

# The Finality of Religion in Aquinas' Theory of Human Acts

Francisco José Romero Carrasquillo  
*Marquette University*

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THE FINALITY OF RELIGION  
IN AQUINAS' THEORY  
OF HUMAN ACTS

by

Francisco J. Romero, B.A., M.A.

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## ABSTRACT

### THE FINALITY OF RELIGION IN AQUINAS' THEORY OF HUMAN ACTS

Francisco J. Romero, B.A., M.A.

Marquette University, 2009

The study examines the end or purpose of the acts of the virtue of religion within Thomas Aquinas' ethics of human action. What is the end of religious worship? Is it God, or is it the worshippers themselves? On the one hand, one would presume that God cannot be the end of religion because, from the perspective of Classical Theism (of which Aquinas is a main proponent), God cannot benefit from the activity of creatures. But on the other hand, if the worshipper is the end of religious acts, would not worship be a self-centered or an egotistic act? The standard Thomistic account of the problem, first laid out by Cajetan and later adopted by countless followers, is that God is the *finis cuius* ("the aim toward which") of the acts of the virtue of religion, whereas the religious worshipper is the *finis quo* (the beneficiary) of the acts. I argue that this solution, which is based on a single text of Aquinas (ST II-II.81.7c), is insufficient. After examining Aquinas' theory of action (the doctrine of object, end, and circumstances presented in ST I-II.18), I show how the object of a particular human act can be interpreted as the *finis operis* (the end of the agent's act). Utilizing this principle of the identity between the object and the *finis operis*, I argue that the *finis operis* of religion can be summed up as a threefold sequence of ends: the honor, reverence, and glory of God. As a result, the ultimate beneficiary of acts of religious worship is neither God nor the individual worshipper, but rather the totality of the universe, encapsulated by Aquinas in his notion of divine "glory," that is, the extrinsic manifestation of God's intrinsic goodness within the universe.

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## PREFACE

This dissertation consists in a study of the philosophical problem of the finality of religious worship in the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas: If God cannot benefit from our actions, of what use is religious worship? Although the question seems to be present in his mind, Aquinas never treats it *ex professo* in any single question or article of his writings. Nevertheless, a coherent answer can be gleaned from the different claims that he makes throughout his discussion on religious worship, especially when these are seen within the broader context of his moral philosophy. Thus, the aim of this study is to answer the question by assembling all of the relevant moral principles and by applying them to the texts that address the specific issue of the finality of religious worship.

As such, the study is not only textual, but also philosophical. Just as, according to the famous dictum, Aquinas' approach in his Aristotelian commentaries can be said to be an exposition of *Aristoteles ex Aristotele*, so in this study, my intent is to develop an exposition of *Thomas ex Thoma* on the issue of the finality of religious worship. That is to say, I concentrate primarily on the interpretation of Aquinas' texts. Nevertheless, the texts themselves are insufficient to answer the question. One needs to weave them together into a philosophically coherent whole in order to construct a successful solution to the problem. So, just as Aquinas in his Aristotelian commentaries proceeds philosophically *secundum intentionem Aristotelis*, as he puts it, I argue philosophically for a solution to the problem of the purpose of religion *secundum intentionem Thomae*, that is, according to the thought of Thomas as entailed by and consistent with an historically accurate interpretation of his text. Thus, it can be said that this study, rather



than being a mere textual study of Aquinas on religious worship, is a philosophical solution to the problem of the finality of religion *ad mentem sancti Thomae*.

The main source for Aquinas' doctrine on the finality of religious worship is his *Summa theologiae*. Among Aquinas' writings, the *Summa* provides the most complete and coherent account of both the human act in general and the religious act in particular. However, whenever possible, I cite other relevant texts from throughout Aquinas' *corpus*, especially when I elucidate some of the rather obscure but central concepts that Aquinas utilizes, such as that of *cultus* and *gloria*.

The emphasis in this study, again, is on the primary texts, so that from them I derive Aquinas' approach and solution, rather from discussions found in the secondary literature, or even in the renowned commentators of fifteenth and sixteenth century scholasticism. The scholarly literature on the issue of the finality of religion in Aquinas is not very ample (see Chapter 1, Part C, *Status Quaestionis*). To the extent that the seriousness of the difficulty on which I focus has been overlooked—and its seriousness has been much underestimated—the scholarly literature does not, indeed, cannot, offer much help. The solution to the problem consists, as I show, in an application of Aquinas' general moral principles concerning the moral determinants of the human act (particularly the doctrine of *ST I-II.18*, on the object and end of the human act) to the issue of religion in particular. Throughout the centuries of thomism, an enormous amount of material has been published on these general principles. It would be impossible for a study focused on the finality of religion to assess all of this material. However, when necessary, I cite the views of the better-known thomistic authors and commentators—particularly Cajetan, Bañez, the Salmanticenses, Garrigou-Lagrange, in addition to recent

Aquinas scholars—to help address issues that are not already clear from the words of St. Thomas. The general methodology, however, requires engaging in a sort of philosophical dialogue with Aquinas himself, interpreting his texts, applying his principles to the issue at hand, and drawing conclusions from the application.

## INTRODUCTION

“What is religious worship?” “Is it related to justice?” “If so, how?” Beginning with the *Euthyphro*, the debate on the general nature of religious worship has become one of the perennial problems in the history of western philosophy. Many great thinkers after Plato, notably, Cicero, Augustine, Albert the Great, Bonaventure and Aquinas, provide solutions to these and similar questions in their works. The notion of religious worship, whether it is expressed in terms of piety (*eusebeia*, *theosebeia*; *pietas*), religion (*thrêskeia*; *religio*), or worship of the divine (*latreia*, *therapeia*; *cultus*), is commonplace in ancient and medieval thought from Plato’s *Euthyphro* to Aquinas’ *Summa* and beyond.

Not as ubiquitous, however, are discussions on the *finality* of religious worship. Oddly, not many thinkers have asked questions such as: “What is the end of religious worship?” “Whom does it benefit?” “Is divine worship good for the sake of the deity or for the sake of the worshipper?” Apart from a few isolated instances in classical and medieval thought, the question of the purpose of the religious act is rarely raised amidst the ample debate on the *nature* of religious worship. Most of those isolated instances are passing (or otherwise indirect) remarks on the issue.<sup>1</sup> Aquinas himself is no exception: he

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Plato, *Euthyphro* 12e-15a, in *Platonis Opera*, ed. J. Burnet (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900-1907), vol. 1; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II-II.81.1, 5, 7, in *Opera Omnia: iussu impensaue, Leonis XIII. P.M. edita* (Rome, 1882-), vol. 9. Among those who do discuss the issue before Aquinas, such as Plato, Philo, and Maimonides, what one most often finds is the assertion, or at least the insinuation (as is the case in the *Euthyphro*), that the end of worship is not a god or God but the worshipper himself. That is to say, there is a consensus on the belief that a transcendent deity (whether the “Unmoved Mover,” “the One,” “the gods” of Ancient Greece, “Allah,” or “Yahweh”) cannot possibly be affected by human actions, and so the deity cannot be the beneficiary of human worship. However, very little to no effort is ever made to reconcile this claim with the common sense view that divine worship is, somehow, intended for God (or gods).

deals directly with the issue only in passing. Not a single question or article (or any other large unit of text) throughout his works expressly poses or attempts to solve the problem.

At the same time, Aquinas' doctrine on the finality of worship does stand out for several reasons. First, before the thirteenth century, we do not often find conceptual tools that are sufficiently developed so as to formulate a sophisticated solution to the problem. In general, the coherence and lucidity of Aquinas' thought allows him to tackle the issue (even if incidentally) in ways that many of his predecessors could not. His solid understanding of finality, his analysis of the object and end of the human act, as well as his extensive treatment of the virtues and their parts, all serve as doctrinal keys to the issue. In particular, his account of religion as an act and virtue arrives at a depth never before attained. As I explain in Chapter 1, his medieval predecessors had wrestled, rather unsuccessfully, to reconcile the pagan classification of *religio* under the virtue of justice, on the one hand, with the Christian doctrine of the intimate connection between religion and the theological virtues, on the other. But Aquinas, following the lead of Albert the Great, reached a synthesis of these two doctrines that allowed him to transcend even Albert in his examination of the nature of religion. The early medievals also struggled greatly to find a coherent terminology for worship and, particularly, to establish the distinction and relationship between such terms as *religio*, *cultus*, *honor*, and *gloria*. Aquinas defined, distinguished and explained each of these terms over the course of his writings, utilizing them to develop a doctrinal edifice that is consistent with both Christian and Aristotelian forms of thought. The solid architecture of Aquinas' philosophy, I argue, provides the foundation for a detailed, comprehensive, and novel

solution to our problem, one hitherto overlooked equally in contemporary thought and in Aquinas scholarship.

Second, unlike his predecessors and contemporaries, Aquinas does have a highly nuanced view on the finality of religion, even if he discusses it directly only in passing, a view woven into his numerous and ample discussions of the nature of religious worship in general, as well as of its different acts and related virtues in particular. In fact, as I show, in the totality of Thomas' references to the finality of religion, there emerges a complex and remarkably coherent doctrinal whole, which cries out for a systematic representation. The aim of this study is precisely to lay out this doctrinal whole as a solution to the philosophical conundra regarding religious worship.

To achieve this aim, the dissertation is divided into three parts. Part One, which comprises the first two chapters, lays out the philosophical problem of the finality of religious worship. In Chapter 1, I delineate the problem, present the Standard Thomistic Account as an insufficient solution, and introduce the current *status quaestionis* in the literature. In particular, I trace the dependence of present scholarship on a late scholastic reading, by Cajetan, that oversimplifies the mind of Aquinas. Chapter 2 addresses three potential objections to the project as a whole and lays out the doctrinal underpinnings of Aquinas' doctrine on religious worship.

Part Two, which comprises the third and fourth chapters, focuses on the general moral principles that are at stake in the issue. Chapter 3 addresses what Aquinas means in *ST* I-II.18 by "object" and "end" so as to explore whether this text can serve as the interpretive key for *ST* I-II.81.5. For, in the latter, Thomas says that *cultus* is the "object" of religion, and God is its "end." Chapter 4 examines the role that the object and,

especially, the end play in the finality of a human act, concluding that the end is the *ratio volendi* of the object, that is, the formality under which the object is willed.

The last part applies the general principles discussed in the Part Two to the problem of the finality of religious worship in order to reach a solution. In Chapter 5, I discuss the object of the virtue of religion, *cultus*, which, for Aquinas, may also be called the proximate end of religious worship. Chapter 6 lays out the two main theses of my study: (1) the virtue of religion has a threefold hierarchy of ends, which hierarchy, in ascending order, consists in God's honor, reverence, and glory; and (2) in the acts of religion, the end, namely, God, gives a formality to the object, *cultus*, such that, although what is perfected is a creature, this *cultus* is seen not only as done for God's sake, but also as transformed under a divine *ratio* or aspect. Finally, in Chapter 7, I discuss the effectiveness of Aquinas' solution by viewing it within the context of his doctrine on the finality of the entire cosmos. The finality of religious worship consists not merely in the perfection of the individual, but in the manifestation of God's goodness in the universe.

## ABBREVIATIONS

### I. Works of Aquinas

<i>CI</i>	<i>Contra impugnantes Dei cultum et religionem</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Contra doctrinam retrahentium a religione</i>
<i>DeSp</i>	<i>De spiritualibus creaturis</i>
<i>InDA</i>	<i>Sententia libri De anima</i>
<i>InDT</i>	<i>Super Boetium De trinitate</i>
<i>InEth</i>	<i>Sententia libri Ethicorum</i>
<i>InHeb</i>	<i>Super Epistolam beati Pauli ad Hebraeos lectura</i>
<i>InIo</i>	<i>Lectura super Ioannem</i>
<i>InMet</i>	<i>In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio</i>
<i>InPs</i>	<i>In Psalmos Davidis expositio</i>
<i>InRom</i>	<i>Super epistolam beati Pauli ad Romanos lectura</i>
<i>QDMalo</i>	<i>Quaestiones disputatae de malo</i>
<i>QDPot</i>	<i>Quaestiones disputatae de potentia</i>
<i>QDVer</i>	<i>Quaestiones disputatae de veritate</i>
<i>QDVirt</i>	<i>Quaestiones disputatae de virtutibus cardinalibus</i>
<i>Quodl</i>	<i>Quaestiones quodlibetales</i>
<i>SCG</i>	<i>Summa contra gentiles</i>
<i>Sent</i>	<i>Scriptum super libros Sententiarum</i>
<i>ST I</i>	<i>Summa theologiae, Prima pars</i>
<i>ST I-II</i>	<i>Prima secundae</i>
<i>ST II-II</i>	<i>Secunda secundae</i>
<i>ST III</i>	<i>Tertia pars</i>

### II. Other Works

<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i>
<i>InST</i>	<i>Cajetan, Commentaria in Summam theologicam</i>

**PART ONE:**

**THE PROBLEM OF THE FINALITY OF RELIGION**



## **THE PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM OF THE FINALITY OF RELIGION**

In this chapter, in order to place the project within its proper context, I first (A) establish the philosophical nature of our study by examining the historical and philosophical background to the concept of religious worship, focusing on the major figures that influenced Aquinas, namely, Plato, Cicero, Augustine, and some of St. Thomas' scholastic predecessors, examining how they, in various ways, helped shape his purely philosophical account of worship. Second (B), I discuss the philosophical problem of the finality of worship in itself, establishing the dilemma it raises, examining the presuppositions of the problem and some potential solutions. Third (C), I lay out the present status of the problem in recent philosophical literature. Finally (D), I close the chapter by proposing the theses that I shall defend over the course of the study.

### **A. AQUINAS ON RELIGION: A PHILOSOPHICAL OR THEOLOGICAL DOCTRINE?**

#### **1. The Question**

*Prima facie* it may seem that the topic of religious worship, or “the virtue of religion,”<sup>1</sup> as Aquinas calls it, belongs properly to the realm of revealed theology. One

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<sup>1</sup> As we shall see in a later chapter, Aquinas uses the term *cultus* to refer to the *object* of the virtue of religion. This term is usually translated into English as “worship;” for example, in the Translation of the Fathers of the English Dominican Province, in *ST* II-II.81.5c: “religion pays due worship (*cultus*) to God.” However, in this study, particularly in Part Three, I shall focus on the technical meaning of *cultus*, a meaning that is much broader than that conveyed by the English term “worship.” Thus, I shall leave the term *cultus* untranslated, as much as possible and shall employ the English term

may be inclined to think that since Aquinas is such a towering theological figure, his doctrine on worship will be profuse with Christian theological presuppositions. The impression that this is the case might be further reinforced by the fact that his discussions on the subject appear only within the context of his theological works and are expressed in a somewhat theological language.<sup>2</sup>

Although it may be true that the topics treated in the *Summa theologiae* are all theological simply because they are being dealt with theologically, under the lens of revelation, nevertheless this fact does not entail that in themselves they are *exclusively* theological topics. One and the same material object (that is, subject matter) can be studied by many sciences:

A diverse aspect (*ratio*) in a knowable thing produces a diversity of sciences. For the astronomer and the physicist demonstrate the same conclusion: that the earth, for instance, is round: but the astronomer through a mathematical means (that is, one abstracted from matter), and the physicist through a means that concerns matter. Hence, nothing prevents that those things that the philosophical disciplines deal with, insofar as they can be known by the light of natural reason, be dealt with by another science insofar as they can be known by the light of Divine Revelation. Hence, that theology that pertains to Sacred Doctrine differs in

---

“worship” as roughly equivalent to “religion.” By “worship,” that is to say, I do mean what Aquinas calls *cultus*, but only what we ordinarily mean in English by this term, a meaning that vaguely encompasses the whole series of acts whereby man renders to God what is his due.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, ed. P. Mandonnet and M. Moos (Paris: Lethielleux, 1929-1947), 3, dist. 9; *Contra impugnantes Dei cultum et religionem*, passim, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 41A; *Contra doctrinam retrahentium a religione*, passim, in *Opera Omnia*, vol. 41 C; *Super Boetium De trinitate* 3.2c, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 50; *Liber de veritate catholicae fidei contra errores infidelium, seu Summa contra gentiles*, ed. C. Pera et al. (Turin-Rome, 1961), 3.119-120; *ST I-II.101-103*; and *ST II-II.81-90*.

kind from that theology [that is, natural theology] which is considered a part of philosophy.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, theology and philosophy may deal with the same material object (God) but considered from different points of view, constituting different formal objects (God *qua primum ens* versus God *qua* revealed by himself supernaturally). The same dual consideration can be found in Aquinas' doctrine on worship. Thomas deals with this topic theologically in his *De religione* (*ST* II-II.81-100, traditionally known as the "Treatise on Religion"), asking whether it is related to the theological virtues, and, if so, how. As these theological questions of the *Summa* clearly indicate, however, religion, *considered in itself*, is a thoroughly philosophical notion, not a notion proper to or known only by revelation. The virtue of religion is, for Aquinas, a potential part of the cardinal (natural) virtue of justice.<sup>4</sup> The interplay between the philosophical nature of his doctrine on religion and its obvious theological connections becomes especially evident if placed in

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<sup>3</sup> *ST* I.1.1 ad 2: "Diversa ratio cognoscibilis diversitatem scientiarum inducit. Eadem enim conclusionem demonstrant astrologus et naturalis, puta quod terra est rotunda: sed astrologus, per medium mathematicum, id est, a materia abstractum; naturalis autem, per medium circa materiam consideratum. Unde nihil prohibet de eisdem de quibus philosophicae disciplinae tractant secundum quod sunt cognoscibilia lumine naturalis rationis, etiam aliam scientiam tractare secundum quod cognoscuntur lumine divinae revelationis. Unde theologia quae ad sacram doctrinam pertinet, differt, secundum genus, ab illa theologia quae pars philosophiae ponitur." All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>4</sup> In a secondary sense, Aquinas employs the term *religio* (as do many other medieval authors) to refer to a religious movement or order, for example, the Mendicant Orders; see *ST* II-II.186-189, *passim*; see also *CI* and *CR*, *passim*. Cf. *ST* II-II.81.1 ad 5: "[Q]uamvis religiosi dici possint communiter omnes qui Deum colunt, specialiter tamen religiosi dicuntur qui totam vitam suam divino cultui dedicant, a mundanis negotiis se abstrahentes. Sicut etiam contemplativi dicuntur non qui contemplantur, sed qui contemplationi totam vitam suam deputant. Huiusmodi autem non se subiiciunt homini propter hominem sed propter Deum, secundum illud apostoli, Gal. IV, *sicut Angelum Dei excepistis me, sicut Christum Iesum.*"

its historical context, as a synthesis between ancient (pagan) philosophy and the Augustinian theological tradition.

## 2. The History of the Philosophical Notion of Religion

As mentioned above, almost every major figure in ancient and medieval thought has something to say on the nature of religion. Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Philo, St. Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius, Avicenna, Maimonides, Peter Lombard, William of Auxerre, the *Summa Fratris Alexandri*, St. Bonaventure, St. Albert the Great, Aquinas, Kilwardby, Scotus, Ockham, Suarez, and Cajetan, among many others, all discuss the subject to some extent, even if, as is to be expected, with different emphases and approaches. The prevailing debate bequeathed by Plato to his heirs in ancient philosophy, notably Cicero, centered on the question of the *nature* of religion: “What is the definition of religion?” “Is it a virtue?” “Is it a “part” of justice?” “If so, what part of justice is it?” In the early Middle Ages, with the advent of Augustinianism, the debate steered toward the issue of what *true* worship consists in: “Does it consist in a moral virtue, such as justice, or in a theological virtue, such as charity?” Finally, in the high middle ages, when practically every university *magister* had to deal with the issue in his mandatory commentary on Peter Lombard’s *Sentences*, further subtle questions entered the debate, including: “How is religion related to other virtues?” “Is it higher than the other virtues?” “Does it have exterior actions, or is it primarily an interior act?” “What actions comprise worship (e.g., prayer, adoration, sacrifice), and how are they different from each other?”

In all of the different historical instances of the debate, the common denominator seems to be the issue of whether religious worship can be properly defined as a part of

justice. Whereas the Augustinian tradition decidedly opts for the negative, Aquinas answers in the affirmative. This decision, which must be examined in its historical context, determines his entire view on the finality of worship and has substantial bearing on the question whether he considers worship essentially a philosophical or theological topic.

### a. Plato

Plato's *Euthyphro* represents the first instance in the history of philosophy where worship is discussed as a thoroughly philosophical issue. It is also the first philosophical text to relate religion to justice. The dialogue hinges on the nature of "piety" (*eusebeia*) or "the holy" (*to hosion*). After a few unsuccessful attempts at defining piety, Euthyphro, with Socrates' help, formulates the hypothesis that piety can be defined as "the part of the just that is concerned with the 'service' (*therapeia*) of the gods."<sup>5</sup> Although Socrates will question how it is possible for mere mortal men to give "service" to the gods—for the gods are assumed to be self-sufficient—nevertheless, the claim that piety is a part or species of justice will remain unchallenged throughout the dialogue.<sup>6</sup> The dialogue, therefore, approaches a definition of piety: it strongly suggests that the *genus* of piety is justice and, in the second place, that its *specific difference* has to do with the "service" of the gods. This possibility is tested by Socrates and his interlocutors, even if the dialogue contains no resolution of the dilemmas it raises.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Plato, *Euthyphro* 11e-12e.

