Aristotle reasons that the good of each pursuit is that for which all else is done, yet that for which the rest are done is the end. Throughout *NE* 1.1-7, Aristotle analyzes the good as an end, which he also calls the *ergon*.⁴²

In *NE* 1.1.2-5, Aristotle outlines four relations that hold between different ends. First, ends may be arranged hierarchically; that is, one end may serve as a means to another end. Aristotle displays this hierarchical relationship in the relation of a master art (*ἀρχιτεκτονικός*) to its subordinate art. The master art includes or uses the ends of all other arts as means to its own end, and these other arts, since they are for the sake of a higher end, are subordinate to the master art. The second relationship is that all ends, except the absolutely final end, are relative. In other words, all ends can serve as means as well. This implies that "master art" and "subordinate art" are relative terms. To illustrate relations one and two, in *NE* 1.1.4-6 Aristotle shows that strategy is a master art over horsemanship and bridle-making, and so it uses the ends of both as means to achieve

⁴⁰ The distinction originates with Hardie (W. F. R. Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's Ethics," *Philosophy* 40 (1965): 277-295), and the inclusivist interpretation is championed by Ackrill (J. L. Ackrill, "Aristotle on Eudaimonia," in *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics*, ed. A. Rorty (CA: University of California Press, 1980), 15-34). Both Kraut and Lear evaluate Ackrill's argument in depth and conclude, convincingly, that it is specious (Richard Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 267-311; Gabriel Richardson Lear, *Happy Lives and the Highest Good: An Essay on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 40-46).

⁴¹ *NE* 1.1 1094a3: τὰγαθὸν οὗ πάντ' ἐφίεται.

⁴² *EE* 2.1 1219a8-13.

its own end. However, in relation to politics, strategy is a subordinate art whose end is used as a means by politics.

The third and fourth principles are closely related. The third principle is that the end is better than the means, for Aristotle writes that “in the case which the ends are beyond the actions, the products are better [βελτίω] by nature than the activities.”⁴³ The fourth principle is that the end is more desirable than the means, for Aristotle writes that “all [the situations in which a faculty is under a master art] the ends of the master art are more desirable (αἰρετώτερα) than the ends of the subordinate art, for the ends of the subordinate art are pursued for the sake of [χάριν] the ends of the master art.”⁴⁴

Something’s degree of goodness and desirability, then, correspond.

In *NE* 1.2.1, Aristotle uses the concept of a hierarchy of ends and the concept that an end is better and more desirable than its means to analyze the characteristics that an end must have for it to be the good and the best:

If, therefore, there exists an end of our actions which (i) we wish for its own sake (ὃ δι’ αὐτὸ βουλόμεθα), and (ii) [we wish] the others for the sake of this (διὰ τοῦτο), and (iii) we do not choose all [ends] for the sake of another [end] (for in this way [choosing] would continue without limit, so that desire would be empty and vain), it is clear that this end would be the good and the best (τάγαθὸν καὶ τὸ ἄριστον).⁴⁵

That Aristotle calls the good and best the “end of our actions” creates a problem. A practicable end is something that may be attained by action and that may be otherwise (not necessary) (*NE* 6.1-2), and so the good and best appear to have these characteristics.

⁴³ *NE* 1.1 1094a3-6: διαφορὰ δὲ τις φαίνεται τῶν τελῶν τὰ μὲν γὰρ εἰσιν ἐνέργειαι, τὰ δὲ παρ’ αὐτάς ἔργα τινὰ ὧν δ’ εἰσὶ τέλη τινὰ παρὰ τὰς πράξεις, ἐν τούτοις βελτίω πέφυκε τῶν ἐνεργειῶν τὰ ἔργα.

⁴⁴ *NE* 1.1 1094a14-16: ἐν ἀπάσαις δὲ τὰ τῶν ἀρχιτεκτονικῶν τέλη πάντων ἐστὶν αἰρετώτερα τῶν ὑπ’ αὐτὰ τούτων γὰρ χάριν κάκεῖνα διώκεται.

⁴⁵ *NE* 1.2 1094a18-22: Εἰ δὴ τι τέλος ἐστὶ τῶν πρακτῶν ὃ δι’ αὐτὸ βουλόμεθα, τᾶλλα δὲ διὰ τοῦτο, καὶ μὴ πάντα δι’ ἕτερον αἰρούμεθα πρόεισι γὰρ οὕτω γ’ εἰς ἄπειρον, ὥστ’ εἶναι κενὴν καὶ ματαίαν τὴν ὄρεξιν, δῆλον ὡς τοῦτ’ ἂν εἴη τάγαθὸν καὶ τὸ ἄριστον.

However, our consideration of God's happiness demonstrated both that God is the best and that God is active thinking. Therefore, it appears that the best is necessary and is active thinking, which is categorically different than the practical. So, how can the good and best have these contradictory attributes? This is the problem of whether the human good or The Good is the object of the *NE*,⁴⁶ and here I only want to raise it. I will suggest a solution to this problem when we consider human happiness in section 2.4.

Before moving on, we should note condition (iii) in *NE* 1.2.1. Aristotle establishes it through a *reductio* argument. Assuming the negation of this condition as a hypothesis, he reasons that if we did choose all ends for something else, then desire would not achieve its purpose (ὥστ' εἶναι κενήν καὶ ματαίαν τὴν ὄρεξιν). The implication in this passage is that Aristotle rejects this inference, and so he affirms that desire cannot be in vain, a principle that is fundamental to Aquinas's doctrine of happiness.

The supreme practicable good of *NE* 1.2.1 is happiness. In *NE* 1.2.4-8, Aristotle argues that the supreme good is the object of politics. For, politics is the pre-eminent master art since it uses the ends of all other arts to achieve its end (*NE* 1.2.6-7), and the supreme good is the object of the pre-eminent master art (*NE* 1.2.4-5) since the end that all other ends are used to achieve is the supreme good. Since happiness is the accepted object of Politics (*NE* 1.4.1-2), the supreme good is therefore happiness (εὐδαιμονία), which is synonymous with living well (τὸ δ' εὖ ζῆν) and doing well (τὸ εὖ πράττειν).

In *NE* 1.7, it appears that whether the good or happiness is a dominant end or inclusive end is an open question, and so Aristotle considers these rival hypotheses

⁴⁶ For a discussion of this problem see Gerbasi, *The Metaphysical Origin*, 1-18. Gerbasi argues that the theoretical good is the end of the practical good and that the practical good is derived from it. Therefore, "Aristotle's discovery of the human good comes about within an affirmation on the dependence of the human good on its divine, and transcendent, source" (ibid., 11).

concerning the nature of the good: (i) “if there is an end of all pursuits, this would be the practicable good” and (ii) “if there are many [ends of all pursuits], these [would be the practicable good].”⁴⁷ In *NE* 1.7.3-5, Aristotle considers these two hypotheses by distinguishing three types of ends:

(A) Since there appears to be many ends, and we choose some of these for the sake of another (δι’ ἕτερον), such as wealth, flutes, and instruments in general, it is clear that not all [ends] are complete (τέλεια), yet the best [end] appears to be something complete. (B) Therefore, if a certain [end] alone is a complete [end], this would be what [we are] seeking, but if there are multiple [complete ends], the most complete of these [would be what we are seeking]. (C) We say that the [end] pursued in virtue of itself (τὸ καθ’ αὐτὸ) is more complete than the [end pursued] for the sake of something else (δι’ ἕτερον) and that the [end] never chosen for the sake of another [end] is more complete than [the end] chosen in virtue of itself and also for the sake of another end (καθ’ αὐτὰ καὶ δι’ αὐτὸ), and therefore [the end] that is always chosen in virtue of itself and never for the sake of another [end] is absolutely complete (ἀπλῶς...τέλειον).⁴⁸

In (A) Aristotle affirms that there are indeed many (πλείω) ends of our actions, and thus it appears that he rejects the first hypothesis concerning the nature of the practicable good and accepts the second; namely, that the many ends collectively are the practicable good.

However, Aristotle rejects the second hypothesis as well since it is too general to adequately describe the nature of the practicable good, for “many ends” can be divided into final ends and non-final ends, and the practicable good is not a non-final end, but a final end. Final ends are chosen for themselves even if nothing results, while non-final ends are chosen for their results. In light of his categorization of the practicable good as a final end, he reformulates, in section (B), his rival hypotheses from (A), and he puts them

⁴⁷ *NE* 1.7 1097a22-24: ὥστ’ εἶ τι τῶν πρακτῶν ἀπάντων ἐστὶ τέλος, τοῦτ’ ἂν εἴη τὸ πρακτὸν ἀγαθόν, εἰ δὲ πλείω, ταῦτα.

⁴⁸ *NE* 1.7 1097a25-34: ἐπεὶ δὲ πλείω φαίνεται τὰ τέλη, τούτων δ’ αἰρούμεθα τινα δι’ ἕτερον, οἷον πλοῦτον αὐλοῦς καὶ ὄλως τὰ ὄργανα, δῆλον ὡς οὐκ ἔστι πάντα τέλεια· τὸ δ’ ἄριστον τέλειόν τι φαίνεται. ὥστ’ εἰ μὲν ἐστὶν ἓν τι μόνον τέλειον, τοῦτ’ ἂν εἴη τὸ ζητούμενον, εἰ δὲ πλείω, τὸ τελειότατον τούτων. τελειότερον δὲ λέγομεν τὸ καθ’ αὐτὸ διωκτὸν τοῦ δι’ ἕτερον καὶ τὸ μηδέποτε δι’ ἄλλο αἰρετὸν τῶν καὶ καθ’ αὐτὰ καὶ δι’ αὐτὸ αἰρετῶν, καὶ ἀπλῶς δὴ τέλειον τὸ καθ’ αὐτὸ αἰρετὸν ἀεὶ καὶ μηδέποτε δι’ ἄλλο.

in terms of final ends: (i) if there is one thing alone which is final, then this would be the good which we are seeking (ii) if there are many final ends, then the most final of these would be the good.

In (C), Aristotle affirms that there are multiple final ends since he divides them into two categories: (i) qualified final ends: ends chosen for themselves but also for something else and (ii) absolutely final ends: ends always chosen for themselves and never for something else. Since Aristotle affirms that there are multiple final ends, he supports the second reformulated hypothesis, and therefore he affirms that the most final end is the good. Therefore, happiness is the most final end since it is the *only* absolutely final end (*NE* 1.7 1097a34-b6), and so happiness is also a *single* good.

2.3.2 The *Ergon* Argument: Human Happiness and Human Essence

Thus far, Aristotle has identified the supreme good with happiness, but in *NE* 1.7.9-16 he aims to make “what [the good] is clearer.”⁴⁹ To this end, he uses the nature of the human *ergon* to demonstrate that the human good or happiness is virtuous rational activity. I will follow Aristotle’s argument and argue that the nature of happiness is ultimately determined by the essence of the human (which I will define in section 2.4).⁵⁰

In the opening passage of the argument, Aristotle argues that human happiness or the human good is found in the human *ergon*:

For just as for a flute-player or sculptor or craftsman of any sort, and generally for anything that has a certain *ergon* or activity (ἔργον τι καὶ πρᾶξις), it seems that the

⁴⁹ *NE* 1.7 1097b23: ...ἐναργέστερον τί ἐστίν....

⁵⁰ Although I argue here that the nature of happiness is ultimately determined by the essence of the human, we will see in section 2.5.3 that human happiness is also determined by God’s active thinking. These conclusions produce a “clash” that I deal with in section 2.5.4.

good (τὰγαθόν) or the doing well (τὸ εὖ) [of that thing] is in its *ergon*. Thus, it would seem that the good is [in the *ergon*] of man, if man has an *ergon*.⁵¹

Yet, *in what way* the good of man is in the human *ergon* is clarified later. Here, after he affirms that humans have an *ergon*, he looks for the nature of the human *ergon* in the life distinctive to humans:

To live would appear to be common with the plants, but the proper (τὸ ἴδιον) [*ergon* of the human] is being sought. Therefore, the life of nutrition and growth ought to be set aside. Some form of sensitive life follows upon [the nutritive life], but [the human] also appears to share this in common with the horse, ox, and animals in general. Therefore, a certain practical life of [the part of the soul] possessing reason remains.⁵²

Aristotle's argument finds the proper human *ergon* by eliminating the types of life that humans have in common with other ensouled beings to leave what is distinctively human: rational activity.⁵³ Yet, although we can follow Aristotle's reasoning, we may wonder about his starting point. Why does Aristotle search for the human *ergon* in the soul? I argue that the answer to this question shows that happiness is determined by the essence of the human.

In *Meteor.* 390a10-15, Aristotle relates the definition of something to its *ergon*:

All things are defined by their *ergon*, for the things that can perform their *ergon*, each truly is what it is. For example, the eye if it can see. But the thing that does

⁵¹ NE 1.7 1097b25-28: ὅσπερ γὰρ ἀύλητῆ καὶ ἀγαματοποιῶ καὶ παντὶ τεχνίτῃ, καὶ ὅλως ὧν ἔστιν ἔργον τι καὶ πράξις, ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ δοκεῖ τὰγαθὸν εἶναι καὶ τὸ εὖ, οὕτω δόξειεν ἂν καὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, εἴπερ ἔστι τι ἔργον αὐτοῦ.

⁵² NE 1.7 1097b33-1098a7: τὸ μὲν γὰρ ζῆν κοινὸν εἶναι φαίνεται καὶ τοῖς φυτοῖς, ζητεῖται δὲ τὸ ἴδιον. ἀφοριστέον ἄρα τὴν τε θρεπτικὴν καὶ τὴν ἀυξητικὴν ζωὴν. ἐπομένη δὲ αἰσθητικὴ τις ἂν εἴη, φαίνεται δὲ καὶ αὐτὴ κοινὴ καὶ ἵπῳ καὶ βοῖ καὶ παντὶ ζῴῳ. λείπεται δὲ πρακτικὴ τις τοῦ λόγον ἔχοντος...

⁵³ There is debate over the meaning of the phrase “a certain practical life (πρακτικὴ τις),” however. H. Joachim holds that it refers to the life of moral virtue and prudence (H. Joachim, *Aristotle The Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), 50-51). J. Stewart, however, appeals to *Pol.* 1325b14ff to show that πρακτικὴ is broad enough to include contemplation, and so it is synonymous with a life of reason in general (J. A. Stewart, *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), 99). Many follow Stewart in this interpretation (Alfonso Gomez-Lobo, “The *Ergon* Inference,” *Phronesis* 34, no. 2 (1989): 174; G. Van Cleemput, “Aristotle on Eudaimonia in *Nicomachean Ethics* 1,” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 30 (2006): 150; Richard Kraut, “The Peculiar Function of Human Beings,” *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 9 (1979): 469-471), as do I.

not have the ability [to perform its *ergon*] is homonymously what it is. For example, a dead eye or one made of stone.⁵⁴

So, something is defined by its capacity to perform the characteristic *ergon* of a class of things.⁵⁵ But, what provides something with the capacity for its characteristic *ergon*? In

DA 2.4, we learn that the soul is the formal cause and essence of a living body.⁵⁶

Furthermore, in *DA* 2.1, Aristotle holds that the soul determines what type of living thing something is by providing it with a capacity for the characteristic activity of that class of living things (e.g., if the eye possessed a soul, the soul would provide it with the capacity to see).⁵⁷ So, Aristotle looks for the human *ergon* in the soul since the soul determines the nature of the human *ergon*. Therefore, since the *ergon* of the human determines what human happiness is, the soul and essence of the human ultimately determines the nature of human happiness.

However, the exercise of the human *ergon* alone is not happiness. Rather, Aristotle uses the nature of the human *ergon* to demonstrate the nature of the human good:

If the *ergon* of man is an activity of the soul according to reason or not without reason, and we say that the *ergon* of something and the *ergon* of the excellent something are the same in kind (just as the *ergon* of the harpist and the excellent harpist [are the same in kind]) – and this applies generally to all things [with an *ergon*] – [with the difference that] the superiority in respect to virtue is added to the *ergon* (for the *ergon* of the harpist is to harp, but the *ergon* of the excellent harpist is to harp well), indeed if these things are the case, and we hold that the *ergon* of man is a certain type of life, and this life is activity or actions of the soul with reason, and the *ergon* of the excellent man is to do these things well and beautifully, and each thing completed according to its own virtue is done well,

⁵⁴ *Meteor.* 390a10-13: ἅπαντα δ' ἐστὶν ὀρισμένα τῷ ἔργῳ· τὰ μὲν γὰρ δυνάμενα ποιεῖν τὸ αὐτῶν ἔργον ἀληθῶς ἐστὶν ἕκαστον, οἷον ὀφθαλμὸς εἰ ὄρα, τὸ δὲ μὴ δυνάμενον ὁμωνύμως, οἷον ὁ τεθνεὼς ἢ ὁ λίθινος (Aristotle, *Meteorologica*, translated by H. D. P. Lee, LCL 397 (London: Heinemann, 1962)).

⁵⁵ Christopher Shields, *Aristotle* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 92; Christopher Shields, “The Science of Soul in Aristotle’s Ethics,” in *Bridging the Gap between Aristotle’s Science and Ethics*, ed. Devin Henry and Karen Margrethe Nielsen (Cambridge: CUP, 2015), 239.

⁵⁶ *DA* 2.4 415b12-23.

⁵⁷ *DA* 2.1 412b10-413a3.

indeed if these things are true, then the human good would be an activity of the soul according to virtue, and if there are many virtues, then according to the best and most perfect virtue.⁵⁸

The reasoning by which Aristotle reaches his conclusion concerning the nature of the human good and happiness is not clear, so I will provide my interpretation of the main argument. The first step is to establish this relationship: the *ergon* of the harpist and of the excellent harpist is generically the same, but they differ in that the excellent harpist harps according to a virtuous capacity, and the *ergon* of this virtuous capacity is not simply to harp but is to harp well (εὖ) or beautifully (καλῶς). The second step is to apply this relationship to the human *ergon*, rational activity, and this implies that the *ergon* of the excellent man is to reason well; namely, to reason according to virtue. From here, Aristotle reaches his definition of the human good, although he suppresses the middle term; namely, that what is desirable to the excellent man is truly desirable. Now, since each person chiefly desires the activity of their proper disposition, the excellent man desires virtuous rational activity most, and therefore this activity is truly the most desirable activity.⁵⁹ Since the most desirable activity is the supreme good, for desirability and goodness correspond as we saw earlier, Aristotle concludes that the human good or happiness is virtuous rational activity.

⁵⁸ NE 1.7 1098a7-18: εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ἔργον ἀνθρώπου ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατὰ λόγον ἢ μὴ ἄνευ λόγου, τὸ δ' αὐτό φαμεν ἔργον εἶναι τῷ γένει τοῦδε καὶ τοῦδε σπουδαίου, ὡσπερ κιθαριστοῦ καὶ σπουδαίου κιθαριστοῦ, καὶ ἀπλῶς δὴ τοῦτ' ἐπὶ πάντων, προστιθεμένης τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν ὑπεροχῆς πρὸς τὸ ἔργον· κιθαριστοῦ μὲν γὰρ κιθαρίζειν, σπουδαίου δὲ τὸ εὖ· εἰ δ' οὕτως, ἀνθρώπου δὲ τίθεμεν ἔργον ζωὴν τινα, ταύτην δὲ ψυχῆς ἐνέργειαν καὶ πράξεις μετὰ λόγου, σπουδαίου δ' ἀνδρὸς εὖ ταῦτα καὶ καλῶς, ἕκαστον δ' εὖ κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρετὴν ἀποτελεῖται· εἰ δ' οὕτω, τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ἀγαθὸν ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια γίνεται κατ' ἀρετὴν, εἰ δὲ πλείους αἱ ἀρεταί, κατὰ τὴν ἀρίστην καὶ τελειοτάτην.

⁵⁹ NE 10.6.5-6.

2.4. TWOFOLD HUMAN HAPPINESS

2.4.1 The Division of Human Reason and the Definition of the Human

In this section (2.4), we will consider the specific nature of human happiness. Our analysis of *NE* 1.7 shows that the essence of the human determines the nature of its *ergon*, and therefore the human essence determines the nature of happiness. However, it appears that the *NE* presents two possible definitions of the human. On the one hand, the essence of the human seems to be a principle of theoretical thought, but, on the other hand, it seems to be a principle of action. In this section, I will first explore this ambiguity and suggest how both definitions of the human can be maintained. Then, I will show how these definitions lead to the twofold happiness in *NE* 10.7-8; namely, the life of contemplation and the life of prudence and moral virtue. Finally, to end this section, I will explore a difficulty in *NE* 10.7: contemplation appears to be divine and above the human yet proper to the human. In the next chapter, we will see that Aquinas solves this difficulty by attributing the doctrine of participation to Aristotle. Let us begin with the first task.

The ambiguity in the definition of the human relates to Aristotle's psychology in the *NE*, and so let us consider this psychology. In *NE* 1.13, Aristotle identifies his general plan for investigating the nature of happiness in books 2-6: "since happiness is a certain activity of the soul according to complete virtue, virtue must be examined."⁶⁰ Thus, before one examines virtue, one must first understand psychology, but one only needs to understand it "insofar as it is necessary for the present inquiry."⁶¹ For his purposes,

⁶⁰ *NE* 1.13 1102a5-6: ἐπει δ' ἐστὶν ἡ εὐδαιμονία ψυχῆς ἐνέργειά τις κατ' ἀρετὴν τελείαν, περὶ ἀρετῆς ἐπισκεπτέον ἂν εἴη.

⁶¹ *NE* 1.13 1102a24-5: ἐφ' ὅσον ἰκανῶς ἔχει πρὸς τὰ ζητούμενα....

Aristotle divides the soul into the irrational and rational (τό λόγον ἔχον), and then he divides the irrational thus: “the vegetative in no way partakes in reason, but the appetitive and in general the desiring [aspect] partakes in reason in some way, in which it listens and is obedient to it.”⁶² The virtues, in turn, are divided according to the division of the soul into the rational and the irrational that obeys reason: the intellectual (διανοητικάς) virtues correspond to the rational aspect and the ethical (τὰς ἠθικάς) virtues correspond to the desiring aspect (*NE* 1.13.20).

NE 2-5 is devoted to examining the moral virtues, and *NE* 6 is devoted to the intellectual virtues. It is the latter on which I want to focus, for here Aristotle divides the rational part of the soul into two rational faculties, and thus “the human is defined relative to the kinds of reasoning.”⁶³ These two faculties are distinguished by their respective objects: the scientific faculty (τὸ ἐπιστημονικόν) contemplates those things whose principles cannot be otherwise and the calculative faculty (τὸ λογιστικόν) considers those things whose principles can be otherwise (*NE* 6.1).

In *NE* 6.2, Aristotle identifies the *ergon* of each intellectual faculty since the virtue of a faculty depends on the *ergon* of that faculty (although the calculative faculty encompasses both practical and productive thinking, only practical thinking is relevant to our purpose). The *ergon* of both faculties of the intellectual soul is to attain truth, but whereas the scientific faculty aims to attain truth simply, the *ergon* of practical thinking is practical truth, which is truth that agrees with right desire. The virtue of each of these faculties is the best disposition of each, and this disposition is the one whose exercise best

⁶² *NE* 1.13 1102b28-31: φαίνεται δὴ καὶ τὸ ἄλογον διττόν. τὸ μὲν γὰρ φυτικὸν οὐδαμῶς κοινωνεῖ λόγου, τὸ δ’ ἐπιθυμητικὸν καὶ ὅλως ὀρεκτικὸν μετέχει πως, ἢ κατήκοόν ἐστιν αὐτοῦ καὶ πειθαρχικόν...

⁶³ W. J. Hankey, *Completitur Omnem*, 4.

achieves the *ergon* of the faculty: wisdom is the virtue of the theoretical intellect and prudence is the virtue of the calculative intellect (*NE* 6.11.7, 6.12.4). We will come back to the intellectual virtues when we discuss the happiness described in *NE* 10. Here, I want to further explore the two types of reasoning, theoretical and practical, that define the human. Let us begin with theoretical reason.

Aristotle opens the *Metaphysics* with the statement that “all humans by nature desire to know.”⁶⁴ Therefore, since all things naturally desire to realize their form (*Phys* 1.9), the human form appears to be a principle of or capacity for the activity of knowing. Furthermore, since Aristotle identifies wisdom with the type of knowing that will ultimately satisfy the human’s natural desire to know (*MP* 1.1.17), the human essence appears to be a principle of wisdom. Indeed, at the end of his discussion of the levels of knowing in *MP* 1.1, Aristotle connects this discussion to *NE* 6: “In the *Ethics*, the difference between art and science and the other habits like these is stated. The purpose of the present account is this, that all assume that which is called wisdom is concerned with the primary causes and principles.”⁶⁵ Now, since the human form appears to be a principle of the type of knowing called wisdom, and since in *NE* 6 wisdom is the virtue of the theoretical intellect, then it follows that the form and essence of the human is theoretical intellect.

Although when we interpret the *NE* through the *MP* the essence of the human appears to be the theoretical intellect, Aristotle defines the human as a principle of action in *NE* 6.2 itself. For Aristotle, the efficient cause of action is choice, and since action is

⁶⁴ *MP* 1.1 980a21: πάντες ἄνθρωποι τοῦ εἰδέναι ὀρέγονται φύσει.

⁶⁵ *MP* 1.1 981b25-29: εἴρηται μὲν οὖν ἐν τοῖς ἠθικοῖς τίς διαφορὰ τέχνης καὶ ἐπιστήμης καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ὁμογενῶν: οὗ δ’ ἕνεκα νῦν ποιούμεθα τὸν λόγον τοῦτ’ ἐστίν, ὅτι τὴν ὀνομαζομένην σοφίαν περὶ τὰ πρῶτα αἰτία καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς ὑπολαμβάνουσι πάντες....

the type of movement specific to the human, choice must be capable of producing movement. Thought by itself, however, moves nothing; rather, only thought directed at some end can produce movement. Therefore, choice cannot be a type of thought alone; rather, it must involve the desire for an end; namely, the end of doing well (ἡ εὐπραξία). Thus, Aristotle arrives at a definition of choice and the human: “Therefore, choice is either desiderative thought or thinking desire, and the human is a principle (ἀρχή) such as this.”⁶⁶ In contrast with the opening of the *MP*, then, Aristotle might have equally opened the *NE* as a whole or *NE* 6 with the statement ‘all humans by nature desire to do well.’

We can maintain and categorize both definitions of the human by appealing to Aristotle’s treatment of definition and naming in *MP* 8.3. Here, Aristotle distinguishes three ways in which a sensible substance may exist and be defined: “as matter, as the form or actuality, and thirdly as the compound of the two.”⁶⁷ However, an ambiguity arises when one assigns a name to a sensible substance, for the name may either “signify the compound substance or the activity and form, for example...whether animal means a soul in a body or a soul...”⁶⁸ This ambiguity is applicable to the human. The human and the essence of the human are not the same, for the human is the compound and the essence of the human refers to its form, the soul; however, the name human can be applied to both the compound and the soul, and thus confusion arises.⁶⁹

I maintain that we can apply the framework of *MP* 8.3 to the definitions of the human in the *NE*: on the one hand, the human is defined in terms of form or actuality

⁶⁶ *NE* 6.2 1139b4-5: διὸ ἡ ὀρεξτικὸς νοῦς ἢ προαίρεσις ἢ ὀρεξις διανοητικὴ, καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ ἄνθρωπος.

⁶⁷ *MP* 8.3 1043a27-8: ἡ μὲν γὰρ ὡς ὕλη, ἡ δ’ ὡς μορφή καὶ ἐνέργεια, ἡ δὲ τρίτη ἢ ἐκ τούτων.

⁶⁸ *MP* 8.3 1043a29-35: δεῖ δὲ μὴ ἀγνοεῖν ὅτι ἐνίοτε λαθάνει πότερον σημαίνει τὸ ὄνομα τὴν σύνθετον οὐσίαν ἢ τὴν ἐνέργειαν καὶ τὴν μορφήν, οἷον... αἱ ζῶον πότερον ψυχὴ ἐν σώματι ἢ ψυχὴ...

⁶⁹ *MP* 8.3 1043b1: τὸ γὰρ τί ἦν εἶναι τῷ εἶδει καὶ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ ὑπάρχει. ψυχὴ μὲν γὰρ καὶ ψυχῆ εἶναι ταυτόν, ἄνθρωπῳ δὲ καὶ ἄνθρωπος οὐ ταυτόν, εἰ μὴ καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ ἄνθρωπος λεχθήσεται: οὕτω δὲ τι μὲν τι δ’ οὐ.

when it is defined as a principle of knowing or theoretical intellect, and, on the other hand, the human is defined in terms of the compound when it is defined as a principle of choice or a desiderative thinking. In what follows I want to argue for this distinction in *NE* 10.7-8 while I describe the two types of happiness possible for the human.

2.4.2 The Intellectual Virtues of Wisdom and Prudence

Since happiness is the exercise of virtue, let us first examine the intellectual virtues of the theoretical intellect and calculative intellect in *NE* 6 before we consider happiness in *NE* 10.7-8. The soul exercises its *ergon* of achieving truth in five ways: art, science, prudence, wisdom, and *nous*. Wisdom, science, and *nous* fall under the theoretical intellect, whereas art and prudence fall under the calculative intellect. I will describe wisdom and prudence and determine which is better, for these are the virtues of each part of the intellectual soul, and happiness is the exercise of the best virtue.

Aristotle describes wisdom thus:

Wisdom is the most exact of the sciences. It is necessary, therefore, that wisdom is not only knowing that which follows from the principles, but also it is to know the truth concerning the principles, so that wisdom is *nous* and science, as the consummation [of the sciences], which has knowledge of the most honorable things.⁷⁰

Science (ἡ ἐπιστήμη), in its most proper sense, is a demonstrating habit (ἕξις ἀποδεικτική). The object of science (τὸ ἐπιστητόν) is that which is universal, necessary (what cannot be otherwise) and, therefore, eternal. Its activity begins with universal first principles and demonstrates true conclusions from them (*NE* 6.3, 6.6). *Nous* is the habit

⁷⁰ *NE* 6.7 1141a16-20: ὥστε δῆλον ὅτι ἀκριβεστάτη ἂν τῶν ἐπιστημῶν εἴη ἡ σοφία. δεῖ ἄρα τὸν σοφὸν μὴ μόνον τὰ ἐκ τῶν ἀρχῶν εἰδέναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς ἀληθεύειν. ὥστ' εἴη ἂν ἡ σοφία νοῦς καὶ ἐπιστήμη, ὥσπερ κεφαλὴν ἔχουσα ἐπιστήμη τῶν τιμωτάτων.

which attains the truth of the universal first principles which science uses in demonstrations (*NE* 6.6). *Nous* attains “the one beyond the many, which is present in them all as one and the same thing.”⁷¹ The activity through which *nous* acquires these principles is induction (ἐπαγωγή) (*NE* 6.3).