<sup>6</sup> For a summary argument of the "constructivist" view on Socratic piety, see McPherran, *The Religion of Socrates* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 1996), 48-51.

## b. Cicero

Although the text of the *Euthyphro* was not available to Aquinas, it nevertheless exercised a great deal of indirect influence on him by way of Cicero. Cicero, probably influenced by Plato on this issue through the Academy, also places *religio* under the virtue of justice. The discussion in Cicero, however, reaches a much higher level of sophistication than that of the *Euthyphro*, making precise definitions and divisions. In his early *De inventione rhetorica*, Cicero discusses the notions of the “honest good” (*honestum*) and the “useful good” (*utile*).<sup>7</sup> He defines the *honestum* as, “that which either in its entirety or in some part is sought for its own sake.”<sup>8</sup> This definition implies a twofold division of the *honestum*, namely, 1) that which is *entirely* sought for its own sake, and 2) that which is *in some part* sought for its own sake. While the second of these remains unnamed, Cicero asserts that the first kind of *honestum* is called “virtue” (*virtus*). Cicero then defines the latter as “a habit of the mind fitting to the mode of nature and to reason,”<sup>9</sup> and divides it into the four cardinal virtues—prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

Subsequently Cicero gives to each of these cardinal virtues a definition and divides it into its “parts” or species, which are, in turn, themselves given a definition. Justice (*iustitia*) is a “habit of the mind that gives to each his worth while preserving

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<sup>7</sup> Cicero, *De inventione rhetorica* 2.52, in *Opera omnia quae exstant critico apparatu instructa* (Milan: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1990): Nam, in primo genere quae sunt, honesta appellabuntur; quae autem in secundo, utilia.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 2.53: Quod aut totum aut aliqua ex parte propter se petitur, honestum nominabimus.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*: Virtus est animi habitus, naturae modo, rationi consentaneus.

public utility.”<sup>10</sup> Cicero tells us of its natural development: “it [justice] derives its beginning from nature; then certain things became custom by reason of their utility; finally, religion and the fear of the laws sanctioned things derived from nature and approved by custom.”<sup>11</sup>

- A. The Honest Good (*honestum*)
1. Virtue (*virtus*)
    - a. Prudence.
    - b. Justice (*iustitia*).
      - 1) Natural right (*naturae ius*).
        - a) Religion (*religio*)
        - b) Piety (*pietas*)
        - c) Forgiveness (*gratia*)
        - d) Vindication (*vindicta*), etc.
      - 2) Right by custom (*consuetudine ius*).
      - 3) Legal right (*ius legale*).
    - c. Fortitude (*fortitudo*).
    - d. Temperance (*temperatia*).
  2. That Which is Sought *Partially* for its Own Sake (unnamed).
- B. The Useful Good (*utile*).

**Figure 1: The Virtue of Religion: Broader Context in Cicero**

Given this claim, Cicero proceeds to divide justice, now under the title of *ius* (“the right” or “the just”), into 1) the natural right (*naturae ius*), 2) the right by custom (*consuetudine ius*), 3) the legal right (*ius legale*). The first of these three he defines as

<sup>10</sup> Cicero, *De inventione rhetorica* 2.53: *Justitia est habitus animi, communi utilitate conservata, suam cuique tribuens dignitatem.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*: *Eius initium est ab natura profectum; deinde quaedam in consuetudinem ex utilitatis ratione venerunt: postea res et ab natura profectas et ab consuetudine probatas legum metus et religio sanxit.*

“what opinion does not produce, but which a certain power in nature has implanted.”<sup>12</sup> Cicero gives instances of the natural right: “religion, piety, forgiveness, vindication, respect, truthfulness.”<sup>13</sup> He then proceeds to define each of these, and it is within this context that he gives his classical definition of religion (*religio*): “religion is that which offers care and reverence to a certain superior nature, which they call divine.”<sup>14</sup> This definition was to become authoritative in the middle ages.

### c. St. Augustine

St. Augustine decidedly steered away from these thoroughly pagan accounts of religion. In his *De civitate Dei*, one of his concerns is to establish a rigorous terminology of worship that avoids equivocation between pagan, polytheistic (that is, sacrilegious) worship and the worship of the one, true, Christian God.<sup>15</sup> To this end, he first establishes

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<sup>12</sup> Cicero, *De inventione rhetorica* 2.53: Naturae ius est, quod non opinio genuit, sed quaedam in natura vis inest, ut religionem, pietatem, gratiam, vindicationem, observantiam, veritatem.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*: [R]eligionem, pietatem, gratiam, vindicationem, observantiam, veritatem.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*: Religio est quae superioris cuiusdam naturae, quam divinam vocant, curam caeremoniamque affert. As we will see, Aquinas accepts this definition as authoritative; cf. *ST* II-II.81.1 s. c., quoted below in note 31.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *De Civitate Dei* 6, preface, in Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina* (Paris: J.P. Migne, 1845), vol. 41, col. 173: “Quinque superioribus libris satis mihi adversus eos videor disputasse, qui multos deos et falsos, quos esse inutilia simulacra, vel immundos spiritus et perniciose daemones, vel certe creaturas, non Creatorem, veritas christiana convincit, propter vitae hujus mortalis rerumque terrenarum utilitatem, eo ritu ac servitute, quae graece latreia dicitur, et uni vero Deo debetur, venerandos et colendos putant.” Cf. also, André Mandouze, “Saint Augustin et la Religion Romaine,” *Recherches Augustinennes* 1 (1958), 187-223; and Nicolas De Ponton D’Amecourt, *The Moral Goodness of Worship* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America, 1988-1989), 22-33. Henceforth, I will cite the texts of the *Patrologia Latina* (PL) by giving the volume and column numbers. A critical edition of Augustine’s *De civitate Dei* can be found in *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina* (Turnholt: Brepols, 1955), vols. 47-48. For a discussion on Augustine’s approach to



the principle that “the gods of the Gentiles are devils: but the Lord made the heavens,”<sup>16</sup> that is, that “the many false gods . . . the Christian truth shows to be useless images, or unclean spirits and pernicious demons, or certainly creatures, not the Creator.”<sup>17</sup> The radical separation between these two objects of religious worship will, for him, imply a radical separation between *kinds* of religious worship. He insists that, in order to avoid confusion, this special type of worship due to the one, true God is to be named in a non-equivocal way. Now, since he can find no Latin term fit for this reality,<sup>18</sup> he decides to have recourse to the Greek language:

For this is the worship which is due to the Divinity, or, to speak more accurately, to the Deity; and, to express this worship in a single word as there does not occur to me any Latin term sufficiently exact, I shall avail myself, whenever necessary, of a Greek word.<sup>19</sup>

In the Greek of the Septuagint, he finds three terms to be adequate: *latreia*, *threskeia*, and *theosebeia*. He, thus, tells us that, “[i]n some passages of Scripture, [the sacred writers] have preferred, so that the distinction appear more decidedly, to say, not *eusebeia*, which is literally a composite out of “good worship,” but *theosebeia*, which is literally a

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pagan virtues, and the reception of his thought in the middle ages, especially by Aquinas, cf. Jennifer A. Herdt, *Putting On Virtue: The Legacy of the Splendid Vices* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Thomas M. Osborne, Jr., “The Augustinianism of Thomas Aquinas’ Moral Theory,” *The Thomist* 67 (2003), 279-305; Angela McKay, “Prudence and Acquired Moral Virtue,” *The Thomist* 69 (2005), 535-555.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Psalms* 95:5: Quoniam omnes dii gentium daemonia at vero Dominus caelos fecit.

<sup>17</sup> *De civitate Dei* 6, preface (PL 41, 173), quoted in note 15.

<sup>18</sup> He believes the Latin terms *cultus*, *pietas*, *religio*, and *servitus* are ambiguous terms and could refer, at least in some contexts, to something other than the worship due to God alone; cf. *De civitate Dei* 10.1 (PL 41, 277-279).

<sup>19</sup> *De civitate Dei* 6, preface (PL 41, 173), quoted in note 15.

composite out of ‘the worship of God’,<sup>20</sup> and that, accordingly, the false gods are not “to be worshipped . . . with that rite and service which the Greeks call *latreia*, and which is due to the one true God.”<sup>21</sup>

Thus, Augustine establishes the *terminology* used to denote the worship of the one, true God in the *De civitate Dei*. Now, in his *Enchiridion* he goes further to specify the *nature* of this worship. There, while commenting on a passage from the book of *Job*, he states that the term *pietas* of the Latin text of that passage is equivalent to the Greek term *theosebeia*, which denotes the worship due to God alone. He then identifies the nature of this *theosebeia* as consisting in the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity: “[P]erhaps you are anxious . . . that I should gather together in a short discourse the proper mode of worshipping God? . . . God is to be worshipped with faith, hope, and love.”<sup>22</sup> The rest of the book will be dedicated to “gathering together” the object of these three virtues, presupposing throughout that divine worship consists in them. This notion that true worship consists in the theological virtues was to become in the middle ages the rival of the Platonic and Ciceronian notions of religion as part of justice.

#### **d. Early Scholasticism**

As a consequence of Augustine’s account, antithetical to the classical one, in the early medieval period there arose a tension between the purely pagan philosophical

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<sup>20</sup> *De civitate Dei* 10.1 (PL 41, 279): Unde in quibusdam Scripturarum locis, ut distinctio certior appareret, non eusebeian, quod ex bono cultu, sed theosebeian, quod ex Dei cultu compositum resonat, dicere maluerunt.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* 6, preface (PL 41, 173), quoted in note 15.

<sup>22</sup> *Enchiridion ad Laurentium de fide et spe et caritate* 3 (PL 40, 232): An . . . fortasse desideras . . . in sermonem colligi brevem, quonam modo sit colendus Deus? . . . respondero, fide, spe, caritate colendum Deum.

understanding of religion as a species of the cardinal virtue of justice, on the one hand, and the theological Augustinian understanding of worship as consisting in the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, on the other hand. The early Scholastics took this tension seriously and sought naturally to find a synthesis between the two models. As is well documented by Odon Lottin, the early scholastics were unafraid of simultaneously accepting the definition given by Cicero and assigning to this virtue some of the acts proper to the theological virtues: Peter Lombard, Simon of Tournai, and Alan of Lille all claimed that *latria* included the love of God (that is, the theological virtue of charity), among other things; William of Auxerre included the theological virtues of faith and charity as “parts” or species of *latria*; Philip the Chancellor, John of la Rochelle, the *Summa Fratris Alexandri*, Odon Rigaud, and St. Bonaventure all listed, among other virtues, the three theological virtues as parts of *latria*.<sup>23</sup>

Particularly interesting, for opposite reasons, are the solutions offered by William of Auxerre and St. Bonaventure. On the one hand, William of Auxerre distinguished between *latria* and *religio*, setting against each other (perhaps more explicitly than anyone else) the Ciceronian and Augustinian models of worship. He argues that,

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Psychologie et Morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles* (Louvain: Abbaye du Mont César; Gembloux, Belgium: J. Duculot, 1949), 322. There Lottin also states: “Ce qui frappe l’historien de cette période préthomiste, c’est l’ampleur du champ d’action attribué à la vertu de religion . . . . Et quand le théologien veut détailler la matière de la religion, il ne craint pas d’y introduire les actes des trois vertus théologiques, comme si ces actes étaient, non seulement commandés par la vertu de religion, mais constituaient eux-mêmes l’objet de cette vertu. Et cette tendance est commune à tous les théologiens, de toute école . . . . Pourquoi dès lors ne pas conclure que la vertu de religion est, elle-même, une vertu théologique? . . . . [A]ux yeux des théologiens du moyen âge, le nombre ternaire des vertus théologiques était trop sacré pour être violé.”

*Latria* according to the Catholic includes more than *religio* according to the philosophers, for philosophers do not attain faith or the gift of wisdom; hence, religion according to them includes only the reverence that we owe to God, and sacrifice and prayer.<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, there is St. Bonaventure's synthesis, which represents the climax of the opposing trend of fusing together *latria* and the cardinal virtues. He found in Peter Lombard's distinction between *cultus* and *servitus* a strategy for fitting the theological virtues within the general virtue of *latria*. He cites Augustine as saying that the Greek term *latria* signifies service (*servitus*), but *theosebeia* and *eusebeia* signify divine worship (*cultus divinus*). Then he notes that, on the one hand, *servitus* pertains to external activity and thus is within the genus of the cardinal virtues, and specifically to justice; but, on the other hand, *cultus* pertains more properly to interior worship, and thus to the theological virtues.<sup>25</sup> In this way, he believes he has resolved an apparent contradiction between Augustinian and Ciceronian authorities.

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<sup>24</sup> *Summa aurea in quattuor libros Sententiarum* (Paris: Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique; Rome: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1980-), Lib. III, Trac. XXVI, Cap. 1, ad. 3: *Latria secundum catholicum plus comprehendit quam religio secundum philosophos, quoniam philosophi non attingunt fidem vel sapientiam donum, unde religio secundum ipsos non comprehendit nisi reverenciam, quam debemus Deo, et sacrificium et orationem . . . .*

<sup>25</sup> Cf. III *Sent* d. 9, q. 2, a. 3, c: [N]otandum, quod licet *latria* notificetur per cultum, sive per *servitum*, ut dicatur *latria* esse *servitus*, sive *cultus* Deo debitus, et ista duo quasi pro eodem accipiuntur, differunt tamen secundum propriam acceptionem. *Cultus* enim Dei respicit actum interiorem et exteriorem, et magis interiorem, quam exteriorem; *servitus* autem proprie respicit actum exteriorem. Et ideo, cum *latria* de ratione sui vocabuli idem sit quod *servitus*, secundum quod exponit Augustinus in libro De trinitate, *latria* proprie respicit actum exteriorem; *theosebia* vero, vel *eusebia*, idem est, quod *cultus divinus*, sive *bonus cultus*: et ideo proprie respicit actum exteriorem . . . . Differunt autem *latria*, et *theosebia*, secundum propriam acceptionem, licet aliquando accipiantur pro eodem, quia *theosebia* dicit *cultum* interiorem, qui proprie spectat ad virtutes theologicas; sed *latria* *servitum* exteriorem, quae spectat ad *justitiam*, scilicet *virtutem cardinalem* . . . .

The effort that the early schoolmen had invested, on the one hand, in distinguishing between the Augustinian *latria* and the pagan *religio*, and, on the other hand, in associating *latria* with the theological virtues, would ultimately be fruitless within the Dominican Tradition, which would lean one-sidedly towards the pagan, Ciceronian model. St. Albert the Great sets the record straight by siding very firmly with Cicero. Speaking of *latria*, he says: “It must be said with Tully, that it is a part of justice, and it falls in the part of justice which religion is.”<sup>26</sup> Albert thus places the virtue of religion firmly under the cardinal virtue of justice. He thereby departs from the standard interpretation of the theological, Augustinian model, and embraces wholeheartedly the pagan, philosophical model, locating the discussion of that virtue fully within the realm of philosophical discourse. He thus immediately set the stage for his disciple from Roccasecca.

### 3. Religious Worship in Aquinas: The Context

Following the lead of his master Albert, Aquinas listed the virtue of religion among the virtues “annexed” to justice. This is best understood if seen within the context of Aquinas’ entire doctrine on habits:<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> III *Sent* d. 9, q. 3, sol.: “Dicendum cum Tullio, quod est pars justitiae, et cadit in partem justitiae quae est religio.” De Ponton very succinctly highlights how these words, full of power, struck the edifice of the synthesis that earlier medieval thinkers had labored to erect: “Saint Albert, in one line, undoes all this work;” De Ponton, *The Moral Goodness of Worship*, 38.

<sup>27</sup> The following outline is a doctrinal reconstruction based on the *Secunda Pars* (both *Prima secundae* and *Secunda secundae*). As is clear from the texts listed to the right of the outline, Aquinas himself does not discuss the virtues exactly in the order given. That is to say, he does not place the discussion of the specific virtues, particularly the cardinal virtues and their annexed virtues, physically within the context of the

A. Virtues in General	I-II.55-67.
1. Human virtues (cardinal virtues and their parts)	I-II.58-61.
a. Prudence	II-II.47-56.
b. Justice	II-II.57-122.
1) In itself and its species.	II-II.57-69.
2) Its annexed virtues: viz., gratitude, <b>religion</b> , etc.	II-II.80-120.
c. Fortitude	II-II.123-40.
d. Temperance	II-II.141-69.
2. Theological virtues	II-II.1-47.
B. Vices	II-II.71-89.

**Figure 2: The Virtue of Religion: Broader Context in Aquinas**

For Aquinas, a virtue is a good habit; a vice, a bad one.<sup>28</sup> Virtues are divided into human virtues and theological virtues. The former, on the one hand, a) are proportionate to the capacity of human nature, b) aid humans to attain a purely natural perfection, c) do not presuppose divine grace or any supernatural sort of aid, and d) are completely within the realm of philosophical discourse. The latter, on the other hand, a) excel the capacities of human nature, b) aid humans to attain a supernatural perfection, c) presuppose divine grace, and d) are outside of the realm of philosophical discourse.<sup>29</sup>

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discussion on virtue in general. Rather, he places the discussion on habits in general in the I-II, which is essentially the *Summa's* section on the general principles of morality, and leaves the discussion on the specific virtues to the *Secunda secundae*. Nevertheless, the outline is accurate insofar as it represents the general context (in the *Prima secundae*) that Aquinas has in mind when discussing religion in the *Secunda secundae*.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *ST* I-II.54.3c.

<sup>29</sup> For the distinction between human (natural) and theological (supernatural) virtues, see *ST* I-II.58.3; 62.1, 2.

The human virtues are chiefly the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance, to which are related other subordinate virtues, as, for example, docility is related to prudence, sobriety to temperance, and religion to justice.<sup>30</sup> Within this context, then, Aquinas appeals to the pagan understanding of Cicero as the definitive authority on religion in the text of the opening article on that virtue:

On the contrary, there is what Cicero says in the second [book] of *De Rhetorica Inventione*, that religion is that which offers care (*curam*) and reverence to a superior nature, which they call divine.<sup>31</sup>

This doctrine of religion as a part of justice or, more specifically, as the virtue “annexed” to the cardinal virtue of justice that is concerned with naturally giving to the deity its due *cultus* or worship, will be Aquinas’ guiding principle throughout his discussion. He will remain loyal to Cicero, his real authority on this matter, and he will emphasize Cicero’s thoroughgoing “natural,” account over every other authority’s stance. If he cites Augustine’s remarks on the relationship between worship and the theological virtues, it is only to re-interpret Augustine (as he frequently does regarding other doctrines) in a way that is consistent with the non-Christian, classical model.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. *ST* I-II.61.1-3.

<sup>31</sup> *ST* II-II.81.1 s. c.: Sed contra est quod Tullius dicit, II Rhetoricae, quod religio est quae superioris naturae, quam divinam vocant, curam caeremoniamque affert.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.81.5 ad 1, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5. The claim that, for Aquinas, religion is a “natural” virtue means that it is a virtue that can be practiced *in the present order of salvation*, even in the absence of sanctifying grace, and even by non-believers. Hence, it is no surprise that he takes pagans such as Aristotle and Cicero as his authorities on the doctrine on the human virtues. These men not only knew about natural, human virtues, such as honesty and temperance, but also practiced them. Aquinas, however, points out that in the present order of salvation, without the help of sanctifying grace, man can do good only sometimes, and not always. Cf. *ST* I-II.109.2-4,

#### 4. Conclusion

The foregoing discussion serves to highlight the purely philosophical and secular character of Aquinas' understanding of *religio*. He and Albert were both conscious of their decisive departure from the standard interpretation, the Augustinian model, and of their embracing of the classical (pagan) tradition's understanding of worship. Underlying this fundamental approach is the notion that *religio* is a human or natural virtue—as opposed to a theological or supernatural virtue—and hence belongs, in itself, entirely within the realm of philosophical discourse.

This fact is also fundamental for the present study. For Aquinas, not only the *existence* of a deity, but also the *worship* that humans owe to it, are open to rational discussion, independent of “faith-claims,” and in that sense “non-theological.” Accordingly, Aquinas can categorize worship among natural human acts and analyze it in terms of general philosophical (that is, psychological and ethical) principles. Just as any ordinary human act has an object, an end, circumstances, etc., so religion, an action, must possess an object, an end, circumstances, etc. The approach of this study is to extract from Aquinas' various, apparently unsystematic remarks regarding the object and end of the virtue of religion a full-fledged theory on the finality of religious acts, by applying the general principles of human acts to his doctrine on the nature of religion.

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8-9. Thus, these virtues are not only possible in a merely theoretical “state of pure nature” before the fall of man, when man had neither a fallen nature nor the influence of sanctifying grace. Aquinas does not accept that such a state of pure nature was ever a historical reality, although he does argue that it is a pure possibility. Cf. II *Sent* d. 31, q. 1, a. 2 ad 3.



Thus, having established the philosophical nature of the virtue of religion in general and of this study, I now proceed to introduce the specific philosophical problem of the finality of worship in Aquinas.

## **B. THE PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM OF THE FINALITY OF WORSHIP**

### **1. The Dilemma**

Given our approach, following Aquinas, to religion as a natural virtue, it is possible to pursue a philosophical inquiry into the finality of such a virtue. That is precisely what this study endeavors to accomplish; namely, to answer the question, “What is the natural end of religion?” Now, this question, which of itself seems unproblematic, at once becomes thorny when we consider the most obvious alternatives. Is worship intended to please the deity? Alternatively, is it merely supposed to perfect the worshipper herself or himself? If, on the one hand, we imagine that the end of worship is to give something to God, for example, to repay him for his gifts, to please him, and the like, we will be directly at odds with God’s immutability, his supreme perfection and his metaphysical inability to benefit from anything outside himself. If, on the other hand, we resort to the other obvious hypothesis, that we worship God for *our* own sake, then we run into the counterintuitive view that worship is not theocentric but egocentric (or at least anthropocentric). We could even ask, Does there need to be an answer at all to the question, “What is the end of worship?” or could it be that worship is simply purposeless, pointless, as we might today put it, for example, a now irrelevant result of the instinct for survival in the human evolutionary process? The fact that Aquinas does not spell out a

full-fledged doctrine on the end of religion in unambiguous terms is troublesome. Since the sixteenth century, even the most loyal Thomistic thinkers and commentators have answered the question in slightly different ways, so it is apparently not obvious how Aquinas would have addressed the issue. Examination of both the philosophical problem in itself and the historical attempts to solve it shed further light on the problem.

In this section (B), I consider the philosophical problem in itself from the point of view of Aquinas' principles. I argue first that, given Aquinas' philosophical principles, worship *must* have an end, for every human act has an end. I then argue that neither the proposed hypotheses (God-as-the-end-of-worship and worshipper-as-the-end-of-worship), nor refined variations of these, represent viable answers to the question.

Next, in section C, I summarize the attempts that have been made in the last five hundred years to deal with the philosophical issue. I show how these views are, at best, incomplete and, at worst, simplistic and fundamentally misguided. Rather, a more sophisticated and nuanced answer is needed. This answer will confirm the rationale for this study on the question of the end of worship. Finally, in section D, I will propose the main theses of this answer.

## **2. Why Religion Must Have an End**

Must we seek an end for religious worship? Could we say that worship is simply pointless; that there is no such thing as an objective end in worship, but simply that the worshipper is performing a human act that truly has no purpose or end, even if he or she is under the (false) impression that he is accomplishing something or that he is attaining

an end? Perhaps Aquinas omitted giving an answer to this question simply because he did not think a question that has no answer had to be asked.

Such dismissal of the question would be incompatible with some of Aquinas' most fundamental principles. According to Aristotelian philosophy of nature, every agent seeks an end. The nature of a thing has a determined set of potencies whose actualization consists in specific acts; the nature specifies the range of activity of the thing. The activities of the being, then, constitute a sort of end that the being tends to by virtue of its nature. Hence, Aquinas says that a thing does what it does in virtue of what it is. As the later Scholastic axiom expresses it, "acting follows being" (*agere sequitur esse*). If the being did not tend to these specific acts as to an end, it would not act this way rather than another; it would be undetermined and simply would not act.

If an agent did not tend to some determinate effect, all effects would be indifferent to it. Now, what is related indifferently to many things does not effect one of those things more so than another thing: hence, an effect does not follow from something that is contingent to either [of two alternatives]—unless it is determined to one [of them]. So it would be impossible for it to act. Therefore, every agent tends to some determinate effect, which is called its end.<sup>33</sup>

Accordingly, an animal has vegetative and sensitive potencies, and thus its actualization consists in vegetative and sensitive acts; these acts are the ends that the animal seeks.

More specifically, a feline has the specific potencies of a feline, and therefore, it will seek the ends that are proper to its feline nature; it tends to do feline-like actions.

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<sup>33</sup> *SCG* III.2.8: Si agens non tenderet ad aliquem effectum determinatum, omnes effectus essent ei indifferentes. Quod autem indifferenter se habet ad multa, non magis unum eorum operatur quam aliud: unde a contingente ad utrumque non sequitur aliquis effectus nisi per aliquid determinetur ad unum. Impossibile igitur esset quod ageret. Omne igitur agens tendit ad aliquem determinatum effectum, quod dicitur finis eius.

Now, these ends that a being seeks by virtue of its nature perfect the nature of that being, for they are nothing other than the actualization of the being's potencies. Now, the perfection of a thing is its good; what is "desirable" in principle for that thing. Any thing is good insofar as it is actually what its nature inclines it to be. "Good" here is nothing other than the actualization of the potencies of a being; it is the fullness of being of a thing. As Aquinas phrases it, "being and good are interchangeable" (*ens et bonum convertuntur*).<sup>34</sup> Thus, Aquinas argues that: "[T]he end of each thing is its perfection. Now, the perfection of any thing is its good. Therefore, each thing is ordered to the good as to an end."<sup>35</sup>

Now, human acts, which are characterized by their voluntary nature, are *a fortiori* said to seek an end and a good. For, each being seeks its good in the way that is fitting to that thing. Each has appetites consequent upon its cognitive capacities. The natural inclinations of beings that are devoid of cognition (that is, of inanimate objects and plants) are unconsciously directed to their corresponding natural good. The inclinations of creatures that possess sensory or rational knowledge (that is, of sensitive or rational beings) are consciously directed to an apprehended (at least apparent) good. Rational creatures, moreover, can seek their corresponding good in a rational way:

The will is a rational appetite. Now every appetite is only of good. The reason for this is that the appetite is nothing else than the inclination of someone who has a desire towards a thing. Now everything that has an inclination has an inclination to something like and suitable. Since, therefore, each thing, insofar as it is a being and a substance, is a certain good, it is necessary that every inclination is towards good. Hence, it is

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. II *Sent* d. 34, q. 1, a. 4, s.c.; *QDVer* 1.1. s.c. 2; *QDMalo* 2.5 ad 2.

<sup>35</sup> *SCG* III.16.3: *Finis igitur uniuscuiusque rei est eius perfectio. Perfectio autem cuiuslibet est bonum ipsius. Unumquodque igitur ordinatur in bonum sicut in finem.*

that the Philosopher says (*Nicomachean Ethics* I.1) that “the good is that which all things desire.”<sup>36</sup>

Thus, because every inclination as well as any act has an end and a good that it aims to attain, it makes sense to ask, of any human act, “What is its end?” or, “What good does it aim to attain?” For Aquinas, moreover, religious worship falls within the range of human acts. Worship, then, *qua* human act, *must* have an end. Thus, it makes sense to ask: “What is the end of religious worship?” “Toward what good does it aim?” “Whom does that good benefit?” Let us now explore the most obvious hypotheses.

### 3. Hypotheses on the Finality of Religion

#### a. The God-as-End Hypothesis

Would Aquinas say that religious worship is done for God’s sake? We could formulate this view as the hypothesis that, “The worshipper worships God for God’s own sake.” Immediately it is evident that view is problematic. It is incompatible with Classical Theism, which affirms a supremely-perfect God, incapable of becoming better or changing in any way whatsoever. Within this view of God, which Aquinas certainly held, anything done for God’s sake is useless and irrational. Thus, from the outset, we can be certain that Aquinas, who thought worship was neither useless nor irrational, would reject the God-as-End hypothesis, at least in the way we have formulated it.

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<sup>36</sup> *ST* I-II.8.1c: *Voluntas est appetitus quidam rationalis. Omnis autem appetitus non est nisi boni. Cuius ratio est quia appetitus nihil aliud est quam inclinatio appetentis in aliquid. Nihil autem inclinatur nisi in aliquid simile et conveniens. Cum igitur omnis res, in quantum est ens et substantia, sit quoddam bonum, necesse est ut omnis inclinatio sit in bonum. Et inde est quod philosophus dicit, in I Ethic., quod bonum est quod omnia appetunt.*

Now, if our worship does not affect God in any way, what good does it do? As already established, all human actions are purposeful, for they are ordered to the realization of some good. Hence, if someone worships, that worship has to have some ultimate purpose and has to tend towards a good. Especially if it belongs to the natural law to offer sacrifices to God, as Aquinas argues,<sup>37</sup> then such religious activities must in some way aid humans in tending towards their ultimate end. Otherwise, the natural law would be futile. What else could this end be, if not God?

### **b. The Worshipper-as-End Hypothesis**

If *religio* is not for God's sake, and if it *must* be for sake of something or someone, then it seems Aquinas will have no other alternative than the opposite hypothesis that, "The worshipper worships God for the worshipper's own sake." In fact, on a *prima facie* reading, Aquinas seems to subscribe precisely to such an egocentric view of the purpose of worship. Consider a passage such as the following:

[W]e show reverence and honor to God, not on account of [God] himself, who is in himself full of glory, and to whom nothing can be added by a creature, but on account of ourselves; because, that is, through the fact that

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.85.1c: [N]aturalis ratio dicitur homini quod alicui superiori subdatur, propter defectus quos in seipso sentit, in quibus ab aliquo superiori eget adiuvari et dirigi. Et quidquid illud sit, hoc est quod apud omnes dicitur Deus. Sicut autem in rebus naturalibus naturaliter inferiora superioribus subduntur, ita etiam naturalis ratio dicitur homini secundum naturalem inclinationem ut ei quod est supra hominem subiectionem et honorem exhibeat secundum suum modum. Est autem modus conveniens homini ut sensibilibus signis utatur ad aliqua exprimenda, quia ex sensibilibus cognitionem accipit. Et ideo ex naturali ratione procedit quod homo quibusdam sensibilibus rebus utatur offerens eas Deo, in signum debitae subiectionis et honoris, secundum similitudinem eorum qui dominis suis aliqua offerunt in recognitionem dominii. Hoc autem pertinet ad rationem sacrificii. Et ideo oblatio sacrificii pertinet ad ius naturale.

we revere and honor God, our mind is subjected to him—and its perfection consists in this; for any thing is perfected through the fact that it is subjected to its superior, just as the body through the fact that it is vivified by the soul, and air through the fact that it is illumined by the Sun.<sup>38</sup>

Hence, it would seem that the end of worship, for Aquinas, is not God, but the worshipper herself or himself. It is by means of worship that one attains one's perfection.

In fact, Aquinas' account of the purpose of prayer also makes explicit its egocentric orientation. For example, he remarks that:

[I]t is not necessary for us to offer prayers to God so that we may manifest to him our needs and desires, but so that we ourselves may consider that in these [matters] recourse must be had to divine help.<sup>39</sup>

He again says:

[P]rayer is not offered to God so that we may bend him, but so that we may excite within ourselves the confidence of petitioning. This [confidence] indeed is primarily excited in us by considering his charity towards us, by which he wills our good—and hence we say, “Our

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<sup>38</sup> *ST II-II.81.7c*: Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibemus non propter ipsum, qui in seipso est gloria plenus, cui nihil a creatura adici potest, sed propter nos, quia videlicet per hoc quod Deum reveremur et honoramus, mens nostra ei subiicitur, et in hoc eius perfectio consistit; quaelibet enim res perficitur per hoc quod subditur suo superiori, sicut corpus per hoc quod vivificatur ab anima, et aer per hoc quod illuminatur a sole.

<sup>39</sup> *ST II-II.83.2 ad 1*: [N]on est necessarium nos Deo preces porrigere ut ei nostras indigentias vel desideria manifestemus, sed ut nosipsi consideremus in his ad divinum auxilium esse recurrendum.

Father;” and his excellence, by which he is capable [of accomplishing our good]—and hence we say, “Who art in Heaven.”<sup>40</sup>

He also states:

Hence it is necessary that men do some things, not so that through their acts they may change the divine disposition, but so that through their acts they may accomplish certain effects according to the order disposed by God. The same is also [true] in natural causes. And, it is similar also in the case of prayer. For we pray not in order to change the divine disposition but in order that we beseech that which God has disposed to be fulfilled through the prayers of holy people; “that is, in order that men, by petitioning, may merit to receive what Almighty God has disposed before the ages to give them,” as Gregory says in the book of *The Dialogues*.<sup>41</sup>

From another perspective, however, the Worshipper-as-End hypothesis would seem problematic as well, and, in fact, counterintuitive. It contradicts the common sense view that worship is not to be offered to God solely to obtain benefits in return, but, rather, that it is offered to him simply because one owes him such honor and adoration. In other words, the proper religious attitude, one would think, is to adore and praise God, and even to offer sacrifice to him, not intending to receive some reward (the so-called “do

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<sup>40</sup> *ST II-II.83.9 ad 5*: [O]ratio non porrigitur Deo ut ipsum flectamus, sed ut in nobis ipsis fiduciam excitemus postulandi. Quae quidem praecipue excitatur in nobis considerando eius caritatem ad nos, qua bonum nostrum vult, et ideo dicimus, pater noster; et eius excellentiam, qua potest, et ideo dicimus, qui es in caelis.

<sup>41</sup> *ST II-II.83.2c*: Unde oportet homines agere aliqua, non ut per suos actus divinam dispositionem immutent, sed ut per actus suos impleant quosdam effectus secundum ordinem a Deo dispositum. Et idem etiam est in naturalibus causis. Et simile est etiam de oratione. Non enim propter hoc oramus ut divinam dispositionem immutemus, sed ut id impetremus quod Deus disposuit per orationes sanctorum esse implendum; ut scilicet homines postulando mereantur accipere quod eis omnipotens Deus ante saecula disposuit donare, ut Gregorius dicit, in libro Dialogorum.



*ut des* conception” of religion is universally recognized as inadequate), but simply because God is worthy of such respect and reverence.

### **c. The Worshipper-as-End Hypothesis, Revisited**

In the face of the two unattractive alternatives, that is, divine worship’s being good for God (thus compromising God’s absolute perfection and immutability), and divine worship’s being good for the worshipper (which is open to the charge of egocentrism), a Classical Theist would likely opt for the latter alternative as the less problematic. Accordingly, he will prefer to say that, although the worshipper may be under the impression that God is being pleased, the true value of religious actions lies in their ability to perfect the worshipper. Therefore, while worship in itself may require that worshippers have the impression of doing something for God, in reality they will be doing it for their own benefit. This hypothesis, formulated as a proposition, would claim: “Worshippers worship God under the impression that it is for God’s sake, when in reality they are doing it for their own sake.” This view implies that knowledge of God’s immutability and absolute perfection is incompatible with worship. It amounts to saying that, in order to worship at all, worshippers must believe that their worship pleases God in some way. It, thus, implies that worship makes sense only if the worshipper aims at something impossible, to please God.

Now, it would seem that Aquinas would also reject this formulation of the Worshipper-as-End hypothesis. St. Thomas himself had a profound philosophical understanding of God’s absolute immutability and, nevertheless, believed he was *bound*

by natural law to worship God.<sup>42</sup> Given the texts we have seen, and given the fact that Aquinas believed himself bound to worship a self-sufficient, immutable God, we may readily see that the only way the Worshipper-as-End hypothesis could still stand is in the following form: “The worshipper worships God for the worshipper’s own sake, *knowing* that it is for the worshipper’s own sake.”

#### **d. The God-as-End Hypothesis, Revisited**

For all its merits, the Worshipper-as-End hypothesis is undoubtedly a counterintuitive view, because it at least seems to discard the obvious theocentric element of worship. At the same time, an examination of other texts in Aquinas on the issue also discloses a line of thinking that appears to contradict it. In other words, elsewhere in the *corpus*, specifically within ST II-II.81, we find the claim that, in some way or another, the end of worship is God. For example, Aquinas speaks of honor as something that is *due* to God, that is, as something that we *owe to him*: “It pertains to religion to render due honor to someone, that is, to God.”<sup>43</sup> He is implying here an obligation towards God. God himself seems to be the reason, not the worshipper. Similarly, in explaining what is “that for the sake of which” worship is done, Aquinas repeatedly speaks not in terms of any human perfections sought by the worshipper, but chiefly in terms of doing things for God: “The good to which religion is ordered is to show due honor to God.”<sup>44</sup> “To religion

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. ST II-II.85.1c, quoted in note 37.

<sup>43</sup> ST II-II.81.2c: [A]d religionem pertineat reddere honorem debitum alicui, scilicet Deo.

<sup>44</sup> ST II-II.81.4c: Bonum autem ad quod ordinatur religio est exhibere Deo debitum honorem; cf. 81.7 arg. 2: Religionis finis est Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibere.

pertains doing certain things for the sake of divine reverence.”<sup>45</sup> “All things, according as they are done for God’s glory, pertain to religion . . . .”<sup>46</sup> In fact, he makes plain that religion orders and directs (*ordinat*) humans to God alone: “Religion has proper and immediate acts . . . through which man is ordered to God alone, such as sacrifice, adoration, and other suchlike things.”<sup>47</sup> In numerous texts Thomas asserts again and again this theocentric finality of worship: “Religion . . . effects those things that are directly and immediately ordered to divine honor.”<sup>48</sup> “Divine *cultus* is ordered . . . primarily to showing reverence to God.”<sup>49</sup> “The end of divine worship is that man may give glory to God.”<sup>50</sup> Most explicitly, he states that God himself is the end of worship: “It is manifest that . . . God is related to religion . . . as end.”<sup>51</sup> “Religion orders man to God . . . as to an end.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *ST* II-II.81.2 ad 1: Ad religionem autem pertinet facere aliqua propter divinam reverentiam.

<sup>46</sup> *ST* II-II.81.4 ad 2: Omnia, secundum quod in gloriam Dei fiunt, pertinent ad religionem.

<sup>47</sup> *ST* II-II.81.1: Religio habet . . . actus . . . proprios et immediatos, quos elicit, per quos homo ordinatur ad solum Deum, sicut sacrificare, adorare et alia huiusmodi.

<sup>48</sup> *ST* II-II.81.6c: Religio . . . operatur ea quae directe et immediate ordinantur in honorem divinum.

<sup>49</sup> *ST* II-II.92.2c: Ordinatur . . . primo divinus cultus ad reverentiam Deo exhibendam.

<sup>50</sup> *ST* II-II.93.2c: Finis autem divini cultus est ut homo Deo det gloriam . . . ; cf. *ST* II-II.81.4 ad 2: Ad secundum dicendum quod omnia, secundum quod in gloriam Dei fiunt, pertinent ad religionem non quasi ad elicentem, sed quasi ad imperantem. Illa autem pertinent ad religionem elicentem quae secundum rationem suae speciei pertinent ad reverentiam Dei; cf. *ST* II-II.81.6 ad 2: Deo autem non exhibetur aliquid propter eius utilitatem, sed propter eius gloriam, nostram autem utilitatem.

<sup>51</sup> *ST* II-II.81.5c: Unde manifestum est quod Deus . . . comparatur ad virtutem religionis . . . sicut finis.

<sup>52</sup> *ST* II-II.81.5 ad 2: [R]eligio ordinat hominem in Deum non sicut in obiectum, sed sicut in finem.

### e. A False Problem?

One may at this point object that the account so far seems to be creating a false problematic. Why is there a dichotomy between God and humans as possible ends of worship? Why not resolve the problem by saying that humans obtaining God is the end of worship?

I would reply that it cannot be as simple as that. Aquinas notes that love is necessarily twofold: love of friendship and love of concupiscence.<sup>53</sup> God must be loved, not merely with love of concupiscence, as a good loved for our sakes, but also with love of friendship, given that all creation is in some way loved for his sake.

By way of example, think of a perfection and a subject or bearer of that perfection. Whenever someone loves a perfection, such as health or knowledge, one not only loves that perfection, but also *the person to whom* one wills that the perfection belong. Thus, for St. Thomas, love necessarily has a duality of objects: love of the good thing and love of the subject whose perfection is sought. The first of these, namely, the love of the perfection itself, St. Thomas calls *love of concupiscence*; the second, namely, love of the subject whose perfection is sought, he calls *love of friendship*. He explains:

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<sup>53</sup> In addition to the texts quoted below, cf. II *Sent* d. 3, q. 4, a. 1; III *Sent* d. 28, q. 1, a. 2 and d. 29, q. 1, a. 3; *ST* I.60.3; I-II.66.6 ad 2; *Quodl* I.4.3c; *InPs* 13.1. *InIo* 15.4. On this distinction between love of concupiscence and love of friendship, see also David M. Gallagher, "Desire for Beatitude and Love of Friendship in Thomas Aquinas," *Mediaeval Studies* 58 (1996), 1–47; *ibid.*, "Person and Ethics in Thomas Aquinas," *Acta Philosophica* 4 (1995), 56–63; *ibid.*, "Thomas Aquinas on Self-Love as the Basis for Love of Others," *Acta Philosophica* 8 (1999), 23–44; Guy Mansini, "Duplex amor and the Structure of Love in Aquinas," in *Thomistica*, ed. E. Manning, *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, vol. 1 (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 137–196.