The specific object of wisdom itself is that which is most honorable and, therefore, divine:

...nor is another science more honorable than this. For, what is most divine is most honorable, but there are only two ways in which a science can be divine. (i) That which most of all belongs to God is divine among the sciences, and (ii) if a certain science is concerned with the divine. This science alone fulfills both of these: for it seems to all that God is among the causes and is a certain principle, and this science belongs alone or most of all to God.⁷²

Since the object of wisdom is the divine, Aristotle calls this science theology (θεολογία) (*MP* 6.1). However, Wayne Hankey notes a problem that identifying wisdom with divine science creates for Aristotle and which Aquinas inherits. In this passage “what best satisfies what by nature we seek is not, by its nature, ours”,⁷³ this science belongs most of all to the divine. This problem also occurs in the *NE*,⁷⁴ and we shall come back to it below.

Now let us consider the virtue of the calculative faculty, prudence. Aristotle defines prudence as “a rational habit that attains truth concerning what is good and bad for humans in action.”⁷⁵ The activity (*ergon*) of prudence is to deliberate well (τὸ εὖ βουλευέσθαι), and so prudence, which is a type of deliberation, does not attain truth in

⁷¹ *APo.* 2.19: τοῦ καθόλου ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, τοῦ ἐνὸς παρὰ τὰ πολλά, ὃ ἂν ἐν ἅπασιν ἐν ἐνῇ ἐκείνοις τὸ αὐτό...

⁷² *MP* 1.2 983a4-11: οὔτε τῆς τοιαύτης ἄλλην χρῆ νομίζειν τιμωτέραν. ἢ γὰρ θειοτάτη καὶ τιμωτάτη: τοιαύτη δὲ διχῶς ἂν εἴη μόνη: ἦν τε γὰρ μάλιστ' ἂν ὁ θεὸς ἔχοι, θεία τῶν ἐπιστημῶν ἐστί, κἂν εἴ τις τῶν θείων εἴη. μόνη δ' αὕτη τούτων ἀμφοτέρων τετύχηκεν: ὃ τε γὰρ θεὸς δοκεῖ τῶν αἰτίων πᾶσιν εἶναι καὶ ἀρχή τις, καὶ τὴν τοιαύτην ἢ μόνος ἢ μάλιστ' ἂν ἔχοι ὁ θεός.

⁷³ Hankey, “Placing the Human,” 4.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 7-9.

⁷⁵ *NE* 6.5 1140b4-6: αὐτὴν εἶναι ἕξιν ἀληθῆ μετὰ λόγου πρακτικὴν περὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπου ἀγαθὰ καὶ κακά.

respect to an end since deliberation does not attain such truth (*NE* 6.7). Rather, to deliberate well is to attain truth in respect to the means, and to attain such truth is to arrive through a process of thought at the means that will achieve one's end of acting well. Aristotle calls this process of thought deliberating correctly (*ὀρθῶς*) (*NE* 6.9.4, 7; cf. 6.7.6). Therefore, although prudence is not a process of thought that seeks truth in respect to the end, it is about ends in that it looks for the means to bring the end of acting well into existence (*NE* 6.5).

Aristotle elevates wisdom above prudence by a consideration of the nature of their objects. As we saw, wisdom is concerned with what is divine and most honorable, but prudence is concerned with the human and particular actions (*τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα*). Therefore, Aristotle reasons that “[i]t would be strange for one to think that politics or prudence is the most excellent science, for the human is not the best thing in the cosmos.”⁷⁶

2.4.3 The Definition of the Human and Twofold Human Happiness

Now that we understand the intellectual virtues, let us turn to Aristotle's doctrine of happiness in *NE* 10.7-8. My comparison of Aristotle's and Aquinas' doctrines of happiness will focus almost exclusively on the contemplative life; however, here I consider Aristotle's doctrine of practical happiness insofar as it relates to our discussion of the definition of the human. First, I argue that, in *NE* 10.7-8, the definition of the human as form leads to perfect happiness, while the definition of the human as the composite leads to secondary happiness. Secondly, I address a difficulty raised in section

⁷⁶ *NE* 6.7 1141a20-22: ἄτοπον γὰρ εἶ τις τὴν πολιτικὴν ἢ τὴν φρόνησιν σπουδαιότατην οἶεται εἶναι, εἰ μὴ τὸ ἄριστον τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἄνθρωπος ἐστίν.

2.1; namely, that the good of the *MP*, active thinking, appears to be different than the practical good of the *NE*. I argue that the good of active contemplation can be practicable since prudence is for the sake of contemplation.

In *NE* 10.7.1 Aristotle argues that perfect happiness is the activity in accordance with the intellectual virtue of wisdom:

If happiness is the activity according to virtue, it is reasonable that it is according to the strongest virtue, and this will be of the [the virtue] of the best. Whether, therefore, this is *nous* or something else which by nature seems to rule and lead and to take thought of the noble and divine, whether being divine itself or the most divine thing in us, the activity of this according to its proper virtue is perfect happiness. It has already been said that this is contemplative activity.⁷⁷

The idea that *nous* is the strongest (τὴν κρατίστην) and ruling (ἄρχειν) relates to how contemplation can be the practical good of the *NE*. I come back to this below. Here, I want to argue that, first, Aristotle derives perfect happiness from the definition of the human as theoretical intellect and, second, that this definition is the definition of the human form rather than the human composite. In respect to the first, since contemplation is perfect happiness, and the nature of happiness is determined by the essence of man, then the definition of the human that determines perfect happiness must be the principle of or capacity for contemplation and, therefore, must be theoretical intellect. In respect to the second, *nous* in the context of *NE* 10.7-8 refers to theoretical intellect. For, since, in the passage immediately above (*NE* 10.7.1), Aristotle says that *nous* is divine or the most divine thing in us, and the divine does not engage in practical or productive thinking (*NE* 10.8.7-8), then *nous* must refer to theoretical intellect, not the calculative intellect. Now,

⁷⁷ *NE* 10.7 1177a12-18: Εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ἡ εὐδαιμονία κατ' ἀρετὴν ἐνέργεια, εὐλογον κατὰ τὴν κρατίστην· αὕτη δ' ἂν εἴη τοῦ ἀρίστου. εἴτε δὴ νοῦς τοῦτο εἴτε ἄλλο τι, ὃ δὴ κατὰ φύσιν δοκεῖ ἄρχειν καὶ ἡγεῖσθαι καὶ ἔννοιαν ἔχειν περὶ καλῶν καὶ θεῶν, εἴτε θεῖον ὄν καὶ αὐτὸ εἴτε τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν τὸ θεϊότατον, ἢ τούτου ἐνέργεια κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρετὴν εἴη ἂν ἡ τελεία εὐδαιμονία. ὅτι δ' ἐστὶ θεωρητικὴ, εἴρηται.

Aristotle contrasts *nous* in 10.7.8 with the human compound, and therefore the theoretical intellect cannot be the definition of the human as compound. It remains that it is the definition of the human as form and actuality.

What does it mean for *nous* to be strong and ruling? In *NE* 6.12-13 Aristotle argues that wisdom is the highest virtue, and this argument both clarifies how *nous* is strong and ruling and allows us to suggest in what sense contemplation is considered a practicable good. Aristotle begins this argument in *NE* 6.12. Here, he raises a problem with the relationship between wisdom and prudence: prudence, although inferior to wisdom, seems to be more authoritative (κυριωτέρα) than it. Aristotle compares wisdom and prudence to health and medicine respectively to make this point. Wisdom does not produce happiness as medicine produces health, or, in other words, as the efficient cause; rather, wisdom produces happiness as healthiness (ἡ υἰγία) produces health or, in other words, as the formal cause. Prudence, on the other hand, studies the means (ἐξ ὧν) to happiness and how it comes into existence (γενέσεως), and so it produces happiness as medicine produces health; namely, as the efficient cause. Therefore, since “the thing creating rules and commands,”⁷⁸ it appears that prudence is authoritative over wisdom.

Aristotle solves this problem by making a distinction in the way that something can rule, a distinction which he makes most explicit in *EE* 8.3: “medicine is a ruling principle (ἀρχή) in one way and health [is a ruling principle] in another: medicine is for the sake of health.”⁷⁹ As we have seen, medicine rules by giving orders to something, yet in this passage Aristotle writes that health rules in another way; namely, as the end. In

⁷⁸ *NE* 6.12 1143b35: ἡ γὰρ ποιούσα ἄρχει καὶ ἐπιτάττει περὶ ἕκαστον.

⁷⁹ *EE* 8.3 1249b12-13: ἄλλως γὰρ ἡ ἰατρικὴ ἀρχὴ καὶ ἄλλως ἡ υἰγία· ταύτης δὲ ἔνεκα ἐκείνη (Aristotle, *Ethica Eudemia*, edited by R. R. Walzer and J. M. Mingay, Oxford Classical Texts (Oxford: OUP, 1991)).

fact, in *NE* 6.13.9, Aristotle argues that medicine does not use health; rather, it is for the sake of health, and, therefore it does not give orders (*ἐπιτάττει*) to nor is it authoritative over health. On the contrary, health is the end of medicine, and so health is authoritative over it. Following this analogy, prudence, then, does not give orders to wisdom, and so it is not authoritative over it. Rather, wisdom is the end for the sake of which prudence gives orders, and therefore wisdom rules and is authoritative over prudence as the end controls the means.⁸⁰

We will return again to the idea that wisdom is strong and ruling and use it to help us understand a paradox that arises in Aristotle's doctrine of happiness. But, here, we can conclude that wisdom and contemplation are practical goods insofar as the practical activity of prudence gives orders for the sake of attaining them, and thus contemplation is the good of the *NE*.⁸¹ Aquinas agrees with the interpretation that prudence in some sense can attain wisdom through action, for, he writes that prudence “does not use wisdom by commanding how it ought to judge divine things, it commands for the sake of it, ordaining, for example, *how men can arrive at wisdom*.”⁸²

⁸⁰ Kraut, *Human Good*, 262; Lear, *Happy Lives*, 190-191.

⁸¹ Cf. *EE* 8.3 1249b13-15. Here Aristotle writes that the faculty of contemplation is the ultimate ruling factor in respect to which one should live, for “God does not rule by issuing commands, but is the end for the sake of which prudence issues commands...” (οὕτω δ' ἔχει κατὰ τὸ θεωρητικόν. οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτακτικῶς ἄρχων ὁ θεός, ἀλλ' οὐ ἕνεκα ἢ φρόνησις ἐπιτάττει). Note, however, that both Lear and Gerbasi provide a different solution. They argue that practical activity is for the sake of intellectual in that its activity approximates or imitates theoretical activity. Lear, *Happy Lives*, 93-122; Gerbasi, *The Metaphysical Origin*, 82-124.

⁸² *SLE* 6 lect. 11 lines 194-198: ...et similiter prudentia etiam politica non utitur sapientia praecipiens illi qualiter debeat iudicare circa res divinas, sed praecipit propter illam, ordinans scilicet qualiter homines possint ad sapientiam pervenire... (Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, edited by Fratrum Praedicatorum, 2 vols, Leonine Commission 47 (Rome: Ad Sanctae Sabinae, 1969)).

The practical life, since it is inferior to the contemplative life, is secondary happiness (*NE* 10.7.2-7, 10.8).⁸³ It consists in activity according to prudence and the first principles of prudential reasoning, the ethical virtues. The ethical virtues are inextricably linked with the passions, and therefore they are of the composite nature. Since what is connected with the composite nature is human, the life according to the ethical virtues and prudence is human (*NE* 10.8.1-3). But, in light of the facts that practical activity is inferior to theoretical activity and that happiness is an activity according to *the best* virtue, how can Aristotle also consider the practical life as happiness? I maintain that the practical life is happiness in some sense because happiness is determined by the essence of the human, and practical activity is the activity of the essence of the human compound. In proof of the proposition that practical activity is the activity of the compound, let us recall that the definition of the human compound is desiring thinking as a principle of choice, as I have argued. Since thinking in this definition refers to deliberation, for deliberation is the thought involved with choice, and since the moral virtues are the virtue of the desiring part of the human (*NE* 1.13), then the activity of the human defined as the compound is activity according to prudence and moral virtue; namely, practical activity.

2.4.4 A Paradox: Contemplation as Above yet Proper to the Human

Aristotle's account of perfect happiness contains a paradox that creates a problem for the later tradition and Aquinas: it appears that the contemplative life is divine and

⁸³ We have considered two ways in which the practical life is inferior to the contemplative life. First, it is inferior since its object, the human, is inferior to the object of the contemplative life, the gods. Second, it is inferior since wisdom is authoritative and ruling over prudence. Below, I come back to Aristotle's argument in 10.7.2-7 that the practical life is inferior to the contemplative since it possesses the attributes of God to a lesser degree.

beyond the human yet simultaneously proper to the human. This is the same problem that emerged from our consideration of wisdom: the knowledge that by nature we seek and will fulfill our desire to know is not by nature ours; rather, it is God's. In *NE* 10.7.8, Aristotle writes of the life of wisdom and contemplation that

The life such as this would be stronger (κρείττων) than the human life, for this life will not be lived in virtue of being a man but in virtue of something divine in him (ἐν αὐτῷ ὑπάρχει). As much as this divine thing surpasses the composite, by this much also its activity surpasses the activity according to the other virtue. If, therefore, the intellect is divine in comparison with the human, the life according to this is divine in comparison to the human life.⁸⁴

The life of contemplation is divine and stronger than that for which the human compound has a capacity. How might we understand this? Our analysis of 'strongest' and 'authoritative' above demonstrated that these terms mean that theoretical intellect, wisdom, and contemplation are ruling in that they are the final end. I suggest that Aristotle refers to this ruling characteristic of wisdom when, in the *MP*, he argues that humans pursue wisdom for itself and not as something useful.⁸⁵ Therefore, Aristotle continues, since to be free is to exist for one's own sake and not for another, "this is the only free science."⁸⁶ Yet, "it is justly supposed that this is not a human possession, for the nature of men are in many ways servile."⁸⁷ Therefore, the life of contemplation is beyond a human's capacity in that humans do not have the complete freedom necessary for it; man can only rise to this life for a short time, as we saw in *MP* 12.7.

⁸⁴ *NE* 10.7.1177b26-31: ὁ δὲ τοιοῦτος ἂν εἴη βίος κρείττων ἢ κατ' ἀνθρώπων· οὐ γὰρ ἢ ἀνθρωπός ἐστιν οὕτω βιώσεται, ἀλλ' ἢ θεῖόν τι ἐν αὐτῷ ὑπάρχει· ὅσον δὲ διαφέρει τοῦτο τοῦ συνθέτου, τοσοῦτον καὶ ἡ ἐνέργεια τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἄλλην ἀρετῆν. εἰ δὴ θεῖον ὁ νοῦς πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπων, καὶ ὁ κατὰ τοῦτον βίος θεῖος πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον.

⁸⁵ *MP* 1.2 982b20-25.

⁸⁶ *MP* 1.2 982b27: αὐτὴν ὡς μόνην οὔσαν ἐλευθέραν τῶν ἐπιστημῶν.

⁸⁷ *MP* 1.2 982b28-30: διὸ καὶ δικαίως ἂν οὐκ ἀνθρωπίνη νομίζοιτο αὐτῆς ἢ κτησίς: πολλαχῆ γὰρ ἡ φύσις δούλη τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐστίν....

Yet, only several lines after stating that the life of contemplation is divine and too free for the human, Aristotle seems to contradict himself:

It would seem that this [intellect] is each, if indeed it is the authoritative and better part. Therefore, it would be strange if one chooses not to live his own life but the life of something different. What was said earlier applies also here: what is proper (τὸ οἰκεῖον) to each nature is best and most pleasant to each nature, and therefore the life according to the intellect is best and most pleasant to man, if indeed this is most of all man. This life therefore is also the happiest life.⁸⁸

So, how can the intellect and the life of contemplation both belong to the divine and be above the human yet simultaneously be proper to the human? In other words, since to be proper to a species means to belong only to that species,⁸⁹ how can the intellect both be proper to the human and belong to the divine? There are at least two possible solutions to this problem, both of which focus on Aristotle's claim in *MP* 12.7 that God's contemplation and human contemplation are alike but that God's contemplation is also *something more* than human contemplation.⁹⁰ The first solution runs like this: by "something more" Aristotle means that God is beyond the intellect, and therefore intellect does not belong to God. Evidence for this is Simplicius' quotation from Aristotle's lost work *On Prayer* that "the divine is either thought or something beyond thought."⁹¹ The second solution runs like this: "something more" indicates that Aristotle differentiates two types of intellect. The divine intellect is pure activity whereas the human intellect is

⁸⁸ NE 10.7.1178a2-8: δόξειε δ' ἂν καὶ εἶναι ἕκαστος τοῦτο, εἴπερ τὸ κύριον καὶ ἄμεινον. ἄτοπον οὖν γίνοιτ' ἂν, εἰ μὴ τὸν αὐτοῦ βίον αἰροῖτο ἀλλὰ τινος ἄλλου. τὸ λεχθέν τε πρότερον ἀρμόσει καὶ νῦν· τὸ γὰρ οἰκεῖον ἕκαστῳ τῇ φύσει κράτιστον καὶ ἥδιστόν ἐστιν ἕκαστῳ· καὶ τῷ δὴ ὁ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίος, εἴπερ τοῦτο μάλιστα ἄνθρωπος. οὗτος ἄρα καὶ εὐδαιμονέστατος. Note that in *NE* 9.8.1169a2 Aristotle writes that each person is most of all the practical intellect. For a reconciliation of these two passages (Kraut, *Human Good*, 128-131).

⁸⁹ In *Top.* 1.5, Aristotle defines something proper as a non-essential attribute that belongs only to a certain species. However, Aristotle relaxes his use of proper in the *NE*, for in *NE* 1.7 he searches for the human *ergon*, and therefore its essence, by finding what only belongs to the human and he calls such an attribute proper. Therefore, in the *NE*, proper can mean a distinctive essential attribute.

⁹⁰ Note that, as I pointed out in section 2.2.1, ontologically, human contemplation is like divine contemplation, not the other way around. Cf. Kosman, *Activity of Being*, 215-217.

⁹¹ Kosman, *Activity of Being*, 215.

the activity of an underlying potentiality. My intention is not to solve this problem but to raise it so that I can point out that in his commentary on the *NE*, Aquinas “used *participatio* to reconcile the divinity of intellect with its being the characteristic of the truly human.”⁹² We will consider Aquinas’ solution in the next chapter.

2.5 THE RELATION BETWEEN DIVINE HAPPINESS AND HUMAN HAPPINESS

2.5.1 The Immortality of the Soul and Happiness after Death

Now that we have examined divine happiness and human happiness, I want to consider the relationship between the two, and there are at least three points of inquiry on this topic. First, I will ask whether humans can be happy without the body; in other words, whether humans can be happy after death. Secondly, we will examine whether the divine is in some sense the cause of human happiness. Thirdly, we will consider whether the divine activity determines the nature of human happiness. This final issue is especially important since I have argued for the position that the human essence determines the nature of happiness. I will begin with the first issue.

God is immaterial, and therefore His contemplation and happiness occur apart from the body. Can the contemplation and happiness of the human occur without the body as well? The answer to this question is determined by whether the human soul can exist apart from the body, and in *De Anima* 1.1 Aristotle raises the question of the soul’s separability:

The affections of the soul involve a difficulty: whether they are all common with that which has [a soul] or whether there is also a certain proper [affection] of the

⁹² Hankey, “*Complectitur Omnes*,” 7.

soul itself...It seems that most of these are not affected or do not act without the body; for example, being angry, courageous, desiring, and generally sensing; rather, this seems most of all proper to thinking. But, if this is a certain imagination or not without imagination, it would not be possible for this to be without the body. If, then, there is a certain proper [work or affection] among the works and affections of the soul, it would be separable, but if none is proper to the soul, then it would not be separate...for it is inseparable if it always is with some body.⁹³

Aristotle lays down two criteria for determining whether an activity of the soul is separable from the body, and he applies these criteria to thinking. If the soul does not have a proper affection (an affection that does not need the body for its activity), then it is inseparable from the body. But, if the soul has a proper affection, then it is separable from the body. The only activity of the soul that is a candidate to be a proper affection is thinking. To determine whether thinking is a proper affection, Aristotle sets up two tests that thinking must pass, both of which rely on the fact that imagination cannot occur without the body. First, if thinking is a type of imagination, then thinking cannot occur without the body, and therefore it is not a proper affection. Secondly, if thinking requires imagination and images for its activity, then thinking cannot occur without the body, and therefore thinking is not a proper affection. We will come back to these criteria.

When Aristotle considers *nous* in *DA* 3.5, he concludes that *nous ποιητικός* is separable, and therefore it follows that the soul is separable: “And this *nous* is separate

⁹³ *DA* 1.1 403a3-16: ἀπορίαν δ' ἔχει καὶ τὰ πάθη τῆς ψυχῆς, πότερόν ἐστι πάντα κοινὰ καὶ τοῦ ἔχοντος ἢ ἔστι τι καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς ἴδιον αὐτῆς...φαίνεται δὲ τῶν μὲν πλείστων οὐθὲν ἄνευ τοῦ σώματος πάσχειν οὐδὲ ποιεῖν, οἷον ὀργίζεσθαι, θαρρεῖν, ἐπιθυμεῖν, ὄλως αἰσθάνεσθαι, μάλιστα δ' ἔοικεν ἰδίῳ τὸ νοεῖν· εἰ δ' ἐστὶ καὶ τοῦτο φαντασία τις ἢ μὴ ἄνευ φαντασίας, οὐκ ἐνδέχοιτ' ἂν οὐδὲ τοῦτ' ἄνευ σώματος εἶναι. εἰ μὲν οὖν ἔστι τι τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς ἔργων ἢ παθημάτων ἴδιον, ἐνδέχοιτ' ἂν αὐτὴν χωρίζεσθαι· εἰ δὲ μηθέν ἐστιν ἴδιον αὐτῆς, οὐκ ἂν εἴη χωριστή...ἀχώριστον γάρ, εἴπερ ἀεὶ μετὰ σώματός τινος ἐστὶν (Aristotle, *De Anima*, edited by W. D. Ross, Oxford Classical Texts, (London: OUP, 1956)).

(χωριστὸς) and unaffected and unmixed, being in essence activity...when separated (χωρισθεῖς) it is only what it is, and this alone is immortal and eternal.”⁹⁴

However, one of the many controversies over the interpretation of *DA* 3.5 is whether *nous* refers to the human *nous* or divine *nous*. Most interpreters since Aquinas have held that the human *nous* is the subject of *DA* 3.5; for example, Lloyd Gerson.⁹⁵ Recently, however, Victor Caston has challenged this consensus:

The structure of the argument concerns a distinction between different species within the genus of soul, if you will, rather than a distinction between faculties inside a given soul; and the attributes he assigns to the second species make it clear that his concern here...is the difference between the human and the divine. The intellect in question is nothing but its essence (a22-23), which is just actuality (a18), and it functions without interruption (a22) for eternity (a23) - characteristics ascribed only to God, who is unique (1074a35-37).⁹⁶

Caston maintains that the *De Anima* is concerned with taxonomical separability; it is concerned with which capacities (nutritive, sensitive, etc.) may exist apart from each other rather than whether a capacity can exist apart from an individual. If Caston is correct, then in *DA* 3.5 Aristotle points to God in whom *nous* exists without the other capacities found in the soul to establish *nous* as a taxonomically distinct type of soul. Therefore, on Caston’s view, God, not the human, is the subject of *DA* 3.5 and is immortal.⁹⁷ Yet, to restrict Aristotle’s search for the separability of the soul to a search for which capacities may exist apart from each other is myopic. As our discussion above shows, Aristotle is certainly concerned with whether *nous* can be separated from the body in an individual human.

⁹⁴ *DA* 3.5.430a17-18, 23-24: καὶ οὗτος ὁ νοῦς χωριστὸς καὶ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἀμιγῆς, τῆ οὐσίᾳ ὄν ἐνέργεια...χωρισθεῖς δ’ ἐστὶ μόνον τοῦθ’ ὅπερ ἐστὶ, καὶ τοῦτο μόνον ἀθάνατον καὶ αἰδῖον....

⁹⁵ Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists*, 152-172.

⁹⁶ Victor Caston, “Aristotle’s Two Intellects: A Modest Proposal,” *Phronesis* 44 (1999): 200.

⁹⁷ Caston, *Two Intellects*, 209-210.

So, is the human *nous* separable, and does the human appear in *DA* 3.5? We can address the first question by returning to the two tests for separability that I outlined above: is thinking a type of imagination and does thinking require imagination? Aristotle is clear that thought and imagination are different (*DA* 3.3), and therefore thinking passes the first test. In respect to the second test, Eli Diamond argues that the potential intellect requires images but that the actual intellect “has no such external involvement or dependence on an image....Thinking awareness...is genuinely separate (*χωριστός*); even by the standards laid out in I.1, it is not dependent upon *phantasia* at all.”⁹⁸ We cannot agree with Diamond here, for Aristotle writes that “whenever we think theoretically, it is necessary to think images at the same time.”⁹⁹ Therefore, thinking requires the body, and so soul is not separable as something existing independently from the body.

But if the human *nous* is not separable, then it seems that the human is not the subject of *DA* 3.5, for Aristotle twice predicates separability of *nous* in *DA* 3.5, first at 430a17 and again at 430a22. However, there is a sense in which human *nous* is separable. In *DA* 3.4, Aristotle maintains that human *nous* is separable in that it is not a bodily organ,¹⁰⁰ a fact that Aristotle uses to explain why *nous* is not destroyed when it thinks an extremely intelligible object just as the bodily sensible organ is destroyed when it senses an intense sensible object. This distinction allows us to maintain against Caston but in

⁹⁸ Eli Diamond, *Mortal Imitations of Divine Life: The Nature of the Soul in Aristotle's De Anima* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2015), 198.

⁹⁹ *DA* 3.8.432a8-9: ...ὅταν τε θεωρῆ, ἀνάγκη ἅμα φάντασμά τι θεωρεῖν....

¹⁰⁰ Here I follow Aquinas' interpretation that, in *DA* 3.4, separable means without a bodily organ (*SLDA* 3 lect. 7). However, my interpretation of Aristotle differs from Aquinas's in this: on my interpretation, the human intellect can only exist separately from the body if it can be active without images, whereas Aquinas maintains that the fact that the human *nous* is not a bodily organ is sufficient to establish that it can exist apart from the body. I expand on Aquinas' interpretation in the next chapter (section 3.4.6).

agreement with Diamond that the human *nous* is also present along with the divine *nous* in *DA* 3.5. Let us consider how they are both present.

In 430a17-18, Aristotle writes that “this *nous* is separate and unaffected and unmixed, being in essence activity.”¹⁰¹ Eli Diamond comments that “[a]t this point in the text we are speaking of that thinking conscious awareness responsible for actualizing the epistemic memory of settled understanding...This is not yet God.”¹⁰² Indeed, on this reading, “separable” is not used in the sense that something exists independently from the body which would exclude human *nous*; rather, Aristotle means separability in the sense that this *nous* is not a bodily organ.

The divine *nous* emerges at 430a22 when Aristotle says that *nous* “does not sometimes think and sometimes not think.”¹⁰³ The fact that this *nous* always thinks can be attributed to the divine but not to the human because human thinking involves potentiality:

But the full active awareness of our thinking apart from the receptive aspect of human mind is identical to the divine thinking activity, with the difference that active human thinking is the activity of some independently underlying potential for that activity, while divine thinking is pure activity.... It is clearly this kind of intellect to which Aristotle refers in the concluding section of the chapter: “When it is separated [χωρισθείς], it alone is that which it is, and this alone is immortal and eternal” (III.5.430a22-23).¹⁰⁴

The divine intellect, then, can exist independently of the body and is eternal, whereas the human intellect, although it is not a material organ, cannot exist independently of the body and, thus, is not eternal. This implies for Aristotle, therefore, that humans cannot be happy after death. However, Aquinas, as we will see in the next

¹⁰¹ *DA* 3.5 430a17-18: καὶ οὗτος ὁ νοῦς χωριστὸς καὶ ἀπαθὴς καὶ ἀμυγῆς, τῇ οὐσίᾳ ὄν ἐνέργεια....

¹⁰² Diamond, *Mortal Imitations*, 199.

¹⁰³ *DA* 3.5 430a22: ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὅτε μὲν νοεῖ ὅτε δ’ οὐ νοεῖ.

¹⁰⁴ Diamond, *Mortal Imitations*, 201.

chapter, maintains that only the human is the subject of *DA* 3.5 and, thus, that Aristotle holds that the human *nous* can exist apart from the body. Therefore, for Aquinas, whether Aristotle thinks that the human attains happiness after death is an open question.¹⁰⁵ Aquinas surely thinks humans can be happy after death, and, in our analysis of Aristotle, this marks a significant difference between the two. Furthermore, when we come to Aquinas' commentary on the *DA*, we will see that, for the third time, he attributes the doctrine of participation to Aristotle.

2.5.2 The Cause of Human Happiness

Next, let us consider whether the divine is in some sense the cause of human happiness. In *NE* 1.9, Aristotle asks “whether happiness is something learned, acquired by habit or some other practice, or if it is received according to divine providence, or through luck.”¹⁰⁶ In respect to divine providence (θείαν μοῖραν), he answers: “If, therefore, something is a gift (δῶρημα) of the gods to men, it is reasonable that it is divinely given (θεόσδοτον)... But this, perhaps, belongs more to another subject.”¹⁰⁷ Aristotle leaves his position on whether the gods influence human happiness unclear, and we will come back to it below. He is clear, however, that happiness cannot be caused by fortune. For, the best thing, as with all things in nature, is ordered in the best possible way, and since happiness is attained in a better way through some study or care than

¹⁰⁵ In 4 *Sent.* d. 49 q. 1 a. 1 sol. 4, Aquinas writes that Aristotle speaks of imperfect happiness in the *NE*, but he “neither asserts nor denies the other happiness which is after this life” (*aliam, quae est post hanc vitam, nec asserens nec negans*). Quoted in Denis J. M. Bradley, *Aquinas on the Twofold Human Good: Reason and Human Happiness in Aquinas's Moral Science* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 399.