As the Philosopher says in *Rhetoric* 2.4, “to love is to will good to someone.” Therefore, the movement of love tends toward two things, namely, toward the good which one wills for someone, whether for oneself or for another; and toward him to whom one wills good. Therefore, one has love of concupiscence toward that good which one wills to another, and love of friendship toward him to whom he wishes good.<sup>54</sup>

Elsewhere, Aquinas offers a more metaphysical account of the same psychological reality:

Since love is of the good, and good is both in the substance and in the accident, as it is clear in the first book of the *Ethics*, something is loved in two ways: first, as a subsisting good, and second, as an accidental or inhering good. That is loved as a subsisting good which is so loved that someone wills good to it. But that which is desired for another is loved as an accidental or inhering good: as knowledge is loved, not so that it may be good, but that it may be possessed. And some have called this kind of love “concupiscence,” but the first “friendship.”<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *ST* I-II.26.4: Sicut philosophus dicit *Rhetorica* ii, 4, amare est velle alicui bonum; sic ergo motus amoris in duo tendit; scilicet in bonum, quod quis vult alicui, vel sibi, vel alii; et in illud, cui vult bonum; ad illud ergo bonum, quod quis vult alteri, habetur amor concupiscentiae: ad illum autem, cui aliquis vult bonum, habetur amor amicitiae.

<sup>55</sup> *ST* I.60.3: “[C]um amor sit boni, bonum autem sit et in substantia et in accidente, ut patet I *Ethic.*, dupliciter aliquid amatur, uno modo, ut bonum subsistens; alio modo, ut bonum accidentale sive inhaerens. Illud quidem amatur ut bonum subsistens, quod sic amatur ut ei aliquis velit bonum. Ut bonum vero accidentale seu inhaerens amatur id quod desideratur alteri, sicut amatur scientia, non ut ipsa sit bona, sed ut habeatur. Et hunc modum amoris quidam nominaverunt concupiscentiam, primum vero amicitiam.” In *ST* I-II.26.4 ad 2, Aquinas explains that love of concupiscence should not be confused with concupiscence itself, and that, hence, the two loves should be called *love of friendship* and *love of concupiscence*, respectively: “amor non dividitur per amicitiam et concupiscentiam, sed per amorem amicitiae et concupiscentiae. Nam ille proprie dicitur amicus, cui aliquod bonum volumus, illud autem dicimur concupiscere, quod volumus nobis.” Concupiscence itself is a result of original sin, and hence it is an

These tendencies of love are merely two sides of the same reality. Both are essential to love; one cannot exist without the other. One cannot desire perfection without desiring the perfection of someone, and vice versa. They are distinct, however. One is secondary and relative and the other primary and absolute. Thus, the object of love of concupiscence is loved relatively (for another), whereas the object of love of friendship is loved simply (for itself). St. Thomas continues to explain:

Now, this division is according to something prior and something posterior: for that which is loved with love of friendship is loved simply and for its own sake; whereas that which is loved with the love of concupiscence is loved, not simply and for its own sake, but is loved for another. For just as a being of itself is simply something that has being, while a relative being is that which is in another. Thus, the good, simply speaking—which is interchangeable with being—is that which has goodness itself; but that which is the good of another, is good relatively. And, consequently, the love with which a thing is loved so that it may be good, is love simply; while the love with which a thing is loved so that it may be another's good, is relative love.<sup>56</sup>

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imperfection. Love of concupiscence, however, is not a result of the Fall of the first man (the sin of the forbidden fruit in the garden), but a natural aspect of all loves, and thus is not an imperfection. Even God, in loving man, wills good things for man, and hence he loves these goods with love of concupiscence, and man with love of friendship.

<sup>56</sup> *ST I-II.26.4*: Haec autem divisio est secundum prius et posterius. Nam id quod amatur amore amicitiae, simpliciter et per se amatur, quod autem amatur amore concupiscentiae, non simpliciter et secundum se amatur, sed amatur alteri. Sicut enim ens simpliciter est quod habet esse, ens autem secundum quid quod est in alio; ita bonum, quod convertitur cum ente, simpliciter quidem est quod ipsum habet bonitatem; quod autem est bonum alterius, est bonum secundum quid. Et per consequens amor quo amatur aliquid ut ei sit bonum, est amor simpliciter, amor autem quo amatur aliquid ut sit bonum alterius, est amor secundum quid.

In sum, it is clear that, on the one hand, that which is loved with a love of concupiscence is loved as an accident, as the good *of* someone. On the other hand, that which is loved with a love of friendship is loved as a substance, as the *subject* of goodness.

Now, Aquinas tells us that humans do (and should) love God with love of friendship,<sup>57</sup> and not merely love of concupiscence. In other words, it is not enough for us to love God as a good for ourselves, with ourselves as the ultimate *terminus*, or end point, of the love of friendship; rather, we must love God as the terminus, or end point, of our love of friendship. Therefore, if humans “obtain” God, they do not obtain him as a *good for themselves*.

But in light of this teaching, a problem arises for Aquinas’ understanding of worship. There *is* a dichotomy between God and man as possible ends of worship. If God is to be obtained, then we must ask whether he is to be obtained *for our sake*, for the sake of our perfection. If so, that seems not to do justice to the altruistic element of religion, to the requirement that humans love God somehow for God’s sake, with love of friendship. But if God is to be obtained *for God’s sake*, then that seems to imply that Classical Theism is false, that God is not immutable and that he is somehow dependent on creatures to attain his end.

Evidently, then, Aquinas’ own thought reveals the same contradictory alternatives, the same dichotomy, with which we began. The worship of God is said to be both a) for the worshipper and b) for God. Is it possible both to recognize the egocentric reading and to “save” the non-egocentric end of worship?

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<sup>57</sup> Cf. *ST* I.60.5; I-II.109.3; II-II.26.3.

### ***C. STATUS QUAESTIONIS***

Before we accuse Aquinas of any contradictions or inconsistencies, we must consider the possibility of an interpretation that harmoniously synthesizes them. I will turn, then, to examining the present status of the problem in search for a potentially satisfactory answer.

The literature on this issue can be divided into three broad views, based on the answer that each gives to our original dilemma. In outline:

1. Theocentric Theories.
2. “Egocentric,” “Anthropocentric,” or “Humanistic” Theories.
3. “Compatibilist” Theories:
  - A. Simplistic readings.
  - B. Standard Thomistic Account.

#### **1. Theocentric Views**

Very few philosophers who hold a theocentric view of worship actually believe that God can be perfected by means of worship. Most theocentrists prefer to bypass the question of metaphysical finality altogether and posit a sort of deontological motivation for addressing worship to God. Within this group, we find mainly the proponents of objectivism in the theory of value. The most notable of these is Rudolf Otto, who, following the Kantian *Critique of Judgment*, claims that affective experiences furnish the subject with a non-rational intuition of noumenal values. By applying this epistemology



to the religious sphere, in his *The Idea of the Holy*,<sup>58</sup> Otto argues that worship is the non-rational, affective response of a subject to the numen, or the “numinous” object, that is, the Divine. As he expresses it, worship is the appropriate affective response to the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. From Otto’s analysis, it follows that worship is not so much an act that we perform in order to accomplish some good, but rather a response to an Object that is worthy of such a response: “the numen . . . is ‘august’ (*augustum*) insofar as it is recognized as possessing in itself *objective* value that claims our homage.”<sup>59</sup> In short, the motivation for such a response is the Object Itself, and not some metaphysical perfection or other subjective need.

Although Otto did not develop his ideas on this issue any further, another proponent of this view, Deitrich Von Hildebrand, develops this solution more substantially. Following Max Scheler, Von Hildebrand posits objective, extramental values (which are ontologically independent of the subject), and claims that the agent’s duty is to give a proper response to such values, not because such a response will produce good results, but simply because it is the agent’s duty. Within this context, he argues in his work, *Liturgy and Personality*,<sup>60</sup> that religious worship consists in an adequate affective response to God. Thus, one does not worship in order to attain some benefit or for any other purpose than to give God a proper response. For Von Hildebrand, the quality of worship is directly proportional to the degree in which the worshipper assumes “the Spirit of Response-to-Value,” that is, to the degree that he is focused on giving God the proper response that he deserves as an object of worship, and abandons the attitude of

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. especially, Chs. 1-8, pp. 1-59.

<sup>59</sup> Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998), 52.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. especially, Chs. 4-6, pp. 41-109.

seeking benefit from the act of worship itself, which would imply a utilitarian, *do-ut-des* attitude toward God.<sup>61</sup>

From these brief considerations, it can readily be seen that the fundamental presuppositions of this view are at odds with those of Aquinas, insofar as the latter has a theory of action that precludes him from positing a metaphysically purposeless<sup>62</sup> human act.

## 2. Egocentric Views

Within the second group, we find the great majority of the discussions on the issue from the point of view of Socratic Piety. The basis for an egocentric or “humanistic” interpretation of Socratic piety lies in the fact that the most serious hypothetical definition of piety offered in the *Euthyphro* is the following: “piety is the part of justice that is concerned with the service of the gods” (*Euthyphro* 12e). Here, “caring” for the gods seems to imply that the gods benefit from worship, and this, for both Socrates and Euthyphro, is unacceptable. This *aporia* intimates that, due to the human inability to affect the divine, such a theocentric view of piety is impossible, and, therefore, the solution lies in anthropocentrism. The dialogue also raises the question of whether piety is coextensive with justice, and strongly suggests an affirmative answer. In

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<sup>61</sup> Mention should also be made of Alice Von Hildebrand’s *Introduction to a Philosophy of Religion* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1971) as an important development of her husband’s work.

<sup>62</sup> I say “metaphysically purposeless” because the proponents of the theocentric view do acknowledge a purpose for worship, namely, one to give an appropriate response to the object of worship, but this purpose is one that does not consist in the metaphysical perfection of any subject or being.

that sense, piety would be reducible to a virtue that consists in doing good to others generally, and, thus, would have an entirely humanistic import.

This view, as we have seen, safeguards both the inability of the divine to receive benefit and the need to posit an end of worship. However, it has a significant drawback insofar as it completely shatters the theocentricity of worship. Most of Aquinas' claims regarding the finality of worship are ultimately incompatible with this view.

### 3. Compatibilist Views

#### a. Simplistic Readings

Most Thomists are "Compatibilists" of some sort; that is, they hold views that are simultaneously theocentric and egocentric. However, this group itself can be divided into three subgroups. On the one hand, some Thomists<sup>63</sup> who treat the issue only in passing find a quick solution: the worshipper ultimately seeks God's glory, but in doing this, the utility reverts to the worshipper. This rather simplistic view of the issue, which consists in affirming a double finality in which one end is subordinated to the other, is completely governed by the text of II-II.81.7: "We pay God honor and reverence, not for his sake

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<sup>63</sup> Cf. for example, Mennessier, *La religion, traduction française de la Somme Theologique de saint Thomas d'Aquin, IIa-IIae, QQ. 80-100* (Paris: Desclée et Cie, 1932), p. 241: Ce profit que la vertu morale de religion nous assure, dans le moment même où elle poursuit la gloire de Dieu, c'est la perfection de notre union spirituelle à Lui . . . Son désintéressement même nous grandit, assurant en dépit de l'apparente inutilité de ses démarches extérieures, notre véritable perfection de créatures et d'enfants de Dieu. Nevertheless, he does say (p. 243) that, "Rendre gloire à Dieu . . . est le but immédiat (*finis operis*) de l'hommage que nous lui devons." Cf. also, A. G. Fuente, "La liturgia secondo S. Tommaso," *Sacra doctrina* 36 (1991), 208; as well as Pedro Fernandez, "Teología de la liturgia en la Summa de Santo Tomás," *Ciencia Tomista: Salamanca* 101 (1974), 264.

(*non propter seipsum*), because he is in himself full of glory to which no creature can add anything, but for our own sake (*sed propter nos*).” Rarely are any of the “theocentric” texts taken into account in this reading.<sup>64</sup>

### **b. The Standard Thomistic Account**

On the other hand, other Thomists,<sup>65</sup> employing a stricter philosophical precision, offer reconstructions of St. Thomas’ view on the finality of worship that attempt to weave a coherent whole from the apparently contradictory strands. I call this view the “Standard Thomistic Account” because it is the most prominent view among Thomists who address the issue. The view is ultimately based on Cajetan’s interpretation of *ST II-II.81.7* (note 38 above), although Cajetan’s view is perhaps more nuanced than the “Standard Thomistic Account,” and, thus, could not be classified under the latter.

Cajetan there relies on a doctrine that was originally proposed by Aristotle, and was then transformed by Aquinas. Aristotle makes a distinction between *finis cuius* (*to hoû heneka tinos*) and *finis cui* (*to hoû heneka tôi*). In the second book of the *De Anima*, Aristotle explains that, “The phrase ‘for the sake of which’ is ambiguous; it may mean

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<sup>64</sup> Pedro Fernandez (cf. *Ibid.*) acknowledges that it is often remarked that worship is for God’s glory, but he quickly dismisses the idea that this could be the true ultimate end of worship simply by quoting Aquinas: “Deus suam gloriam non querit propter se, sed propter nos” (*ST II-II.132.1 ad 1*).

<sup>65</sup> Román Bustinza, “La religión y el actuar humano en la ‘Suma Teologica’ de santo Tomás de Aquino,” *Teología: Buenos Aires* 11 (1974), 123; Bernard Lucien, “The Notion of Sacrifice According to the *Summa theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas,” 37, note 6, in *Altar and Sacrifice: The Proceedings of the Third International Colloquium of Historical, Canonical, and Theological Studies of the Roman liturgy* (London: Saint Austin Press, 1998); Frank M. Quoëx, *Les actes extérieurs du culte dans l’histoire du salut selon Saint Thomas D’Aquin* (Rome: Pontificia Studiorum Universitas a Sancto Thoma Aquinate, Facultas Theologiae, 2001), 29-30.

either (a) the end to achieve which, or (b) the being in whose interest, the act is done.”<sup>66</sup>

And again, in *Metaphysics Lambda*: “‘That for the sake of which’ [that is, the final cause] is both that *for* which and that *towards* which, and of these the one [namely, that *towards* which] is unmovable and the other [namely, that *for* which] is not.”<sup>67</sup>

Aquinas, in turn, interprets Aristotle’s distinction in terms of “intrinsic” and “extrinsic” ends:

Good, inasmuch as it is the end or goal of a thing, is twofold. For an end is extrinsic to the thing ordered to it, as when we say that a place is the end of something that is moved locally. Or it is intrinsic, as a form is the end of the process of generation or alteration; and a form already acquired is a kind of intrinsic good of the thing whose form it is.<sup>68</sup>

He also notes that, while extrinsic ends exist independently of the actions that aim at them, intrinsic ends are only potential and are *brought about* through the actions whose ends they are.

Now one thing can be the goal of another in two ways: first, as something having prior existence, as the center of the world is said to be a goal which is prior to the motion of heavy bodies . . . the first mover can be a goal in this way. Second, one thing is said to be the goal of another, not as something that exists actually, but only as existing in the intention of the

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<sup>66</sup> *De Anima* II.4 (412b2) in Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 2 Vols.

<sup>67</sup> *Metaphysics* XII.7 (1072b1-3).

<sup>68</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio*, ed. M.-R. Cathala and R. Spiazzi (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1950), 12.10, lect.12, n. 2627: Bonum enim, secundum quod est finis alicuius, est duplex. Est enim finis extrinsecus ab eo quod est ad finem, sicut si dicimus locum esse finem eius quod movetur ad locum. Est etiam finis intra, sicut forma finis generationis et alterationis, et forma iam adepta, est quoddam bonum intrinsecum eius, cuius est forma.

agent by whose activity it is produced, as health is the goal of the activity of the medical art. And an end or goal of this kind does not exist in the realm of immovable things.<sup>69</sup>

Finally, Cajetan accepted the essence of the distinction as he found it in Aquinas, but he rendered it as one between a) the “term of utility” (*terminum utilitatis*) and b) “end” (*finis*) or “final cause” (*causa finalis*). Commenting on *ST* II-II.81.7 (note 38 above), he says:

When it is said that we give honor to God “not for his sake” (*non propter seipsum*), the “for his sake” does not connote the final cause but the “term of utility” (*terminum utilitatis*). For it is evident that we render worship to God for himself as end (*propter seipsum ut finem*) . . . but not for God’s utility, but rather for our utility, in such a way that our worship will not be able to give to God any increase in glory or anything else—of which it is written: *You are not in need of our goods* (Psalm 15:2).<sup>70</sup>

Accordingly, Cajetan argues that, for Aquinas, the “end” of worship is twofold. On the one hand, humans give honor to God and, consequently, God is the *finis* or *causa finalis* (in Cajetan’s terminology). Here, of course, “end” must be understood, not in the sense that God benefits, but in the sense that he is the aim of the worship. This would

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<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, lect. 7: n. 2528: Dupliciter autem potest esse aliquid finis alterius. Uno modo sicut praeexistens; sicut medium dicitur finis praeexistens motus gravium . . . et sic primum movens immobile potest esse finis. Alio modo dicitur aliquid esse finis alicuius, sicut quod non est in actu, sed solum in intentione agentis, per cuius actionem generatur, sicut sanitas est finis operationis medicinae; et huiusmodi finis non est in rebus immobilibus.

<sup>70</sup> Cajetan, *Commentaria in Summam theologicam s. Thomae Aquinatis*, II-II.81.7, in Thomas Aquinas, *Opera omnia*, vol. 9: Cum dicitur, ‘Deo honorem exhibemus non propter seipsum’, ly ‘propter’ non denotat causam finalem, sed terminum utilitatis. Constat namque quod colimus Deum propter seipsum ut finem . . . sed non propter ipsius Dei, sed nostri utilitatem, ita quod nec augmentum gloriae nec quodcumque aliud Deo ex nostro cultu accrescere potest, de quo scriptum est: ‘bonorum nostrorum non indiges’.

explain both the Aristotelian and Thomistic terminologies: in Aristotle's language, God is the "end to achieve which" (*finis cuius*) of the worship; in Aquinas' terms, he is the *extrinsic* and pre-existing goal of worship.

On the other hand, the worship is done for "our sake" (*propter nos*); that is, the worshipper's perfection is the *terminum utilitatis* (in Cajetan's terms). This fact explains the other element in Aristotle's and Aquinas' terminology: in Aristotle, the worshipper's perfection would be the "end for which" (*finis cui*) the worship is done; in Aquinas, the benefit of the worshipper is the intrinsic end to be realized in the acts of worship.

The proponents of the Standard Thomistic Account will conclude from this finding that, while in worship our mind must be fixed on God, our true purpose is to perfect ourselves.<sup>71</sup> Thus, the Standard Thomistic Account embraces both the Worshipper-as-End hypothesis and the God-as-End hypothesis, but harmonizes them by making a distinction between two different meanings of "end." Accordingly, worship can be said to be both egocentric and theocentric: egocentric insofar as its intrinsic end is the worshipper and theocentric insofar as its extrinsic end is God. By means of this distinction, then, the Standard Thomistic Account groups the different (and seemingly contradictory) passages according to the two kinds of end.

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<sup>71</sup> In fact, Aquinas speaks in different contexts of things that are for our sake but done with God as *terminus*; cf. *ST* II-II.81.6 ad 2, quoted in note 50; *ST* II-II.88.4c: "[V]otum est promissio Deo facta. Alia autem ratione promittitur aliquid homini, et alia ratione Deo. Homini quidem promittimus aliquid propter eius utilitatem, cui utile est et quod ei aliquid exhibeamus, et quod eum de futura exhibitione prius certificemus. Sed promissionem Deo facimus non propter eius utilitatem, sed propter nostram. Unde Augustinus dicit, in praedicta epistola, benignus exactor est, non egenus, et qui non crescat ex redditis, sed in se crescere faciat redditores. Et sicut id quod damus Deo non est ei utile, sed nobis, quia quod ei redditur reddenti additur, ut Augustinus ibidem dicit; ita etiam promissio qua Deo aliquid vovemus, non credit in eius utilitatem, qui a nobis certificari non indiget; sed ad utilitatem nostram, in quantum vovendo voluntatem nostram immobiliter firmamus ad id quod expedit facere. Et ideo expediens est vovere."