¹⁰⁶ *NE* 1.9 1099b9-11... πότερόν ἐστι μαθητὸν ἢ ἐθιστὸν ἢ καὶ ἄλλως πως ἀσκητὸν, ἢ κατὰ τινα θείαν μοῖραν ἢ καὶ διὰ τύχην παραγίνεται.

¹⁰⁷ *NE* 1.9 1099b11-14: εὐλογον καὶ τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν θεόσδοτον εἶναι... ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν ἴσως ἄλλης ἂν εἴη σκέψεως οἰκειότερον...

through fortune, happiness is indeed attained through study and not through fortune (*NE* 1.9.5-6).

Therefore, insofar as study is within the power of the human, Aristotle's position is that happiness can be won by human activity.¹⁰⁸ Aquinas will both agree and disagree with Aristotle. He agrees in that the happiness of the philosophers, which according to Aquinas Aristotle describes and is imperfect, depends on the human's natural powers (*ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 5); however, he disagrees in that perfect happiness cannot be attained by man's natural powers but only by God's aid (*ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 5-6). Furthermore, here we can appropriately note a second difference between the two. For Aristotle, since happiness is attained through study, it is common to many (*NE* 1.9.4). However, although Aquinas accepts that happiness must be attainable by many, he rejects Aristotle's explanation of this fact. While arguing for the necessity of sacred doctrine, Aquinas, following Moses Maimonides who thought that he was following Aristotle,¹⁰⁹ maintains that study does not bring happiness to many:

Even in respect to those things concerning God which human reason is able to investigate, it is necessary that humans be instructed by divine revelation. Since the truth concerning God which is able to be investigated by reason would come to only a few and through a long time and with a mixture of many errors.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Aristotle will argue that practical happiness, at least, can be won by human activity and independently of fortune, for one can exercise moral virtue in the act of bearing their misfortune with nobility and greatness of soul (*NE* 1.10.12-14). However, Aristotle is not clear on whether human activity can produce happiness independently of the "gift" of the gods and divine providence. But we will see below that the gods do influence happiness in some way (again, in this interpretation, I follow Bodéüs' interpretation that Aristotle takes his inherited polytheistic religion seriously; see section 2.2.1).

¹⁰⁹ Wayne Hankey, "Thomas Aquinas," in *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Chad Meister and Paul Copen, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 235-238.

¹¹⁰ *ST* 1 q. 1 a. 1 resp.: Ad ea etiam quae de Deo ratione humana investigari possunt, necessarium fuit hominem instrui revelatione divina. Quia veritas de Deo, per rationem investigata, a paucis, et per longum tempus, et cum admixtione multorum errorum, homini proveniret... (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae cum commentariis Caietani*, edited by Fratrum Praedicatorum, Leonine Commission 4-12 (Rome: Ex Typographia Polyglotta, 1888-1906)).

Now, although in *NE* 1.9 Aristotle maintains that humans can attain happiness through study and practice, elsewhere he considers whether the gods influence man's happiness in some way. As we have seen, the knowledge whose contemplation is the human's perfect happiness belongs most of all to God, and therefore, in *MP* 1.2, Aristotle writes that "if what the poets say [is true] and the divine is by nature jealous, then in respect to this [knowledge] it seems that God is most of all [jealous] and all those [with this knowledge] extraordinarily unfortunate. But it is not possible for the divine to be jealous; rather, as the proverb says, the singer tells many lies."¹¹¹ For those who pursue the happiness of wisdom, then, God is not a hindrance. Rather, in *NE* 10.8, it appears that if God does influence human happiness, then He does so as an aid:

The one who exercises *nous* and who takes care of it seems to be in the best disposition and most beloved by the gods. For if the gods care for human things, as it seems, then it would be reasonable that they delight in the best things and the things most akin [to themselves] (this would be *nous*) and that they reward the ones who love and honor this most as taking care of what is dear to them and acting rightly and beautifully. That all these things belong most of all to the wise is not unclear. Therefore, they are the most loved by the gods, and it seems that they will also be the happiest.¹¹²

2.5.3 The Divine Paradigm of Human Happiness

Let us now turn to our third question; namely, whether divine activity determines the nature of human happiness. I will argue that divine contemplation is the perfect

¹¹¹ *MP* 1.2 983a2-6: "εἰ δὴ λέγουσιν τι οἱ ποιηταὶ καὶ πέφυκε φθονεῖν τὸ θεῖον, ἐπὶ τούτου συμβῆναι μάλιστα εἰκὸς καὶ δυστυχεῖς εἶναι πάντας τοὺς περιττοῦς. ἀλλ' οὔτε τὸ θεῖον φθονερόν ἐνδέχεται εἶναι, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἄνθρωποι...."

¹¹² *NE* 10.8 1179a22-31: ὁ δὲ κατὰ νοῦν ἐνεργῶν καὶ τοῦτον θεραπεύων καὶ διακείμενος ἄριστα καὶ θεοφιλέστατος ἔοικεν. εἰ γάρ τις ἐπιμέλεια τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ὑπὸ θεῶν γίνεται, ὥσπερ δοκεῖ, καὶ εἴη ἂν εὐλογον χαίρειν τε αὐτοὺς τῷ ἀρίστῳ καὶ συγγενεστάτῳ (τοῦτο δ' ἂν εἴη ὁ νοῦς) καὶ τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας μάλιστα τοῦτο καὶ τιμῶντας ἀντευποιεῖν ὡς τῶν φίλων αὐτοῖς ἐπιμελουμένους καὶ ὀρθῶς τε καὶ καλῶς πράττοντας. ὅτι δὲ πάντα ταῦτα τῷ σοφῷ μάλισθ' ὑπάρχει, οὐκ ἄδηλον. θεοφιλέστατος ἄρα. τὸν αὐτὸν δ' εἰκὸς καὶ εὐδαιμονέστατον....

standard of which human contemplation is an imperfect likeness. Let us begin in *NE* 1.12 with Aristotle's discussion of whether happiness is something praised or honored.

For Aristotle, each thing is praised if it has a certain quality (ποιόν τι) and stands in a certain relation to something (πρός τι πῶς ἔχειν), and this something is God and the good. However, since the gods are the standards of and superior to what we praise, they themselves are not praised. Rather, "something greater and better [is for the best things], just as it appears: for we call the gods blessed and happy, and we call the most divine humans blessed. Likewise of goods things: for no one praises happiness as they do justice, but we call it blessed as being something more divine and better."¹¹³ To be blessed, then, is to be like the divine, and that which is like the divine, such as happiness, is honored, not praised (*NE* 1.12.7-8).

So, for Aristotle, to be happy is to be blessed, and to be blessed is to be a god or to be like the divine. That one is happy insofar as one is like the divine explains why, in *NE* 10.7.2-7, Aristotle determines whether the contemplative or practical life is perfect happiness by comparing these two lives in respect to the attributes which belong to blessedness (τῷ μακαρίῳ). Since the contemplative life possesses the divine attributes, like self-sufficiency and continuity, to a greater degree than the practical life, it is perfect happiness. Thus, in this passage, Aristotle's reasoning infers the nature of human happiness from the nature of divine happiness. Indeed, Aristotle reasons from divine to human happiness again in *NE* 10.8.7-8: God's activity is contemplation, and therefore,

¹¹³ *NE* 1.12 1101b22-27: ...δῆλον ὅτι τῶν ἀρίστων οὐκ ἔστιν ἔπαινος, ἀλλὰ μεῖζόν τι καὶ βέλτιον, καθάπερ καὶ φαίνεται: τοὺς τε γὰρ θεοὺς μακαρίζομεν καὶ εὐδαιμονίζομεν καὶ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τοὺς θειοτάτους μακαρίζομεν. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τῶν ἀγαθῶν: οὐδεὶς γὰρ τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν ἐπαινεῖ καθάπερ τὸ δίκαιον, ἀλλ' ὡς θειότερόν τι καὶ βέλτιον μακαρίζει.

since to be happy is to be like the divine, the human activity most akin (συγγενεστάτη) or which has a certain likeness (ὁμοίωμα τι) to divine contemplation is happiness.

Therefore, although humans can attain perfect human happiness, because the human contemplative life possesses the divine attributes to a degree, its blessedness and happiness is imperfect when it is compared to the perfect blessedness and happiness of its divine standard. So, when Aristotle attributes blessedness to humans, he distinguishes their blessedness from God's blessedness and calls them "blessed as humans."¹¹⁴ This is an important phrase for Aquinas. As we will see in the next chapter, he points to it to argue that Aristotle recognizes that both the contemplative and practical human happiness which he expounds in the *NE* is only imperfect. On my reading of the *NE*, however, Aristotle holds that humans can attain perfect human happiness in this life, and so this marks a difference between the two.

2.5.4 The Clash and its Reconciliation: *Pros hen* Homonymy

My analysis of Aristotle's theory of happiness in this chapter produces a clash of arguments. In section 2.5.3, I argued that the nature of human happiness is determined by the nature of God's activity. However, in sections 2.3 and 2.4, I argued that human happiness is determined by the essence of the human. Can these two positions be reconciled? I argue that they can be reconciled through Aristotle's notion of *pros hen* homonymy: the nature of human happiness is determined both by God's activity and human nature, for the human *nous* is defined in reference to God. First, I will consider Aristotle's doctrine of *pros hen* homonymy, which he uses to explain the unity of the

¹¹⁴ *NE* 1.10 1101a20-21: ...μακαρίους δ' ἀνθρώπους.

categories of being, and, secondly, I will argue that he also uses *pros hen* homonymy to unite various types of substances.

In the *Categories*, Aristotle distinguishes two types of predication: univocal and homonymous. One term is univocally predicated of two things if the definition of the term in both cases is the same, whereas a term is homonymously predicated if the definition of the term in one case is different from the definition in the other case (*Cat.* 1). Now, predicating a term univocally of the objects one wishes to study appears to be a necessary condition of a united and single science. However, this condition creates a problem for metaphysics, the study of being *qua* being, for the predicate “being” is said in many ways (homonymously), and therefore it appears that there can be no single science of being. In *MP* 4.1, Aristotle solves this problem by distinguishing a third type of predication; namely, *pros hen* homonymy:

Being is said in many ways, but in relation to one thing and some one nature, and not homonymously.... The study of one science is not only of things said according to one thing but also of things said in relation to one nature, for these things are also said in a certain way according to one thing...In each [science] knowledge is principally of what is first, and on which the others depend, and on account of which they are named.¹¹⁵

Aristotle’s solution to the apparent disorder of being is that although the science of being is not united through univocal predication, all the various senses of being are united in that they contain one univocal sense of being within their definitions and to which they relate in a certain way. For example, the primary sense of being is substance, and this sense of being appears in the definitions of the other senses of being: “some things are

¹¹⁵ *MP* 4.1 1003a33-b19: Τὸ δὲ ὄν λέγεται μὲν πολλαχῶς, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἓν καὶ μίαν τινὰ φύσιν καὶ οὐχ ὁμωνύμως.... οὐ γὰρ μόνον τῶν καθ’ ἓν λεγομένων ἐπιστήμης ἐστὶ θεωρῆσαι μίᾳς ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν πρὸς μίαν λεγομένων φύσιν· καὶ γὰρ ταῦτα τρόπον τινὰ λέγονται καθ’ ἓν...πανταχοῦ δὲ κυρίως τοῦ πρώτου ἢ ἐπιστήμη, καὶ ἐξ οὗ τὰ ἄλλα ἤρτηται, καὶ δι’ ὃ λέγονται.

said to be since they are affections of substance, others are a process towards substance, or destructions, or privations...of substance.”¹¹⁶ This primary sense of being on which the definitions of the other senses depend is what Aristotle refers to when he says that the many senses of being are said “in relation to one thing and some one nature (πρὸς ἓν καὶ μίαν τινὰ φύσιν).” In general, this primary sense of a *pros hen* homonym has been called the focal meaning or core-homonym of the term.¹¹⁷

Eli Diamond argues that Aristotle defines life as a *pros hen* homonym, and therefore that he also defines soul as a *pros hen* homonym since soul is the principal (ἀρχὴ) of life in a living body (*DA* 2.4).¹¹⁸ I will follow Diamond’s general argument and show that it implies that *pros hen* homonymy unites various types of substance. First, I will consider the homonymy of life, second the relation that obtains between the various types of souls, and finally the core-homonym of soul. Let us consider the homonymy of life through Aristotle’s rejection of a common definition of the soul in *De Anima* 2.3:

A common account is possible concerning figures, which fits each but is proper to none of them. Likewise, this is the case with the kinds of soul we have discussed. Therefore, it is foolish to seek the common account concerning these things and other things, which will be a proper account of none of the beings nor will be according to the proper and undivided form, while leaving an account such as this behind.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ *MP* 4.1 1003b6-10: τὰ μὲν γὰρ ὅτι οὐσίαι, ὄντα λέγεται, τὰ δ’ ὅτι πάθη οὐσίας, τὰ δ’ ὅτι ὁδὸς εἰς οὐσίαν ἢ φθορὰ ἢ στερήσεις ἢ οὐσίας.

¹¹⁷ G.E.L. Owen, “Logic and Metaphysics in Some Earlier Works of Aristotle,” in *Articles on Aristotle 3: Metaphysics*, ed. J. Barnes, M. Schofield, and R. Sorabji (London: Duckworth, 1979), 17; Christopher Shields, *Order in Multiplicity: Homonymy in the Philosophy of Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 103-130.

¹¹⁸ Diamond, *Mortal Imitations*, 37-42.

¹¹⁹ *DA* 2.3 414b22-28: γένοιτο δ’ ἂν καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν σχημάτων λόγος κοινός, ὃς ἐφαρμόσει μὲν πᾶσιν, ἴδιος δ’ οὐδενός ἔσται σχήματος. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ ταῖς εἰρημέναις ψυχαῖς. διὸ γελοῖον ζητεῖν τὸν κοινὸν λόγον καὶ ἐπὶ τούτων καὶ ἐφ’ ἑτέρων, ὃς οὐδενός ἔσται τῶν ὄντων ἴδιος λόγος, οὐδὲ κατὰ τὸ οἰκεῖον καὶ ἄτομον εἶδος, ἀφέντας τὸν τοιοῦτον.

In *DA* 2.1, Aristotle provides a common definition of the soul as “the first actuality of a natural body with organs,”¹²⁰ but he rejects it in *DA* 2.2 because life (ἡ ζωή) is ‘said in many ways’: as the capacity for nutrition, sensation, thought, or movement (*DA* 2.2.413a20-b13). The problem with giving a common definition of a homonymous term is that the common definition does not describe the essence of any one type of soul.¹²¹ Since Aristotle eliminates searching for a common or univocal definition of the soul, we may infer that if the science of soul will be united, he must define soul as a *pros hen* homonym.

Following his critique of a common definition of soul, Aristotle identifies the relationship between the various senses of soul, and this relationship allows us to identify the core-homonym of soul:

The situation concerning the figures is much the same as that concerning the soul. For the former thing always belongs potentially in what follows concerning both figures and ensouled things, for example the triangle in the quadrilateral, and the nutritive soul in the sensitive.¹²²

Diamond explains that the relation between types of soul is a hierarchical ordering of means to end in the sense of how the potential is for the actual. The final term in the series, therefore, will be that for which the lower terms exist, and which exists for its own sake. Since, for Aristotle, something is defined in terms of its end, the final term in this hierarchy will be the core-homonym or focal term of soul.¹²³

So, what is this final term and core-homonym of soul? The answer is twofold and depends on whether we restrict our investigation to the soul or broaden it to life. Yet,

¹²⁰ *DA* 2.1 412b5-6: ἐντελέχεια ἡ πρώτη σώματος φυσικοῦ ὀργανικοῦ.

¹²¹ Cf. *Top.* 6.10 148a23-7.

¹²² *DA* 2.3.414b28-415a3: παραπλησίως δ’ ἔχει τῶν περὶ τῶν σχημάτων καὶ τὰ κατὰ ψυχὴν· ἀεὶ γὰρ ἐν τῶν ἐφεξῆς ὑπάρχει δυνάμει τὸ πρότερον ἐπὶ τε τῶν σχημάτων καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐμψύχων, οἷον ἐν τετραγώνῳ μὲν τρίγωνον, ἐν αἰσθητικῶν δὲ τὸ θρεπτικόν.

¹²³ Diamond, *Mortal Imitations*, 62.

from another perspective, there is only one answer: the active contemplation of *nous*. If we restrict our inquiry to the soul, then the final term and core-homonym of soul is the active thinking found in humans. Eli Diamond shows this when he writes that, in respect to the types of soul,

each level of actuality is the potentiality for the subsequent actuality...such that the actuality of nutrition is the potentiality of perception, and the actuality of perception is the potentiality of thinking. In this sense, thinking is the actuality of the whole series.¹²⁴

It appears, then, that thinking is the final term of soul. Yet, Aristotle is more precise about the structure of thinking in *DA* 3.3-5 in that thinking itself is structured hierarchically according to degrees of potentiality and actuality: the first potentiality of the intellect is its capacity to become all things; the first actuality of intellect is its state of having learned and actually become its objects, a state which is simultaneously the potential for thinking its object; and second actuality intellect is the active thinking or contemplation of these objects.¹²⁵ On this account, the final term of soul and, therefore, the focal term of soul is the active thinking found in humans.

So, the diverse types of soul relate to active thinking, the core-homonym of soul, through the relation of means to end or potentiality to actuality, and this reading implies that living substances are united according to *pros hen* homonymy. For, Aristotle maintains that the soul is substance since it is the cause of life in the living body: “substance is the cause of being for all things, and for living things being is life, and the soul is also the cause and source of life.”¹²⁶ Therefore, since the soul is the substance of the living body, and the types of soul are united according to *pros hen* homonymy, then

¹²⁴ Diamond, *Mortal Imitations*, 64.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 165-9.

¹²⁶ *DA* 2.4 415b8-14.

living substances themselves, and not only the categories of being, are united according to *pros hen* homonymy.

If we broaden our perspective to consider all life and not only the soul, then the focal term and essence of *life* is not the active thinking found in humans, but, I maintain along with Christopher Shields, the focal term is God's active contemplation which is God Himself.¹²⁷ For, as we have seen, "life belongs to God, for the activity of intellect is life, and God is this activity." Furthermore, all forms of life stand in a teleological relationship to God's thinking. Therefore, as the final term of life, God's active thinking is the core-homonym of life.

Let me defend the claim that all forms of life stand in a teleological relationship to God's thinking. In our consideration of God's happiness, we saw that God is the good and best. Therefore, since God is active thinking, we may infer that the good is God's active thinking. Now, in *MP* 12.10, Aristotle considers how the good or best is in nature:

whether as something separate and itself by itself, or in the order. Rather, in both ways...all things are ordered together in some way, but not in the same way...and all things are ordered together in relation to one thing (πρὸς μὲν γὰρ ἓν).¹²⁸

Therefore, since all things are ordered to the good and best, they are ordered to the active thinking of God as their end.

That all things are ordered to God as their end is affirmed in *DA* 2.4, which also provides the type of means-end relationship involved. Aristotle writes that the *ergon* of all living creatures is

to make another like itself, an animal makes an animal, a plant makes a plant, in order that they may partake (μετέχωσιν) of the immortal and divine in the way

¹²⁷ Shields, *Order in Multiplicity*, 188-191; Diamond, *Mortal Imitations*, 5-6.

¹²⁸ *MP* 12.10 1075a11-19: ...πότερον κεχωρισμένον τι καὶ αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτό, ἢ τὴν τάξιν. ἢ ἀμφοτέρως...πάντα δὲ συντέτακταί πως, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὁμοίως...πρὸς μὲν γὰρ ἓν ἅπαντα συντέτακται....

they are able, for all desire this, and for the sake of this they do all they do according to their nature.¹²⁹

The activity of each type of soul is *for the sake of partaking* in the immortal and the divine life. This relation is ambiguous, and I will come back to its ambiguity below.

So, how can happiness be defined by human nature, on the one hand, and God's nature, on the other hand? *Pros hen* homonymy allows us to propose an answer.

Although the nature of happiness is determined by human nature, the human *nous* as soul and as a principle of life is defined as a *pros hen* homonym whose core term is God.

Therefore, since each such homonym is defined in reference to its core term, human *nous* is defined in relation to God, and therefore happiness is simultaneously determined by God's nature.

Now, let us return to the ambiguity in the *pros hen* homonym "life." As we have seen above, the definition of a non-core term in a *pros hen* homonym contains both some relation to the core homonym and the core-homonym itself. However, Aristotle leaves the relationship between the various senses of life and God ambiguous: the activity of each living thing is *for the sake of partaking in* God. Yet, he never defines what he means by "partakes" (μετέχω), and he himself has critiqued the term as an empty phrase (*MP* 1.9). Therefore, since he leaves this relation ambiguous, he also leaves the *pros hen* definition of the human ambiguous.

I do not intend to address the question of whether Aristotle accepts or rejects platonic participation; rather, I bring attention to this ambiguity in the *pros hen* definition of the human to point out two implications that it has for our comparison of Aristotle's

¹²⁹ *DA* 2.4 415a28-b2: τὸ ποιῆσαι ἕτερον οἷον αὐτό, ζῶον μὲν ζῶον, φυτὸν δὲ φυτόν, ἵνα τοῦ ἀεὶ καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ μετέχωσιν ἢ δύνανται· πάντα γὰρ ἐκείνου ὀρέγεται, καὶ ἐκείνου ἔνεκα πράττει ὅσα πράττει κατὰ φύσιν.

and Aquinas' doctrines of happiness. First, at the end of section 3.4 of the next chapter, I will argue that Aquinas' doctrine of analogy (Aristotle's *pros hen* homonymy) includes his doctrine of participation and that this relation between analogy and participation might explain why Aquinas interprets Aristotle with the notion of participation in the instances we have pointed out. Secondly, because Aristotle leaves the relation between the human and divine in the *pros hen* definition of the human ambiguous, he does not clearly differentiate the human from the divine. For, as we have seen in the paradox that I raised in section 2.4.4, Aristotle writes that the intellect, which is divine, is indeed truly what the human is. Furthermore, Aristotle exhorts us to become as immortal as is possible, and, again, since the thinker and the object of thought become one (*DA* 3.4-5, *MP*12.7), the human who contemplates God becomes divine. In Aristotle's account of perfect happiness, then, at the moment of contemplation, the human appears to lose its identity and is not established firmly against the divine.¹³⁰ Aquinas, in contrast, establishes the human in relation to the divine through his clarified notion of participation.¹³¹ I address how Aquinas does this at the end of section 3.5 of the next chapter.

¹³⁰ Hankey, "Placing the Human," 4-9. Hankey also shows that the human loses its identity in Plato (*Ibid.*, 1-4) and Plotinus (*Ibid.*, 9-10).

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

CHAPTER 3: AQUINAS ON DIVINE AND HUMAN HAPPINESS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

I ask two general questions in this chapter: what are Aquinas's doctrines of divine and human happiness and how do they differ from Aristotle's? I organize my analysis of Aquinas's doctrines of divine and human happiness according to the order of the *ST*. In section 3.2, I argue that the acquisition of beatitude or happiness is the aim of the *ST* and that Aquinas develops the content of the *ST* according to the neoplatonic *exitus-reditus* pattern to achieve this goal. In accordance with this pattern, the *Summa* first treats divine happiness, then the relation between divine and human happiness, and finally human happiness. My explication, then, will follow this order.

My purpose in this chapter is also to continue the comparison between Aristotle's and Aquinas's doctrines on those points which I indicated that Aquinas's doctrine differed from Aristotle's. Through this comparison, we will see how the doctrine of participation creates a difference in their theories. First, in respect to divine happiness, Aquinas's doctrine of participation allows him to differentiate creatures from God and draw them back into God's happiness (3.3). Secondly, in respect to human happiness, participation allows Aquinas to preserve the nature of the human in relation to God when the human reaches perfect human happiness in the beatific vision (3.5). Furthermore, in the analysis of Aquinas's solutions to those problems that Aristotle's theory of happiness creates for him, we will also see how Aquinas, in his commentaries on the *Metaphysics*, *De Anima*, and *Nicomachean Ethics*, uses the doctrine of participation to interpret Aristotle. Once we have surveyed these texts, I will suggest that Aquinas found the doctrine of participation in Aristotle's doctrine of *pros hen* homonymy.

In respect to considering Aquinas's doctrines on their own, my goals in this chapter are twofold. First, as I mentioned above, I will show how happiness is developed in the *ST* according to the *exitus-reditus* pattern. This means that I will not only consider what perfect human happiness is but that I will also show how the attainment of perfect happiness is a return to God through Christ in the *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa*. Secondly, I will consider the essence of happiness, the different types of happiness, and the difference between divine and human happiness. In respect to this goal, I will focus predominately on Aquinas's analysis of Aristotelian happiness. I will ask why it is imperfect and whether there is any instance in which the philosopher can attain true and perfect beatitude.

3.2. THE STRUCTURE AND MOVING PRINCIPLES OF THE *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE*

3.2.1 The *Exitus-Reditus* Structure of the *Summa Theologiae*

My explication of Aquinas's doctrines of divine and human happiness will follow the structure of the *Summa Theologiae*. In this section, I aim to show why this method is not arbitrary; indeed, happiness is the rule that, from the first article, orders the development of the *Summa*'s content and is developed by the neoplatonic *exitus-reditus* pattern. I close this section by providing the plan for sections 3.3 and 3.4.

Aquinas reveals the general structuring principle of the *ST* in its prologue. Here, Aquinas declares that he will treat the subject matter of *sacra doctrina* in a way that is

“suited to the instruction of beginners.”¹³² To achieve this purpose, Aquinas aims to redress what he observes to be the aspects of other theological texts that hinder the student’s progress in grasping this science: repetitions; useless questions, articles, and arguments; and, most importantly for our purposes, “those things that are necessary for them to know are not taught according to the order of the discipline (*ordinem disciplinae*), but according as the exposition of the book requires, or the occasion that the argument offers.”¹³³ In the prologue, then, Aquinas makes a distinction between the ordering of the discipline and the order that the material is presented in some theological texts. However, in the *Summa*, Aquinas will order the material according to the order of the discipline so that it is “appropriate for ‘teaching beginners.’ This explains how the *Summa* proceeds.”¹³⁴

The specific structuring principle according to which Aquinas orders this discipline is the neoplatonic *exitus-reditus* pattern and notion of inclusive perfection that this pattern entails.¹³⁵ The subject of *sacra doctrina* is God, and all things in it are treated “under the notion of God, either since they are God Himself or because they are ordered to God as to their principle or end.”¹³⁶ The *Summa* as a whole or in its parts develops this material according to the self-related circles of “remaining (*μονή*, “in Deo continentur omnia”); going-out (*πρόοδος*, *exitus*); and return (*ἐπιστροφή*, *reditus*...), by which all

¹³² *ST* pr.: ...congruit ad eruditionem incipientium.

¹³³ *ST* pr.: ...ea quae sunt necessaria talibus ad secundum, non traduntur secundum ordinem disciplinae, sed secundum quod requirebat librorum expositio, vel secundum quod se praebebat occasio disputandi....”

¹³⁴ W. J. Hankey, “The Conversion of God in Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae*: Being’s Trinitarian and Incarnational Self-disclosure,” *Dionysius* 35 (2017): 139.

¹³⁵ W. J. Hankey, *God in Himself: Aquinas’ Doctrine of God as Expounded in the Summa Theologiae* (Oxford: OUP, 1987); Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 146-7;

¹³⁶ *ST* 1 q. 1 a. 7 resp.: Omnia autem pertractantur in sacra doctrina sub ratione Dei: vel quia sunt ipse Deus; vel quia habent ordinem ad Deum, ut ad principium et finem.

things come out from and circle back to their beginning.”¹³⁷ As a whole, “[t]hree parts of the *Summa* accomplish this: ‘God, the movement of humans in, towards, and into God, [and] Christ, who because he is human is our way of journeying into (tendendi) God.’ The Third Part unites the other two, thus perfecting God’s self-conversion.”¹³⁸ I will organize my discussion of happiness according to this remaining, going-out, and return structure, as I explain in more detail at the end of this section. To get there, we will first look at the necessity of *sacra doctrina* and the principle that governs the *exitus-reditus* pattern; namely, union with God as beatitude.

3.2.2 The Necessity of *Sacra Doctrina* for Perfect Human Happiness

In the first article of the first question of the *Summa*, Aquinas argues that a theology other than the theology which is a part of philosophy is necessary for humanity to achieve its end and, thus, to be happy. Aquinas differentiates the theology of *sacra doctrina* from the theology which is part of philosophy by the means in which each science achieves knowledge of God: the things learned about God through *sacra doctrina* are known through the light of revelation (*lumine divinae revelationis*), whereas those things learned through philosophy are known through the light of natural reason (*lumine naturalis rationis*).¹³⁹ Yet, in the first article of the first question of the *Summa*, Aquinas must justify the necessity of *sacra doctrina*, for it appears that philosophy, built through natural reason, has already adequately treated all knowledge, including knowledge of God.¹⁴⁰ Aquinas’ justification of *sacra doctrina*, then, must show that it possesses

¹³⁷ Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 140.

¹³⁸ Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 141, quoting *ST* 1 q. 2 pr.

¹³⁹ *ST* 1 q. 1 a. 1 ad. 2.

¹⁴⁰ *ST* 1 q. 1 a. 1 obj. 2.

knowledge of God through revelation which the theology belonging to philosophy does not. Indeed, Aquinas argues that this knowledge exceeds human reason.

The knowledge revealed by God through *sacra doctrina* is necessary for man's salvation, a feat which the knowledge man gains through natural reason cannot accomplish "since man is ordained to God as to an end which exceeds the comprehension of reason....However, it is necessary for people who are to direct their intentions and actions to an end to know the end beforehand."¹⁴¹ Therefore, man cannot direct his thoughts and actions towards his end, God, by natural reason, and so man cannot achieve God as end, happiness, or salvation through natural reason. From philosophy's inability in these respects, Aquinas draws the conclusion that "it is necessary for the salvation of man that certain things which exceed human reason are made known to man through divine revelation"¹⁴² so that, as Wayne Hankey writes, "humans, in accord with the demands of the rational freedom which they possess as the divine image, can direct their desires, intentions, and actions to the supernatural end, which alone fully satisfies them."¹⁴³

The *Summa* as *sacra doctrina*, then, is itself justified as a body of knowledge about God in addition to, for instance, Aristotle's *Metaphysics* since only through it can humanity achieve perfect happiness. Indeed, beyond being justified, the *Summa* is necessary, therefore, since according to both reason and faith man must attain his end.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ *ST* 1 q. 1 a. 1 resp.: Primo quidem, quia homo ordinatur ad Deum sicut ad quendam finem qui comprehensionem rationis excedit.... Finem autem oportet esse praecognitum hominibus, qui suas intentiones et actiones debent ordinare in finem.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*: Unde necessarium fuit homini ad salutem, quod ei nota fierent quaedam per revelationem divinam, quae rationem humanam excedunt.... Necessarium igitur fuit...sacram doctrinam per revelationem haberi.

¹⁴³ Hankey, "Placing the Human," 23-4.

¹⁴⁴ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 1 resp.

3.2.3 Happiness as the Final Cause of the *Summa Theologiae*

Not only does happiness as the final cause justify and necessitate the discipline of *sacra doctrina* and the work of the *ST* as a whole, but this finality is also the ultimate end of *sacra doctrina* and the *ST*.¹⁴⁵ In *ST* 1 q. 2, Aquinas lays out the chief aim of *sacra doctrina* and the structure by which he develops the whole *Summa* to achieve this goal:

Since, therefore, the chief intent of this sacred doctrine is to teach the knowledge of God, not only as He is in Himself, but also as He is the principle of things and the end of things, and specifically of the rational creature....since we endeavor to expound this doctrine, first we will treat of God, secondly of the movement of the rational creature into God, and thirdly of Christ, who, in that he is man, is our way of pressing into God.¹⁴⁶

The end of *sacra doctrina* is the knowledge of God, and since the knowledge of God is the beatitude of the intellectual substance,¹⁴⁷ then beatitude is the end of *sacra doctrina*. Furthermore, since the end is the rule of that which is ordained to the end,¹⁴⁸ then beatitude is the rule of *sacra doctrina* and, therefore, the whole *ST*. That beatitude is the rule means that beatitude determines the content of the *ST* and how its *exitus-reditus* structure develops: both are determined by their goal of teaching that in which beatitude consists and the means to this beatitude. Now, let us consider in more detail how the *exitus-reditus* structure of the *ST* and beatitude relate.

Two aspects of the *exitus-reditus* structure are essential for understanding how it relates to beatitude: union and inclusive perfection. The *exitus-reditus* structure forms a circle in which what goes out returns and is united with its source. Aquinas maintains that

¹⁴⁵ Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 146.

¹⁴⁶ *ST* 1 q. 2 pr.: Quia igitur principalis intentio huius sacrae doctrinae est Dei cognitionem tradere, et non solum secundum quod in se est, sed etiam secundum quod est principium rerum et finis earum, et specialiter rationalis creaturae, ut ex dictis est manifestum; ad huius doctrinae expositionem intendentes, primo tractabimus de Deo; secundo, de motu rationalis creaturae in Deum; tertio, de Christo, qui, secundum quod homo, via est nobis tendendi in Deum.

¹⁴⁷ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 8 resp.

¹⁴⁸ *ST* 1a2ae q. 1 pr.: ...ex fine enim oportet accipere rationes eorum quae ordinantur ad finem.

the end of the rational creature and, therefore, of happiness, is to be united with its source. Therefore, human happiness is the *reditus*, and so according to this logic it is intelligible why perfect happiness is accomplished in the *reditus* of the *Summa's Tertia Pars*. Furthermore, this *reditus* is what Wayne Hankey calls an “inclusive perfection.” This means an “end as return to source, or beginning, but with this difference, the beginning as end includes what is traversed between the source and the end.” Hankey, building on the work of Adriano Oliva, describes how the *Summa* as a whole is an inclusive perfection:

Thus, God as end, attained in the ἐπιστροφή, “to God all is converted,” through Christ, “who as human is our way of being drawn (tendendi) into God,” is inclusive perfection vis-à-vis God as μονή, “everything is contained in God.” Fr Oliva writes: “Christ, in that he is human, is the way of our return (tendendi) to God, and, in that he is God, he is the goal of this very return.” That is, God again, but now known as containing and redeeming, by the life, death, and resurrection of the Son of God and Man, the Fall into alienated existence with its consequences.¹⁴⁹

Therefore, as an inclusive perfection, human happiness contains the knowledge of Christ as God, or, in other terms, the trinity. We will see this in our discussion of faith in section 3.4.

Yet there is a dialectical tension according to which Aquinas develops his doctrine of happiness towards man’s *reditus* to God and perfect happiness. Humans desire happiness *by nature*, but attaining it is beyond human nature. In order to achieve it, humans need the supernatural help of grace through which their natural faculties are elevated, an elevation which leads to a problem that we encountered in our analysis of Aristotle’s doctrine of happiness; namely, it seems that human nature changes into

¹⁴⁹ Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 146-7, quoting Adriano Oliva, “La *Somme de théologie* de saint Thomas d’Aquin: Introduction historique et littéraire,” *χώρα REAM* 7-8 (2009-2010), 250.

something else in the vision of God. This nature-grace tension and the resolution of the problems for the integrity of human nature that arise from it, then, develop Aquinas' discussion on happiness and, thus, move the *Summa*.¹⁵⁰ Aquinas, indeed, preserves human nature in the vision of God, and he does so in accordance with the principle that "grace does not destroy nature but completes it."¹⁵¹ I will show, at the end of section 3.5, that grace enables the human to achieve the vision of God while preserving human nature in its characteristic form of knowing.

The order of my explication of beatitude in the *Summa* will follow the order of the *Summa* in its general structure of *exitus-reditus* that we have been discussing. In section 3.3, I will consider God's beatitude and what is included within it. In section 3.4, I will consider humans in the image of God and gone out from Him in their attempt to return in the *Secunda Pars*, a movement which achieves imperfect happiness. Finally, in section 3.5, I will consider perfect human happiness as it is explicated in the *Prima* and *Secunda Pars* and briefly consider how it is accomplished through Christ in the *Tertia Pars*. As I consider Aquinas's doctrines, I will provide his solutions to those problems that he inherits from Aristotle and that we brought up in chapter one. These problems are the content of God's contemplation, the divinity of human *nous*, and the immortality of the human soul.

¹⁵⁰ Hankey, "Placing the Human," 19.

¹⁵¹ "Aquinas ultimately derives this from Proclus and Dionysius" (Hankey, "Placing the Human," 24).

3.3 GOD'S REMAINING IN *DE DEO*: DIVINE HAPPINESS

3.3.1 *Exitus-reditus*, self-differentiation, and inclusive perfection

In section 3.2, I argued that Aquinas develops the *Summa* as a whole and in its parts according to a remaining, going-out, and return structure. I begin my analysis of happiness in relation to this structure with the *Prima Pars* which constitutes the remaining stage in this movement, and within this stage I shall consider a smaller circle that is relevant to our comparison of Aquinas and Aristotle on happiness; namely, the operations of God in *ST* 1 q.14-q.26. In this circle,

beginning in God's knowledge, the movement of the question is outward through will and love, and those activities, like providence and predestination, which combine them, to the operation *ad extra* of power and back to God's knowing self-enjoyment in beatitude. Within the parts of this general *exitus-reditus* pattern, there are a number of movements of the same type.¹⁵²

In this movement outward from God's knowing and the return to it in God's beatitude, the difference between God and creation emerges, but because the *exitus-reditus* circle is an inclusive perfection (an end that includes what is traversed in the return to its source) knowledge of creatures is also included within God's beatitude.

The content that the inclusive perfection of God's beatitude includes is articulated throughout questions 14-26 by several "ever widening and strengthening" differentiations in God,¹⁵³ the first of which is God's self-relation as knower which appears in article two of question fourteen: "whether God understands Himself." This self-differentiation is prior to the differentiation within God that is crucial for our purposes; namely, the multiplicity involved in God's self-knowledge insofar as God knows creatures through

¹⁵² Hankey, *God in Himself*, 96.

¹⁵³ Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 155.

knowing His essence. This differentiation of creatures from God and their subsequent inclusion in God's knowledge marks a distinction between Aquinas's and Aristotle's doctrines of divine happiness. Not only is it a contentious issue whether God's knowledge includes the knowledge of creatures in Aristotle, but in Aristotle's doctrine, there is no such movement of differentiation and inclusion of creatures in God's knowledge.

My immediate aims in this section (3.3) are twofold: first, I will analyze how God possesses this knowledge of creatures in the *ST*. This doctrine appears in *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 5, and we will follow it through the discussion on God's knowing, willing, power, and back again to God's knowing in His beatitude. Secondly, I will show how, in Aquinas's discussion of God's knowing, he implicitly attributes the doctrine of participation to Aristotle in his *Metaphysics* commentary.

3.3.2 Multiplicity and Creation in God's Self-Knowledge

The first differentiation within God that we will consider is His self-knowledge or, in other words, that God understand Himself through Himself. The nature of God's self-knowledge rests, paradoxically, on God's simplicity. God is his essence, for since He is simple, He is not composed of matter.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, God's essence is His existence since form relates to existence as potentiality to actuality, but God is pure act.¹⁵⁵ Therefore, it follows that God is His existence as well. In addition, God's simplicity also

¹⁵⁴ *ST* 1 q. 3 a. 3 resp.

¹⁵⁵ *ST* 1 q. 3 a. 4 resp.

implies that God is His intellect,¹⁵⁶ His own act of understanding,¹⁵⁷ and the intelligible species through which He understands.¹⁵⁸

Taking these five conclusions together, we can understand how God understands Himself through Himself. Since the intelligible species through which God understands is His essence, and the divine essence is identical with God Himself, then the intelligible species God understands is God Himself.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, God is not only the object He understands, but God's intellect through which He understands and His act of understanding are also God Himself.¹⁶⁰ Therefore, God understands Himself through Himself.

Aquinas' God, although the primary object of His intellect is His own essence, is not a solipsistic God. This brings us to the next differentiation within God that we will consider. In the response of *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 5-6, Aquinas establishes that God has proper knowledge of things other than Himself through Himself and that God has this knowledge by knowing Himself as participated. We will consider these two propositions and how through them Aquinas attributes participation to Aristotle. Then, we will finish our discussion of God's knowledge by examining how God knows creatures through the divine ideas.¹⁶¹

First, let us consider how God knows things other than Himself through Himself. For Aquinas, God perfectly understands Himself, and this implies that He perfectly

¹⁵⁶ *ScG* 3.45.3.

¹⁵⁷ *Comp. The.* c. 1.31; cf. *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 2 resp.; *ScG* 3.45.2

¹⁵⁸ *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 2 resp; *Comp. The.* c. 1.31; cf. *ScG* 3.46.3.

¹⁵⁹ *ScG* 3.47.2; cf. *ScG* 3.48.6.

¹⁶⁰ *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 2 resp.; *ScG* 3.47.4.

¹⁶¹ Gregory T Doolan, *Aquinas on the Divine Ideas as Exemplar Causes* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 250. For a discussion on Aquinas's interpretation of Aristotle on whether God knows the world see Vivian Boland, *Ideas in God according to Saint Thomas Aquinas: Sources and Synthesis*. Leiden: Brill, 1996), 284-296.

knows His power and to what it extends. Therefore, since God is the first effective cause of all things, He knows things other than himself. But, something is known in two ways: “[s]omething is known in itself when it is known by the proper species adequate to the thing known itself...[and something] is seen through another which is seen through an image of something containing it...”¹⁶² God sees Himself in the first way, but He sees other things “not in themselves, but in Himself, inasmuch as His essence contains a similitude of things other than Himself.”¹⁶³ Furthermore, God has proper knowledge of those other things that He knows in His self-knowledge, and such knowledge is to know something both in general and as distinct from other things.¹⁶⁴ To prove God has proper knowledge of other things, Aquinas argues that an understanding that only knows something generally is imperfect, but God’s knowledge and understanding must be perfect, for if they were imperfect, His being would not be perfect.¹⁶⁵

Now, as we saw in section 2.2, Aquinas holds that Aristotle’s doctrine that God is a “thinking thinking of thinking” does not mean that God only thinks Himself, but it also means that God thinks His effects by thinking Himself; this is the doctrine of *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 5-6 which we just considered. In what follows, I argue that by explaining Aristotle’s doctrine of God’s contemplation thus, Aquinas implicitly attributes the doctrine of participation to Aristotle. To show this, I will sketch Aquinas’s doctrine of participation and show that his account of how God knows things other than Himself relies on it.

¹⁶² *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 5 resp.: In seipso quidem cognoscitur aliquid, quando cognoscitur per speciem propriam adaequatam ipsi cognoscibili.... In alio autem videtur id quod videtur per speciem continentis....

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*: ...non in ipsis, sed in seipso, inquantum essentia sua continet similitudinem aliorum ab ipso. For Aquinas, sensation also pre-exists within God although in a different mode than in the human (*ST* 1 q. 14 a. 11). This doctrine is also found in Plotinus and Augustine (Martin Sastri, “The Influence of Plotinian Metaphysics in St. Augustine’s Conception of the Spiritual Senses,” *Dionysius* 24 (2006): 99-110).

¹⁶⁴ *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 6 sc.

¹⁶⁵ *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 6 resp.

In his commentary on the *De ebdomadibus* of Boethius, Aquinas distinguishes three types of participation, one of which is relevant for us: an effect, Aquinas writes, participates in its cause.¹⁶⁶ This type of participation is what Geiger calls participation by likeness or formal hierarchy,¹⁶⁷ and it is established by efficient causality in line with the principle that “all agents make something like itself.”¹⁶⁸ God as the agent of the universe impresses on all things a likeness of His form, but since God is a pre-eminent and transcendent agent, these likenesses are not perfect likenesses; rather, they are more or less imperfect possessions of what God possesses maximally and essentially.

Now, we saw above that God has proper knowledge of things other than Himself but not how God has this knowledge. In *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 6, Aquinas uses the doctrine of participation to explain how. Aquinas argues that since God’s knowledge is perfect, He knows both His own essence and “each way His own perfection is participated by others.”¹⁶⁹ Therefore, since “the proper nature of each thing consists...in a participation of the divine perfection,”¹⁷⁰ God knows all things with proper knowledge in His perfect self-knowledge. So, when Aquinas explains, in his commentary on the *Metaphysics*, that Aristotle’s God as a “thinking thinking of thinking” knows other things by thinking His effects in Himself, he must attribute the doctrine of participation to Aristotle for his explanation to work. For, as we have seen here, God knows His effects insofar as they participate in His perfection.

¹⁶⁶ *De ebdo.* lect. 2 lines 65-115.

¹⁶⁷ Geiger, *La Participation*, 28-29, 66-71. See also N Clarke, “The Meaning of Participation in St. Thomas Aquinas,” *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 26 (1952): 152.

¹⁶⁸ *ST* 1 q. 4 a. 3 resp.: Cum enim omne agens agat sibi simile in quantum est agens....

¹⁶⁹ *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 6 resp.: quomodocumque participabilis est ab aliis sua perfectio.

¹⁷⁰ *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 6 resp.: Propria enim natura uniuscuiusque consistit, secundum quod per aliquem modum divinam perfectionem participat.

The discussion on God's knowledge extends from question fourteen to question eighteen. "[The effect of these questions] is to develop the self-relation belonging to the divine knowing as it is presented by Thomas from the very beginning. By this means the transition to will is made."¹⁷¹ Next, I will examine the role of the divine ideas and truth in God's knowledge of creatures before I consider the divine will and its necessity in creation.

In the proem to God's knowledge, Aquinas explains why the ideas must follow a treatment of God's knowledge: "since everything known is in the knower, but the notions of things insofar as they are in God as knower are called ideas, the consideration of ideas ought to be joined with the consideration of knowledge."¹⁷² My goal here is to analyze Aquinas's explanation of how God has knowledge of many creatures through the divine ideas without contradicting the divine simplicity in *ST* 1 q. 15.

In *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 1, Aquinas defines the ideas thus: "by the ideas are understood the forms of other things, existing apart from the things themselves."¹⁷³ The ideas are divided by Aquinas into exemplars (*exemplar*) and notions (*ratio*). An exemplar is a principle of making things, and this principle belongs to practical knowledge, whereas a notion is a principle of knowledge, and this principle belongs to speculative knowledge.¹⁷⁴ Some ideas may be either an exemplar or a notion depending on the intention of the intelligent agent.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Hankey, *God in Himself*, 100.

¹⁷² *ST* 1 q. 14 pr.: ...quia omne cognitum in cognoscente est, rationes autem rerum secundum quod sunt in Deo cognoscente, ideae vocantur, cum consideratione scientiae erit etiam adiungenda consideratio de ideis.

¹⁷³ *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 1 resp.: ...per ideas intelliguntur formae aliarum rerum, praeter ipsas res existentes.

¹⁷⁴ *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 3 resp.

¹⁷⁵ *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 16 resp.

Aquinas then demonstrates that ideas exist in the divine mind. Since the agent of generation acts for a form as its end only if the likeness of the form is in the agent, the intellectual agent of the world must possess an intelligible likeness of the form of the world. Since God made the world through an intellectual act, it follows that God possesses a form in His mind the likeness after which the world was made,¹⁷⁶ and this type of idea is an exemplar.¹⁷⁷ God as efficient cause, then, creates according to the exemplar ideas, and therefore in the participation by likeness that efficient causality establishes, the creature imitates its appropriate divine idea.

In the third objection of *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 1, Aquinas clarifies the way in which the ideas exist in God: God's essence itself is an idea insofar as it is a likeness to other things.¹⁷⁸ This thesis leads to the first objection of article two: God's essence is one, and therefore the ideas must not be many but one.¹⁷⁹ Aquinas responds that the ideas are indeed many since many notions are understood through God's one essence.¹⁸⁰ The burden of the main response in article two is to show how God understands many ideas through His simple essence.

Aquinas begins by demonstrating that there are many ideas in the divine mind. Since God intends the order of the universe as its end, God must possess the idea of the order of the universe. Aquinas continues,

¹⁷⁶ *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 1 resp.

¹⁷⁷ This conclusion is contrary to the Platonic position that the ideas existed in themselves rather than in the intellect (*ST* 1 q. 15 a. 1 ad. 1).

¹⁷⁸ *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 1 ad. 3: Deus secundum essentiam suam est similitudo omnium rerum. Unde idea in Deo nihil est aliud quam Dei essentia.

¹⁷⁹ *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 2 obj. 1: Videtur quod non sint plures ideae. Idea enim in Deo est eius essentia. Sed essentia Dei est una tantum. Ergo et idea est una.

¹⁸⁰ *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 2 ad. 1: quod idea non nominat divinam essentiam in quantum est essentia, sed in quantum est similitudo vel ratio huius vel illius rei. Unde secundum quod sunt plures rationes intellectae ex una essentia, secundum hoc dicuntur plures ideae.

One cannot possess a notion of some whole unless the proper notions of each thing from which the whole is constituted is possessed.... Therefore, it is necessary that in the divine mind there are proper notions of all things.... Therefore, it follows that in the divine mind there are many ideas.¹⁸¹

One may think that the conclusion that God understands many things is “repugnant”¹⁸² to the divine simplicity, and it would be if the divine mind understood by many species; however, if it understands many things through one species, then, Aquinas maintains, God’s simplicity is maintained. Thus, Aquinas proceeds to demonstrate how the divine intellect understands many things through one species, the divine essence. Aquinas again employs the doctrine of participation. God, in knowing His own essence perfectly, knows it as a likeness participated by creatures, and so God knows His single essence as the proper account and idea of each creature.¹⁸³

In question sixteen on truth, “the circle of self-knowledge by which God knows his relation to things becomes more explicit...”¹⁸⁴ In this question, Aquinas will move beyond demonstrating how God understands many things through one species and argue that this multiplicity of ideas originates through God knowing Himself as truth. Let us consider this.

Aquinas begins His treatment of truth by placing truth primarily in the intellect. He argues that the true denotes that towards which the intellect tends, and since the intellect knows insofar as the thing it knows is in it, then truth must be in the intellect.¹⁸⁵ From this Aquinas infers the definition of truth as “the conformity of the intellect to the

¹⁸¹ *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 2 resp.: Ratio autem alicuius totius haberi non potest, nisi habeantur propriae rationes eorum ex quibus totum constituitur.... Sic igitur oportet quod in mente divina sint propriae rationes omnium rerum.... Unde sequitur quod in mente divina sint plures ideae.

¹⁸² *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 2 resp.

¹⁸³ *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 2 resp.: ...inquantum Deus cognoscit suam essentiam ut sic imitabilem a tali creatura.

¹⁸⁴ Hankey, *God in Himself*, 102.

¹⁸⁵ *ST* 1 q. 16 a. 1 resp.; Cf. *ST* 1 q. 16 a. 1 ad. 2.

thing.”¹⁸⁶ In contrast with humans, however, truth not only resides in God’s intellect, but God is truth:

Truth is found in the intellect insofar as it apprehends a thing as it is, and in a thing insofar as he has an existence conformable to the intellect. This, however, is found maximally in God. For, His existence not only is conformed to his intellect, but it is indeed His own act of understanding, and his own act of understand is the measure and cause of every other being and intellect, and He Himself is His existence and understanding. Therefore, it follows that not only that truth is in Him, but that He is the highest and first truth itself.¹⁸⁷

However, the thesis that God is truth leads to a differentiation in God insofar as truth implies a diversity. Since truth is a conformity between the intellect and the thing known, truth adds the notion of a comparison to the intellect.¹⁸⁸ To know truth, then, is “to know this conformity [between the intellect and the thing known]”¹⁸⁹ and, therefore, to know a comparison.¹⁹⁰ But since the notion of conformity and comparison require diversity, the notion of truth also assumes a diversity of things.¹⁹¹ For God to know Himself reflexively as truth, then, requires that He knows some diversity in Himself to which he compares Himself. This comparison “introduces differentiation into God”¹⁹² and multiples the ideas of things: “Such relations, by which the ideas are multiplied, are not caused by the thing, but by the divine intellect comparing its essence to the things.”¹⁹³

¹⁸⁶ *ST* 1 q. 16 a. 2 resp.: Et propter hoc per conformitatem intellectus et rei veritas definitur.

¹⁸⁷ *ST* 1 q. 16 a. 5 resp.: ...veritas invenitur in intellectu secundum quod apprehendit rem ut est, et in re secundum quod habet esse conformabile intellectui. Hoc autem maxime invenitur in Deo. Nam esse suum non solum est conforme suo intellectui, sed etiam est ipsum suum intelligere; et suum intelligere est mensura et causa omnis alterius esse, et omnis alterius intellectus; et ipse est suum esse et intelligere. Unde sequitur quod non solum in ipso sit veritas, sed quod ipse sit ipsa summa et prima veritas.

¹⁸⁸ *ST* 1 q. 16 a. 3 resp.: ...ita et verum comparationem ad intellectum.

¹⁸⁹ *ST* 1 q. 16 a. 2 resp.: Unde conformitatem istam cognoscere, est cognoscere veritatem.

¹⁹⁰ *ST* 1 q. 16 a. 2 resp.

¹⁹¹ *DV* q. 1 a. 3.

¹⁹² W. J. Hankey, *Aquinas’s Neoplatonism in the Summa Theologiae on God: A Short Introduction* (Forthcoming), 59.

¹⁹³ *ST* 1 q. 15 a. 2 ad. 3: Ad tertium dicendum quod huiusmodi respectus, quibus multiplicantur ideae, non causantur a rebus, sed ab intellectu divino, comparante essentiam suam ad res. Cf. Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 156.

Therefore, in knowing Himself as truth, God knows Himself as the likeness to what He creates, and such knowledge is to know what He creates. “The enjoyment of this result is part of the felicity of the divine beatitude.”¹⁹⁴

3.3.3 God’s Will and Power

Aquinas’s consideration of God’s will follows his consideration of God’s knowledge since “will follows upon the intellect.”¹⁹⁵ God’s will is a step outward in the *exitus* of God’s operations, but it is not the final step; this belongs to God’s power.

The *exitus* movement from God’s knowledge to His will can be seen in the idea that God’s will is a more proximate cause of creation than His knowledge. God’s knowledge alone cannot be the sufficient cause of creation. For, if this were the case, then created things would be eternal since God’s knowledge is eternal, and when a cause is present so is its effect.¹⁹⁶ Yet, creation is not eternal. To show why creation is not eternal, Aquinas combines God’s knowledge and will.¹⁹⁷ The knowledge of God is the cause of things he creates “only insofar as it is joined with the will,”¹⁹⁸ for an intelligible form is a principle of action only if God has “the inclination to do what the intellect has conceived[.]”¹⁹⁹ Therefore, God’s will is essential to His *exitus*. However, His will is an internal operation and so we have not yet reached God’s creative power.

¹⁹⁴ Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 156.

¹⁹⁵ *ST* 1 q. 19 a. 1 resp.: ...voluntas enim intellectum consequitur.

¹⁹⁶ *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 8 obj. 2: Praeterea, posita causa ponitur effectus. Sed scientia Dei est aeterna. Si ergo scientia Dei est causa rerum creaturarum, videtur quod creaturae sint ab aeterno.

¹⁹⁷ Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 158-9. Aquinas argues that God possesses a will since the intellect both seeks to possess its intelligible form and rests in it when possessed, and “both of these belong to the will.” *ST* 1 q. 19 a. 1 resp.

¹⁹⁸ *ST* 1 q. 14 a. 8 resp.: sua scientia sit causa rerum, secundum quod habet voluntatem coniunctam.

¹⁹⁹ *ST* 1 q. 19 a. 4 resp.: nam inclinatio eius ad agendum quod intellectu conceptum est, pertinet ad voluntatem.

Yet, a problem arises from this explanation of creation. Since God must will to create, there might not be an *exitus* of creatures from God. For, it is disputed whether God wills anything other than Himself, for if so, He would be moved by another,²⁰⁰ and therefore God would not be moved by Himself.²⁰¹ To solve this Aquinas explains that “it pertains to the notion of the will to communicate to others the good that one has, insofar as it is possible,”²⁰² and so God does indeed both will Himself and others to be. But God wills thus with this difference: He wills “Himself as end, and others as to that end.”²⁰³ This distinction provides a resolution to the above objection. When God wills others, He is moved by Himself since the end is what moves the will, and God wills others towards Himself as end.

Question twenty-five on God’s power marks the fundamental distinction in the treatise on God’s operations and is the culmination of God’s movement outwards in this treatise. Aquinas writes of this fundamental distinction at the beginning of his consideration of God’s operations:

And since one kind of operation is that which remains in the operator, and another is that which proceeds to the exterior effect, first we will consider knowledge and will (for to understand is in the one understanding, and to will is in the one willing); and after this the power of God, which is considered as the principle of the divine operation proceeding to the exterior effect.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁰ *ST* 1 q. 19 a. 2 obj.2.

²⁰¹ *ST* 1 q. 19 a. 1 ad. 3. For a discussion on How God moves Himself with respect to both God’s intellect and will and how this solution reconciles Plato’s self-moving creator and Aristotle’s unmoved mover see Hankey, *God in Himself*, 102-105; Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 157.

²⁰² *ST* 1 q. 19 a. 2 resp.: Unde et hoc pertinet ad rationem voluntatis, ut bonum quod quis habet, aliis communicet, secundum quod possibile est.

²⁰³ *ST* 1 q. 19 a. 2 resp.: Sic igitur vult et se esse, et alia. Sed se ut finem, alia vero ut ad finem...

²⁰⁴ *ST* 1 q. 14 pr.: Et quia operatio quaedam est quae manet in operante, quaedam vero quae procedit in exteriorem effectum, primo agemus de scientia et voluntate (nam intelligere in intelligente est, et velle in volente); et postmodum de potentia Dei, quae consideratur ut principium operationis divinae in effectum exteriorem procedentis.

In the question on God's power, God's movement outwards extends beyond knowing creatures and willing their existence, and "by this outward movement, the operation *ad extra* is reached. Power is 'principium effectus'."²⁰⁵ In *ST* 1 q. 25 a. 1 ad. 4, Aquinas relates knowledge, will, and power to summarize how God produces His effect, and he explains why the consideration of the interior effect precedes the consideration of the operation to the exterior effect:

Power implies a notion of principle executing that which the will commands, and to which knowledge directs.... Therefore, a consideration of knowledge and will precedes in God a consideration of power as a cause precedes the operation and effect.²⁰⁶

After the *exitus* in God's operations reaches its apex in God's power, God's operations return to Himself in His beatitude.

3.3.4 God's Beatitude as an Inclusive Perfection of *de operatione Dei*

Question twenty-six, "On the Divine Beatitude," concludes the outward movement of the divine operations from God's knowledge, to His will, and to His power.²⁰⁷ In the conclusion of this movement, this question "effects a return to God's knowledge, which began the tract and dominates it"²⁰⁸ since happiness is "the perfect good of the intellectual nature."²⁰⁹ First, I aim to show how God is His own Beatitude, a doctrine with which Aristotle agrees. Secondly, we will consider how God's beatitude includes both all types of beatitude and the knowledge of what has been differentiated

²⁰⁵ Hankey, *God in Himself*, 110.

²⁰⁶ *ST* 1 q. 25 a. 1 ad. 4: potentia importat rationem principii exequentis id quod voluntas imperat, et ad quod scientia dirigit.... Unde consideratio scientiae et voluntatis praecedit in Deo considerationem potentiae, sicut causa praecedit operationem et effectum.

²⁰⁷ Hankey, *God in Himself*, 111; Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 161. Cf. *ST* 1 q. 2 pr.

²⁰⁸ Hankey, *God in Himself*, 111.

²⁰⁹ *ST* 1 q. 26 a. 1 resp.: bonum perfectum intellectualis naturae. Cf. Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 161.

from Him in the questions on His knowledge, will, and power. Both points rely on Aquinas's doctrine of participation,²¹⁰ and both points also mark a difference between Aquinas's and Aristotle's doctrines of divine happiness. For, the beatitude of Aristotle's God does not include all types of beatitude, and, even if Aristotle's God knows creatures, He does not know them by means of this self-differentiation. Let us begin with the first.