The Standard Thomistic Account does shed some light on the issue, but if it goes no further, it remains inadequate on two levels. First, philosophically, it does not solve the problem of the finality of worship, but only complicates it. As was said above, *each of the two alternatives* to the issue of the finality of worship is problematic. On the one hand, the Worshipper-as-End hypothesis contradicts our intuitions about worship as non-egocentric. It seems wrong for the worshipper to engage in worship with his own benefit in mind. On the other hand, and most importantly, claiming that God is the end only in the sense of a goal, as a point towards which we are moving, does not seem to capture the very strong claim that in worship we give to God a *debitum*, that is, something that is *due* to him. If this theocentric element is what accounts for religion's being related to justice (for presumably religion is the virtue whereby the worshipper practices justice, in a certain sense,<sup>72</sup> toward God), it is difficult to see how such a weak interpretation of the God-as-End hypothesis will be sufficient. Thus, it would seem that the dilemma, as it stands, requires choosing one of two contradictory alternatives and explaining how its apparent disadvantages can be countenanced or nullified. Instead of taking this route,

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<sup>72</sup> As we shall discuss below, in Chapter 2, religion, being a “potential” part of (or “annexed” virtue to) justice, does not quite meet the criteria for being a species, or “subjective” part, of justice, for the worshipper can never fully give God his due; cf. *ST* II-II.80c: “[I]n virtutibus quae adiunguntur alicui principali virtuti duo sunt consideranda, primo quidem, quod virtutes illae in aliquo cum principali virtute convenient; secundo, quod in aliquo deficient a perfecta ratione ipsius. Quia vero iustitia ad alterum est, ut ex supradictis patet, omnes virtutes quae ad alterum sunt possunt ratione convenientiae iustitiae annecti. Ratio vero iustitiae consistit in hoc quod alteri reddatur quod ei debetur secundum aequalitatem, ut ex supradictis patet. Dupliciter igitur aliqua virtus ad alterum existens a ratione iustitiae deficit, uno quidem modo, in quantum deficit a ratione aequalis; alio modo, in quantum deficit a ratione debiti. Sunt enim quaedam virtutes quae debitum quidem alteri reddunt, sed non possunt reddere aequale. Et primo quidem, quidquid ab homine Deo redditur, debitum est, non tamen potest esse aequale, ut scilicet tantum ei homo reddat quantum debet; secundum illud Psal., quid retribuam domino pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi? Et secundum hoc adiungitur iustitiae religio . . . .”



however, the Standard Thomistic Account affirms *both* alternatives and leaves their problematic aspects unresolved. In other words, the problem is that worship seems to be *neither* theocentric nor egocentric; saying that it is *both* theocentric *and* egocentric raises more issues than it solves.

Moreover, textually, the Standard Thomistic Account does not offer a satisfactory explanation of the doctrinal nuances of Aquinas' claims. This account reduces Aquinas' various statements on the finality of worship to two general categories: those that speak of the *finis cuius* (or *causa finalis*) and those that speak of the *finis cui* (or *terminum utilitatis*). Thus, one is left with the impression that the claims that fall under the same category are roughly equivalent. Hence, for example, to claim that the end of worship is "the glory of God" would amount to saying that the end of worship is "God himself"<sup>73</sup> in the sense of *causa finalis*. Consider again the following texts: "Religion . . . effects those things that are directly and immediately ordered to divine honor." "Divine worship is ordered . . . primarily to showing reverence to God." "The end of divine *cultus* is that man may give glory to God." The Standard Thomistic Account, of course, would interpret these as roughly equivalent claims and would classify them under the *finis cuius* (or *causa finalis*) category. However, this interpretation is inadequate in view of Aquinas' statements regarding the distinction between honor, reverence, and glory. For instance, we know that honor and reverence are not equivalent; Aquinas makes a clear distinction between these two concepts:

Reverence is not the same as honor, but on the one hand it is the motive principle for honoring, insofar as someone honors another out of the

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<sup>73</sup> *ST* II-II.81.5c, quoted in note 37.

reverence he has for him; and on the other hand, it is the end of honor, in so far as someone is honored in order that he may be held in reverence by others.<sup>74</sup>

We also know that glory is distinct from both honor and reverence:

*Glory* is an effect of *honor* and praise: because from the fact that a man is praised, or shown any kind of reverence, he becomes “clarified” in the knowledge of others.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> *ST II-II.103.1 ad 1*: [R]everentia non est idem quod honor, sed ex una parte est principium motivum ad honorandum, in quantum scilicet aliquis ex reverentia quam habet ad aliquem, eum honorat; ex alia vero parte est honoris finis, in quantum scilicet aliquis ad hoc honoratur ut in reverentia habeatur ab aliis. Cf. *ST II-II.81.6 ad 2*, quoted in note 50.

<sup>75</sup> *ST II-II.132.2c*: “Gloria est quidam effectus honoris et laudis, ex hoc enim quod aliquis laudatur, vel quaecumque reverentia ei exhibetur, redditur clarus in notitia aliorum.” Cf. *ST II-II.132.4 ad 2*: “laus et honor comparantur ad gloriam, ut supra dictum est, sicut causae ex quibus gloria sequitur. Unde gloria comparatur ad ea sicut finis, propter hoc enim aliquis amat honorari et laudari, in quantum per hoc aliquis aestimat se in aliorum notitia fore praeclarum;” *103.1 ad 3*: “Gloria autem est effectus honoris et laudis;” *145.2 ad 2*: “Ad secundum dicendum quod, sicut supra dictum est, gloria est effectus honoris, ex hoc enim quod aliquis honoratur vel laudatur, redditur clarus in oculis aliorum. Et ideo, sicut idem est honorificum et gloriosum, ita etiam idem est honestum et decorum.” Cf. *Super Epistolas S. Pauli lectura*, t. 2: *Super Epistolam ad Hebraeos lectura*, ed. R. Cai (8<sup>th</sup> ed.: Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1953), 2, lect. 2: “Deinde cum dicit gloria et honore, etc., ostendit mysterium exaltationis, ubi tria facit. Primo ostendit eius gloriam; secundo honorem, ibi et honore, etc.; tertio potestatem, ibi constituisti eum, et cetera. Apoc. V, 12 s.: dignus est agnus qui occisus est, accipere virtutem, et divinitatem, et sapientiam, et fortitudinem, et honorem, et gloriam, et benedictionem in omnem creaturam, et cetera. Dicit ergo primo coronasti eum gloria, id est, claritate. Gloria enim claritatem importat. Christus autem duplici gloria coronatus est, scilicet claritate corporis. Ad Phil. III, 21: qui reformabit corpus humilitatis nostrae, configuratum corpori claritatis suae. Ista claritas sibi promittitur Io. XII, 28: et clarificavi animam, scilicet implendo splendoribus gratiae, et iterum clarificabo, scilicet corpus immortalitatis gloria. Alia claritas est in confessione omnium populorum. Phil. II, 11: et omnis lingua confiteatur. Ps. XX, 5: gloriam et magnum decorem impones super eum. Consequenter ostendit eius honorem, cum dicit et honore, et cetera. Differt autem honor a gloria, sicut effectus a causa. Est enim honor reverentia exhibita in testimonium excellentiae, unde est testificatio bonitatis eius. Honor ille est, ut omnis creatura vereatur ipsum sicut et patrem. Io. V, 23: ut omnes honorificent filium sicut et patrem.”

From the fact that all things are from him, through him, and in him, every creature owes him *honor, reverence* and subjection . . . . But from the fact that neither council nor gift is received from another, [every creature] owes him *glory*.<sup>76</sup>

From these distinctions, therefore, it is clear that Aquinas' various claims regarding finality of worship are by no means equivalent, but each refers to a feature that is distinct from and irreducible to the rest. Thus, one must go beyond the Standard Thomistic Account and employ a reading that is sophisticated enough to incorporate all of these claims into a coherent whole, instead of merely subsuming them under one of two kinds of final causality.

#### 4. Conclusion

All of the aforementioned hypotheses are too simplistic to solve the problem. None of them is represented by a study of sufficient length and nuance to be able to deal with the issue adequately. Many of them are, in addition, fundamentally misguided. Even the Standard Thomistic Account, which has its merits, leaves much to be desired. A more nuanced solution that proceeds from strong metaphysical and ethical foundations is needed. Such a solution is exactly the aim of this study: to address the issue in a detailed and precise way from a Thomistic metaphysical and ethical background. My solution to the problem will itself form a third Compatibilist category, different from both (a) the simplistic reading and (b) the Standard Thomistic Account.

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<sup>76</sup> *Super Epistolas S. Pauli lectura*, t. 1: *Super Epistolam ad Romanos lectura*, ed. R. Cai (8<sup>th</sup> ed.: Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1953), 11: Ex eo quod ex ipso et per ipsum, et in ipso sunt omnia, debetur ei honor et reverentia et subiectio a tota creatura . . . . Ex eo vero quod ab alio non accipitur nec consilium, nec donum, debetur ei Gloria . . . .

#### **D. THE THESES TO BE DEFENDED IN THIS STUDY**

Thus far I have laid out the problem, indicated why it emerges from Aquinas' texts, and shown why the previous solutions, even the Standard Thomistic Account, are insufficient. In light of the texts presented, I shall argue for two theses in this study, which will be brought out in Chapter 6.

The first thesis is textual in nature. According to it, Aquinas affirms a threefold hierarchy of ends related to worship. This thesis can be expressed by means of three propositions concerning the finality of religion:

- a. The proximate or immediate end of religion is the *honor* of God.
- b. The mediate or remote end of religion is the *reverence* of God.
- c. The ultimate end of religion is the *glory* of God.

That these propositions are true, for Thomas, will emerge from an analysis of the text. As said in the preface, the analysis will proceed not only through the reading and interpretation of relevant texts, but also through a properly philosophical process of reasoning, involving the application of Aquinas' general moral principles to the particular issue of the virtue of religion.

The second thesis that I defend in this study is a strictly systematic one in the context of Aquinas' thought. It is a direct logical consequence of the application of Aquinas' general moral principles to the particular context of religion. In the ultimate analysis, I argue, Aquinas' solution consists in the claim that religion materially perfects the worshipper, but is sought formally as an act done for God's sake. Thus, whereas the thing perfected is a creature, this perfection occurs under a divine formality; that is to say, the creature is seen as belonging somehow to God. This thesis, as we shall see,

encapsulizes the solution to the problem of the finality of worship in Aquinas. Chapter 7 examines the adequacy of the solution within the context of the finality of the entire universe. This context is essential to Aquinas' account and helps explain how to the extent that Aquinas' solution is anthropocentric, it is cosmic rather than egocentric.

### PROLEGOMENA: THREE POTENTIAL OBJECTIONS

In order to address the issue of the finality of worship in itself, a task that I initiate in Part Two of the work (with Chapter 3), it will first be helpful to consider in this chapter three potential objections:

(A) The human agent is free to determine the end of any particular action, and so it is futile to seek a determinate end for worship.

(B) Virtue is its own reward, and thus there is no need to seek an ulterior end for the virtue of religion.

(C) As was observed previously, God does not benefit from the worship offered to him. Thus, the end of worship must not be outside the worshipper herself or himself.

My replies to these objections will consist in a defense of the view that worship has an objective and “extrinsic” finality; one that is reducible neither to the teleology nor to the subjective determination of the agent. In particular, I proceed as follows:

(A) In reply to the first objection, I discuss Aquinas’ distinction between *finis operis* and *finis operantis* in reference to the virtue of religion. This will serve to show that, although the agent is free to determine the *finis operantis* of any action, each action has its own determinate *finis operis* that flows from its nature *qua* action. Thus, I maintain that, in this study, we are ultimately concerned with finding the *finis operis* of worship, not its *finis operantis*.

(B) The claim that the virtue of religion is its own reward, while partially true, does not fully answer the question of the finality of worship. Virtues, though good in

themselves (and not mere means to obtain other goods), derive their goodness from the acts of which they are virtues. A virtue is, in fact, ordered toward its act as to its end. Hence, the teleology of the virtue of religion is grounded in the acts of worship. The end of worship, then, lies in the good that its acts produce.

(C) In reply to the claim that the worshipper herself or himself is the end of worship, I examine religion as a part of justice, that is, as a virtue that renders *to another* something that is due to him. This will allow us to conclude that, *qua* part of justice, religion is essentially altruistic or other-seeking and, thus, its end is necessarily outside of the agent.

#### **A. CAN AGENTS DETERMINE THE END OF THEIR WORSHIP?**

The objection (A) that the ends of particular human actions are not determinate can be removed if we consider the distinction between *finis operis* and *finis operantis*. The *finis operis* and *finis operantis* of an act are the objective and subjective ends, respectively, of any given concrete human act. The objective end is nothing other than that towards which an act by its very nature tends to. The subjective end is the purpose that the agent imposes upon the act and which does not necessarily follow from the nature of the act. Aquinas explains:

Doing something for an end is twofold, either on account of a *finis operis* or on account of a *finis operantis*. The *finis operis* is that to which a work is ordered by the agent, and that is called the *ratio* of the work; but the *finis operantis* is that at which the worker principally aims; hence, the *finis operis* can be in another; but the *finis operantis* is always in him; as is clear in the case of the builder, who gathers stones in order to put them together, because this composition, in which the form of the house

consists, is the *finis operis*; but the utility which comes from this to the worker is the end from the part of the agent (*finis ex parte agentis*).<sup>1</sup>

Thus, on the one hand, the *finis operis* of an action is determined by the nature of the act itself and is, therefore, something fixed. The *finis operantis* of the action, on the other hand, is freely determined by the agent and is, therefore, something arbitrary, that is, whatever the agent wills it to be. In other words, although the agent is free to determine the *finis operantis* of any action, each action has its own determinate *finis operis* that flows from its nature *qua* action. In fact, an agent can potentially ordain his act to an infinite number of *fines operantis*:

[A]n action of one same species on the part of its object can be ordered to an infinite number of ends: for instance, theft can be ordered to an infinite number of good and bad ends.<sup>2</sup>

Now, it must be noted that the fact that the *finis operantis* is arbitrary does not mean that it never coincides with the *finis operis*. For example, let us suppose that the *finis operis* of cooking is to make certain foods edible or more appetizing or something of the sort. The *finis operantis*, then, may be, on the one hand, to display the art of cooking in a case where the food will not be eaten, or to gain profit by selling the food (in which

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<sup>1</sup> II *Sent* d. 1, q. 2, a. 1c: [A]gere aliquid propter finem est dupliciter: vel propter finem operis, vel propter finem operantis. Finis operis est hoc ad quod opus ordinatum est ab agente, et hoc dicitur ratio operis; finis autem operantis est quem principaliter operans intendit: unde finis operis potest esse in alio; sed finis operantis semper est in ipso; sicut patet in aedificatore, qui lapides congregat ad componendum eos, quod ista compositio, in qua consistit forma domus, est finis operis; sed utilitas quae provenit ex hoc operanti, est finis ex parte agentis.

<sup>2</sup> *ST* I-II.18.7s.c.: [A]ctus eiusdem speciei ex parte obiecti, potest ad infinitos fines ordinari, puta furtum ad infinita bona vel mala.



case the end belongs to a different order from the *finis operis*), but it may also, on the other hand, coincide with the *finis operis*—in this case simply to eat the food made edible. Aquinas allows for this latter possibility, namely, that the two *fines* coincide, when he states that *sometimes* they are different:

[I]t must be observed that sometimes the *finis operantis* differs from the *finis operis*, thus it is clear that the end of building is a house, whereas sometimes the end of the builder is profit.<sup>3</sup>

In fact, he tells us that a *finis operis* can be ordered to the *finis operis* in either a *per se* or a *per accidens* manner:

The object of the external act can relate in a twofold manner to the end of the will: one way, as being *per se* ordered to it; just as fighting well is *per se* ordered to victory; another way, *per accidens*, as taking the property of another is ordered *per accidens* to the giving of alms.<sup>4</sup>

Given this doctrine, it is easy to see how Aquinas would reply to the objection that the human agent is free to determine the end of any particular action, and that it is thus futile to seek a determinate end for worship. In reply, one need simply point out that this study is an enquiry into the *finis operis* of religious worship, not some arbitrary *finis*

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<sup>3</sup> *ST II-II.141.6 ad 1*: Considerandum est autem quod quandoque aliud est finis operantis, et aliud finis operis, sicut patet quod aedificationis finis est domus, sed aedificatoris finis quandoque est lucrum. Sic igitur temperantiae ipsius finis et regula est beatitudo, sed eius rei qua utitur, finis et regula est necessitas humanae vitae, infra quam est id quod in usum vitae venit.

<sup>4</sup> *ST I-II.18.7c*: [O]biectum exterioris actus dupliciter potest se habere ad finem voluntatis, uno modo, sicut per se ordinatum ad ipsum, sicut bene pugnare per se ordinatur ad victoriam; alio modo, per accidens, sicut accipere rem alienam per accidens ordinatur ad dandum eleemosynam.

*operantis*.<sup>5</sup> There is no such thing as a fixed *finis operantis* that is exclusively proper to a species of human act. That is, species of human acts do not have fixed *fines operantis*, for the *finis operantis* is something proper to concrete human acts and makes sense only where the particular agent of a given act is considered, even if in a concrete case some *fines operantis*, unlike others, are *per se* ordered to a given action. Thus, it would be a fruitless endeavor to seek “the *finis operantis* of religion,” for the *finis operantis* of a moral agent who performs an act of religion is determined by the agent herself or himself, and thus it can be practically anything, including his own perfection.<sup>6</sup> However, the *finis operis* of an act of religion is something determinate, owing to the nature of the act itself. In other words, the question to be answered is not “What are some of the arbitrary uses of religion?” but rather, “What is the end to which religion is naturally ordered, which provides the *ratio* for the contents of its actions?”

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<sup>5</sup> Traditionally, Christian sacrifice, particularly the Sacrifice of the Mass, is offered for four main ends: adoration, expiation, thanksgiving, and petition. Cf. *ST I-II.102.3 ad 10*: “[I]nter omnia sacrificia holocaustum erat praecipuum, quia totum comburebatur in honorem Dei, et nihil ex eo comedebatur. Secundum vero locum in sanctitate tenebat hostia pro peccato, quae comedebatur solum in atrio a sacerdotibus, et in ipsa die sacrificii. Tertium vero gradum tenebant hostiae pacificae pro gratiarum actione, quae comedebantur ipso die, sed ubique in Ierusalem. Quartum vero locum tenebant hostiae pacificae ex voto, quarum carnes poterant etiam in crastino comedi. Et est ratio huius ordinis quia maxime obligatur homo Deo propter eius maiestatem, secundo, propter offensam commissam; tertio, propter beneficia iam suscepta; quarto, propter beneficia sperata.” These four ends are *fines operantis*, not *fines operis*; cf. Damianus Klein, “De fine sacrificii,” *Antonianum* 13 (1938), 11.

<sup>6</sup> This explains the possibility of acts in which the agent worships for an illegitimate end, for example, superstition and idolatry. Cf. below, Chapter 5, note 30.

## B. IS THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION ITS OWN END? THE PRIMACY OF THE ACT

The second objection (B) stated that virtue is its own reward and, thus, there is no need to seek an ulterior end for the virtue of religion different from the virtue itself. In reply, one must first acknowledge that virtue is in a sense its own reward. However, this line of thinking is only partially true and potentially misleading. It ignores the principle of the priority of acts over their corresponding virtues.

Aquinas argues that a habit is naturally ordered toward operation:

[I]t belongs to every habit to have relation to an act, for it is essential to habit to imply some relation to a thing's nature insofar as it is suitable or unsuitable thereto. But a thing's nature, which is the end of generation, is further ordered to another end, which is either an operation, or the product of an operation, to which one attains by means of operation. Hence habit implies relation not only to the very nature of a thing, but also, consequently, to operation, inasmuch as this is the end of nature, or conducive to the end. Hence also it is stated in *Metaphysics* 5 in the definition of habit, that it is a disposition whereby that which is disposed, is well or ill disposed either in regard to itself, that is to its nature, or in regard to something else, that is to the end.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *ST* I-II.49.3c: [C]onvenit omni habitui aliquo modo habere ordinem ad actum. Est enim de ratione habitus ut importet habitudinem quandam in ordine ad naturam rei, secundum quod convenit vel non convenit. Sed natura rei, quae est finis generationis, ulterius etiam ordinatur ad alium finem, qui vel est operatio, vel aliquod operatum, ad quod quis pervenit per operationem. Unde habitus non solum importat ordinem ad ipsam naturam rei, sed etiam consequenter ad operationem, in quantum est finis naturae, vel perducens ad finem. Unde et in V *Metaphysicorum* dicitur in definitione habitus, quod est dispositio secundum quam bene vel male disponitur dispositum aut secundum se, idest secundum suam naturam, aut ad aliud, idest in ordine ad finem.

That is to say, one may think of habits as standing between the agent and his acts. The habit facilitates the agent's acts. The nature of the agent is inclined or ordered to perform the acts; therefore, the habits, as mediators, are also ordered toward the acts.

Now, since virtues are *good* operational habits, they are ordered towards *good* acts. "The end of virtue, since it is an operative habit, is operation."<sup>8</sup> Thus, the good act is that for the sake of which the virtue exists; it is the virtue's *raison d'être*. Consequently, we do not act well in order to possess virtues, but vice-versa: we have virtues in order to act well with ease.

In fact, the distinction among virtues is drawn from their corresponding kind of good action. Thus, the goodness of a virtue is posterior (and reducible) to the goodness of its corresponding action.

Virtue is properly directed to an act that it renders good; and consequently virtues must differ according to different acts, especially when there is a different kind of goodness in the acts. For, if various acts contained the same kind of goodness, they would belong to the same virtue.<sup>9</sup>

What exactly does this text mean for religious worship? In his *Commentary on the Sentences* Aquinas brings it all together specifically within the context of *latria* (that is, the kind of religious worship due to God alone):

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. *ST* I-II.55.4c: Finis autem virtutis, cum sit habitus operativus, est ipsa operatio.

<sup>9</sup> *ST* II-II.51.2c: [V]irtus proprie ordinatur ad actum, quem reddit bonum. Et ideo oportet secundum differentiam actuum esse diversas virtutes, et maxime quando non est eadem ratio bonitatis in actibus. Si enim esset eadem ratio bonitatis in eis, tunc ad eandem virtutem pertinerent diversi actus.

Now this name [namely, *latria*] is understood in a threefold manner: sometimes as that which is shown to God as submission, such as sacrifice, genuflections, etc.; and sometimes as the showing itself; and sometimes as the habit whereby submission is shown; and in the first way *latria* is not a virtue, but the matter of a virtue; in the second way it is the act of a virtue; in the third way it is a virtue . . . .<sup>10</sup>

Thus, the virtue of religion draws its goodness from the fact that it is a habit whereby “submission is shown” (*obsequium exhibetur*) to God. This “showing” itself is the cause of the goodness of the virtue. That is, the virtue of religion is good because the *act* of showing submission to God is itself good, and not vice versa. Hence, it is not enough to claim that the virtue of religion is “its own reward,” and to leave it at that.<sup>11</sup> To study the issue fully one must investigate the finality of the *act* of worship. I undertake such an investigation in Chapter 5 when I deal with the object of religion. First, however, let me press this issue further and show that the virtue of religion, as a “part” of justice, is necessarily ordered towards the good of *another* and, therefore, its end is not the perfection of the worshipper.

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<sup>10</sup> III *Sent* d. 9, q. 1, a. 1, quaestiunc. 1c: Hoc autem nomen tripliciter sumitur: quandoque enim pro eo quod Deo in obsequium exhibetur, sicut sacrificium, genuflexiones, et hujusmodi; quandoque autem pro ipsa exhibitione; quandoque vero pro habitu quo exhibetur obsequium; et primo modo *latria* non est virtus, sed materia virtutis; secundo modo est actus virtutis; tertio modo est virtus . . . .

<sup>11</sup> I am not trying to argue that a virtue is not a benefit to its possessor. It is a benefit for the possessor, for a virtue is a perfection of the powers of the possessor’s soul. Justice, like any virtue, does perfect the person who has the virtue. That is what any virtue does. If I have the virtue of justice, I am perfected by it. However, that benefit is not the  *motive* for practicing the virtue, and hence, not the  *end* of the virtue. Specifically, the virtue of justice has to do with seeking the good of others; the motive for practicing justice is the good of others. It presupposes altruism.

### C. THE *ALIETAS* OF RELIGION

In face of the objection that, because God cannot benefit from our actions, the finality of religion must consist in the perfection of the worshipper, I now defend the theocentric finality of worship. The idea that the virtue of religion is ordered towards something outside of the worshipper is perhaps most evident if seen from the perspective of its corresponding cardinal virtue, namely, justice. For, even if, in a sense, the end of the virtues of prudence, fortitude, and temperance is the very perfection of their possessor, this is clearly not the case with justice, which is a virtue that aims to render *to another* what is due to him. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the virtue of religion is related to justice as one of its “parts.” Because religion is a part of justice and shares part of its *ratio*, it follows that religion, like justice, is necessarily other-seeking. Hence, whereas in the first chapter I considered the theocentricity of religion simply as a fact of experience, now I examine it as an essential mark of religion *qua* a potential part of justice. Thus, a discussion of how exactly the virtue of religion fits within the broader context of the cardinal virtue of justice and its “parts” will serve to show concretely how the end of the virtue of religion is necessarily something extrinsic to the worshipper.

#### 1. The Mereology of the Virtues

One of the overarching elements of Aquinas’ ethics is the application of a sophisticated mereology (theory of the part-whole relationship) to his account of the virtues. He distinguishes between three kinds of “part”:

Parts are of three kinds, namely, (A) integral, as wall, roof, and foundations are parts of a house; (B) subjective, as ox and lion are parts of “animal;” and (C) potential, as the nutritive and sensitive powers are parts of the soul.<sup>12</sup>

In other words, by “part” one could mean:

(A) “Integral part,” which is a notion characteristic of natural philosophy and corresponds to the ordinary usage of the term, for example, the hand and the leg of a human being are its parts. In this sense, a part is less than the whole of which it is a part: for instance, a hand is less than a human being. Conversely, a whole is not predicated of its integral parts: for example, a hand is not a human being.

(B) “Subjective part,” which is a notion characteristic of logic and is equivalent to the term “species,” for example, “human” is a subjective part of “animal.” A subjective part, then, *is* everything that the whole (of which it is a part) is—and, in a sense, more than the whole, by being wider than the whole: all of the defining characteristics of the concept “animal” are found also within the concept of “human” (although the latter concept contains more defining characteristics). Accordingly, a whole is predicated of its

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<sup>12</sup> *ST* II-II.48c: “[T]riplex est pars, scilicet integralis, ut paries, tectum et fundamentum sunt partes domus; subiectiva, sicut bos et leo sunt partes animalis; et potentialis, sicut nutritivum et sensitivum sunt partes animae.” Cf. *DeSp* 11 ad 2: “[S]ciendum est triplex esse totum. Unum universale, quod adest cuilibet parti secundum totam suam essentiam et virtutem; unde proprie praedicatur de suis partibus, ut cum dicitur: Homo est animal. Aliud vero est totum integrale, quod non adest alicui suae parti neque secundum totam essentiam neque secundum totam suam virtutem; et ideo nullo modo praedicatur de parte, ut dicatur: Paries est domus. Tertium est totum potenziale, quod est medium inter haec duo: adest secundum totam suam essentiam, sed non secundum totam suam virtutem. Unde medio modo se habet in praedicando: praedicatur quandoque de partibus, sed non proprie. Et hoc modo quandoque dicitur, quod anima est suae potentiae, vel e converso.”

subjective parts (but not vice-versa): for example, “human” is “animal” (but “animal” is not “human”).

(C) “Potential part,” a notion related to the other two. A potential part is *almost* a subjective part, but falls short of the requirements for being strictly a subjective part. It is, as it were, a quasi-subjective part. It is not an *actually* subjective part, but a *potentially* subjective part—hence “potential” part, for short. Like the integral part, a potential part is not quite everything that the whole (of which it is a part) is. Hence, a whole is not strictly predicated of its potential parts. The example that Aquinas gives is the relationship between the human soul and its nutritive and sensitive faculties. From it we are to understand that these faculties in humans are potentially, not actually, species of souls themselves, in the sense that the nutritive faculty has all the capacities necessary to be a nutritive soul in its own right and the sensitive faculty has all the capacities to be a sensitive soul in its own right, but neither of these has actual existence as a soul in its own right.

How does this apply to virtue? Aquinas continues:

Therefore, parts can be assigned to a virtue in three ways. First, in likeness to integral parts, so that those things that need to concur for the perfect act of some virtue are called “parts” of that virtue.<sup>13</sup>

From the point of view of logic, it must be noted that the integral parts of a virtue are not predicated of the whole of which they are parts. Thus, for example, none of the

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<sup>13</sup> *ST* II-II.48c: Tribus ergo modis possunt assignari partes alicui virtuti. Uno modo, ad similitudinem partium integralium, ut scilicet illa dicantur esse partes virtutis alicuius quae necesse est concurrere ad perfectum actum virtutis illius.



integral parts of prudence, taken singly—namely, memory, reason, understanding, docility, shrewdness, foresight, circumspection, and caution—is prudence itself. *All of these are required for prudence. Similarly, the integral<sup>14</sup> parts of justice are “giving to another what is due to him” and “inflicting no harm on one’s neighbor.”<sup>15</sup> Thus, both of these are required for justice.*

On the other hand, “[t]he subjective parts of a virtue are said to be its various species.”<sup>16</sup> Thus, the subjective parts of prudence (taken strictly<sup>17</sup>) are: (1) the prudence whereby someone rules a multitude, called “regitive” prudence (*regitiva*), and (2) the prudence whereby someone rules herself or himself (unnamed). Regitive prudence is itself divided into four subjective parts: (a) military prudence, (b) domestic prudence (*oeconomica*), (c) “regnative” prudence (*regnativa*), and (d) political prudence.<sup>18</sup> Each of

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<sup>14</sup> Although I call them here the “integral parts of justice,” Aquinas tries to avoid too close an analogy between physical beings (from which the language of “integral parts” is drawn) and the virtues and thus calls them “quasi-integral” in *ST II-II.79*; the Marietti edition of the *Summa theologiae*, in a footnote to the prooemium of this article, explains: “Sic eas vocat S. Doctor, quia proprie non sunt integrales ut in physicis dici solent ex quibus corpus constituitur sed habent quamdam similitudinem cum illis quae in compositione physica sic vocantur proprie.”

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *ST II-II.79.1c*: Constituit autem aliquis aequalitatem iustitiae faciendo bonum, idest reddendo alteri quod ei debetur. Conservat autem aequalitatem iustitiae iam constitutae declinando a malo, idest nullum nocumentum proximo inferendo.

<sup>16</sup> *ST II-II.48c*: Partes autem subiectivae virtutis dicuntur species eius diversae.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *ST II-II.48c*: Si vero prudentia sumatur large, secundum quod includit etiam scientiam speculativam, ut supra dictum est; tunc etiam partes eius ponuntur dialectica, rhetorica et physica, secundum tres modos procedendi in scientiis. Quorum unus est per demonstrationem ad scientiam causandam, quod pertinet ad physicam; ut sub physica intelligantur omnes scientiae demonstrativae. Alius modus est ex probabilibus ad opinionem faciendam, quod pertinet ad dialecticam. Tertius modus est ex quibusdam coniecturis ad suspicionem inducendam, vel ad aliquam persuadendum, quod pertinet ad rhetoricam. Potest tamen dici quod haec tria pertinent ad prudentiam etiam proprie dictam, quae ratiocinatur interdum quidem ex necessariis, interdum ex probabilibus, interdum autem ex quibusdam coniecturis.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *ST II-II.48c*: [P]artes prudentiae, secundum quod proprie sumuntur, sunt prudentia per quam aliquis regit seipsum, et prudentia per quam aliquis regit

these is fully prudence on its own accord in the same way in which each species of animal (for instance, “dog,” “cat,” “monkey”) is “animal.” Similarly, the subjective parts of justice are distributive and commutative justice, each of which is said to be “justice” in the full sense of the term.<sup>19</sup>

Now, the potential parts of a virtue are the “parts” that do not quite qualify as species of their principal virtue. Hence, they are called “annexed” virtues. Aquinas notes that this relationship between principal and annexed virtues is analyzable into two aspects, namely, their “coinciding,” and their “falling short”:

[T]wo points must be observed about the virtues annexed to a principal virtue. The first is that these virtues in some respect coincide with the principal virtue; and the second is that in some respect they fall short of the nature of that virtue.<sup>20</sup>

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multitudinem, quae differunt specie, ut dictum est, et iterum prudentia quae est multitudinis regitiva dividitur in diversas species secundum diversas species multitudinis. Est autem quaedam multitudo adunata ad aliquod speciale negotium, sicut exercitus congregatur ad pugnandum, cuius regitiva est prudentia militaris. Quaedam vero multitudo est adunata ad totam vitam, sicut multitudo unius domus vel familiae, cuius regitiva est prudentia oeconomica; et multitudo unius civitatis vel regni, cuius quidem directiva est in principe regnativa, in subditis autem politica simpliciter dicta.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.61.1: [I]ustitia particularis ordinatur ad aliquam privatam personam, quae comparatur ad communitatem sicut pars ad totum. Potest autem ad aliquam partem duplex ordo attendi. Unus quidem partis ad partem, cui similis est ordo unius privatae personae ad aliam. Et hunc ordinem dirigit commutativa iustitia, quae consistit in his quae mutuo fiunt inter duas personas ad invicem. Alius ordo attenditur totius ad partes, et huic ordini assimilatur ordo eius quod est commune ad singulas personas. Quem quidem ordinem dirigit iustitia distributiva, quae est distributiva communium secundum proportionalitatem. Et ideo duae sunt iustitiae species, scilicet commutativa et distributiva.

<sup>20</sup> *ST* II-II.80c: [I]n virtutibus quae adiunguntur alicui principali virtuti duo sunt consideranda, primo quidem, quod virtutes illae in aliquo cum principali virtute convenient; secundo, quod in aliquo deficiant a perfecta ratione ipsius.

Here Aquinas is expressing the fact that the relationship between some virtues is *similar* to, but falls short of, the relationship between a species and its genus. In other words, some virtues (a) have similarities to, and hence a close relationship with, a principal virtue, but (b) they are significantly different from, and hence fall short of the nature of, the principal virtue. Because these virtues are not quite *actual* subjective parts, that is, actual species, of their corresponding principal virtues, Aquinas calls them *potential* parts of their corresponding principal virtues.

Now, the *coinciding* between a principal virtue and its annexed virtues (potential parts) is based on the coincidence of the objects towards which they are directed.

The potential parts of a virtue are the virtues connected with it, which are directed to certain secondary acts or matters, not having, as it were, the whole power of the principal virtue.<sup>21</sup>

The annexed virtues deal with “secondary acts or matters.” The fact that their objects are “secondary” implies that they have some close relationship to, and hence coincidence with, the objects of the primary virtue. This is easy to see with respect to the virtue of justice. Aquinas explains that:

[S]ince justice is of one man to another as stated above (II-II.58.2), all the virtues that are directed to another person may, by reason of this common aspect, be annexed to justice.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *ST* II-II.48c: Partes autem potentiales alicuius virtutis dicuntur virtutes adiunctae quae ordinantur ad aliquos secundarios actus vel materias, quasi non habentes totam potentiam principalis virtutis.

On the other hand, an annexed virtue's *falling short* from its primary virtue is due to the fact that the annexed virtues fail in some way to fulfill the requirements of the definition of the primary virtue.

## 2. The Requirements of Justice

In the case of justice in particular, its “essential character . . . consists in rendering to *another* his *due* according to *equality*,”<sup>23</sup> hence, a virtue can be associated with justice, even if it falls short one of the following three respects:

- a) *Alietas* (“otherness”),
- b) *Ratione debiti* (“by reason of what is due”),
- c) *Ratione aequalis* (“by reason of what is equal”).

In *ST* II-II.58.2 Aquinas offers the Platonic notion of “justice” within the soul as an example of how a virtue fails to meet the requirement of (a) *alietas*:

[S]ince justice by its name implies equality, it denotes essentially relation to another, for a thing is equal, not to itself, but to another. And forasmuch as it belongs to justice to rectify human acts, as stated above (I-II.113.1; II-II.57.1) this otherness (*alietas*) which justice demands must needs be between beings capable of action. Now actions belong to suppositis and wholes and, properly speaking, not to parts and forms or powers, for we do not say properly that the hand strikes, but a man with his hand, nor that heat makes a thing hot, but fire by heat, although such expressions may be employed metaphorically. Hence, justice properly speaking demands a distinction of suppositis, and consequently is only in one man towards another. Nevertheless in one and the same man we may speak metaphorically of his various principles of action such as the reason, the

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<sup>22</sup> *ST* II-II.80c: Quia vero iustitia ad alterum est, ut ex supradictis patet, omnes virtutes quae ad alterum sunt possunt ratione convenientiae iustitiae annecti.

<sup>23</sup> *ST* II-II.80c: Ratio vero iustitiae consistit in hoc quod *alteri* reddatur quod ei *debetur* secundum *aequalitatem* (my emphasis).

irascible, and the concupiscible, as though they were so many agents: so that metaphorically in one and the same man there is said to be justice insofar as the reason commands the irascible and concupiscible, and these obey reason; and in general insofar as to each part of man is ascribed what is becoming to it. Hence, the Philosopher (*Ethics* V.11) calls this “justice said according to metaphor.”<sup>24</sup>

*Alietas* is an essential element of the virtue of justice. Deficiency in this respect thus makes a virtue be only *metaphorically* justice. In this sense one can call *metaphorically* “justice” what is properly speaking prudence, fortitude or temperance.

In *ST* II-II.80 he explains how virtues which fulfill the requirement of (a) *alietas* can still fall short with respect to (b) *ratione debiti* and (c) *ratione aequalis*:

[I]n two ways may a virtue directed to another person fall short of the perfection of justice: first, by falling short by reason of what is equal; secondly, by falling short by reason of what is due.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *ST* II-II.58.2c: [C]um nomen iustitiae aequalitatem importet, ex sua ratione iustitia habet quod sit ad alterum, nihil enim est sibi aequale, sed alteri. Et quia ad iustitiam pertinet actus humanos rectificare, ut dictum est, necesse est quod *alietas* ista quam requirit iustitia, sit diversorum agere potentium. Actiones autem sunt suppositorum et totorum, non autem, proprie loquendo, partium et formarum, seu potentiarum, non enim proprie dicitur quod manus percutiat, sed homo per manum; neque proprie dicitur quod calor calefaciat, sed ignis per calorem. Secundum tamen similitudinem quandam haec dicuntur. Iustitia ergo proprie dicta requirit diversitatem suppositorum, et ideo non est nisi unius hominis ad alium. Sed secundum similitudinem accipiuntur in uno et eodem homine diversa principia actionum quasi diversa agentia, sicut ratio et irascibilis et concupiscibilis. Et ideo metaphorice in uno et eodem homine dicitur esse iustitia, secundum quod ratio imperat irascibili et concupiscibili, et secundum quod haec obediunt rationi, et universaliter secundum quod unicuique parti hominis attribuitur quod ei convenit. Unde philosophus, in V *Ethic.*, hanc iustitiam appellat secundum metaphoram dictam.

<sup>25</sup> *ST* II-II.80c: Ratio vero iustitiae consistit in hoc quod alteri reddatur quod ei debetur secundum aequalitatem, ut ex supradictis patet. Dupliciter igitur aliqua virtus ad

These two aspects are essential to justice insofar as they are part of the “perfection” of justice. However, they are not as central as *alietas*. Whereas without *alietas* a virtue can only be called “justice” metaphorically, if a virtue possesses the *alietas* of justice but falls short only with respect to (b) *ratione debiti* or (c) *ratione aequalis*, that would make the virtue a *potential* part of justice—and not just *metaphorically* “justice.”

### 3. Religion as Justice

#### a. Religion Falls Short of Justice *Ratione aequalis*

The virtue of religion is among the virtues “which render another his due but are unable to render the equal due.”<sup>26</sup> This virtue, then, fulfills the requirements with respect to (a) *alietas* (for it is directed to God) and (b) *ratione debiti* (for we *owe* worship to God), but it falls short of justice (c) *ratione aequalis*. It is impossible to give to God his due in the measure of equality—by reason both of our finitude and of his inability to receive benefit. This makes it a “potential part” of justice, or a virtue “annexed” to justice.

Whatever man renders to God is due, yet it cannot be equal, as though man rendered to God as much as he owes him, according to *Ps.* 115:12,

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alterum existens a ratione iustitiae deficit, uno quidem modo, inquantum deficit a ratione aequalis; alio modo, inquantum deficit a ratione debiti.

<sup>26</sup> *ST* II-II.80c: quae debitum quidem alteri reddunt, sed non possunt reddere aequale.

“What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that he hath rendered to me?” On this respect, religion is annexed to justice . . . .<sup>27</sup>

Thus we see that, whereas (a) *alietas* and (b) *ratio debiti* explain the coincidence between religion and its corresponding principal virtue of justice, the absence of (c) *ratio aequalis* explains why religion *falls short* of being an (actual) subjective part or species of justice.

### b. The *Alietas* of Religion

It is now evident, within this context, that justice is primarily characterized by the aspect of *alietas* and, therefore, its goodness consists primarily in giving a due good *to another*. Hence, the proper or essential end of justice is not the perfection of the agent (or possessor). The good that makes an act just is the good of the *other*. The end of justice is the other. Justice is, thus, essentially altruistic or other-seeking and, therefore, it is not, *qua* justice, ordered to self-perfection. The agent who acts justly certainly benefits from performing a just act, and he may even seek such a benefit, but that benefit is not part of the essence of the just act. The benefit of the possessor is an effect of the virtue, but just that: an *effect*, not the virtue itself. The *alietas* of religion, then, demands that one seek an *extrinsic* end for the virtue of religion.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *ST* II-II.80c: Et primo quidem, quidquid ab homine Deo redditur, debitum est, non tamen potest esse aequale, ut scilicet tantum ei homo reddat quantum debet; secundum illud Psalm., quid retribuam domino pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi? Et secundum hoc adiungitur iustitiae religio . . . .