For Aquinas, the perfect good of God is beatitude since beatitude is the perfect good of the intellectual nature.²¹¹ The perfect good in each being, in turn, is its most perfect operation: it is an operation which involves understanding itself, the perfection of the intellect for the operation, and the highest intelligible as its object.²¹² God is blessed since He possesses all aspects of this most perfect operation:

He is intelligent, and His intellect is the highest power, nor does it need a perfecting habit since He is perfect in Himself, as was shown above. Moreover, He understands Himself, who is the highest intelligible...²¹³

This consideration of God's happiness as consisting in both the act of the intellect and its object further implies that God is His own beatitude. Since the object of God's beatitude is Himself as intelligible object, and, as has been established, God is identical with His intelligible object, then God is His own beatitude in respect to the object. Furthermore, since God's understanding is His substance, and beatitude consists in the understanding, then God is His blessedness in respect to His understanding as well.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ I have demonstrated the role of participation in God's knowledge of what is differentiated from Him in section 3.3.2. I show how the proposition that God's beatitude includes all others relies on the doctrine of participation in this section (3.3.4).

²¹¹ *ST* 1 q. 26 a. 1 resp.; *ScG* 1.100.2.

²¹² *ScG* 1.100.3.

²¹³ *ScG* 1.100 lines 2-6, p. 265: ...cum sit intelligens; et suus intellectus altissima virtutum sit, nec indiget habitu perficiente, quia in seipso perfectus est, ut supra ostensum est; ipse autem seipsum intelligit, qui est summum intelligibile... (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles cum commentariis Ferrariensis*, edited by Fratrum Praedicatorum, Leonine Commission 13-15 (Rome: Typis Riccardi Garroni, 1918-30)).

²¹⁴ *ScG* 1.101.2.

In article two of question twenty-six, Aquinas also argues that God is His act of intellect and, therefore, His own happiness.²¹⁵ However, Wayne Hankey observes that, in this question, these identifications are not the “salient point....[r]ather it is precisely as intellectual act, ‘secundum rationem intellectus’, that beatitude gathers together all the preceding perfections....[it] involves a return to the point of departure which contains what intervenes,”²¹⁶ and so the divine beatitude is what Hankey calls an inclusive perfection.²¹⁷

This inclusive perfection of God’s knowledge, will, and power in His happiness is displayed in Aquinas’ answer to the question of whether beatitude belongs to God:

Nothing other is understood by the name beatitude than the perfect good of the intellectual nature, which knows its own sufficiency in the good which it possesses, and to which it befits that some good or bad may occur, and which is the master of its own operations.²¹⁸

Commenting on how this passage shows the inclusive nature of happiness in respect to God’s will and power, Hankey writes

Specifically, happiness is presented as an intellectual activity containing will and power... Happiness knows the good it possesses—or, put otherwise, it is by knowledge that will enjoys its self-possession as its own end or good. Further, the intellectual nature, which is happy, is, as will, the source of good or evil, and has power over its acts. Intellect is the origin of will and power...and they are also thus the perfections of intellect.... Beatitude is intellect knowing and enjoying its will and power...²¹⁹

The inclusivity of God’s beatitude also arises in article four²²⁰ in which Aquinas asks, “whether every beatitude is included in God’s beatitude.” In addition to including

²¹⁵ *ST* 1 q. 26 a. 2 resp.

²¹⁶ Hankey, *God in Himself*, 111-112.

²¹⁷ Hankey, *Aquinas’s Neoplatonism*, 61.

²¹⁸ *ST* 1 q. 26 a. 1 resp.: Nihil enim aliud sub nomine beatitudinis intelligitur, nisi bonum perfectum intellectualis naturae; cuius est suam sufficientiam cognoscere in bono quod habet; et cui competit ut ei contingat aliquid vel bene vel male, et sit suarum operationum domina.

²¹⁹ Hankey, *God in Himself*, 112.

²²⁰ Hankey, *God in Himself*, 112-113; Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 161.

His will and power, the divine beatitude includes all perfections, and thus it includes both the goods of every creature and, more specifically, all types of beatitude.²²¹ That God's beatitude includes every type of beatitude relies on the doctrine of participation, therefore. For, the perfections of all creatures are participations in God's essence.²²²

That God's beatitude includes every type of beatitude means that God possesses wholly in His beatitude whatever is desirable in the beatitudes of earthly happiness (which consists in delight, riches, power, dignity, and fame), practical happiness, and contemplative happiness. In contemplative happiness "God possesses a continual and most certain contemplation of Himself and all other things."²²³ The burden of my analysis in sections 3.3.1-3.3.4 has been to show how, in the contemplation of Himself, God contemplates all other things. God's beatitude consists in the self-reflexive contemplation of His own essence, and by knowing His essence as the exemplar ideas of creatures, God has a proper knowledge of all creatures. Therefore, God's beatitude includes His knowledge of creatures.

3.3.5 The Divine Mission: From Divine to Human Happiness

Happiness, for Aquinas, is the perfection of the intellectual nature, and, in the *Secunda Pars* of the *ST*, he concludes that this perfection consists in knowing and loving God. My aim in this final section on God's happiness is to argue that the mission of the divine persons is a transition from God's happiness to human happiness insofar as

²²¹ *ST* 1 q. 26 a. 4 sc.: Sed contra est quod beatitudo est perfectio quaedam. Divina autem perfectio complectitur omnem perfectionem, ut supra ostensum est. Ergo divina beatitudo complectitur omnem beatitudinem. Cf. *ST* 1 q. 26 a. 1 ad. 1.

²²² *ST* 1 q. 4 a. 2.

²²³ *ST* 1 q. 26 a. 4 resp.: De contemplativa enim felicitate, habet continuam et certissimam contemplationem sui et omnium aliorum....

through the indwelling of the divine persons the human knows and loves God. This happiness via God's indwelling is treated in the *Secunda Pars*, and it is also an anticipation of the eternal ultimate happiness treated in the *Tertia Pars*.

We may consider this transition by distinguishing the several ways human knowing participates in God's own knowing: by the light of nature, the light of faith or grace, and the light of glory.²²⁴ In Aquinas's discussion on how God is known by us, he writes,

It is clear, however, that God is the author of the intellectual power and that he can be seen by the intellect. Since the intellectual power of the creature is not the essence of God, it remains that it is some participated likeness of it, which is the first intellect. Therefore, also the intellectual power of the creature is called a certain intelligible light, as if it is derived from the first light, whether this is understood concerning the natural power or concerning some perfection added by grace or glory.²²⁵

In Aquinas' discussion of the divine mission in *ST* 1 q. 43 a. 3, he distinguishes between our participation in God's knowing by nature and by grace in terms of mission. Our natural light, the agent intellect, refers to "the one common mode by which God is in all things, through essence, power, and presence as the cause is in the effects participating in its goodness."²²⁶ However, God, in the divine mission, can also be in the rational creature in another mode. The notion of mission implies a relation of the one sent to its

²²⁴ W. J. Hankey, "God's Indwelling: Aquinas's Platonist Systematization of Aristotelian Participation," (Forthcoming), 14-15.

²²⁵ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 2 resp.: Manifestum est autem quod Deus et est auctor intellectivae virtutis, et ab intellectu videri potest. Et cum ipsa intellectiva virtus creaturae non sit Dei essentia, relinquitur quod sit aliqua participata similitudo ipsius, qui est primus intellectus. Unde et virtus intellectualis creaturae lumen quoddam intelligibile dicitur, quasi a prima luce derivatum, sive hoc intelligatur de virtute naturali, sive de aliqua perfectione superaddita gratiae vel gloriae.

²²⁶ Hankey, *God's Indwelling*, 15. *ST* 1 q. 43 a. 3 resp.: Est enim unus communis modus quo Deus est in omnibus rebus per essentiam, potentiam et praesentiam, sicut causa in effectibus participantibus bonitatem ipsius.

term, and in the divine mission, the divine person who is sent, since they are already in everything according to a common mode, exists in its term in a new mode:²²⁷

And since, by knowing and loving, a rational creature by its own operation touches God Himself, according to this special mode God is not only said to be in the creature but even to inhabit them as in His temple. Thus, no other effect is able to be the reason that the divine person is by this new mode in the rational creature except sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*).²²⁸

In this new mode in which God is in the rational creature, the knowing and loving proper to human nature is elevated since in the giving of the Holy Spirit and the Son the soul is assimilated to the love of the Holy Spirit and the knowing of the Son.²²⁹ Since something is given insofar as it is possessed by someone, and one possesses “only what [they] can freely use and enjoy,”²³⁰ humans possess through this grace the power of the Holy Spirit and the Son as if it were their own. Indeed, Camille de Belloy, commenting on the one to whom the divine persons come in 1 *Sent.* d. 14 q. 2 a. 2 ad. 2, avers, against the neo-Thomist rationalists, the subjective experience of this knowing and loving in Aquinas.²³¹ Furthermore, this knowing and loving that the human possesses through grace is not only a higher contemplation than the contemplation of reason, but it is a participation in the Trinity; namely, in the Son and the Holy Spirit. For, “[s]anctifying grace, is the means of the participation of the just in the Persons of the Trinity as they send themselves,”²³² and the human participation in the light of grace or faith is through this sanctifying grace.

²²⁷ *ST* 1 q. 43 a. 1 resp.

²²⁸ *ST* 1 q. 43 a. 3 resp.: Et quia, cognoscendo et amando, creatura rationalis sua operatione attingit ad ipsum Deum, secundum istum specialem modum Deus non solum dicitur esse in creatura rationali, sed etiam habitare in ea sicut in templo suo. Sic igitur nullus alius effectus potest esse ratio quod divina persona sit novo modo in rationali creatura, nisi gratia gratum faciens.

²²⁹ *ST* 1 q. 43 a. 5 ad. 2.

²³⁰ *ST* 1 q. 43 a. 3 resp.: illud solum habere dicimur, quo libere possumus uti vel frui.

²³¹ W. J. Hankey, “Henri-Louis Bergson,” in *Plotinus’ Legacy: Studies in the Transformation of ‘Platonism’ from Early Modernism to the Twentieth Century*, edited by Stephen Gersh (forthcoming), referring to Camille de Belloy, *Dieu comme soi-même. Connaissance de soi et connaissance de dieu selon Thomas d’Aquin: L’herméneutique d’Ambroise Gardeil*. Bibliothèque thomiste 63 (Paris: Vrin, 2014), 13.

²³² Hankey, *God’s Indwelling*, 16.

To connect the divine mission with human happiness, de Belloy explains how, through the divine mission and indwelling, the human is united with God as the final end:

Without leaving its temporal and created condition, [the human] receives by grace the Son and Holy Spirit according to the immanent mode in which these persons eternally proceed, one as Word, the other as Love within the uncreated Trinity, and by which each of them does not cease, in a movement without change, to return to the Father, but also to bring back there, in time and as its final end, the rational creature whom they have chosen for a dwelling place.²³³

However, although humans in this life are brought to their end by assuming the divine powers of knowing and loving God and, therefore, possess a type of happiness, humans cannot know the divine essence in this life (as will be shown), and therefore, by the light of grace humans do not reach perfect happiness and complete union with God.²³⁴ Yet, this grace “looks forward to the perfection of the state of glory...”²³⁵ in which God by His essence will be in the knower through the light of glory. Therefore, the light of glory alone is the participation by which humans are brought to perfect happiness.

3.4. *DE MOTU RATIONALIS CREATURAE*: IMPERFECT HUMAN HAPPINESS

3.4.1 The Structure of the *Summa* in relation to Human Happiness

Aquinas’ treatment of God characterized by continual differentiations in His names, operations, real relations, and creating accomplishes the remaining stage of the

²³³ de Belloy, *Dieu comme soi-même*, 13, quoted in Hankey, “Placing the Human,” 28.

²³⁴ Although, in this study, I take the position that humans can only see the divine essence in this life through rapture, and so humans do not see the divine essence in this life through the divine mission, there is room for further study. The reason for my position is that Aquinas argues in *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 11 and *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 3 that as long as the human’s proper mode of knowing is through sensible substances, then the human cannot see God’s essence. Rapture circumvents this problem, for the human is separated from the body and the senses. On the other hand, it is possible that the human sees the divine essence in this life through the divine mission by assuming the knowing of Son if one were to argue that Christ experienced beatitude *in via*.

²³⁵ Hankey, *God’s Indwelling*, 17.

exitus-reditus structure of the whole *Summa*. The *Secunda Pars* and *Tertia Pars*

accomplish the *exitus* and *reditus* stages respectively:

The return to God as Goodness per se, takes place in the cosmos fallen in the *exitus* of the Second Part. That fall is a consequence of our pursuit of our good, happiness, a quest which, crucially, also contains the possibility of our return.... In Christ, the human motion is given a way back.²³⁶

In sections 3.4 and 3.5, I will focus on the *reditus* of man. Before I lay out the aims of this section (3.4), however, let us look more closely at the structure of the *Summa* in relation to human happiness.

I closed section 3.3 by considering the divine mission through which humans are brought to happiness. In the prologue to the *Secunda Pars*, Aquinas identifies the subject of the *Secunda Pars* as the human who is the image of God:

Since the exemplar, God, has been treated and those things which have proceeded from the divine power according to His will, it remains for us to consider His image, man, insofar as he is the principle of his own operations, as having free will and power over his actions.²³⁷

In the prologue to the first question of the *Secunda Pars*, “On the Ultimate End of Human Life,” Aquinas connects the human’s free will from the prologue of the *Secunda Pars* to human happiness, and thus in humanity’s pursuit and attainment of happiness, Aquinas preserves human freedom and choice alongside of the grace of the divine mission.²³⁸ The prologue reads:

In regard to this, first the ultimate end of the human life ought to be considered, and then the things through which man is able to approach this end or deviate

²³⁶ Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 150.

²³⁷ *ST* 1a2ae pr.: postquam praedictum est de exemplari, scilicet de Deo, et de his quae processerunt ex divina potestate secundum eius voluntatem; restat ut consideremus de eius imagine, idest de homine, secundum quod et ipse est suorum operum principium, quasi liberum arbitrium habens et suorum operum potestatem.

²³⁸ Olivier Boulnois, “What is Freedom,” *Dionysius* 35 (2017): 51-52.

from it, for it is necessary to receive from the end the rule of those things ordained to the end...the ultimate end of human life is assumed to be happiness...²³⁹

Furthermore, this passage structures both the *Secunda* and *Tertia Pars* of the *ST*. Aquinas considers happiness first (*ST* 1a2ae q.1-5) since as an end it will structure his discussion on the means to happiness. In this consideration of happiness, he divides it into an imperfect happiness that is attainable *in via* and a perfect happiness that is only attained *in patria*. Since Aquinas' goal, after he discusses happiness itself, is to consider "the things through which man is able to approach this end," he must, then, consider how humans advance to both imperfect and perfect happiness. The rest of the *Secunda Pars* after 1a2ae q. 5 describes how we advance to imperfect happiness. This includes a consideration of human actions themselves and both the internal principles of action, such as virtues and vices, and the external principles of action, the law and grace.²⁴⁰ The *Tertia Pars* describes how humans attain perfect happiness through Christ who returns to and unites them with their source.²⁴¹

Since our saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, to save His people from their sins..., showed us the way of truth in Himself, through which we are able to arrive to the beatitude of immortal life by resurrecting, it is necessary that to the completion of the whole business of theology after the consideration of the ultimate end of human life and the virtues and vices, our consideration of the savior of all people and his benefits bestowed upon the human race ought to follow.²⁴²

²³⁹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 1 pr.: Ubi primo considerandum occurrit de ultimo fine humanae vitae; et deinde de his per quae homo ad hunc finem pervenire potest, vel ab eo deviare, ex fine enim oportet accipere rationes eorum quae ordinantur ad finem. Et quia ultimus finis humanae vitae ponitur esse beatitudo....

²⁴⁰ *ST* 1a2ae q. 6 pr., 1a2ae q. 49 pr., 1a2ae q. 90 pr.

²⁴¹ Hankey, *Conversion of God*, 149-150.

²⁴² *ST* 3 pr.: Quia salvator noster dominus Iesus Christus, teste Angelo, populum suum salvum faciens a peccatis eorum, viam veritatis nobis in seipso demonstravit, per quam ad beatitudinem immortalis vitae resurgendo pervenire possimus, necesse est ut, ad consummationem totius theologici negotii, post considerationem ultimi finis humanae vitae et virtutum ac vitiorum, de ipso omnium salvatore ac beneficiis eius humano generi praestitis nostra consideratio subsequatur.

In this section (3.4), we will consider imperfect human happiness in the *Secunda Pars* relative to four goals. First, I aim to differentiate the types of contemplative happiness that are found in Aquinas's texts. In Aquinas's analysis, Aristotle's perfect human happiness becomes imperfect human happiness. My second goal is to show why Aristotelian happiness is imperfect for Aquinas. I will argue that humans are ordained to God who is an end that exceeds the comprehension of reason as Aquinas maintains in the first article of the *Summa*. Humans as intellectual creatures can only be satisfied by the vision of God's essence, but they cannot reach this end as substances who naturally know by abstracting species from phantasms. My third goal is to show how, for Aquinas, *sacra doctrina* is necessary in the pursuit of happiness. Although it is not beyond reason to grasp that knowledge of God is its end, knowledge of God's essence is beyond the grasp of reason. I will argue that this tension of knowing the end but not having the means to achieve it accounts for the frustration that Aquinas says some pagan philosophers experience in the pursuit of their happiness. Furthermore, I will argue that *sacra doctrina* is necessary in that it reveals a means to attain this end and, thus, gives hope to the believer, a hope which would relieve the frustration of the non-Christian philosopher. Yet, we will also consider an exception to this argument; there is a case in which the philosopher can overcome this frustration apart from *sacra doctrina*. Finally, we will see that Aquinas uses the notion of participation to interpret Aristotle's doctrine of happiness two more times: once in his commentary on the *NE* and, again, in his commentary on the *DA*. So, I will close this section by providing an explanation for why Aquinas can interpret Aristotle thus even though Aristotle seems to reject the doctrine of participation.

3.4.2 The Essence of Human Happiness: Knowing God

To achieve my first goal, I will first consider the nature of human happiness before its division into various types. I argue that the essence of happiness is knowing God, whereas loving God is not included in the essence of happiness but is a necessary means and concomitant perfection of happiness.²⁴³ Secondly, I will argue that perfect happiness is knowing God's essence. Finally, I will argue that four types of happiness can be differentiated according to four types of contemplation, which are characterized by different degrees of knowledge of God.

First, let us consider human happiness before its division. In *ST* 1 q. 61 a. 1 Aquinas writes that beatitude²⁴⁴ is “the ultimate perfection of the rational or intellectual nature.” The perfection of a thing is also its ultimate end,²⁴⁵ and therefore happiness is the ultimate end of the intellectual nature. In *ST* 1a2ae q. 1 a. 8, Aquinas asks whether all other creatures agree with man in his last end. He begins his response by dividing the notion of an end into two types; “namely, for which and by which, that is, the thing itself in which the notion of the good is found and the use or acquisition of that thing.”²⁴⁶ All things agree with man in his end in respect to the thing itself; this end is God. However, in respect to the end as the achievement or acquisition of the thing itself, man differs

²⁴³ This is the standard interpretation. For a recent dissenter from this interpretation, see Joseph Stenberg, “Aquinas on the Relationship between the Vision and Delight in Perfect Happiness,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 90, no. 4 (2016): 665-680.

²⁴⁴ Aquinas often uses *felicitas* and *beatitudo* as synonymous, but some scholars have identified nuanced distinctions between these terms; see Brian Davies, “Happiness,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, edited by Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump (Oxford: OUP, 2012), 231-2; Celano, *Worldly Beatitudo*, 119-220. Although at times these nuances may be present and important, I will use the two terms synonymously unless otherwise noted.

²⁴⁵ *ST* 1a2ae q. 1 a. 6; *ST* 1a2ae q. 1 a. 7.

²⁴⁶ *ST* 1a2ae q. 1 a. 8 resp.: scilicet cuius, et quo, idest ipsa res in qua ratio boni invenitur, et usus sive adeptio illius rei.

from the irrational creatures, for “man and other rational creatures attain the ultimate end by knowing and loving God,”²⁴⁷ and irrational creatures do not.

This division of ends into two types allows Aquinas to articulate more precisely what he means by happiness. He maintains that “the thing itself which is desired as an end is that in which happiness consists and that which makes one happy, but the attainment of this thing is called happiness.”²⁴⁸ Therefore, God, the thing itself, is desired as an end and makes one happy, but knowing and loving God, the attainment of the end, is called happiness and indeed is the very essence of human happiness.²⁴⁹ For man to attain God, in turn, is for man to be “united to the uncreated good.”²⁵⁰

The third question in Aquinas’s treatise on happiness is “What is Happiness?” Part of Aquinas’s search in this question is for the precise internal operation whereby man attains God and is united to Him.²⁵¹ This question shows that although the definition of happiness as knowing and loving God may have served Aquinas’s purposes in *ST* 1a2ae q. 1 a. 8, it is not precise. Let us, then, consider Aquinas’ precise understanding of the essence of happiness.

In *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 4, Aquinas argues that the essence of happiness does not consist in the act of the will, for the act of the will does not attain an end. Rather, the will relates to an end in two ways: if the end is absent, then the will desires it, but if the end is

²⁴⁷ *ST* 1a2ae q. 1 a. 8 resp.: homo et aliae rationales creaturae consequuntur ultimum finem cognoscendo et amando Deum....

²⁴⁸ *ST* 1a2ae q. 2 a. 7 resp.: Res ergo ipsa quae appetitur ut finis, est id in quo beatitudo consistit, et quod beatum facit, sed huius rei adeptio vocatur beatitudo.

²⁴⁹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 1 resp.: si autem consideretur quantum ad ipsam essentiam beatitudinis. Note, however, that this distinction seems to collapse once it is analyzed. For, the thing itself, God, is perfect self-knowing. In other words, the attainment and the thing itself are both ‘knowing.’

²⁵⁰ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 3 resp.: Nam beatitudo hominis consistit essentialiter in coniunctione ipsius ad bonum increatum....

²⁵¹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 3 resp. Cf. *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 2 resp.; *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 2 ad. 3.

present, then the will delights in it. Instead of an act of the will, the essence of happiness consists in an act of the intellect since God is an intelligible end, and we attain such an end by making it present to us by an act of the intellect.²⁵² Therefore, precisely speaking, the essence of happiness consists in knowing God and not in loving God.²⁵³

Yet, although love does not constitute the essence of happiness, love is required for happiness as its moving cause. The will moves each power to its act, and therefore it moves the intellect to its act.²⁵⁴ Since the essence of happiness consists in the act of the intellect, the will is the moving cause of happiness. More specifically, the will moves one to happiness through love. As Aquinas states, “the love of God incites one to the vision of the first principle itself; namely, God.”²⁵⁵ Therefore, the love of God is the moving cause of happiness and, consequently, not the essence of happiness.²⁵⁶

Furthermore, the love of God necessarily accompanies happiness as a proper accident and perfection. For Aquinas, the end corresponds to the beginning, and since the movement towards the vision of God begins in the appetite, the vision of God must have its end in the appetite as well;²⁵⁷ this end is called delight. Delight is caused when one attains what they love and the appetite rests in it. Since happiness is to attain God by

²⁵² *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 4 resp.

²⁵³ Two more characteristics of happiness that are worth mentioning and that follow from the conclusion that happiness is the attainment of God in knowing and loving Him are: first, happiness itself, since man attains happiness through the soul, belongs to the soul as an inherent good, but happiness as the thing attained, God, exists outside of the soul (*ST* 1a2ae q. 2 a. 7 resp.; *ST* 1a2ae q. 2 a. 7 ad. 3). Second, since happiness itself as attainment exists in the human, it is created, but since the last end as object or cause of happiness is God, happiness in this respect is uncreated (*ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 1 resp.).

²⁵⁴ *ST* 2a2ae q. 180 a. 1 resp.

²⁵⁵ *ST* 2a2ae q. 180 a. 1 ad. 1: ...ad ipsam visionem primi principii, scilicet Dei, incitat amor ipsius.

²⁵⁶ *ST* 2a2ae q. 180 a. 2 ad. 1: Causae autem moventes non intrans essentialiam rei...

²⁵⁷ *ST* 2a2ae q. 180 a. 7 ad. 1.

seeing Him, delight is caused by the very sight of God Himself, and so delight is a proper accident or necessary concomitant of seeing God.²⁵⁸

Because delight follows upon the vision of God, it is the perfection of happiness in a way. Aquinas writes that delight or joy is “the consummation of happiness,”²⁵⁹ and he says that this is what Augustine means by his statement in *Confessions* 10 that “happiness is joy in truth.”²⁶⁰ Yet, although delight is called the perfection of the intellect, this proposition must be qualified since delight results from the operation of the intellect, and so it is a concomitant perfection. Delight does not make the act of the intellect itself, the vision of God, perfect,²⁶¹ and therefore delight does not perfect the essence of happiness.

3.4.3 The Argument from Desire: Perfect Happiness as Seeing God

Now that we have established that the essence of happiness consists in knowing God, let us consider Aquinas’s argument that perfect beatitude consists specifically in the knowledge of God’s essence before we move on to consider how various types of knowing differentiate various types of happiness

Aquinas’s argument that perfect happiness consists in the knowledge of God’s essence is based on the relationship between desire and the ultimate end.²⁶² If a man

²⁵⁸ *ST* 1a2ae q. 4 a. 1 resp.; *ST* 1a2ae q. 4 a. 1 ad. 2.

²⁵⁹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 4 resp.: ...consummatio beatitudinis....

²⁶⁰ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 4 resp.: ...beatitudo est gaudium de veritate....

²⁶¹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 4 a. 2 ad. 2.

²⁶² Bradley, *Twofold Human Good*, 435-6; 427-8; Brian Davies, *Thomas Aquinas*, (London: Continuum, 2002), 229-230. Bradley, in fact, distinguishes three types of arguments that Aquinas uses to establish that perfect happiness is the vision of God, “The arguments appeal to: (1) the coincidence of efficient and final causality; (2) the nature of exemplar causality; and (3) the ultimate fulfillment of the human desire to know” (Bradley, *Twofold Human Good*, 431-2).

reaches his ultimate end, then his natural desire comes to a rest,²⁶³ which means that he does not desire a further end.²⁶⁴ Indeed, the very nature of the ultimate end is that for the sake of which everything else is sought and which is sought for nothing else.²⁶⁵

This connection between the ultimate end and desire brings us to the first fundamental premise in Aquinas' demonstration that human happiness consists in knowing the divine essence: since perfect human happiness consists in one attaining their ultimate end, and when one attains their ultimate end, their desire is quieted, then the "human is not perfectly happy as long as something remains for him to desire and to seek."²⁶⁶ This conclusion immediately implies that if a human is perfectly happy, then nothing remains for him to desire.

The second premise in Aquinas' demonstration lies in the human's natural desire to know. In *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 8, Aquinas writes that "the perfection of each power depends on the nature of its object. But the object of the intellect is...the essence of a thing.... Wherefore the perfection of the intellect proceeds as far as it knows the essence of something."²⁶⁷ Since, as we saw in *ST* 1a q. 62 a. 1, each thing naturally desires its own perfection, the intellect naturally desires to know the essence of each thing.²⁶⁸

This natural desire leads the human to desire to know the essence of the first cause. For, if someone knows the essence of an effect, then that person knows that a

²⁶³ *ScG* 3.48.10; *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a.4.

²⁶⁴ *ST* 1a2ae q. 2 a. 8; *ScG* 3.48.2.

²⁶⁵ *SLE* 1 lect. 2 lines 13-16: Quicumque finis est talis quod alia volumus propter illum et ipsum volumus propter se ipsum et non aliquid aliud, iste finis non solum est bonus, sed etiam est optimus...."

²⁶⁶ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 8 resp.: ...quod homo non est perfecte beatus, quandiu restat sibi aliquid desiderandum et quaerendum. Cf. *ScG* 3.63.9.

²⁶⁷ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 8 resp.: Secundum est, quod uniuscuiusque potentiae perfectio attenditur secundum rationem sui obiecti. Obiectum autem intellectus est quod quid est, idest essentia rei, ut dicitur in III de anima. Unde intantum procedit perfectio intellectus, inquantum cognoscit essentiam alicuius rei.

²⁶⁸ For similar demonstrations of the fact that humans naturally desire to know see *ST* 2a2ae q. 180 a. 7; *ScG* 3.63.2; *In Metaph.* 1 lect. 1 n. 1-3.

cause of the effect exists, and therefore she desires to know the essence of this cause. The human's desire to know the essence of the cause of each effect does not cease until one grasps the essence of the first cause.²⁶⁹ Therefore, since one is perfectly happy only if their desire has ceased, man is perfectly happy only if he knows the essence of the first cause. Now, the final step is this: "The first cause, however, is God. Therefore, the ultimate end of the intellectual creature is to see God through his essence."²⁷⁰

3.4.4 Division of the Types of Contemplative Happiness

We have seen that the essence of human happiness is to attain God through the operation of the intellect which grasps His essence. Next, I aim to show that this operation is the operation of the speculative intellect, although Aquinas holds, in agreement with Aristotle, that the operation of the practical intellect constitutes a secondary type of happiness. Secondly, now that we reached contemplative happiness, we will consider how Aquinas resolves the paradox of *NE* 10.7. Finally, I argue that different modes of contemplation distinguish different types of primary happiness,²⁷¹ and

²⁶⁹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 8 resp.; *Comp. The.* c. 1.104; *ScG* 3.25.11.

²⁷⁰ *Comp. The.* c. 1.104: Prima autem causa Deus est...est igitur finis ultimus intellectualis creaturae, Deum per essentiam videre (Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium theologiae et cetera*, edited by Fratrum Praedicatorum, Leonine Commission 42 (Rome: Editori di San Tommaso, 1979)). The proposition that humans could see the divine essence was condemned in 1241. For a discussion on how Thomas Aquinas deals with the effects of this proposition see W. J. Hankey, "The Concord of Aristotle, Proclus, the *Liber de Causis*, and Blessed Dionysius in Thomas Aquinas, Student of Albertus Magnus," *Dionysius* 34 (2016): 177-9; W. J. Hankey, "Dionysius in Albertus Magnus and his Student Thomas Aquinas," in *The Oxford Handbook to Dionysius the Areopagite*, ed. Mark Edwards, Dimitrios Pallis, and George Steiris. (Forthcoming).