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Charles René Billuart, *Summa sancti Thomae: hodiernis academiaram moribus accommodata* (Paris: Victor Lecoffre, 1886), vol. IV, p. 541: Sic se habet religio ad Deum, sicut iustitia, cujus est pars, ad proximum . . . . Objectum vero cui [iustitiae], seu potius finis cui, est ipsa persona cui redditur aequale debitum . . . . Pariformiter . . . . objectum tandem cui [religionis] ipse Deus . . . .

Thus, the claim that worship must be a self-centered act simply because God does not need our worship is a *non sequitur*. To argue this way is to proceed from a false dichotomy. It is possible for worship to be an act that aims at neither human perfection nor God's perfection, but at a *tertium quid*, something that is finite and perfectible, but that at the same time has some relation to God. In fact, this *must* be the case. The supreme perfection of God, on the one hand, and the nature of the virtue of religion itself, on the other, demand that one posit this *tertium quid* as the end sought in worship. On the one hand, nothing humans do can bring God any closer to perfection because that would imply that he is less-than-supremely-perfect; hence, it cannot be that worship seeks to perfect God. On the other hand, religion itself has an element of otherness (*alietas*), which precludes it from being an egocentric act. Therefore, a *tertium quid* must be sought. Ultimately my argument in the subsequent chapters will be that *tertium quid* as the ultimate end of worship is what Aquinas calls the "glory of God," that is, the extrinsic (perfectible) manifestation of his intrinsic (non-perfectible) goodness within creation. This *tertium quid* is, considered formally under the aspect of something related to God, but materially as comprised of the universe of rational beings. Thus, the theocentric finality of worship is accounted for without compromising Divine immutability.



**PART TWO:**

**THE PRINCIPLES**

### ***THE INTERPRETIVE KEY: OBJECT VS. END***

It is clear now that by the finality of worship I do *not* mean the (arbitrary) *finis operantis* of a given act of worship, but rather the (natural) *finis operis* of all acts of worship in general. I said, moreover, that whereas in one sense it is true that the virtue of religion is its own reward, and its acts are good in themselves, nevertheless in another sense religious worship also has a finality that is non-immanent. Finally, given the *alietas* that accounts for the fact that religion is a potential part of justice, it is necessary to acknowledge that the acts of religious worship also have, in some way or another, a theocentric finality. None of these points tells us precisely in what the finality of worship consists, but only in what it does *not* consist. In the present Part, I head toward a positive solution by offering a close study of the moral principles that govern the issue.

Besides *ST II-II.81.7*, where Aquinas bluntly asserts that worship is not “for the sake of [God] himself . . . but for our sake,” there is another text that deals, explicitly and *ex professo*, with the topic of the finality of worship, namely, *ST II-II.81.5*. There Aquinas appears to go in the opposite direction: he claims that God *is* indeed the end of religion. He does so while discussing the distinction between the object and the end of the virtue of religion. His concern is to classify the virtue of religion as a moral virtue rather than as a theological virtue. In order to make the classification he has to argue that the *object* of the virtue of religion is not God, but something created. Only the theological virtues have God as object, he has held. Moral virtues have created objects. However, by making the claim that the object of religion is not God, he is seemingly emptying religion of its theocentric element. Is not God central to the notion of religion? Is he not its “object?” Aquinas will answer the first of these questions in the affirmative, but the

second in the negative. God is indeed central to religion; nevertheless, he is not its *object*, properly speaking, but its *end*. He explains:

Religion is what offers to God due *cultus*.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, two things are considered in religion. One is *what* religion offers, that is, *cultus*: and this is related to religion as matter and object. The other is *that to which it is offered*, that is, God. To God *cultus* is shown not as if the acts whereby God is worshipped (*colitur*) attain God himself, as when we believe in God, by believing we attain God . . . . But rather due *cultus* is offered to God insofar as certain acts, whereby God is worshipped (*colitur*), are done for the sake of reverence of God, for example, the offering of sacrifices and other such things. Hence, it is manifest that God is not related to the virtue of religion as matter or object, but as end. Therefore, religion is not a theological virtue, whose object is the ultimate end: but rather it is a moral virtue, to which it belongs to be about “those things that are for the end” [that is, the means].<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Most translators render *cultus* as “worship.” However, this translation would run afoul in other texts, where Aquinas uses the term outside of the religious context. Cf. *ST* II-II.81.1 ad 4: “[C]olere dicimus homines quos honorificatione, vel recordatione, vel praesentia frequentamus. Et etiam aliqua quae nobis subiecta sunt coli a nobis dicuntur: sicut agricolae dicuntur ex eo quod colunt agros, et incolae dicuntur ex eo quod colunt loca quae inhabitant . . . .” Therefore, I will leave this term untranslated as much as possible. When the Latin must be translated, I will translate *cultus* and its related forms as “worship,” “cultivating,” et cetera, depending on the context; cf. Roy DeFerrari, *A Lexicon of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1948-49), 258. When I do translate the term, I also add to the translations the corresponding Latin term in parenthesis in order to allow the reader to keep in mind the original. As I pointed out in Chapter 1, outside of translations I will continue utilizing the term “worship” in the general sense of anything pertaining to the virtue of religion, as synonymous with “religion” and *latria*.

<sup>2</sup> *ST* II-II.81.5c (emphasis added): “[R]eligio est quae Deo debitum cultum affert. Duo igitur in religione considerantur. Unum quidem quod religio Deo affert, cultus scilicet, et hoc se habet per modum materiae et obiecti ad religionem. Aliud autem est id cui affertur, scilicet Deus. Cui cultus exhibetur non quasi actus quibus Deus colitur ipsum Deum attingant, sicut cum credimus Deo, credendo Deum attingimus . . . affertur autem Deo debitus cultus in quantum actus quidam, quibus Deus colitur, in Dei reverentiam fiunt, puta sacrificiorum oblationes et alia huiusmodi. Unde manifestum est quod Deus non comparatur ad virtutem religionis sicut materia vel obiectum, sed sicut finis. Et ideo religio non est virtus theologica, cuius obiectum est ultimus finis, sed est virtus moralis,

This article builds on a great deal that Aquinas has previously established regarding the object and end of a human act in general and the object of religion specifically, namely, *cultus*. Most significantly, Aquinas here imports from *ST I-II.18* a fundamental distinction between the object and the end of a human act in general. Hence, it seems obvious that, if one wishes to understand Aquinas' claim that God is the end of religion, one must turn to *ST I-II.18* to examine the principles that govern that issue. However, for reasons that I give below, the doctrine of the object and end of a human act in general, at least as it is presented in the text of *ST I-II.18*, does not sufficiently explain the nuances of Aquinas' claim that God is the end of religion. As I shall show, that text is much more helpful for the purposes of this study when read in light of the *finis operis / finis operantis* distinction.

My aim in this second part of the study, which comprises Chapters 3 and 4, is the following: to examine the doctrine on the object and end of human acts in general as presented in *ST I-II.18* in such a way that I may later, in Part Three (Chapters 5-7), apply it to doctrine on the object and the end of religion in particular as presented in *ST II-II.81.5*. In Chapter 3, I examine Aquinas' use of the terms "object" and "end" in *ST I-*

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cuius est esse circa ea quae sunt ad finem." The Blackfriars translation renders this last clause as, "whose objects are the means to the last end." Although the translation is not literal, it accurately communicates the idea. The terminology of *esse circa* is interchangeable with the more standard *obiectum*. Aquinas defines the *obiectum* of an act as the matter *circa quam*: cf. *ST I-II.18.2 ad 2*: *obiectum non est materia ex qua, sed materia circa quam . . .* The phrase *ea quae sunt ad finem* (literally, "those things that are for the end"), which is standard throughout Aquinas' writings (cf. *ST I-II.8ff, passim*), simply refers to the means to an end. Aquinas does not use (or, for that matter, have) a single word for "means" (*medium* means something else). However, for the sake of faithfulness to Aquinas' thought, I will henceforth translate these expressions literally, providing the Latin in footnotes for easy reference. Despite its verbosity, the expression "those things which are for the end" not only has the merit that it renders as exactly as possible the meaning of the Latin, but also makes clear the fact that the end is the *ratio volendi* of the means—a doctrine that I shall later unpack in Chapter 4.

II.18 and compare it with his use of the same terms in the question on religion (*ST* II-II.81.5). As I explain later, in the former text, “end” refers to the *finis operantis* of a human act. By contrast, “end” in the latter text refers to the *finis operis* of religion. Explaining this apparent discrepancy will take me into a more detailed philosophical study of the notions of *finis operis* and *finis operantis* and their applications to human acts and virtues. I conclude finally that the discrepancy does not entail an impasse, and that *ST* I-II.18 sheds important light on *ST* II-II.81.5c. In Chapter 4, I analyze the principles that Aquinas lays out in *ST* I-II.18 for the role that the object and end play in a human act. These principles form the conceptual core of this study. Chapters 3-4 thus pave the way for Part Three, where I apply this analysis of the principles in *ST* I-II.18 to the issue of the end of worship in *ST* II-II.81.5c.

### DOES *ST I-II.18* SERVE AS THE INTERPRETIVE KEY?

In this chapter, I examine the notions of “object” and “end” as Aquinas presents them in *ST I-II.18* (Section A), in order later to apply them to the discussion of the object and end of religion in *ST II-II.81.5* (Section B). In Section A, I do two things: first, (1) I give a brief presentation of Aquinas’ notion of the object of a human act in general, which is relatively unproblematic for this study. Then, (2) I focus on the notion of “end” as Aquinas discusses it in *ST I-II.18*, which is problematic when applied to the context of religion. I show that in *ST I-II.18*, and particularly in articles 4, 6 and 7,<sup>1</sup> the “end” of the human act means the *finis operantis*, not the *finis operis*. In Section B, I show that a problem arises when one attempts to apply this understanding of “end” to the discussion of the object and end of religion in *ST II-II.81.5c*. In the latter text, Aquinas very clearly affirms God as the objective end, the *finis operis*, of the acts of religion. Therefore, there seems to be a discrepancy. In *ST I-II.18*, he seems to refer to the *finis operantis* of a given human act and, in *ST II-II.81.5*, to the *finis operis* of religion.

Ultimately, the goal of this chapter is to resolve this apparent discrepancy between the two texts. This chapter, then, prepares the way for the chapters to come. Once Chapter 3 has concluded that one can read *ST II-II.81.5c* in light of *ST I-II.18*, Chapter 4 can engage in a detailed study of the objects and the ends of human acts in

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<sup>1</sup> These three articles are the most relevant for the notion of the end of the human act, as their headings (taken from the *prooemium* of the question) show: Art. 4, “Utrum [actio hominis] habeat [quod sit bona vel mala] ex fine;” Art. 6: “Utrum actus habeat speciem boni vel mali ex fine;” Art. 7. “Utrum species quae est ex fine, contineatur sub specie quae est ex obiecto, sicut sub genere, aut e converso.”

general (in *ST I-II.18*). Then, in Part Three (Chapters 5-7), I apply the principles discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 to the issue of the object and the end of religion in *ST II-II.81.5*.

## **A. THE OBJECT AND END OF A HUMAN ACT IN GENERAL**

### **1. The “Object” of a Human Act**

What does Aquinas mean when he says that *cultus* is the “object” of the virtue of religion? What is an “object?” In *ST I-II.18* Aquinas gives an exposition on what has been traditionally called the moral determinants of the human act. Here Aquinas introduces the familiar distinction between the object, the end, and the circumstances of a human act and establishes their relationships. The question begins, in the first article, with the assertion of the principle that, just as the goodness and badness of things depends on their fullness of being or defect thereof, so the goodness and badness of actions depends on their fullness of being as well: “Every act has goodness insofar as it has some being; but it falls short of goodness insofar as it falls short of some of the fullness of being that is due to the human act, and is thus called evil . . . .”<sup>2</sup>

Aquinas’ ultimate concern in this question is to determine what makes an act morally good or evil. In order to do so, he presents a fundamental principle governing the moral specification of human acts. Because acts are “things” in the sense that they are

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<sup>2</sup> *ST I-II.18.1c*: Sic igitur dicendum est quod omnis actio, in quantum habet aliquid de esse, in quantum habet de bonitate: in quantum vero deficit ei aliquid de plenitudine essendi quae debetur actioni humanae, in quantum deficit a bonitate, et sic dicitur mala . . . .

some-thing and not no-thing, one can apply to them anything that is true of things in general: “it is necessary to speak of goodness and evil in actions just as of goodness and evil in things . . . .”<sup>3</sup> Although this principle seems obvious in the context of Aquinas’ thought, it is nevertheless essential to anticipate the potential objection that Thomas is “reifying” human acts. He does not intend to reify acts by closely paralleling them to *material* things. Rather, he applies to acts some of the logical and metaphysical notions that apply to all *entia* in general (other than God), such as genus and species.<sup>4</sup> To be sure, acts are not material things—certainly not substances—but they are indeed *entia* and, therefore, qualify for this sort of analysis. In fact, I have already performed a similar kind of application of principles from *entia* to virtues in quite a generous manner in the previous chapter when I spoke of virtues as having species and potential parts.

Whereas in article one Aquinas established the legitimacy of applying the general principles of *entia* to human acts, in article two he begins to *perform* the application. He is particularly concerned there to find in human acts a “species,” much in the same way in which natural things have species. Therefore, just as Aquinas would say, for instance, that I belong to the species “human,” he will also say that the human act that I am currently performing belongs to the species “typing a sentence.” The species of human acts will be the first determining factor of the moral goodness or evil of the act.

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<sup>3</sup> *ST* I-II.18.1c: [D]e bono et malo in actionibus oportet loqui sicut de bono et malo in rebus.

<sup>4</sup> One could object that, according to St. Thomas, angels are a counterexample to the thesis that genus and species are applicable to all created *entia*. Although it is true that, according to him, angels do not differ in number within the same species, they do differ in species (each individual angel is its own species), and they all belong to the genus “incorporeal substance.” Thus, genera and species are logical notions that are applicable to angels. Cf. *ST* I.50.4c.



He begins his argument in article two by reasserting the principle of the derivation of the goodness and evil of an act from its fullness of being. He combines this principle with the observation that “the first thing that seems to pertain to the fullness of being is that which gives to a thing its species.”<sup>5</sup> Now, he tells us that what gives an act its species is its object; or, as he puts it elsewhere, “any difference of object makes a diversity of species in acts”<sup>6</sup> It follows that the goodness and evil of an act is primarily derived from its object:

Now, just as a natural thing has its species from its form, so an action has its species from the object, as motion from the *terminus*. And, thus, just as the first goodness of a natural thing is obtained from its form, which gives it the species, so the first goodness of a moral act is obtained from a fitting object. Hence, [this goodness] is called by some “the good from the genus,” for example, to make use of what is one’s own. And just as in natural things the first evil is [constituted by] whether a generated thing does not attain its specific form, for example, if a human is not generated, but something else instead of man, thus, the first evil in moral acts is what is taken from the object, such as to take what belongs to another. And this is called “evil from the genus,” taking “genus” for “species,” speaking in the same way as when we call the entire human species “the human genus [or kind].”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *ST I-II.18.2c*: Primum autem quod ad plenitudinem essendi pertinere videtur, est id quod dat rei speciem.

<sup>6</sup> *ST I-II.18.5c*: [A]liqua differentia obiecti faciat diversitatem speciei in actibus.

<sup>7</sup> *ST I-II.18.2c*: Sicut autem res naturalis habet speciem ex sua forma, ita actio habet speciem ex obiecto; sicut et motus ex termino. Et ideo sicut prima bonitas rei naturalis attenditur ex sua forma, quae dat speciem ei, ita et prima bonitas actus moralis attenditur ex obiecto convenienti; unde et a quibusdam vocatur bonum ex genere; puta, uti re sua. Et sicut in rebus naturalibus primum malum est, si res generata non consequitur formam specificam, puta si non generetur homo, sed aliquid loco hominis; ita primum malum in actionibus moralibus est quod est ex obiecto, sicut accipere aliena. Et dicitur malum ex genere, genere pro specie accepto, eo modo loquendi quo dicimus humanum genus totam humanam speciem.

Most important in this passage for this study on the finality of religion is not the conclusion that the object of an act is the primary determinant of the moral status of the act. Rather, of primary importance for us is the premise that the object of an act is what gives it its species. In other words, what makes this or that an act of theft, for example, is that it is essentially a “taking of the property of another.” As I later show, this doctrine, applied to religion, means that what makes this or that an act of religion is that it is essentially an act of *cultus*.

Now, what exactly does Aquinas mean when he says that an object specifies an act? His analogies with motion and with natural things give us an indication. He tells us that the relationship between a human act and its object is analogous, on the one hand, to the relationship between a natural thing and its form, and, on the other, to that between motion and its *terminus*. Just as the *form* gives to a natural thing its species, and the *terminus* gives to motion its species, so the *object* gives to a human act its species. What is the principle expressed in these analogies? In each case, one part of the being—the essential part, one might say—gives the species or quiddity to the entire being. Thus, these examples show that the specification that the object gives to the act is not the logical type of specification that a difference gives to a genus. Rather, the specification of which Aquinas speaks is the sort that a substantial form gives to the particular *ens* whose substantial form it is. The object is not identical to the act itself. By “act,” Aquinas means the whole, concrete, particular entity, such as a particular act of theft, which includes not only the object of taking the property of another, but also the circumstances (when, why, etc.) and the *finis operantis*. Hence, it is evident that, by “object,” Aquinas means its most

essential element, the element that makes the act be the kind of moral act that it is.<sup>8</sup> The object, considered in itself, does not amount to a real, particular act (or to any real entity at all)—just as, analogously, in natural things, a thing’s species (for example, the catness of a cat) does not amount to a natural, primary substance (that is, does not amount to a cat).<sup>9</sup> The object of an act, then, is simply the essence of an action, abstracting from its particular elements.

So far, then, the discussion in *ST* I-II.18 is unproblematic and, in fact, helpful to this study. As I show in Chapter 5, the doctrine on the object of a human act can be directly applied to the acts of religion. When Aquinas says that *cultus* is the object of religion, he means that *cultus* is the essence of a particular act of religion, abstracting from its particular elements, such as its circumstances (when, where, how, and why it is done). However, when one turns to Aquinas’ explanation of the *end* of a human act in *ST*

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<sup>8</sup> This fact is particularly clear in the case of the exterior act. Aquinas later claims, in his discussion of the interior act of the will, that the end also specifies the moral act. However, as the context shows, ends specify acts only insofar as they are objects of the will. Hence, the “object” and the “end” both specify acts, but only insofar as they are somehow objects. For a thorough exposition on objects as the most essential element of a human act in Aquinas, see Joseph Pilsner, *The Specification of Human Acts in St Thomas Aquinas* (London: Oxford University Press, 2006), 70-140. Cf. Theo G. Belmans, “La Spécification de l’agir humain par son objet chez saint Thomas d’Aquin,” *Divinitas* 22 (1979), 336-56; 23 (1979), 7-16; Stephen Brock, *Action and Conduct: Thomas Aquinas and the Theory of Action* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 86-93; Chad Ripperger, *The Morality of the Exterior Act in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Rome, 1996), 28-62; Kevin Flannery, “The Multifarious Moral Object of Thomas Aquinas,” *Thomist* 67 (2003), 95-118; Lawrence Dewan, “‘Objectum’: Notes on the Invention of a Word,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 48 (1981), 37-96.

<sup>9</sup> Despite the fact that an act’s species, considered in itself, is not a real entity, but an abstraction, it can be said to be morally good, evil, or indifferent (cf. *ST* I-II.18.8c); individual human acts, however, are always either good or bad, because “every individual action must have some circumstance that makes it good or bad, at least in respect of the intention of the end” (cf. *ST* I-II.18.9c).

I-II.18, things become rather complex and problematic, and perhaps unhelpful, for this study.

## 2. The “End” of a Human Act

### a. “End” as *Finis operantis* in *ST I-II.18*?

As I pointed out earlier, Aquinas’ general goal in Question 18 is to present the three moral determinants of the human act, namely, the object, the end, and the circumstances. The operative principle in the question is that, for a particular human act to be morally good, all three determinants must be morally good; but if one or more of these is morally evil, the particular act itself is evil. Thus, it is possible for a particular human act to have a good object but an evil end, or an evil object but a good end.