²⁷¹ The standard division of happiness is into perfect and imperfect happiness (e.g., Bradley, *Twofold Human Good*, 369-423). However, there are some who also divide imperfect happiness; see T. J. López, "Trichotomizing the Standard Twofold Model of Thomistic Eudaimonism," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 86 (2012): 23-46. López argues for a threefold division of happiness in Aquinas whereas I will argue that there are four types of contemplative happiness. Furthermore, López takes practical happiness into account whereas, after my consideration of whether the practical or contemplative life is better, I focus only on contemplative happiness.

we will see that Aquinas categorizes Aristotelian happiness as imperfect happiness. Let us begin with Aquinas's comparison of contemplative and practical activity.

Aquinas considers the operations of the speculative and practical intellects as candidates for the intellectual operation in which happiness consists.²⁷² These operations differ in respect to their ends: the end of the former is truth while the end of the latter is some external action.²⁷³ These two types of intellectual operations also distinguish two prominent lives that man can live; namely the contemplative life and the life of action. The contemplative life aims to contemplate truth and the active life aims to act according to moral virtue and prudence.²⁷⁴

In his comparison of the contemplative and active lives, Aquinas adopts the eight arguments which Aristotle uses in *NE* 10.7-8 to show that the contemplative life is better than the active life (e.g., the argument from continuity, self-sufficiency, and what is best in man).²⁷⁵ Aristotle's evaluation seems to be conclusive for Aquinas since these arguments "appear individually in works of Aquinas of almost every sort...and from the beginning to the conclusion of his teaching."²⁷⁶ Even so, Aquinas adds his own ninth argument to this list. Aquinas attributes this argument to Jesus who responds thus to Martha's complaint that Mary, who is listening to Jesus teach, is not helping her with the work: "Mary has chosen the best part which shall not be taken from her."²⁷⁷ Based on similar considerations, Aquinas concludes that whereas perfect happiness consists

²⁷² *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 5.

²⁷³ *ST* 2a2ae q. 179 a. 2 resp.

²⁷⁴ *ST* 2a2ae q. 181 a.1 resp., a. 2 resp.

²⁷⁵ *ST* 2a2ae q. 182 a. 1 resp.

²⁷⁶ Sommers, "Contemplation and Action," 169-170.

²⁷⁷ *ST* 2a2ae q. 182 a. 1 resp.

entirely in contemplation, “imperfect happiness first and principally consists in contemplation and secondarily in the operation of the practical intellect.”²⁷⁸

Let us now focus on contemplative happiness.²⁷⁹ First, how does Aquinas resolve the paradox of *NE* 10.7-8; namely, that the intellect and life of contemplation appear to be divine and above the human yet proper to the human? In his commentary on Book 10 of the *NE*, Aquinas resolves this paradox through the notion of participation. In respect to Aristotle’s comment that the intellect is proper to man, Aquinas writes:

Nor is this contrary to what was said above, that [the intellect] is not according to the human but above the human, for it is not according to the human in respect to man’s composite nature; however, it is most properly according to the human in respect to that which is principal in man: that which is most perfectly found in the superior substances, but in man imperfectly and *by participation*.²⁸⁰

A passage from Aquinas’s commentary on the *MP* explains the relevant aspects of participation at work in this passage from his commentary on the *NE*:

The form or the idea is the specific nature itself by which humans exists essentially. The individual, however, is human by participation insofar as the specific nature is participated by this determined matter. For what is totally something does not participate in it but is the same as it essentially. However, what is not something totally, having something other added, is properly said to participate that thing.²⁸¹

Therefore, the human participates intellect because, as Aquinas comments, the human is “composed of diverse things,” the intellectual soul and body. Moreover, the fact that

²⁷⁸ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 5 resp.: Beatitudo autem imperfecta, qualis hic haberi potest, primo quidem et principaliter consistit in contemplatione, secundario vero in operatione practici intellectus....

²⁷⁹ My consideration of Aquinas’s doctrine of happiness from here forward will focus on contemplative happiness and not practical happiness. So, when I speak of either imperfect or perfect happiness in what follows, I am referring to imperfect or perfect contemplative (primary) happiness.

²⁸⁰ *SLE* 10 lect. 11 lines 153-164: Nec hoc est contra id quod supra dictum est quod non est secundum hominem, sed supra hominem; non est enim secundum hominem quantum ad naturam compositam, est autem propriissime secundum hominem quantum ad id quod est principalissimum in homine; quod quidem perfectissime invenitur in substantiis superioribus, in homine autem imperfecte et quasi participative....

²⁸¹ *In Metaph.* 1 lect. 10 n. 154: ...nam species, vel idea est ipsa natura speciei, qua est existens homo per essentiam. Individuum autem est homo per participationem, in quantum natura speciei in hac materia designata participatur. Quod enim totaliter est aliquid, non participat illud, sed est per essentiam idem illi. Quod vero non totaliter est aliquid habens aliquid aliud adiunctum, proprie participare dicitur.

humans participate intellect implies for Aquinas that they have received intellect from a source that possesses it totally and essentially. In his commentary on the *NE*, Aquinas identifies this source as the divine intellect and again appeals to participation:

And for this reason, explaining what was said, he added that man living in this way, having leisure for contemplation, does not live according to what is human, who is composed from diverse things, but according to something divine existing in him, insofar as he participates in a likeness of the divine intellect.²⁸²

Therefore, Aquinas explains how the intellect belongs to God but is proper to the human and, therefore, resolves the paradox of *NE* 10.7 thus: the intellect is found perfectly in God whereas it is found imperfectly and by participation in the human. This resolution, then, is a second instance in which Aquinas attributes the notion of participation to Aristotle.

Now, let us look more closely at the types of contemplative happiness. Aquinas distinguishes various types of contemplative happiness among various types of intellectual beings based on this principle:

Since happiness signifies a certain final perfection, insofar as diverse things capable of happiness can attain to diverse grades of perfection, so far is it necessary that happiness is said in many ways.²⁸³

God is happy essentially, angels are happy with a single and everlasting happiness, and although man *in patria* will be happy “as the angels in heaven,”²⁸⁴ *in via* man’s operation is neither single nor continuous.²⁸⁵

²⁸² *SLE* 10 lect. 11 lines 94-99: Et ideo manifestans quod dictum est subdit quod homo sic vivens, scilicet vacando contemplationi, non vivit secundum quod homo, qui est compositus ex diversis, sed secundum quod aliquid divinum in ipso existit, prout scilicet secundum intellectum divinam similitudinem participat.

²⁸³ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 2 ad. 4: Ad quartum dicendum quod, cum beatitudo dicat quandam ultimam perfectionem, secundum quod diversae res beatitudinis capaces ad diversos gradus perfectionis pertingere possunt, secundum hoc necesse est quod diversimode beatitudo dicatur.

²⁸⁴ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 2 ad. 4: quando erimus sicut Angeli in caelo....

²⁸⁵ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 2 ad. 4. We have considered God’s happiness already, and the consideration of angelic happiness is beyond the scope of this study.

With this same principle; namely, that types of happiness are distinguished by the diverse grades of perfection of their operations, we can differentiate between the diverse types of human happiness. Humans have imperfect happiness in two ways: in respect to themselves and in respect to God. In the former way, perfect happiness is distinguished from imperfect happiness in this: perfect happiness consists in the contemplation of God's essence through the light of glory, whereas imperfect happiness consists in the contemplation of God that falls short of grasping His essence,²⁸⁶ and therefore imperfect happiness consists in a less perfect knowledge of God than perfect. In the latter way, human perfect happiness is imperfect in respect to God's happiness for reasons we will consider in section 3.5.²⁸⁷

For Aquinas there are three types of imperfect happiness, and they are differentiated by the perfections of their operations and the powers which are the principles of these operations. One type is Aristotelian happiness, and this type consists in the knowledge of God that can be attained through natural reason.²⁸⁸ However, the knowledge of God that comes through the light of grace given to man by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is more perfect than the knowledge of God that is attained through natural reason,²⁸⁹ and therefore the contemplation of the light of glory is a different and higher mode of happiness.²⁹⁰ Yet, there is a still more perfect knowledge of God that can be attained in this life. The faithful cannot know God's essence by the light of grace; however, one can see the essence of God in this life through rapture,²⁹¹ and therefore the

²⁸⁶ *Super DT* q. 6 a. 4 ad. 3.

²⁸⁷ *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 4 ad. 2.

²⁸⁸ *ST* 1 q. 61 a. 1; *Super DT* q. 6 a. 4 ad. 3.

²⁸⁹ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 13 resp.

²⁹⁰ The knowledge of God that comes through the light of grace consists in the articles of faith, as we will see in section 3.4.7.

²⁹¹ *ST* 2a2ae q. 175 a. 3.

vision of rapture is more perfect than the vision of the light of grace. Rapture, then, constitutes a different mode of happiness than the previous two.

Yet, although rapture consists in the vision of God's essence, it falls short of perfect happiness. In perfect happiness "the mind of man will be joined to God by a single, continuous, and everlasting operation. But in the present life, insofar as we fall short of the unity and continuity of such an operation, so far do we fall short of perfect happiness."²⁹² Since rapture must cease, it is not perfect happiness.

So, in sum, Aquinas distinguishes and orders four types of happiness by the degree to which each attains the knowledge of God: the contemplation of God by natural reason, by the light of grace, by the light of glory in rapture *in via*, and by the light of glory *in patria*.²⁹³ In section 3.5, I will consider the perfect happiness that humans possess through the light of glory. In the remainder of section 3.4, however, let us consider imperfect happiness.

3.4.5 Imperfect Happiness: Knowledge of God via Natural Reason

Let us now pursue the second goal of section 3.4: let us consider the knowledge of God in which Aristotelian happiness consists and why Aristotelian happiness is imperfect for Aquinas. To this end, we will examine Aquinas' understanding of Aristotelian wisdom, what knowledge we can have of God through this wisdom, and why Aquinas

²⁹² *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 2 ad. 4: quia una et continua et sempiterna operatione in illo beatitudinis statu mens hominis Deo coniungetur. Sed in praesenti vita, quantum deficiamus ab unitate et continuitate talis operationis, tantum deficiamus a beatitudinis perfectione.

²⁹³ Cf. *Super Is.* 1 lect. 1 for the distinction of these four types of contemplation, and for a characterization of them see Sommers, "Contemplation and Action," 176-8.

holds that our natural lights cannot reach to the knowledge of God's essence. Let us begin with Aquinas's understanding of Aristotelian wisdom.

As we saw above, Aquinas writes that one type of imperfect happiness is the happiness attained through the natural power of the created intellect and is the happiness of which Aristotle speaks. In *ScG* 3.44.5, Aquinas gives a summary of his interpretation of Aristotelian happiness. Aristotelian happiness is the operation of speculation according to the chief intellectual virtue, wisdom.²⁹⁴ Aquinas continues,

[w]isdom, according to him, is one of the speculative sciences, the head of the others, as he says in *Ethics* 6, and at the beginning of the *Metaphysics*, he names the science which he intends to treat in that book wisdom. Therefore, it is clear that the opinion of Aristotle is that the ultimate happiness which a man in this life is able to acquire is a knowledge of divine things that is able to be possessed through the speculative sciences.²⁹⁵

Aquinas' interpretation that Aristotelian contemplative happiness consists in the knowledge of God attainable through the speculative science of wisdom agrees with our analysis of the *NE* in chapter one. Let us now consider what type of knowledge of God we can have through this wisdom. The answer to this question, moreover, will allow us to understand why Aristotelian happiness is imperfect for Aquinas.

For Aquinas humans "receive the principles of speculative knowledge through their senses."²⁹⁶ Aquinas uses a biblical image to explain how knowledge beginning with the senses leads to knowledge of God. Perfect contemplation in the future life is to see God face to face, but the imperfect contemplation of God in this life is to see God

²⁹⁴ *ScG* 3.44.5.

²⁹⁵ *ScG* 3.44 lines 34-42, p. 115: Sapientia autem, secundum ipsum, est una de scientiis speculativis, caput aliarum, ut dicit in VI Ethicorum: et in principio metaphysicae scientiam quam in illo libro tradere intendit, sapientiam nominat. Patet ergo quod opinio Aristotelis fuit quod ultima felicitas quam homo in vita ista acquirere potest, sit cognitio de rebus divinis qualis per scientias speculativas haberi potest.

²⁹⁶ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 6 resp.: ...principia scientiarum speculativarum sunt per sensum accepta....

through a mirror and in an enigma.²⁹⁷ In *Super ad 1 Corinthios* 13, Aquinas explains that to see God face to face is to see God as he is, which is to see the essence of God. In contrast, when we see something through a mirror, we do not see the thing itself (*ipsam rem*); rather, we see the likeness of the thing reflected in the mirror,²⁹⁸ and for Aquinas to see God in this manner means to see the invisible things of God through creation.²⁹⁹ The way that creation as a mirror reflects the invisible things of God is as an effect reflects a cause; namely, by possessing the likeness of the cause.³⁰⁰ Therefore, to see God in a mirror is to see a likeness of him in creation. Therefore, the question to ask now is “what kind of knowledge of God can the human intellect gain through knowing creation?”

In *ScG* 3.39.1, Aquinas writes that the knowledge of God that is acquired through demonstrations is higher than that which is possessed by most men. Most men possess “a common and confused knowledge of God” acquired by natural reason. This confused knowledge is the knowledge that God exists: “when men see that natural things run according to a fixed order, since ordering does not occur without one that orders, most perceive that there is some orderer of things which we see.”³⁰¹ However, the one who only knows that this orderer exists is left confused since “who, or what kind, or if there is

²⁹⁷ *ST* 2a2ae q. 180 a. 4 resp.

²⁹⁸ For Aquinas, to see through a mirror (*per speculum*) not only refers to the object seen, but it also refers to the power by which one sees, the power of reason. See *Super 1 ad Cor.* 13 lect. 4 n. 801; *ScG* 3.47.8-9.

²⁹⁹ *Super 1 ad Cor.* 13 lect. 4 n. 802: Cum enim videmus aliquid in speculo, non videmus ipsam rem, sed similitudinem eius; sed quando videmus aliquid secundum faciem, tunc videmus ipsam rem sicut est. Ideo nihil aliud vult dicere Apostolus, cum dicit: Videbimus in patria facie ad faciem, quam quod videbimus ipsam Dei essentiam. I Io. III, 2: *Videbimus eum sicuti est*, etc. (Thomas Aquinas, *S. Thomae Aquinatis doctoris angelici in omnes S. Pauli Apostoli Epistolas Commentaria*, edited by Raffaele Cai (Turin: Marietti, 1953)).

³⁰⁰ *ST* 1a2ae q.180 a. 3 ad. 2.

³⁰¹ *ScG* 3.38 lines 11-15, p. 94: Videntes enim homines res naturales secundum ordinem certum currere; cum ordinatio absque ordinatore non sit, percipiunt, ut in pluribus, aliquem esse ordinatorem rerum quas videmus.

only one orderer of nature is not yet immediately grasped from this common consideration.”³⁰²

Demonstration moves beyond this common consideration and distinguishes God from created beings by removing what characterizes created beings from Him. In this way we know, for example, that God is immovable, eternal, incorporeal, completely simple, and one.³⁰³ However, demonstrations fall short of reaching God’s essence as well since through demonstrations one can only know God by negations. Aquinas explains that although one can have proper knowledge through affirmation or negation, these modes differ in that

[t]hrough affirmation when we have proper knowledge of a thing, one knows what the thing is and in what way it is separated from others, but through negation when we have proper knowledge of a thing, one knows that it is distinct from others, yet what it is remains unknown. But such knowledge is the proper knowledge which one has concerning God through demonstration. This, however, is not sufficient for the ultimate happiness of man.³⁰⁴

As we saw above, the knowledge that comes through the speculative science of wisdom is that knowledge characteristic of happiness *in via*, Aristotelian happiness. Therefore, since wisdom knows through demonstrations, but demonstrations can only know God by negations, then the knowledge of God characteristic of Aristotelian happiness is negative. This happiness cannot be perfect happiness since negations cannot reveal the essence of God. Therefore, Aristotelian happiness is imperfect. In what follows we will examine why humans cannot come to know the essence of God through the natural light of reason

³⁰² *ScG* 3.38.1 lines 15-17, p. 94: Quis autem, vel qualis, vel si unus tantum est ordinator naturae, nondum statim ex hac communi consideratione habetur.... Cf. *ST* 1 q. 2.

³⁰³ *ScG* 3.39.1.

³⁰⁴ *ScG* 3.39.1 lines 1-10, p. 95: Sed hoc interest inter utrumque cognitionis propriae modum, quod, per affirmationes propria cognitione de re habita, scitur quid est res, et quomodo ab aliis separatur: per negationes autem habita propria cognitione de re, scitur quod est ab aliis discreta, tamen quid sit remanet ignotum. Talis autem est propria cognitio quae de Deo habetur per demonstrationes. Non est autem nec ista ad ultimam hominis felicitatem sufficiens.

and the demonstrations of speculative science, and the answer to this question will also reveal why demonstrations cannot have any positive knowledge of God's essence.

For Aquinas, the human intellect knows when the intellect in act becomes or is assimilated to the intelligible in act, and this assimilation can only occur if the intellect is informed by a species or likeness (*similitudo*) of what is known.³⁰⁵ Aquinas distinguishes two ways in which the thing known may be in the knower:

In one way, according to the thing itself, when [the intellect] is directly informed by a similitude of it, and then that thing is known according to itself. In another way, [the intellect] is informed by the species of what is like to it, and then the thing is not said to be known in itself but in its likeness.³⁰⁶

My aim here is to show that humans cannot come to know God's essence through the natural light of reason, and I will do this by demonstrating that in this life God's essence cannot be in the human's intellect in either of the ways just distinguished. First, I will argue that due to the weakness of the human intellect, the essence of God cannot be in the intellect by directly informing it as a similitude of God's essence. Secondly, I will argue that due to the disproportion of a sensible nature to God, God's essence cannot be known by the human intellect through a species of what is like it. Let us begin with the first.

In *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 4 Aquinas writes that "the thing known is in the knower according to the mode of the one knowing. Therefore, the knowledge of any knower is according to the mode of its nature."³⁰⁷ Since the human is a soul in individual matter, the proper object of human knowing, then, is sensible natures composed of matter and form, and the

³⁰⁵ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 9 obj. 1; *ST* 1 q. 88 a. 1 ad. 2.

³⁰⁶ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 9 resp.: Uno modo, secundum se, quando directe eius similitudine informatur, et tunc cognoscitur illud secundum se. Alio modo, secundum quod informatur specie alicuius quod est ei simile, et tunc non dicitur res cognosci in seipsa, sed in suo simili.

³⁰⁷ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 4 resp.: Cognitum autem est in cognoscente secundum modum cognoscentis. Unde cuiuslibet cognoscentis cognitio est secundum modum suae naturae.

human intellect comes to know sensible natures by abstracting their forms from phantasms.³⁰⁸ However, the human cannot come to know natures that are not in matter³⁰⁹ such as immaterial substances and God: since these natures are incorporeal, they cannot be sensed, and since they cannot be sensed, the intellect cannot possess a phantasm of them from which the agent intellect can abstract a species. The human intellect, then, cannot know God by being directly informed by a similitude of God's essence in this life.³¹⁰ This aspect of human knowing constitutes the human intellect's weakness and makes it in relation to God "...as the eyes of owls to the light of day, which they are not able to see, even though they may see it obscurely, and this is on account of the weakness of their sight."³¹¹

However, although in this life the human intellect cannot possess a species of the divine essence itself, Aquinas holds to a principle that makes it possible for the human to know God in some way and possibly even to know His essence: "[t]he natural knowledge of some creature is according to the mode of his substance: thus concerning the intelligence it is said in the *Liber de Causis* that it knows things that are above it, and things that are below it, according to the mode of its substance."³¹² As we saw above, the human substance is form in matter, and so its proper object is form in matter. Therefore, the human knows that which is above it insofar as it is possible to know such things

³⁰⁸ *In Metaph.* 2 lect. 1 n. 285.

³⁰⁹ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 4.

³¹⁰ *ST* 1 q. 88 a. 1 resp.; *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 12 obj. 2.

³¹¹ *In Metaph.* 2 lect. 1 n. 282: "...sicut se habent oculi nycticoracum ad lucem diei, quam videre non possunt, quamvis videant obscura. Et hoc est propter debilitatem visus eorum. Cf. *ST* 1a q. 12 a. 1; *ScG* 3.25.4. Note that although Aquinas uses "bat" in the analogy in these two passages, he normally uses owl (*ScG* 3.45.7; *In Metaph.* 2 lect. 1 n. 282).

³¹² *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 5: Naturalis enim cognitio cuiuslibet creaturae est secundum modum substantiae eius: sicut de intelligentia dicitur in Libro de causis, quod cognoscit ea quae sunt supra se, et ea quae sunt infra se, secundum modum substantiae suae.

through sensible substances.³¹³ Now, since God is the cause of the world, and a cause always makes things according to its likeness,³¹⁴ then sensible substances bear a likeness to Him. Therefore, humans can know God by their natural powers in this life insofar as something may be known through a species that is similar to it. Thus, we have arrived at the second way something may be in the knower, and I will argue that God's essence cannot be known by the human intellect in this way either.

Aquinas appeals to Dionysius for the affirmative answer to the question of whether the intellect can understand immaterial substance through material things: "Dionysius says in *1 cap. Cael. Hier.* that it is not possible for the human mind to be raised up to that immaterial contemplation of the heavenly hierarchies unless it is led by material guidance according to itself."³¹⁵ In his response, Aquinas nuances this answer. He reasons that since material things do not have a sufficient proportion to immaterial things, humans cannot have perfect knowledge (knowledge of the essence) of the immaterial things. Yet, although humans cannot come to a perfect knowledge in this manner, Aquinas notes that we can rise to some type of knowledge of the immaterial.³¹⁶

What is the proportion that must exist between two things for one to be capable of revealing the essence of another? Aquinas maintains that even among sensible substances, the species of one thing (e.g., an ox) cannot disclose the full essence of a different species (e.g., donkey).³¹⁷ So, since if two things do not agree in species, then

³¹³ Cf. *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 11 resp. Here Aquinas also mentions the principle that a human may know, to some degree, what is not proper to it through its proper mode.

³¹⁴ *ST* 1 q. 4 a. 3 resp.: Cum enim omne agens agat sibi simile in quantum est agens...

³¹⁵ *ST* 1 q. 88 a. 2 obj. 1: Dicit enim Dionysius, *1 cap. Cael. Hier.*, quod non est possibile humanae menti ad immaterialem illam sursum excitari caelestium hierarchiarum contemplationem, nisi secundum se materiali manu ductione utatur.

³¹⁶ *ST* 1 q. 88 a. 2 ad. 1.

³¹⁷ *Comp. The.* c. 1.105; *ScG* 3.41.8.

one cannot reveal the essence of the other, it follows that if one thing can reveal the essence of another, then they both must agree in species. Aquinas confirms this inference in *ScG* 3.41: “By reason of a likeness it would not be possible to know what the cause is from the effect unless the agent is of one species [with the effect].”³¹⁸ In light of this principle, Aquinas explains why the created intellect cannot see God’s essence through an image of it: “Since the essence of God is itself his existence, as was shown above, which does not befit any created form, it is not possible for some created form to be a likeness representing the essence of God to the one seeing.”³¹⁹

Although we cannot know God’s essence through knowing a likeness of it found in a sensible substance, Aquinas maintains that one can have imperfect knowledge of one species through another species if they agree in genus and that the more remote the genus in which they agree the less perfect the knowledge.³²⁰ Since created material substances are in the same logical genus as created immaterial substances (angels)³²¹ “it is possible to know something affirmative concerning angels in respect to a common notion, although not according to a specific notion.”³²²

Although humans can possess imperfect knowledge of the essence of an angel by grasping a genus that the angel shares in common with sensible substances, humans cannot gain any degree of affirmative knowledge of God’s essence through knowing

³¹⁸ *ScG* 3.41 lines 20-22, p. 104: *Ratione autem similitudinis, ex effectu non poterit sciri de causa quid est, nisi sit agens unius speciei...*

³¹⁹ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 1 resp.: *Secundo, quia essentia Dei est ipsum esse eius, ut supra ostensum est, quod nulli formae creatae competere potest. Non potest igitur aliqua forma creata esse similitudo repraesentans videnti Dei essentiam.*

³²⁰ *Comp. The.* c. 1.105.

³²¹ *ST* 1 q. 88 a. 2 ad. 4. Concerning the nature of the genus in which angels and humans agree see also *ScG* 3.41.7.

³²² *ST* 1 q. 88 a. 2 ad. 4: *...aliquid affirmative potest cognosci de Angelis secundum rationem communem, licet non secundum rationem speciei...*”

sensible substances.³²³ For Aquinas maintains that if two species do not agree in any genus, then one cannot come to know in any way the essence of one species through its likeness with another species.³²⁴ Since “no created thing communicates with God in genus, God cannot be known through His essence through any created species, not only sensible but also intelligible.”³²⁵ Furthermore, that one cannot gain affirmative knowledge of God’s essence through material substances explains why demonstrations can only yield knowledge of God through negations: the principles of speculative science that are used in demonstrations are acquired through the senses.³²⁶

So, if sensible substances are not like God in species or genera, in which way are they like God, and what kind of knowledge of God do we gain through grasping this likeness? Aquinas gives us these answers in his discussion on God’s perfection:

If therefore there is some agent, which is not contained in a genus, its effect will even more remotely approach to the likeness of the form of the agent, not, however, so as to participate in the likeness of the form of the agent according to the same specific or generic notion, but according to some kind of analogy, just as existence itself is common to all.³²⁷

Therefore, humans can attain analogical knowledge of God through creatures, and it is in this knowledge together with the knowledge of God that comes through negations that imperfect Aristotelian happiness consists.

³²³ *ST* 1 q. 88 a. 2 ad. 4.

³²⁴ *Comp. The.* c. 1.105.

³²⁵ *Comp. The.* c. 1.105: nullum creatum communicat cum Deo in genere. Per quamcumque igitur speciem creatam non solum sensibilem, sed intelligibilem, Deus cognosci per essentiam non potest.

³²⁶ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 6 resp.

³²⁷ *ST* 1 q. 4 a. 3 resp.: Si igitur sit aliquod agens, quod non in genere contineatur, effectus eius adhuc magis accedent remote ad similitudinem formae agentis, non tamen ita quod participant similitudinem formae agentis secundum eandem rationem speciei aut generis, sed secundum aliqualem analogiam, sicut ipsum esse est commune omnibus.

3.4.6 The Frustration of the “Celebrated Geniuses”

In sub-sections 3.4.6-8, I pursue the third goal of my analysis of imperfect human happiness: I aim to identify the cause of the anguish and frustration of the pagan philosopher and to identify how this frustration is resolved through the divine mission and the articles of faith which are derived from *sacra doctrina*. As a transition between the cause of the anguish of the philosopher and its resolution, I will consider why the vision of God is necessary, and this consideration will lead us to Aquinas’ commentary on the *DA* in which he maintains that Aristotle teaches that the soul is immortal, an interpretation that I disagreed with in chapter two. Furthermore, I will show how this difference between Aquinas and Aristotle leads to a second; namely, they differ on whether humans can achieve perfect human happiness in this life. Finally, I will show that Aquinas attributes the doctrine of participation to Aristotle in his *DA* commentary.

Let us begin examining the cause of the anguish and frustration of the pagan philosopher by considering how humans come to desire the vision of the divine essence. For Aquinas, everyone desires happiness as it is understood through its general notion, for the general notion of happiness is the perfect good, and all people desire this. However, not everyone desires that in which the general notion of happiness consists, for this specific notion of happiness is the vision of God, but not all people know that the specific notion is this vision,³²⁸ and one must apprehend something by the intellect before they can will it.³²⁹ Indeed, the vision of the divine essence cannot be necessarily and naturally desired by man, as the notion of the perfect good is.³³⁰ Oliva explains,

³²⁸ *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 8 resp.: Et sic non omnes cognoscunt beatitudinem, quia nesciunt cui rei communis ratio beatitudinis conveniat. Et per consequens, quantum ad hoc, non omnes eam volunt.

³²⁹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 8 ad. 2: cum voluntas sequatur apprehensionem intellectus seu rationis...

³³⁰ *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 4 ad. 2.

dans ce cas, la volonté devrait avoir pour objet le bien de voir Dieu comme son acte premier et tous les hommes devraient le désirer nécessairement, sans possibilité de se tromper, et Dieu serait obligé de donner à l'homme accès à la vision de son essence. Au contraire, cette identification est un acte second de la volonté (de la uoluntas ut ratio ou deliberata), qui suit une délibération de la raison et ne comporte donc aucune nécessité absolue, ni de la part de l'homme ni de la part de Dieu.³³¹

This deliberation of the will accounts for the diverse types of ends that humans set up for themselves, such as wealth, honor, glory, power, goods of the body, or pleasure, each of which Aquinas reasons is not the perfect good.³³²

So, how does one come to desire the vision of the divine essence? In one sense, the answer is simple. One desires to see God when one learns that He is the perfect good of the intellectual nature, a point which Aquinas is not shy of demonstrating (see 3.4.3, 3.4.6). However, I want to answer this question by clarifying Aquinas's idea that one must apprehend an intelligible end by the intellect before they can will it as an end to pursue. This clarification can be illustrated by considering Meno's paradox. Socrates invites Meno to seek virtue with him, but Meno objects to partaking in such a search with an argument that Socrates repeats to him thus:

I understand what you wish to say, Meno. Do you perceive that you are drawing out a debater's argument, that a man can neither seek what he knows nor what he does not know? He cannot search for what he knows, for he knows it and it is not necessary for such a one to search, nor for what he does not know for he does not know what he is seeking.³³³

The burden of the dilemma is to show that inquiry is impossible, and we may state the dilemma more formally as this: I either know what something is or I do not, and if I know what it is, then there is no need to search for it, but if I do not know what it is, then I

³³¹ Oliva, "La contemplation des philosophes," 648.

³³² *ST* 1a2ae q. 2 a. 1-6.

³³³ *Meno* 80e: Μανθάνω οἷον βούλει λέγειν, ὃ Μένων. ὁρᾷς τοῦτον ὡς ἐριστικὸν λόγον κατάγεις, ὡς οὐκ ἄρα ἔστιν ζητεῖν ἀνθρώπων οὔτε ὃ οἶδε οὔτε ὃ μὴ οἶδε; οὔτε γὰρ ἂν ὃ γε οἶδεν ζητοῖ—οἶδεν γάρ, καὶ οὐδὲν δεῖ τῷ γε τοιοῦτον ζητήσεως—οὔτε ὃ μὴ οἶδεν—οὐδὲ γὰρ οἶδεν ὅτι ζητήσῃ.

cannot search for it, and therefore one cannot inquire after knowledge.³³⁴ David Bronstein explains that Aristotle solves this dilemma in the *Posterior Analytics* (*APo.*) by denying that one can only have either absolute knowledge or ignorance of something. Rather, Aristotle distinguishes various intermediate states of knowing something as well. Bronstein argues that these intermediate states of knowing solve Meno's paradox, for one can desire to seek a higher knowledge of something and can recognize this knowledge once they find it if that person already possesses some lower type of knowledge of it. This idea is captured in the opening phrase of the *APo.*: "All intellectual teaching and learning proceeds from pre-existing knowledge."³³⁵

It appears that Aquinas faces a similar dilemma that does not allow for man to search for the perfect happiness of the vision of God's essence. Aquinas holds that one cannot will to pursue what they do not know, and it follows from this proposition that we can only will to pursue what we already know. But, if we must know our intelligible end before we can desire to pursue it, and if this pursuit aims at grasping the intelligible end, then we must know the intelligible end before we can desire to know it. In this case, however, there will be no inquiry into the intelligible end since we already possess it. Therefore, it seems that Aquinas is caught in Meno's paradox: if one does not know something, then they cannot will to inquire after it, and if one knows something, then they will not inquire after it. Therefore, since perfect happiness is an intelligible end, humans cannot seek it.

³³⁴ D. Bronstein, *Aristotle on Knowledge and Learning: The Posterior Analytics* (Oxford: OUP, 2016) 11-13

³³⁵ *APo.* 71a1-2: πᾶσα διδασκαλία καὶ πᾶσα μάθησις διανοητικὴ ἐκ προϋπαρχούσης γίνεται γνώσεως (Aristotle, *Analytica priora et posteriora*, edited by W. D. Ross, Oxford Classical Texts (New York: OUP, 1989)). Bronstein, *Knowledge and Learning*, 11-30.

I maintain that Aquinas overcomes this paradox in a way similar to Aristotle; namely, Aquinas distinguishes intermediate states of knowing. While discussing how man is ordered to his end, Aquinas writes:

Man is ordered to an intelligible end partly through the intellect and partly through the will: through the intellect insofar as some imperfect knowledge of the end pre-exists in the intellect.³³⁶

Since “perfect knowledge of the end corresponds to imperfect knowledge [of the end],” one begins to search for the perfect knowledge of what he knows imperfectly if it is possible to attain.³³⁷ So, Aquinas distinguishes degrees of knowing when searching for an intelligible end as Aristotle does, and in this way, he can overcome Meno’s paradox.

Now, philosophy, not only *sacra doctrina*, can provide humans with the requisite knowledge that ordains them to and allows them to seek their proper end and perfect happiness,³³⁸ for philosophical contemplation is ordered to the knowledge of God’s essence as the highest good.³³⁹ Wonder, for Aquinas, just is the desire to know the essence of the cause of some apprehended effect, and such a desire causes inquiry, which is a movement towards this intelligible thing as an end. This desire of wonder only rests when the inquirer attains knowledge of the essence of the cause, and, ultimately, it only rest at the knowledge of the essence of the first cause, God.³⁴⁰ Philosophy, the love of wisdom, is this inquiry that results from wonder, and so it aims at the knowledge of God’s essence, the possession of which is wisdom.³⁴¹

³³⁶ *ST* 1a2ae q. 4 a. 3 resp.: Ad finem autem intelligibilem ordinatur homo partim quidem per intellectum, partim autem per voluntatem. Per intellectum quidem, in quantum in intellectu praexistit aliqua cognitio finis imperfecta.

³³⁷ *ST* 1a2ae q. 4 a. 3 resp.

³³⁸ *ST* 1 q. 1 a. 1 resp.

³³⁹ Oliva, “La contemplation des philosophes,” 639.

³⁴⁰ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 8 resp.

³⁴¹ *In Metaph.* 1 lect. 3 n. 54-56.

However, although philosophy can discover that happiness consists in the vision of God's essence, philosophy still cannot achieve this vision, and therefore philosophy is ordained to an end that it cannot achieve. This creates a dire situation for her adherents, as *ScG* 3.48 shows. Here, Aquinas considers the various ways by which man can acquire knowledge of God in this life and denies that they lead to knowledge of God's essence, and so he concludes that man cannot attain perfect happiness in this life.³⁴² One such way that he considers is the knowledge of God that comes through knowing separate substances as it is articulated by Alexander and Averroes. Another way is the knowledge of God that comes through the speculative sciences, specifically first philosophy (wisdom or theology), as it is articulated by Aristotle.³⁴³ Aquinas writes concerning their pursuit of happiness through these two methods: "Therefore, on this point, it is sufficiently apparent how much their brilliant minds suffered distress." But what is it about their method of pursuing happiness that made them suffer? Aquinas continues, "From which distress we will be liberated if according to the foregoing proofs we lay down that man is able to arrive at true happiness after this life...."³⁴⁴ Therefore, it follows that these brilliant minds suffered because perfect happiness appeared impossible to them: their methods could not achieve it in this life, and they did not argue that it could be achieved in the afterlife.

But, is knowing that perfect happiness is possible after this life enough to free these brilliant minds from distress? Adriano Oliva writes

³⁴² *ScG* 3.48.1.

³⁴³ *ScG* 3.48.14.

³⁴⁴ *ScG* 3.48 lines 52-55, p. 131, line 1, p. 132: In quo satis apparet quantam angustiam patiebantur hinc inde eorum praeclara ingenia. A quibus angustiis liberabimur si ponamus, secundum probationes praemissas, hominem ad veram felicitatem post hanc vitam pervenire posse....

La raison, en élaborant sa connaissance philosophique, peut arriver selon Thomas à identifier dans la contemplation de l'essence de Dieu lui-même sa propre fin ultime, après la mort. Cette contemplation finale peut ainsi être supposée à juste titre, par la raison elle-même.... Mais la raison reste seule, complètement démunie devant cette vérité, et même prisonnière de celle-ci.³⁴⁵

Following Oliva's interpretation, I maintain that it is philosophy's inability to achieve the end to which it is ordered which is the cause of the suffering of her children. Philosophers can come to know the end of their nature (that in which perfect happiness consists and to which philosophy is ordered), but the means which they employ are not capable of achieving their end, and so they suffer.

However, before we move on to consider how *sacra doctrina* can resolve this frustration, we must take into account that Aquinas maintains that there is a situation in which the philosopher, apart from *sacra doctrina*, can be freed from this frustration and achieve perfect happiness. Oliva explains that, in the pursuit of happiness, a philosopher, through her devotion to seeking the knowledge of God, may become friends with God as the saints do. The difference between the contemplation of a philosopher and a saint is that the former arises from self-love whereas the latter arises from the infused virtue of charity³⁴⁶ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Yet, the philosopher still loves God with a friendship love, which Thomas affirms in his commentary on the *NE*. The philosopher loves God more than himself by his own natural abilities without the help of grace,³⁴⁷ and this creates the conditions for true friendship between herself and God.³⁴⁸ Yet, the philosopher cannot become friends with God without grace. Since friendship requires reciprocity, and since God cannot love the sinner, God becomes friends with the pagan

³⁴⁵ Oliva, "La contemplation des philosophes," 640.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 630.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 604-6.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 659.

philosopher by forgiving and justifying him through sanctifying grace, *gratia gratum faciens*.³⁴⁹

However, since Aquinas holds that philosophers do experience anguish when they discover that the means they possess cannot reach the end to which they are ordered, the situation in which God gives sanctifying grace to a philosopher cannot be the experience of every philosopher or non-philosopher who comes to recognize that the knowledge of God is the perfect good. So, how does Aquinas resolve this frustration that we have been describing? First, he shows that man must attain His end, and then he shows the means; namely, Christ as he is revealed in *sacra doctrina*. In sections 3.4.7-3.4.8, we will consider why the vision of God is necessary, Aquinas's interpretation of the immortality of the soul in his *DA* commentary, and the dissolution of this frustration in the hope of the saints *in via*.

3.4.7 The Necessity of Happiness and the Immortality of the Soul

In *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 3, Aquinas asks whether someone in this life can be happy. He answers that one cannot be perfectly happy in this life, and he demonstrates this both from the general notion of happiness as “a perfect and sufficient good”³⁵⁰ and from that “in which beatitude specifically consists; namely, the vision of the divine essence.”³⁵¹

Aquinas provides various arguments for this conclusion based on the general notion of happiness,³⁵² but we do not need to consider these, for we have already shown that since

³⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 612-13.

³⁵⁰ *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 3 resp.: ...perfectum et sufficiens bonum....

³⁵¹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 3 resp.: ...in quo specialiter beatitudo consistit, scilicet visio divinae essentiae. Cf. *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 11.

³⁵² Aquinas's arguments based on the general notion of happiness can be sorted into these categories: (i) arguments from the premise that perfect happiness must satisfy human desire (*ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 3 resp.; *ScG* 3.48.2, 3.48.12), (ii) arguments from the premise that perfect happiness cannot involve misery or sorrow

humans naturally know sensible substances, they cannot see the divine essence in this life, and therefore humans cannot be perfectly happy in this life (see 3.4.4-3.4.5).

Yet, Aquinas maintains that humans must see God's essence, and from this he infers that humans must see it in the afterlife. Aquinas argues that the ultimate end of man is to see the essence of God, but something is futile if it exists for an end which it cannot attain,³⁵³ and therefore if humans cannot apprehend the essence of God, then they exist in vain. However, humans naturally desire their ultimate end and, therefore, the vision of God's essence. Now, for Aquinas, a natural desire cannot be in vain since "a natural desire is nothing other than an inclination inherent in things from the ordering of the prime mover, which is not able to be purposeless."³⁵⁴ Therefore, the human must be able to see the essence of God.³⁵⁵ However, this natural desire cannot be fulfilled in this life. It is "necessary, therefore, that it is fulfilled after this life. Therefore, the ultimate happiness of man is after this life."³⁵⁶

Aquinas's argument for the necessity of the vision of God's essence brings us to two points in which he diverges from Aristotle. First, as we have seen in our analysis of *DA* 3.5, Aristotle does not maintain that the soul is immortal. Aquinas, however, clearly does, and his interpretation of Aristotle in *DA* 3.5 is that Aristotle also espouses the immortality of the soul. Secondly, since Aquinas holds this interpretation of Aristotle,

(*ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 3 resp.; *ScG* 3.48.5, 3.48.6, 3.48.8), (iii) arguments from the premise that perfect happiness must involve rest and stability (*ScG* 3.48.3), and (iv) arguments from the premise that perfect happiness must be continuous (*ScG* 3.48.7).

³⁵³ *ScG* 3.44.2.

³⁵⁴ *SLE* 1 lect. 2 lines 44-47: ...sed hoc est impossibile, quia naturale desiderium nihil aliud est quam inclinatio inhaerens rebus ex ordinatione primi moventis, quae non potest esse supervacua....

³⁵⁵ Cf. *ScG* 3.51; Bradley, *Twofold Human Good*, 428-429.

³⁵⁶ *ScG* 3.48 lines 11-15, p. 131: Est igitur implebile desiderium naturale hominis. Non autem in hac vita, ut ostensum est. Oportet igitur quod impleatur post hanc vitam. Est igitur felicitas ultima hominis post hanc vitam.

Aquinas can argue that Aristotle believes that humans only achieve imperfect human happiness in this life. However, I will show that my interpretation of the *DA* implies that Aristotle believes humans achieve perfect happiness in this life. Let us begin with the first difference.

In chapter two, we saw that in *DA* 1.1 Aristotle reasons that the soul is separable only if it has a proper activity (an activity that does not require the body) and that thinking is a proper activity of the soul only if it does not need the imagination. We concluded that thinking does need imagination, and therefore the soul neither exists separately nor is immortal for Aristotle. However, Aquinas's interpretation of Aristotle's criterion for separability alters it, and this allows him to maintain that the human soul is immortal for Aristotle.

While commenting on the puzzle of soul's separability in *DA* 1.1 403a3-16, Aquinas writes that "thinking is special to the soul in one way but belongs to the compound in another."³⁵⁷ To show this he makes a distinction between two types of operation: (a) an operation that needs a body as its instrument and object and (b) an operation that needs the body as an object but not as an instrument. Aquinas places thinking in category (b) and concludes that

two things follow from this. One is that thinking is a proper operation of the soul and does not need the body, except that it needs body only as its object as was said.... The other thing is that what has an operation in itself has existence and subsistence in itself.... Therefore, intellect is a subsistent form, but the other powers are forms in matter.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁷ *SLDA* 1 c. 2 lines 48-50: Nam intelligere quodam modo est proprium anime, quodam modo est coniuncti (Thomas Aquinas, *Sentencia libri De anima*, edited by Fratrum Praedicatorum, Leonine Commission 45 (Rome-Paris: Vrin, 1984)).

³⁵⁸ *SLDA* 1 c. 2 lines 69-79: Et ex hoc duo sequuntur. Vnum est quod intelligere est propria operatio anime et non indigent corpore nisi ut obiecto tantu, ut dictum est.... Aliud est quod illud quod habet operationem per se, habet esse et subsistentiam pe se...ideo intellectus est forma subsistens, alie potencie sunt forme in materia.

On our interpretation of Aristotle, thinking is a proper activity of the soul only if its operation does not need the body as instrument or object, but on Aquinas' interpretation the fact that thinking does not need the body as an instrument is sufficient to establish that thinking is a proper activity of the soul. So, concerning Aristotle's comment that separated intellect is immortal and eternal (*DA* 3.5.430a23-24), Aquinas writes that human intellect "is incorruptible and eternal...[and] this type of soul is separated from the others as the eternal from the perishable."³⁵⁹

Because Aquinas holds that the human intellect survives the disintegration of the body and is immortal, he encounters a problem that Aristotle does not; namely, if the human intellect knows by abstracting essences from images that are provided by the senses, then how will the human intellect be active when it is separated from the body? On my interpretation of Aristotle, this is precisely why Aristotle rejects the separability and immortality of the human intellectual soul: it cannot be active apart from the body and images. Aquinas' solution distinguishes between modes of understanding:

...the mode of acting of each thing follows its mode of being. The soul has a different mode of being when it is joined to the body and when it is separated from the body while nevertheless the nature of the soul remains the same....Therefore, to the soul according to its mode of being when united with the body belongs a mode of understanding by turning to the images of bodies which are in corporeal organs. However, when separated from the body a mode of understanding belongs to it by turning to things that are simply intelligible, as is also the case with other separated substances.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁹ *SLDA* 3 c. 4 lines 213-216: ...est incorruptibilis et perpetua...hoc genus anime separantur ab aliis « sicut perpetuum a corruptibili ».

³⁶⁰ *ST* 1 a. 89 a. 1 resp.: modus operandi uniuscujusque rei sequitur modum essendi ipsius. Habet autem anima alium modum essendi cum unitur corpori, et cum fuerit a corpore separate, manente tamen eadem animae natura.... Animae igitur secundum illum modum essendi quo corpori est unita, competit modus intelligendi per conversionem ad phantasmata corporum, quae in corporeis organis sunt: cum autem fuerit a corpore separate, competit ei modus intelligendi per conversionem ad ea quae sunt intelligibilia simpliciter, sicut et aliis substantiis separatis.

In the body, however, the agent intellect abstracts forms from sensible substances, and therefore it is a maker in that it makes the potentially intelligible form actually intelligible and like itself by making it immaterial through abstraction. Aquinas maintains that this making aspect of the agent intellect is that to which Aristotle refers when he compares the agent intellect to light, and, importantly, in his exposition of this comparison he attributes the idea of participation to Aristotle:³⁶¹ “In this way the active power is a certain participation in the intellectual light of separated substances. Therefore, the philosopher says it is like a state as light, which would not be appropriate to say if it were a separated substance.”³⁶²

Now, let us look at the second point on which Aquinas diverges from Aristotle; namely, their answers to the question of whether humans can achieve perfect human happiness in this life.³⁶³ In the first chapter, I considered *NE* 1.10 in which Aristotle concludes that the one who acts according to complete virtue, who is supplied with sufficient external goods, and who continues to live this way throughout a complete lifetime is “blessed among the living, but blessed as man.”³⁶⁴ I concluded that this implies human happiness is imperfect relative to God but that humans truly achieve perfect human happiness in this life. For, since the soul is not immortal for Aristotle, and since

³⁶¹ Hankey, “Placing the Human,” 16.

³⁶² *SLDA* 3 c. 4 lines 162-166 Huiusmodi autem virtus activa est quaedam participatio luminis intellectualis a substantiis separatis, et ideo Philosophus dicit quod est *sicut habitus, ut lumen*, quod non competeret dici de eo, si esset substantia separata.

³⁶³ One may think that I have already discussed this difference, for I have argued that Aquinas categorizes Aristotle’s perfect happiness as imperfect happiness. However, in that case, the difference is that they do not agree on what perfect human happiness is. In contrast, here, I am arguing that they also differ in that Aristotle believes one can achieve perfect human happiness in this life whereas Aquinas believes one cannot.

³⁶⁴ *NE* 1.10 1101a19-21: εἰ δ’ οὕτω, μακαρίου ἐροῦμεν τῶν ζώντων οἷς ὑπάρχει καὶ ὑπάρξει τὰ λεχθέντα, μακαρίου δ’ ἀνθρώπου.

natural desire cannot be in vain (*NE* 1.2), the implication is that Aristotle holds that humans must be able to achieve perfect human happiness in the present life (see 2.5.3).

However, as we have seen, Aquinas holds that humans cannot attain perfect human happiness in this life, and he argues that Aristotle holds the same position. First, let us note that if Aquinas did not interpret Aristotle's *De Anima* to teach that the human intellect is immortal, then he could not argue that it is Aristotle's position that humans cannot attain perfect happiness in this life. For, if the human soul is not immortal, and if the human does not attain perfect happiness in this life, then human nature would be in vain.

Now, let us turn to the texts in which Aquinas claims that Aristotle recognizes that the happiness he describes in the *NE* is imperfect human happiness. Aquinas maintains that, in *NE* 1.10, Aristotle recognizes that he is speaking of imperfect happiness that can be had in this life:³⁶⁵ “the philosopher, in *Ethics* 1, placing the happiness of man in this life, says that it is imperfect, after many things concluding “we call them happy, but happy as man.”³⁶⁶ On Aquinas's interpretation, the “perfect” happiness that Aristotle describes in the *NE* is not just imperfect relative to God's happiness, but it is imperfect relative to the truly perfect human happiness. For example, in his commentary on *NE* 10.8, he writes that “likewise, we must keep in mind that he does not specify perfect happiness in this life, but such as can be ascribed to human and mortal life. Hence, in the first book he states: “Those we call happy are men.”³⁶⁷

³⁶⁵ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 6 ad 1: Ad primum ergo dicendum quod philosophus loquitur in libro Ethicorum de felicitate imperfecta, qualiter in hac vita haberi potest.

³⁶⁶ *ST* 1a2ae q. 2 a. 2 ad 4: Unde philosophus, in I Ethic., ponens beatitudinem hominis in hac vita, dicit eam imperfectam, post multa concludens, beatos autem dicimus ut homines.

³⁶⁷ *SLE* 10 lect. 13 lines 141-4: Attendendum etiam quod in hac vita non point perfectam felicitatem, sed talem quails potest competere humanae et mortali vitae; unde et supra in I dixit: « Beatos autem ut homines ».

3.4.8 The Hope of the Saints *in Via* and the Resolution of Frustration

As we saw in section 3.4.6, Aquinas holds that a philosopher's belief in the immortality of the soul is not enough to dissolve the frustration that they feel when they realize that the end of their nature cannot be achieved by any means that they possess. Let us now begin our inquiry into how the hope of the saints resolves the frustration of the philosophers by contrasting and comparing their respective proper virtues: the theological virtues and the intellectual virtue of wisdom.

The theological virtues are distinguished from wisdom in respect to the formal difference of their objects.³⁶⁸ The theological virtues consider divine things insofar as they exceed the comprehension of reason. Wisdom, in contrast, considers divine things insofar as they can be investigated by human reason.³⁶⁹ On the other hand, the two types of virtue are similar in that both wisdom and the theological virtues, specifically faith, do not grasp God's essence. Yet, for Aquinas, there is a difference between the two types of virtue that would turn the frustration of the philosopher into hope if he or she became a saint. Wisdom knows no way by which one can attain knowledge of the divine essence, whereas faith presents The Way to the divine essence, Jesus Christ. Let's see how Aquinas gets here.

Aquinas reasons that since the human intellect and will are not sufficient to ordain one to perfect happiness,

it is necessary that, in respect to both, something supernatural is added to man to ordain him to a supernatural end. First, certain supernatural principles are added to man's intellect which are grasped by the divine light, and these are the articles of faith, concerning which is faith. Secondly, the will is ordained to this end in

³⁶⁸ *ST* 1a2ae q. 62 a. 2.

³⁶⁹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 62 a. 2 ad. 2.

respect to the motion of intention, tending to the end as to that which is possibly attainable, which pertains to hope....³⁷⁰

The relation between faith and hope is crucial for us. First, we will consider the saint's hope of an attainable end and the role of faith (which consists in the articles of faith and the divine light) in this hope, and then we will consider how hope and faith resolve the frustration of the philosophers.

Hope in general is a relation between the lover and beloved in which the beloved "is possible to obtain but elevated above the faculty of the one attaining so that one is not able to have it immediately."³⁷¹ The object of hope is "a future good that is difficult but possible to obtain,"³⁷² where possible to obtain has two senses: "in one way, through us ourselves; in another way, through others."³⁷³ The theological virtue of hope tends to what is difficult but possible through another's help; namely, through God's help.

The object of theological hope, then, has two aspects: "the good which it intends to obtain and the help through which it is obtained."³⁷⁴ In respect to the good which it intends, the object of theological hope is the final cause, and this object can be considered in two ways: the proper and principal end is eternal happiness,³⁷⁵ and the secondary end is something ordered towards eternal happiness.³⁷⁶ In respect to the help on which hope leans, the object of theological hope is the efficient cause which is also twofold: the

³⁷⁰ *ST* 1a2ae q. 62 a. 3 resp.: Unde oportuit quod quantum ad utrumque, aliquid homini supernaturaliter adderetur, ad ordinandum ipsum in finem supernaturalem. Et primo quidem, quantum ad intellectum, adduntur homini quaedam principia supernaturalia, quae divino lumine capiuntur, et haec sunt credibilia, de quibus est fides. Secundo vero, voluntas ordinatur in illum finem et quantum ad motum intentionis, in ipsum tendentem sicut in id quod est possibile consequi, quod pertinet ad spem....

³⁷¹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 4 a. 3 resp.

³⁷² *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 1 resp.: ...obiectum spei est bonum futurum arduum possibile haberi.

³⁷³ *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 1 resp.: ...uno modo, per nos ipsos; alio modo, per alios....

³⁷⁴ *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 4 resp.: ...bonum quod obtinere intendit; et auxilium per quod illud bonum obtinetur.

³⁷⁵ *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 2 resp.

³⁷⁶ *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 2 ad. 2.

principal efficient cause is the divine assistance itself, and the secondary efficient cause is the instrumental cause.³⁷⁷ Theological hope can attain its object in its second aspect; namely, divine assistance, but it does not attain the primary good which it intends; namely, eternal happiness. Rather, it expects to obtain eternal happiness through the divine assistance,³⁷⁸ and in this way theological hope tends towards perfect happiness.³⁷⁹

However, one can only hope to attain something if the object of hope is proposed to him as possible, and it is the role of the theological virtue of faith to propose to the Christian that the object of theological hope, eternal happiness, is possible through divine assistance.³⁸⁰ This is why faith must precede hope in the individual.³⁸¹ Let us consider, then, that in which this divine assistance consists and which faith believes.

The principal object of faith or the beliefs that belong to faith *per se*, for Aquinas, are divided into two types: “the secret of divinity...and the mystery of the incarnation.”³⁸² Both categories concern those things “whose vision we shall enjoy in eternal life and through which we are led to eternal life.”³⁸³

In respect to those things whose vision we shall enjoy in eternal life, perfect human happiness consists in understanding God’s essence in both its unity and plurality. The faithful *in via* assent to the objects of faith concerning God’s essence through the light of faith which is graciously given to them and which convinces them that they ought to believe these articles.³⁸⁴ This belief is caused by an act of choice rather than by the

³⁷⁷ *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 4 resp.

³⁷⁸ *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 5 resp. Cf. 2a2ae q. 17 a. 6 resp.

³⁷⁹ *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 6 ad. 3.

³⁸⁰ *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 7 resp.

³⁸¹ *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 7 resp. Cf. *ST* 1a2ae q. 62 a. 4 resp. Cf. 2a2ae q. 4 a. 7 resp.

³⁸² *ST* 2a2ae q. 1 a. 8 resp.: ...occultum divinitatis...et mysterium humanitatis Christi....

³⁸³ *ST* 2a2ae q. 1 a. 8 resp.: ... quorum visione in vita aeterna perfruemur, et per quae ducemur in vitam aeternam.

³⁸⁴ *ST* 2a2ae q. 1 a. 5 ad. 1.

very object of faith itself, and thus Aquinas holds that faith is of things unseen. Now, one sees something intellectually when they are moved to believe it by the object itself, and one is moved thus when the object is known either in itself or through something else known (e.g., a demonstrated conclusion).³⁸⁵ The faithful, therefore, do not know the articles of faith in themselves or as a demonstrated conclusion.

In respect to those things through which we are led to eternal life, we are ordered directly to perfect happiness since the articles of faith reveal both the end, of which the vision is, and the means, that by which we attain it.³⁸⁶ I will say more about how the faithful are more directly ordered to the vision of God than the philosophers below; here, I want to discuss the means to this vision, a means which relates to the hope of the saints *in via*.

The way to happiness falls under God's providence, which "includes all things that have been dispensed by God in time for the salvation of man."³⁸⁷ This providence includes "the incarnation of Christ and his passion."³⁸⁸ Thus, "...the way... by which humans come to happiness is the mystery of the incarnation and passion of Christ[.]"³⁸⁹ Therefore, since one has hope only if one knows that the object of hope can be obtained, the saint *in via* acquires hope that he or she will attain perfect happiness *in patria* through assenting to the mystery of the incarnation and passion of Christ *in via*.

The philosopher, in contrast, neither orders himself directly to this end nor has hope that he will possess this end. If the philosopher is an unbeliever, then he is ignorant

³⁸⁵ *ST* 2a2ae q. 1 a. 4 resp.

³⁸⁶ *ST* 2a2ae q. 1 a. 6 resp.

³⁸⁷ *ST* 2a2ae q. 1 a. 7 resp.: in fide autem providentiae includuntur omnia quae temporaliter a Deo dispensantur ad hominum salutem, quae sunt via in beatitudinem.

³⁸⁸ *ST* 2a2ae q. 1 a. 7 resp.: ... incarnatio Christi et eius passio....

³⁸⁹ *ST* 2a2ae q. 2 a. 7 resp: Via autem hominibus veniendi ad beatitudinem est mysterium incarnationis et passionis Christi....

of the things of faith,³⁹⁰ and therefore the philosopher is ignorant of those things of which one will have vision *in patria*, such as the trinity and the incarnation of Christ. Therefore, although it is important to keep in mind that the philosopher and saint are ordered to the same end, namely, the vision of God's essence, the saint knows that in which the vision consists, whereas the philosopher does not. Since, then, we order ourselves to an end insofar as we know something about that end, the saint is ordered directly to perfect happiness whereas the philosopher, who knows God only as the perfect good or first cause, is ordered indirectly to perfect happiness.

Moreover, the philosopher, although he is ordered to this end, does not hope to possess it. Aquinas writes that "by faith we hold many things concerning God which the philosophers were not able to investigate through natural reason, for instance His providence and omnipotence."³⁹¹ Since God's providence includes the way to perfect happiness, the philosopher who relies on natural reason is ignorant of the way to His perfect happiness. Therefore, since one can only hope if the "the object of hope is proposed to him as possible,"³⁹² the philosopher has no hope of attaining his end.

This lack of hope that is due to the philosopher's ignorance of the way to happiness, I have argued, is the reason for the philosopher's anguish. The philosopher's situation is that he naturally tends towards the perfect good, which he identifies through the intellect as the knowledge of God. However, the philosopher, upon exhausting all her natural means of attaining this end without achieving it, realizes that she cannot naturally

³⁹⁰ *ST* 2a2ae q. 1 a. 5 ad. 1.

³⁹¹ *ST* 2a2ae q. 1 a. 8 ad. 1: multa per fidem tenemus de Deo quae naturali ratione investigare philosophi non potuerunt, puta circa providentiam eius et omnipotentiam....

³⁹² *ST* 2a2ae q. 17 a. 7 resp.: Ad hoc ergo quod aliquis speret, requiritur quod obiectum spei proponatur ei ut possibile.

attain it, and therefore she loses hope. Yet, frustratingly, she must continue to desire what she cannot attain since it is a natural desire to possess the perfect good. For Aquinas, this frustration turns into hope either if God gives grace to the philosopher who is devoted to seeking the knowledge of Him, or if the philosopher assents to the articles of faith and, specifically, to the mystery of the incarnation and passion of Christ, for these articles contain the means to perfect happiness.

Let me conclude my comparison of the knowledge of God that comes through natural reason and such knowledge that comes through *sacra doctrina* by noting the highest form of knowing that one can attain in *via*. Although the faithful in *via* know through the light of faith or grace, which is a higher knowing than through the light of reason alone, they still do not grasp the divine essence.³⁹³ In rapture, which both Moses and Paul experienced, however, the one rapt attains “the vision of the blessed which exceeds the state of the wayfarer.”³⁹⁴ Therefore, since one sees God’s essence in rapture, “the highest degree of contemplation in the present life is...in rapture.”³⁹⁵ Rapture, although a true vision of the divine essence, is transitory, as we have seen.³⁹⁶ It serves as an anticipation of perfect happiness in that in rapture God shows one the life he will enjoy for eternity.³⁹⁷

³⁹³ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 13 ad. 1.

³⁹⁴ *ST* 2a2ae q. 175 a. 3 resp.: ...visionem beatorum, quae excedit statum viae.

³⁹⁵ *ST* 2a2ae q. 180 a. 5 resp.: Unde supremus gradus contemplationis praesentis vitae est qualem habuit Paulus in raptu.

³⁹⁶ *ST* 2a2ae q. 175 ad. 4.

³⁹⁷ *ST* 2a2ae q. 175 ad. 4: Ad quod cum dicit se raptum, significat quod Deus ostendit ei vitam in qua videndus est in aeternum.

3.4.9 Transcendental Analogy: Aquinas, Aristotle, and Participation

My comparison of divine and human happiness in Aquinas and Aristotle thus far has established the existence of a problem in Aquinas' interpretation of Aristotle's doctrine of divine and human happiness; namely, that Aquinas uses the doctrine of participation to resolve difficulties in his commentaries on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, *Nicomachean Ethics*, and *De Anima*. This usage of participation is a problem because it appears that Aristotle rejects the notion of participation. To close this section, I want to show where in Aristotle Aquinas may have found the doctrine of participation. My argument involves Aquinas's doctrine of analogy, so before I outline my argument, let us consider an overview of this doctrine.

Aquinas adopts Aristotle's doctrine of *pros hen* homonymy, which he calls analogy, to explain how being, which is said in many ways, is united under one science.³⁹⁸ Scholars have noticed that Aquinas uses this doctrine to establish the unity of being in two different ways. The first way is called predicamental analogy, and it is the analogical unity that holds among the types of beings distinguished in the categories: the accidents are said in relation to substance.³⁹⁹ Therefore, predicamental analogy corresponds to the type of unity that Aristotle establishes in *MP* 4.1. The second way is called transcendental analogy, and it is the analogical unity that holds among the hierarchy of substances themselves. In this case, all substances are said in relation to

³⁹⁸ Bernard Montagnes, *The Doctrine of the Analogy of Being according to Thomas Aquinas*, trans. E.M. Macierowski (WI: Marquette University Press, 2004), 33-34. Aquinas also applies the term 'analogy' to two other concepts, which Montagnes calls the analogy of proportion and proportionality. For a treatment of these see Montagnes, *The Doctrine of Analogy*, 69-75; Pasquale Porro, *Thomas Aquinas: A Historical and Philosophical Profile*, translated by Joseph G. Trabbic and Roger W. Nutt (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2016), 34-38.

³⁹⁹ Montagnes, *The Doctrine of Analogy*, 28-33.

God.⁴⁰⁰ I argued in chapter one that Aristotle also uses *pros hen* homonymy in this second way.

So, my argument is that Aquinas may have found the doctrine of participation in Aristotle's concept of *pros hen* homonymy. For, Aquinas's doctrine of transcendental analogy has an inherent participation structure, and Aristotle can be interpreted as adhering to a doctrine of transcendental analogy. Here, I want to show how, for Aquinas, transcendental analogy includes the doctrine of participation.

For Aquinas, words are signs of ideas, and ideas are conceptions of the intellect that are likeness of things. Therefore, humans can name something only insofar as they understand it. Since humans cannot understand God's essence in this life, they cannot name God in a way that signifies His essence.⁴⁰¹ However, the human intellect attains some degree of the knowledge of God's substance from creatures insofar as each creature is like God through its perfection. Therefore, humans can name God with names that indicate perfections in creatures.⁴⁰²

In what way is a name predicated of both God and creatures? Aquinas proceeds to show by a process of elimination that names predicated of creatures and God are predicated analogously – he first shows that these common names are neither predicated univocally nor equivocally.⁴⁰³ For our purposes, let us focus on two arguments he makes against the position that names are predicated equivocally of God and creatures in *ST* 1 q. 13.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid., 28-33.

⁴⁰¹ *ST* 1 q. 13 a. 1.

⁴⁰² *ST* 1 q. 13 a. 2.

⁴⁰³ *ST* 1 q. 13 a. 5 resp.; *ScG* 1.34.1; *Comp. The.* c. 1.27; *De Pot.* 7 a. 7 resp.

First, Aquinas argues that although the names predicated of God and creatures are not univocal, neither are they purely equivocal. For, one or more equivocal terms are not said in reference to another equivocal term, but the names predicated of God and creatures do possess such an order; namely, these terms are related through efficient causality, which is the order of what is caused to its cause.⁴⁰⁴ The second argument I want to consider, which is similar to the first, is that purely equivocal names only possess unity in name, but there is no likeness among *the things* themselves.⁴⁰⁵ Yet the relation of efficient causality obtains between God and creatures, and since the agent always makes something similar to itself, creatures must be in some way truly like God. Therefore, the names predicated of God and creatures cannot be purely equivocal.

The aspect of these two arguments which show that Aquinas's doctrine of transcendental analogy includes participation is that when the same name is predicated of God and creatures, the name predicated of creatures is ordered to the name predicated of God through the relation of efficient causality. Thus, we can truly signify something about God using terms that point to attributes in creatures since God is the cause of creatures, and therefore He imprints a likeness, even if imperfect, of Himself on them. Thus, since an effect participates in its cause, as we saw in section 3.3.2, the relation that establishes the unity of a term that is applied to creatures and God is participation. Therefore, Aquinas' doctrine of transcendental analogy uses the doctrine of participation to establish a relation between God and creatures,⁴⁰⁶ and since one can interpret Aristotle as using *pros hen* homonymy to unite the various substances in relation to God, then

⁴⁰⁴ *ScG* 1.33.2.

⁴⁰⁵ *ScG* 1.33.3.

⁴⁰⁶ For the relation between participation and analogy, see Montagnes, *The Doctrine of Analogy*, 34-43.

Aquinas, I argue, finds the doctrine of participation in Aristotle's notion of *pros hen* homonymy. Thus, Aquinas uses participation to interpret Aristotle on those problems that involve a relationship between God and creatures: the content of God's knowledge, the divinity of human *nous*, and the immortality of the soul.

3.5. DIVINE-HUMAN *REDITUS* IN *DE CHRISTO*: PERFECT HUMAN HAPPINESS

3.5.1 The Divine-Human *Reditus* in Christ

In section 3.2, I argued that the *ST* is developed according to the neoplatonic *exitus-reditus* pattern. We have explored this pattern in sections 3.3 and 3.4, but we saw in section 3.4 that the human cannot accomplish his *reditus* and union with God by his own natural powers. In this section (3.5), I will first examine how humans return to God and achieve perfect happiness through the work of Christ. Next, we will consider the light of glory, which is the intellectual power by which humans attain the vision of God, and we will ask what differentiates human beatitude from divine beatitude. Finally, I will show how humans attain this vision that is beyond their nature in a way that preserves their nature. Thus, Aquinas preserves the integrity of human nature when the human reaches perfect happiness, whereas the human is not clearly differentiated from God in Aristotle's doctrine of perfect happiness (see 2.5.4). Let us begin with the first.

In *ST* 3 q. 48 a. 6, Aquinas gives an unequivocal answer to the question "how are men saved?"

The efficient cause is twofold, the principal and the instrumental. The principal efficient cause of human salvation is God. But since the humanity of Christ is the instrument of the divine...therefore, all the actions and passions of Christ operate

instrumentally, in virtue of His divinity, for the salvation of man. In this way, the passion of Christ efficiently causes the salvation of man.⁴⁰⁷

As we saw in the last section, the saint *in via* has hope by grasping the principle and instrumental efficient cause of salvation. However, this formulation remains too general for our purposes. We want to know *how* Christ accomplishes the *reditus* of man to God. To this end, we will ask four questions: (i) what is it precisely that Christ accomplishes as the efficient cause of salvation? (ii) how does Christ accomplish salvation? (iii) what role does Christ's incarnation play in accomplishing salvation, and (iv) how is salvation imparted to humans?

Regarding our first question, we may begin by asking “what problem does salvation address?” This problem is that through sin man is no longer united with God; rather, man is now separated and turned away from God.⁴⁰⁸ Christ addresses this problem. It belongs to a mediator, writes Aquinas, to join those between whom he mediates, and Christ unites men to God, and so Christ is the mediator between God and man.⁴⁰⁹ Christ accomplishes this reconciliation through his passion and death⁴¹⁰ by means of which he delivers man from sin.⁴¹¹ So, Christ as savior reconciles and unites man with God, and to be united to God just is happiness.

Regarding our second question, let us expand on the proposition that Christ unites man to God through his passion and the expiation of sins. Two things are required for the expiation of sins: the removal of the stain of sin and the payment of the debt of

⁴⁰⁷ *ST* 3 q. 48 a. 6 resp.: ...quod duplex est efficiens: principale, et instrumentale. Efficiens quidem principale humanae salutis Deus est. Quia vero humanitas Christi est *divinitatis instrumentum*, ut supra dictum est, ex consequenti omnes actiones et passiones Christi instrumentaliter operantur, in virtute divinitatis, ad salutem humanam. Et secundum hoc, passio Christi efficienter causat salutem humanam.

⁴⁰⁸ *ST* 3 q. 48 a. 4 ad. 1; *ST* 3 q. 26 a. 1 obj. 3; *ST* 3 q. 22 a. 2 resp.

⁴⁰⁹ *ST* 3 q. 26 a. 1 resp.

⁴¹⁰ *ST* 3 q. 49 a. 4 resp.; *ST* 3 q. 26 a. 1 resp.

⁴¹¹ *ST* 3 q. 46 a. 3 resp.

punishment. Christ, as priest, expiates sins in both aspects: “the stain of sin is destroyed through grace, by which the heart of the sinner is converted to God, whereas the debt of punishment is totally destroyed through this: that man satisfies God. Both, however, the priesthood of Christ effects.”⁴¹² Both the stain of sin and the satisfaction for the debt of sin are effected by Christ’s sacrifice in His passion.⁴¹³ Therefore, since man is reconciled to God by having his sins removed,⁴¹⁴ Christ’s sacrifice and the satisfaction that it makes unites man with God.

Regarding our third question, Aquinas writes that God “unites [human flesh] to Himself for the salvation of man.”⁴¹⁵ So, how does the incarnation effect salvation? Aquinas is clear that the incarnation is not necessary for salvation in the sense that salvation is impossible without it. Rather, the incarnation is necessary in the sense that an end (in this case, the restoration of human nature) is “better and more appropriately attained” by it.⁴¹⁶ However, it is necessary that humanity itself could not make satisfaction for its own sin, and herein lies how the incarnation effects salvation. Perfect satisfaction for sin is made only if the satisfaction “is condign through being adequate to compensate for the sin committed.”⁴¹⁷ However, “since God’s majesty is infinite, the sin committed against God has a certain infinity.... Therefore, it is necessary for condign

⁴¹² *ST* 3 q. 22 a. 3 resp.: *Macula quidem culpae deletur per gratiam, qua cor peccatoris in Deum convertitur, reatus autem poenae totaliter tollitur per hoc quod homo Deo satisfacit. Utrumque autem horum efficit sacerdotium Christi.*

⁴¹³ *ST* 3 q. 22 a. 2 resp.; *ST* 3 q. 48 a. 6 ad. 3.

⁴¹⁴ *ST* 3 q. 26 a. 1 obj. 3

⁴¹⁵ *ST* 3 q. 1 a. 1 ad. 2: ...ut sibi eam uniret pro salute humana.

⁴¹⁶ *ST* 3 q. 1 a. 2 resp.: per quod melius et convenientius pervenitur ad finem.

⁴¹⁷ *ST* 3 q. 1 a. 2 ad. 2: Uno modo, perfecte, quia est condigna per quandam adaequationem ad recompensationem commissae culpae.

satisfaction that the action of the one satisfying should have infinite efficacy.”⁴¹⁸ The one satisfying, Christ, must be God and man, then, since “a pure man could not make satisfaction for the whole human race. God, however, did not need to make satisfaction.”⁴¹⁹

Finally, how is the forgiveness of sins imparted to humans? For, after all, it is not each human but Christ who made satisfaction. Aquinas resolves this problem through the mystical body of Christ. Just as sin was transmitted to the whole human race through Adam since Adam, being the first human, is the principle of human nature,⁴²⁰ so God appointed Christ to be the head of all men in grace, and “grace is in Christ not only as in a single human, but it is also in Christ as in the head of the whole Church to whom all are united as members of the head, from which one mystical person is constituted. Therefore, the merit of Christ is itself extended to others insofar as they are His members....”⁴²¹ Thus, since Christ merits satisfaction and salvation by His passion, these merits are extended to the members of His body,⁴²² into which one is incorporated through the sacrament of baptism.⁴²³

Let us close our examination of how humans return to God through Christ by noting the role of Christ’s resurrection in this return. Aquinas writes that it was necessary

⁴¹⁸ *ST* 3 q. 1 a. 2 ad. 2: Tum etiam quia peccatum contra Deum commissum quandam infinitatem habet ex infinitate divinae maiestatis.... Unde oportuit, ad condignam satisfactionem, ut actio satisfaciens haberet efficaciam infinitam, ut puta Dei et hominis existens.

⁴¹⁹ *ST* 3 q. 1 a. 2 resp.: Homo autem purus satisfacere non poterat pro toto humano genere; Deus autem satisfacere non debebat.... Cf. *ST* 3 q. 26 a. 2 resp. In this passage, Aquinas argues for the fittingness of the incarnation from the notion of a mediator.

⁴²⁰ *ST* 3 q. 19 a. 4 ad. 1.

⁴²¹ *ST* 3 q. 19 a. 4 resp.: in Christo non solum fuit gratia sicut in quodam homine singulari, sed sicut in capite totius Ecclesiae, cui omnes uniuntur sicut capiti membra, ex quibus constituitur mystice una persona. Et exinde est quod meritum Christi se extendit ad alios, in quantum sunt membra eius....

⁴²² *ST* 3 q. 49 a. 3 resp.; *ST* 3 q. 48 a. 1 resp.

⁴²³ *ST* 3 q. 19 a. 4 ad. 3.

for Christ to rise “to complete our salvation.”⁴²⁴ For, since “that which is first in some genus is the cause of all things which are after it...and the resurrection of Christ is first in the order of our resurrection, so it is necessary that the resurrection of Christ is the cause of our resurrection.”⁴²⁵ Christ’s resurrection completes the work of salvation, then, since it is through Christ’s resurrection that we are raised into the next life, and perfect happiness is to be united to God by seeing Him face to face *in patria*.

3.5.2 The Light of Glory: Human Knowledge of God’s Essence

Now that we have considered Christ, the means by which humans return to and are united to God, let us look more closely at that in which perfect happiness consists. In section 3.4, we established that perfect human happiness consists in the vision of God’s essence through the light of glory *in patria*. My analysis in 3.5.2-3.5.3 will focus primarily on the light of glory, and my goals are twofold. First, I aim to understand the nature of the vision that humans will possess through the light of glory by analyzing Aquinas’ interpretation of the phrase “in thy light we shall see light” (*Psalms* 35:10). Secondly, I aim to differentiate the human’s contemplation of God’s essence from God’s contemplation of Himself.

Let us begin our consideration of the light of glory by asking “how do humans achieve the vision of God’s essence?” Aquinas argues that the created intellect can see the divine essence only if (i) a supernatural disposition is added to the created intellect and (ii) this disposition is added by God Himself. Aquinas bases his demonstration of (i)

⁴²⁴ *ST* 3 q. 53 a. 1 resp.: ad complementum nostrae salutis.

⁴²⁵ *ST* 3 q. 56 a. 1 resp.: quod illud quod est primum in quolibet genere, est causa omnium eorum quae sunt post, ut dicitur in II *Metaphys*. Primum autem in genere nostrae resurrectionis fuit resurrectio Christi, sicut ex supra dictis patet. Unde oportet quod resurrectio Christi sit causa nostrae resurrectionis.

on the principle that “all things that are elevated to something that exceeds its own nature are necessarily prepared by some disposition which is above its own nature.”⁴²⁶ To see the essence of God, as we have seen, is above the nature of the created intellect, and therefore “some supernatural disposition must be added to it so that it may be elevated to such sublimity.”⁴²⁷

In *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 6, Aquinas proves (ii). He reasons that “what exceeds created nature is not able to be done by the power of some creature, and therefore if something must be done that is above nature, then this is done immediately by God.”⁴²⁸ Now the vision of the divine essence fulfills both of these conditions: it is above nature, and it must be accomplished; otherwise, natural desire would be in vain. Therefore, God Himself graciously bestows perfect happiness on the created intellect by adding to its natural power of understanding a supernatural disposition that illuminates the intellect for the vision of God.⁴²⁹

This supernatural disposition that God adds to the created intellect is the light of glory.⁴³⁰ For Aquinas, the light of glory is that light which is referred to in *Psalms* 35:10: “in thy light we shall see light.”⁴³¹ Therefore, understanding this formula will help us understand the nature of the vision humans will have through the light of glory. In respect to the phrase “in thy light,” Aquinas explains that when something is said to be seen in God, that thing is known by the intellect’s participation in God’s light. Now, “all things

⁴²⁶ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 5 resp.: Respondeo dicendum quod omne quod elevatur ad aliquid quod excedit suam naturam, oportet quod disponatur aliqua dispositione quae sit supra suam naturam....

⁴²⁷ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 5 resp.: Unde oportet quod aliqua dispositio supernaturalis ei superaddatur, ad hoc quod elevetur in tantam sublimitatem. Cf. *Comp. The.* c. 1.105.

⁴²⁸ *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 6 resp.: illud quod excedit naturam creatam, non potest fieri virtute alicuius creaturae. Et ideo si quid fieri oporteat quod sit supra naturam, hoc fit immediate a Deo....

⁴²⁹ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 5; *ST* 1a2ae q. 5 a. 6.

⁴³⁰ *ScG* 3.53.6; *DV* q. 10 a. 11 ad. 7; *DV* q. 8 a. 3 ad. 6.

⁴³¹ *ScG* 3.53 line 21, p. 147: ...*In lumine tuo videbimus lumen.* Cf. *Comp. The.* c. 1.105.

are said to see in God,”⁴³² and therefore the agent intellect knows the essences of sensible substances by a participation in God’s light. However, the agent intellect is such that it can know something in God’s light without knowing the essence of that light, God Himself, just as the eye sees a sensible object in the light of the sun without seeing the substance of the sun.⁴³³ In contrast, the intellect that knows through the light of glory knows by a participation in God’s light as well, but the very thing that the intellect knows is the essence of that light by which it sees, God himself.⁴³⁴

In respect to the phrase “we shall see light,” God as an intelligible object is light since both the active power of the intellect and the intelligible object itself is called light (*lumen* or *lux*).⁴³⁵ Now, since something is intelligible insofar as it is actual, then an intelligible object is called light insofar as it is actual. Therefore, God is light itself since He is pure act.⁴³⁶

In thy light we shall see light means, then, that we shall see the light of God’s essence by participating in the light of God’s operation, the light of glory. In this vision of God’s essence, then, we know God as God knows Himself. For, as we have seen in 3.3.2, God knows Himself through Himself, and when humans see God through the light of glory, “the divine essence is both what is seen and that by which it is seen.”⁴³⁷

⁴³² *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 11 ad. 3: quod omnia dicimur in Deo videre.

⁴³³ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 11 ad. 3.

⁴³⁴ *Super Psalmos* 35 n. 5 (Thomas Aquinas, *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Doctoris Angelici Ordinis Praedicatorum Opera Omnia* (Parma: Typis P. Fiaccadori, 1852-73. <http://www.corpusthomicum.org>)).

⁴³⁵ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 5 resp. Cf. *DV* q. 20 a. 2 sc 1.

⁴³⁶ *Super 1 ad Tim.* 6 lect. 3.

⁴³⁷ *ScG* 3.51 line 6, p. 139, lines 1-4, p. 140: Unde oportet, si Dei essentia videatur, quod per ipsammet essentiam divinam intellectus ipsam videat: ut sit in tali visione divina essentia et quod videtur, et quo videtur.

3.5.3 Differentiating Human Vision from God's Vision

If, in the vision of God's essence through the light of glory, humans know God as God knows Himself, then what differentiates God's knowing of Himself and beatitude from the human's knowledge of God's essence and beatitude? To answer this question, we will look at this distinction that Aquinas makes: "The intellect is able to approach to the knowledge of some nature in two ways: by knowing it and by comprehending it."⁴³⁸

Comprehension is said in two ways for Aquinas, and in one way the human can comprehend God, but in another way the human cannot. In the way that humans can comprehend God, comprehension means "nothing other than the holding of something which is already present and possessed."⁴³⁹ In this sense, comprehension is the response to hope whose object is a good that is not immediately possessed.⁴⁴⁰ In relation to perfect happiness, the end hoped for is the vision of God, and when one attains this vision, they comprehend God since "by seeing Him, they possess Him as present."⁴⁴¹

In the way that the human cannot comprehend God, the intellect comprehends something when what it grasps "is perfectly known, and that which is perfectly known is known as far as it is knowable. Therefore, if that which is knowable through a scientific demonstration is held by an opinion received by a probable reason, then it is not comprehended."⁴⁴² As we have seen, God is infinitely knowable because he is pure act,

⁴³⁸ *Super 1 ad Tim.* 6 lect. 3 n. 269: ...quod dupliciter potest intellectus accedere ad cognitionem naturae alicuius, scilicet ut cognoscat et ut comprehendat (Thomas Aquinas, *S. Thomae Aquinatis doctoris angelici in omnes S. Pauli Apostoli Epistolas Commentaria*, edited by Raffaele Cai (Turin: Marietti, 1953)).

⁴³⁹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 4 a. 3 ad. 1: ...comprehensio nihil aliud nominat quam tentionem alicuius rei iam praesentialiter habitae. Cf. *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 7 ad. 1.

⁴⁴⁰ *ST* 1a2ae q. 4 a. 3 resp.

⁴⁴¹ *ST* 1a2ae q. 12 a. 7 ad. 1: ...et videndo, tenent sibi praesentem....

⁴⁴² *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 7 resp.: quod perfecte cognoscitur. Perfecte autem cognoscitur, quod tantum cognoscitur, quantum est cognoscibile. Unde si id quod est cognoscibile per scientiam demonstrativam, opinione teneatur ex aliqua ratione probabili concepta, non comprehenditur. Cf. *ScG* 3.55.2, 6; *Super 1 ad Tim.* 6 lect. 3.

and therefore one knows God as far as He is knowable only if one knows Him infinitely.

However, it is impossible for the created intellect to know God thus:

The created intellect knows the divine essence more or less perfectly insofar as it is more or less flooded with the light of glory. Therefore, since the created light of glory which is received into any created intellect is not able to be infinite, it is impossible that any created intellect could know God infinitely. Therefore, it is impossible for God to be comprehended.⁴⁴³

God, in contrast, comprehends His own essence, and since this is a more perfect understanding than only knowing His essence “[t]he beatitude of God who comprehends his own essence in understanding it is higher than the beatitude of a man or angel who see but do not comprehend.”⁴⁴⁴

3.5.4 The Gracious Preservation of Human Nature

Let us finish this chapter by considering a problem that the addition of the light of glory to the human intellect creates: how is human nature able to be preserved when it is elevated to what is beyond its nature in the vision of God’s essence? In chapter one, we saw that Aristotle’s doctrine of perfect human happiness encounters the same problem; namely, that when the human contemplates through the speculative intellect, human nature seems to lose its distinction from the divine nature. In contrast, Aquinas distinguishes the nature of the human who attains perfect happiness from the divine. We have already considered part of his solution; namely, that the human intellect participates

⁴⁴³ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 7 resp.: Intantum enim intellectus creatus divinam essentiam perfectius vel minus perfecte cognoscit, inquantum maiori vel minori lumine gloriae perfunditur. Cum igitur lumen gloriae creatum, in quocumque intellectu creato receptum, non possit esse infinitum, impossibile est quod aliquis intellectus creatus Deum infinite cognoscat. Unde impossibile est quod Deum comprehendat. Cf. *ScG* 3.55.2; *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 7.

⁴⁴⁴ *ST* 1a2ae q. 3 a. 8 ad. 2: Sic igitur altior est beatitudo Dei suam essentiam intellectu comprehendentis, quam hominis vel Angeli videntis, et non comprehendentis.

in the divine intellect. Before we look at the rest of his solution, let us consider how Aquinas describes the problem.

God graciously adds the light of glory to the human intellect's natural powers to make the human intellect capable of the divine vision. However, it seems that a faculty cannot be raised to an act beyond its nature. Aquinas writes,

corporeal sense cannot be raised up to understand incorporeal substance, which is above its nature. Therefore, if to see the essence of God is above the nature of every created intellect, it follows that no created intellect can reach up to see the essence of God at all.

Yet, humans do see the divine essence. Therefore, since the vision of the divine essence is above the natural powers of the human intellect, and since a faculty cannot be raised to an act beyond its nature, it seems that human intellect is changed into something that it is not so that it can see God's essence. Therefore, it appears that when the human reaches perfect happiness, he or she will cease to be human, and thus we are back to Aristotle's ambiguity.

Aquinas avoids Aristotle's ambiguity by adding the notion of grace to the way that humans naturally participate in the divine intellect.⁴⁴⁵ As we have seen, grace does not destroy nature but perfects it, and therefore the gracious addition of the light of glory to the human intellect does not destroy human nature but brings human nature to its perfection. Indeed, by this gracious elevation the integrity of human nature is preserved, for Aquinas explains this elevation by "connecting our final state to the form of knowing peculiar to us, that by abstraction."⁴⁴⁶

The sense of sight, since it is altogether material, in no way is able to be elevated to something immaterial. But, our intellect...since it is, to some extent, elevated above matter according to its nature, it is able to be elevated above its own nature

⁴⁴⁵ Hankey, *Placing the Human*, 23-24.

⁴⁴⁶ Hankey, "*Participatio divini luminis*," 29.

through grace to something higher....Therefore, since the created intellect through its own innate nature can apprehend concrete form and the concrete act of being in abstraction, by way of a certain resolution, is able through grace to be elevated so that it knows subsisting separate substance and subsisting separate being.⁴⁴⁷

Thus, human nature is maintained in the vision of God's essence, for since God graciously gives the light of glory to the human, this light adapts itself to the human's natural light, which participates in God's intellect, to perfect it rather than supplant it.⁴⁴⁸

⁴⁴⁷ *ST* 1 q. 12 a. 4 ad. 3: Ad tertium dicendum quod sensus visus, quia omnino materialis est, nullo modo elevari potest ad aliquid immateriale. Sed intellectus noster...quia secundum naturam a materia aliquantulum elevatus est, potest ultra suam naturam per gratiam ad aliquid altius elevari.... Et ideo, cum intellectus creatus per suam naturam natus sit apprehendere formam concretam et esse concretum in abstractione, per modum resolutionis cuiusdam, potest per gratiam elevari ut cognoscat substantiam separatam subsistentem, et esse separatam subsistens.

⁴⁴⁸ Hankey, "*Participatio divini luminis*," 29-30.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

The aim of this study has been to compare Aristotle's and Aquinas's doctrines of divine and human happiness. My thesis is that the doctrine of participation creates a difference between their theories. Let us now outline the results of this study.

In chapters two and three, I consider Aristotle's and Aquinas's theories both on their own and in comparison with each other. The question that drives my analysis of Aristotle's theory is "what determines the nature of human happiness?" Aristotle's *ergon* argument in *NE* 1.7 suggests that the essence of the human does, whereas his argument that human activity is happy insofar as it is like divine activity in *NE* 10.7-8 suggests that God's activity does. I argue that these two options can be reconciled through Aristotle's notion of *pros hen* homonymy: since the human is defined in relation to God, both the human definition and God's activity determine the nature of human happiness.

My analysis of Aquinas's account of happiness aims to show how Aquinas develops the content of the *ST* according to the neoplatonic *exitus-reditus* pattern to both teach that in which happiness consists and the means to achieve it. During this analysis, I distinguish four types of contemplative happiness according to how perfect their knowledge of God is: the continuous contemplation of God's essence *in patria* through the light of glory, the temporary contemplation of His essence *in via* in rapture, the contemplation of the articles of faith through the light of grace, and the contemplation of the negative and analogical knowledge of God through the light of natural reason.

The most conspicuous point on which Aristotle and Aquinas differ is that Aquinas categorizes Aristotle's perfect human happiness as imperfect human happiness. Aquinas, however, holds that Aristotle also thinks that the perfect happiness of which he speaks in

the *NE* is, in fact, imperfect. Yet, my analysis of the *DA* implies that Aquinas's interpretation is wrong. I argue that Aristotle does not maintain that the human soul is immortal; rather, the immortal intellect referred to in *DA* 3.5 is God. Aquinas, however, maintains that the soul is immortal and that this is also Aristotle's position in *DA* 3.5. I argue that since the human soul is perishable for Aristotle, he describes, in the *NE*, the highest happiness which man can achieve; otherwise, human nature would be in vain.

In addition to the problem of the immortality of the soul, I also consider Aquinas's solutions, in his commentaries on the *MP* 12.7 and *NE* 10.7-8, to two further problems which Aristotle's theory of happiness leaves for the later tradition: the content of God's contemplation and the divinity of the human. In each case, I argue that Aquinas attributes the doctrine of participation to Aristotle, a fact that requires explanation since Aristotle critiques participation. To explain this, I argue that Aquinas finds participation in Aristotle's concept of *pros hen* homonymy, which Aquinas calls analogy.

Finally, I argue that notwithstanding Aquinas's attribution of participation to Aristotle, the doctrine of participation creates two differences between Aristotle's and Aquinas's doctrines of happiness. First, the doctrine of participation allows Aquinas both to differentiate creatures from God and bring them back into His self-knowledge and to include all beatitudes in God's beatitude. In contrast, Aristotle neither teaches that God's beatitude includes all others nor that God knows creatures through a process of self-othering. Secondly, I argue that, on Aristotle's account, when humans reach perfect happiness through the activity of the divine intellect, they are not distinguished from God. Aquinas, in contrast, uses participation and grace to establish the human, who reaches perfect happiness, in relation to God.

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