In *ST I-II.18.4*, Aquinas’ thesis is that the end is one of the moral determinants of the act. Argument 3 of that article claims that, because a good act may be done for an evil end, and vice versa, the goodness of the act must therefore have nothing to do with its end. This claim is apparently exemplified in the case of giving alms for the sake of vainglory and in the case of stealing in order to give alms. The argument reads,

[A] good action may happen to be ordered to an evil end, as when a man gives alms on account of vainglory; and conversely, an evil action may happen to be ordered to a good end, as when one steals in order to give to the poor. Therefore, an action is not good or evil from its end.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *ST I-II.18.4* arg 3: Praeterea, contingit aliquam bonam operationem ad malum finem ordinari, sicut cum aliquis dat eleemosynam propter inanem gloriam, et e converso

In replying to this objection, Aquinas will concede the basic idea contained in the premise that a good act may be done for an evil end, and vice versa. However, he will correct the way this idea is expressed. Here, and throughout *ST I-II.18*, Aquinas focuses on the complete act that stems voluntarily from an agent. This fact is a very important one to bear in mind. Although the term “act” can loosely refer to the *species* of the act, its proper referent is the whole, particular act, which includes both essential and accidental elements, namely, the object, the end, and the circumstances. Accordingly, he explains that when the argument claims that, “a good act is done for an evil end,” what is really meant is that the *object* or *species* of the act is done for an evil end. Therefore, an act’s being good “in its species” is not enough for the (whole, particular) act to be good; its other, non-essential elements must be good as well. Thus, Aquinas replies:

[N]othing prevents an action that has one of the aforementioned goodnesses from lacking in another. And according to this, it may happen that an action that is good according to its species or according to circumstances is ordered to an evil end, and vice versa. However, an action is not good, simply speaking, unless all goodnesses concur, because “any individual defect causes evil, but good is caused by an integral cause,” as Dionysius says in Chapter 4 of *On Divine Names*.<sup>11</sup>

In any particular act, then, there is a possible disparity between the object and the end.

The object may be morally good (hence making the act good “in its species”) despite its

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aliquam malam operationem ordinari ad bonum finem, sicut cum quis furatur ut det pauperi. Non ergo est ex fine actio bona vel mala.

<sup>11</sup> *ST I-II.18.4 ad 3*: [N]ihil prohibet actioni habenti unam praedictarum bonitatum, deesse aliam. Et secundum hoc, contingit actionem quae est bona secundum speciem suam vel secundum circumstantias, ordinari ad finem malum, et e converso. Non tamen est actio bona simpliciter, nisi omnes bonitates concurrant, quia quilibet singularis defectus causat malum, bonum autem causatur ex integra causa, ut Dionysius dicit, IV cap. de div. nom.

being willed for an evil end. Conversely, the object may be morally evil (hence making the act evil “in its species”) despite its being willed for a good end.

This possible disparity between the object and the end reveals a significant point regarding Aquinas’ usage of the term “end” in *ST I-II.18*. The “end” spoken of here is not one that *necessarily* ensues from the object. It is an end that may be arbitrarily chosen. It is independent of the natural finality of the act itself and depends only on the will of the agent. It is not the objective end of the human act in question, but the subjective end that the agent imposes upon the action. This end, therefore, cannot, as such, be the *finis operis*, but must be the *finis operantis*. Therefore, when Aquinas speaks of the “end” of a human act in this article (and he uses the term consistently throughout *ST I-II.18*), he is speaking of the *finis operantis*.

This fact, namely, that “end” here means *finis operantis*, is of key importance for this study. I later point out an apparent discrepancy between this text and *ST II-II.81*, where Aquinas claims that God is the “end” of religion, meaning that God is the *finis operis*, not the *finis operantis*, of religion. Here, however, we shall explore in detail the implications of Aquinas’ usage of “end” in *ST I-II.18* as *finis operantis*.

Before we proceed, let us first notice that Aquinas never uses the language of *finis operis* / *finis operantis* (or its variants, such as *finis agentis*) in his entire discussion of the object and end of human acts in *ST I-II.18*.<sup>12</sup> In fact, this distinction is absent from the

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<sup>12</sup>By contrast, in the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* he uses the distinction to explain which sense of “end” counts as a determinant of a human act. Cf. *IV Sent* d. 16 q. 3, a. 1, quaestiunc. 2 ad 3: “Quidam qui est finis operis, secundum quod philosophus dicit in 2 Eth., quod quaedam conjuncta sunt malo fini; et iste finis dat speciem actui; unde vel non est circumstantia, si consideretur tantum genus moris; vel referendo ad ipsam substantiam actus, includitur in hac circumstantia quid. Alius vero est finis agentis, qui

*Prima secundae* altogether. With this in mind, one may object that, contrary to what he had done in his early works, Aquinas is purposefully avoiding the language of *finis operis* / *finis operantis* in *ST I-II.18*, and that, therefore, it is wrong to read *ST I-II.18* in light of this distinction.

I would reply by saying three things. First, although Aquinas does not use this distinction in the *Prima secundae*, he nonetheless uses the distinction in the *Secunda secundae*,<sup>13</sup> where he shows that temperance has a *finis operis* distinct from the *finis operantis* that the agent might impose upon his or her temperate act—an application that is analogous to the one Aquinas makes in the context of religion, on my reading. Given that the *Secunda secundae* was written after the *Prima secundae*,<sup>14</sup> the fact that in the former he still utilizes the distinction is evidence that Aquinas did not reject that doctrine by not appealing to it during the discussion of the object and end of human acts in *ST I-II.18*. He did not *abandon* that distinction; he still thinks the distinction is legitimate. The

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quandoque ex malo actu bonum intendit, vel e converso; et hic finis dicitur haec circumstantia cur.”

<sup>13</sup> *ST II-II.141.6 ad 1*: “Considerandum est autem quod quandoque aliud est finis operantis, et aliud finis operis, sicut patet quod aedificationis finis est domus, sed aedificatoris finis quandoque est lucrum. Sic igitur temperantiae ipsius finis et regula est beatitudo, sed eius rei qua utitur, finis et regula est necessitas humanae vitae, infra quam est id quod in usum vitae venit.” Aquinas, in fact, uses this distinction explicitly nine times in his writings: twice within the context of God and the “ends” of his agency (cf. *II Sent d. 1, q. 2, a. 1; a. 4*); twice within the context of the specification of human acts by their “ends” (cf. *IV Sent d. 16, q. 3, a. 1, qc. 2 ad 3; InDA 2.6.7*); three times within the context of the virtues and their “ends” (cf. *IV Sent d. 49, q. 1, a. 1, qc. 1 ad 4; ST II-II.137.1 ad 2; 141.6 ad 1*); once within the context of the question of whether the many can proceed from the one (cf. *QDPot 3.16c*); and once within the context of sin and its “ends” (*InRom 6, l. 4*). The two instances in which the distinction appears within the context of the specification of human acts by their ends are texts written *prior to* the *Prima secundae*, although the *InDA* text is nearly contemporary with the latter. Cf. Jean Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas. Volume One: The Person and His Work* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), 328.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Jean Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas. Volume One: The Person and His Work*, 329.

distinction is simply appealed to in other contexts where it is immediately relevant.

Second, although the text of *ST* I-II.18 does not utilize the language of *finis operis / operantis*, the doctrine is nonetheless implicit; for example, he says in Article 7 that, “an action of one same species on the part of its object can be ordered to an infinite number of ends: for instance, theft can be ordered to an infinite number of good and bad ends.”<sup>15</sup> Here, he is obviously thinking of *finis operantis*, rather than *finis operis*. As a matter of fact, in that same article, Aquinas *develops* the doctrine of *finis operis / operantis*—without naming it—when he explains that there are two possible relationships between the object (think *finis operis*) and end (think *finis operantis*):

The object of the external act can be related to the end of the will in two ways: in one way, as being *per se* ordered to it, just as fighting well is *per se* ordered to victory; in another way, *per accidens*, just as taking the property of another is *per accidens* ordered to the giving of alms.<sup>16</sup>

This text not only implies the *finis operis / operantis* distinction, but also develops it by showing that the two *fines* can be related *per se* or *per accidens* to each other. Third, given that it is a philosophically relevant distinction, and one that Aquinas accepts during the writing of both *ST* I-II.18 and *ST* II-II.81, it is a legitimate question to ask which sense or senses of “end” Aquinas has in mind when he says (in the former text) that human acts are specified by their end and when he says (in the latter text) that the end of

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<sup>15</sup> *ST* I-II.18.7 s.c.: [A]ctus eiusdem speciei ex parte obiecti, potest ad infinitos fines ordinari, puta furtum ad infinita bona vel mala.

<sup>16</sup> *ST* I-II.18.7c: [O]biectum exterioris actus dupliciter potest se habere ad finem voluntatis, uno modo, sicut per se ordinatum ad ipsum, sicut bene pugnare per se ordinatur ad victoriam; alio modo, per accidens, sicut accipere rem alienam per accidens ordinatur ad dandum eleemosynam.



religion is God. As I shall argue, he has two different senses of “end” in mind, and it is crucial to distinguish between the two.

Let me add that I do not read *ST* I-II.18 as requiring a distinction that is not found there, and perhaps even one that Aquinas himself purposely left out in writing that text. However, because we need the distinction for our study of religion in *ST* II-II.81, it is good to introduce it here to see how it can be harmonized with the central doctrine of *ST* I-II.18 on object, end, and circumstances. I insist that, given the existence of the distinction in Aquinas’ thought, an inconsistency between the two texts in question as far as their use of “end” would arise without a consideration of the distinction, so it is best to introduce the distinction at this point.

#### **b. “End” as *Finis operantis*: What Are the Implications?**

I have shown that, in *ST* I-II.18, by “end” Aquinas means the *finis operantis*, not the *finis operis*, of a particular act. What does this fact mean for the issue of the finality of religion? As I explained in Chapter 2, I have set out in this study to seek the *finis operis* of religion, not any of its arbitrary *fines operantis*. Here one encounters a potential impasse. If one takes *ST* I-II.18 as the interpretive key for understanding *ST* II-II.81.5, it would appear to follow that when Aquinas speaks of God as being the “end” of religion, he must mean that he is religion’s *finis operantis*, not its *finis operis*. If so, *ST* I-II.18 would hardly be helpful for us to determine the *finis operis* of religion. Or, perhaps Aquinas equivocates on the meaning of “end” in these two passages, such that, whereas he is speaking of the *finis operantis* of a human act in general in *ST* II-II.18, he is speaking of the *finis operis* of religion in *ST* II-II.81. In either case (whether he means

*finis operantis* in both texts or he is equivocating), it seems to follow that correlating these texts would be a mistake. Alternatively, perhaps the *finis operis* / *finis operantis* distinction is not so much a dichotomy between irreconcilable realities as simply a distinction of two different aspects (*rationes*) of the same thing that is sought as an end. This route is the one I take to solve the problem. By showing that the *finis operantis* can coincide with the *finis operis*, I demonstrate that the discussion in *ST* I-II.18 on the *finis operantis* of human acts is the interpretive key for the claim in *ST* II-II.81.5 that God is the *finis operis* of religion

The problem needs to be addressed by asking the following question: does the fact that “end” refers to *finis operantis* imply that in *ST* I-II.18 Aquinas is only thinking of arbitrarily-chosen ends that have no connection with the natural, objective end of an act? The answer is clear: No. To think otherwise would miss the point; to think that he intends to exclude ends that naturally ensue from their objects would be to misunderstand the distinction between *finis operis* and *finis operantis*. It would be wrong to define the *finis operantis* as an end that does not ensue naturally from the object. As I noted above in Chapter 2 (pp. 56-7), the *finis operantis* can, in fact, coincide with the *finis operis*. Nothing precludes the natural end of a certain work (*finis operis*) from being also exactly that which the agent voluntarily seeks as his or her own end (*finis operantis*). I gave the example of someone who cooks because he wants to make food edible. In this case, what the agent ultimately wills happens to be exactly that to which the action is objectively ordered. Were one to follow out Aquinas’ example,<sup>17</sup> the builder of a house may intend

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.141.6 ad 1, quoted above in note 13.

to build the house, not in order to profit from the sale of the house, or even in order to live in the house, but simply because he wants the house to be built.

To understand this point properly one must recall that, on the one hand, the *finis operis* of a human act—that to which the act or object is naturally ordered—always belongs to that act. The natural end of cooking, for instance, is invariably to make food edible. To do so belongs to the very definition of cooking. On the other hand, the *finis operantis* of a given species of human act—the ends sought by the agent—are potentially infinite: “[A]n action of one same species on the part of its object can be ordered to an infinite number of ends; for instance, theft to an infinite number of good or bad things.”<sup>18</sup> One could set out to cook for an infinity of reasons or ends (for example, to make food edible, to profit from selling the food, as recreation, etc.), some of which have no natural or intrinsic connection with the act of cooking, but some of which may be, in fact, identical with the natural end of cooking. Hence, the *finis operantis* is not necessarily different from the *finis operis*.<sup>19</sup> Thus, it may happen that tonight my goal (*finis operantis*) in the act of cooking—whose natural end (*finis operis*) is, invariably, to make food edible—is simply to make food edible, and to do nothing else with it other than to leave it in the refrigerator for future consumption. Tomorrow, however, I may perform the same action (with the same *finis operis*) for an entirely different *finis operantis*, such as displaying my artistic ability.

Now, one could object that the last example is unsuccessful in showing how one can perform an act in which the *finis operantis* coincides with the *finis operis*. When I

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<sup>18</sup> *ST I-II.18.7 s.c.*, quoted in note 14.

<sup>19</sup> In fact, as I shall show shortly, it is impossible for us to perform an act without willing its immediate *finis operis*, that is, without its immediate *finis operis* also being in a way a *finis operantis*.

cook in order to make food edible and nothing else, I am actually pursuing two separate ends. One of these ends, making the food edible, is the *finis operis*. The other end, storing the food for future consumption, is the *finis operantis*. Hence, they do not coincide.

In reply, one must first acknowledge that there are, indeed, two ends involved in the example of cooking in order to store the food: making food edible and storing the food for future consumption. Both, however, are *fines operantis*: the former, making the food edible, is the proximate *finis operantis*, and the latter, storing the food for further consumption, is an ulterior *finis operantis*. In order for my act to be a human act that belongs to the species “cooking,” I must will at least the proximate *finis operantis* of making the food edible.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the end of making food edible is both the *finis operis*, and one of the *fines operantis*. It is the natural end of cooking, and hence the *finis operis*, but, through my willing it, it becomes also a *finis operantis*. Hence, we could say that here the proximate *finis operantis* coincides with the *finis operis*. The other, ulterior end of storing the food for future consumption is also a *finis operantis*, but it does not coincide with the *finis operis*. In fact, even in the example of cooking in order to display artistic ability, the *finis operantis* of making food edible is still present, for I am willing the act of cooking (that is, of making food edible) *in order* to display my artistic ability.

From this example, an important generalization can be made. It would be impossible for a human act to have a *finis operis* that is not willed by the agent; that is, to have a *finis operis* that is not also the most proximate of the *fines operantis*. In doing a

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<sup>20</sup> One may argue that cooking may happen by accident, without the *finis operis* of cooking being willed (if I cook while sleepwalking, for instance). However, this would be an act of “cooking” only equivocally, since it could not be a *human act* belonging to the species “cooking.” Here I only speak of human acts and their *moral* species. If an act is not a human act, but only an “act of man,” then it cannot belong to a species of moral act and falls outside of this discussion. Cf. *ST* I-II.1.1c.

certain action, the agent necessarily wills the immediate natural end of that action, for the immediate natural end of that action is part of what the action is, part of its definition. As I shall show below, the proximate or immediate *finis operis*<sup>21</sup> of an act is identical with the object of the act, the most essential element of the act. And so, if this *finis operis* were not willed, the entire human act would not fall under the species of that action. Thus, for example, I could not will to display my artistic ability through cooking if I did not, at the same time, will to make the food edible. If I do not intend to make the food edible, then the action does not fall within the species of “cooking” at all, assuming that “making food edible” is part of the essence, or definition, of “cooking.”

Alternatively, in the case of almsgiving for the sake of vainglory, the giver of alms must *will* the *finis operis* of giving alms, namely, to relieve the poor. The particular act is certainly vitiated by the evil end, but nonetheless the action in its species is an action of “almsgiving,” and it is morally good in this respect. This action, however, is different in species from an action in which the agent does *not* will the end of relieving the poor—for instance, if, out of vainglory, he only wishes to give the *appearance* of intending to relieve the poor and, thus, of giving alms (but does not will the reality of the good deed). In this case, his action would not fall within the species of “almsgiving” at

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<sup>21</sup> In saying “proximate or immediate *finis operis*,” I am implying that the *fines operis* can be numerous, if each of them is ordered to another, forming a “chain” of ends, so to speak; for example, one could say that the *fines operis* of cooking are to make food edible, to nourish the body, and to have health. However, in this case one is dealing with ends that form a hierarchy of ends, a single teleological chain, and not several, disparate ends. In fact, in any one action there is almost invariably a number of *fines operantis*, but these form a “chain” of final causality, so to speak, thus saving the unity in the natural teleology of a human act. In this case, the most proximate or immediate of the *fines operantis* coincides with the *finis operis*. It is under this assumption that I have hypothesized in Chapter 1 that the natural ends (the *fines operis*) of the virtue of religion are the honor, reverence, and glory of God, forming a single teleological hierarchy.

all. It would fall within an entirely different species: that of “dissimulation.”<sup>22</sup> Hence, the act would not count as “*almsgiving* for the sake of vainglory”—which act is good in its species and evil (thus far) only in its end—but would count as “*dissimulation* for the sake of vainglory”—an act that is evil both in its species and its end.

This fact, namely, that the *finis operis* coincides with the proximate or immediate *finis operantis*, is perhaps all the more evident in the reverse scenario, that is, when an act is evil in its species but good in its end, such as when one steals in order to give alms. The goodness of the end does not change the fact that the species is intrinsically evil (a fact that is commonly expressed by the principle that “the end does not justify the means”). The reason why it would be morally evil to steal in order to give alms is that the agent, in choosing the evil means to a good end, embraces voluntarily the evil *finis operis* of the means, namely, of stealing (“appropriating what belongs to another”)<sup>23</sup> in order to perform the act. In short, the agent must will evil to carry out the act.

From the foregoing it is manifest that the *finis operantis* is not necessarily at odds with the *finis operis*; on the contrary, in any particular action there is always a series of *fines operantis*, the most proximate of which coincides with the *finis operis*, at least in the typical cases.<sup>24</sup> Hence, the distinction between *finis operis* and *finis operantis* is not a

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<sup>22</sup> *Simulatio* is a vice opposed to the virtue of truth that consists in a lie told by “the signs of outward deeds;” cf. *ST* II-II.111.1c: “*simulatio proprie est mendacium quoddam in exteriorum signis factorum consistens.*”

<sup>23</sup> I refer to Aquinas’ doctrine on stealing by appealing to his brief formulae, such as, “appropriating what belongs to another” (*ST* I-II.18.2c.), without suggesting that this phrase contains the complete doctrine or solves all of the attendant problems.

<sup>24</sup> This coincidence between the *finis operis* and the most proximate *finis operantis* is always the case with natural actions but not with the supernatural acts of the theological virtues, whose object or *finis operis* (God) coincides with the ultimate end of all acts; hence, there are no ulterior ends for these acts beyond their object. However, even here, the *finis operis* coincides with the sole *finis operantis*. Cf. *ST* I-II.62.2c:

strict dichotomy, but a distinction among different *rationes*, or aspects, of ends. What warrants the distinction is the aspect or *ratio* from which the end is considered. Whereas the expression “*finis operis*” connotes that to which the action is naturally ordered, regardless of what the agent seeks, the expression “*finis operantis*” connotes what the will is seeking in doing the action, regardless of that to which the action is naturally ordered. In other words, whereas the former expression connotes the “objective” goal that the action, as a reality exterior to the will, is ordered to, the latter expression connotes a subjective reality, an end sought by the will. However, in the realm of particular human acts, these objective and subjective realities in the typical case coincide in the proximate *finis operantis*.

### c. The Object as an “End”

If the “end” of which Aquinas speaks in *ST I-II.18* is the *finis operantis*, where does the *finis operis* “fit” within his discussion of the human act? He gives a clue when he says in *De malo*:

[T]he end is twofold: proximate and remote. The proximate end of an act is the same as the object, and from this it receives its species. However, it does not have [its] species from the remote end; but its order to such an end is a circumstance of the act.<sup>25</sup>

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Obiectum autem theologiarum virtutum est ipse Deus, qui est ultimus rerum finis. See also *ST II-II.81.5*: Et ideo religio non est virtus theologica, cuius obiectum est ultimus finis, sed est virtus moralis, cuius est esse circa ea quae sunt ad finem.

<sup>25</sup> *Questiones disputate de malo* 2.4 ad 9, ll. 335-339, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 23: . . . duplex est finis: proximus et remotus. Finis proximus actus idem est quod obiectum, et ab

Here he is presupposing that human acts have essential and accidental elements. The essential element is the object, and the accidental elements are the circumstances. Ends stand between the two, as it were, because they can either be part of the object or remain extrinsic to it. Some ends, namely, the *finis operis* (or *finis proximus* in the text above), are part of the object and, therefore, play a role in the specification of the act. However, other ends, namely, the *finis operantis* (or *finis remotus* in the text above), are extrinsic to the object. They are circumstances of the human act and are, as such, accidental elements that do not play a role in the specification of the act.<sup>26</sup>

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hoc recipit speciem. Ex fine autem remoto non habet speciem; sed ordo ad talem finem est circumstantia actus.

<sup>26</sup> However, Aquinas states that even what in other cases would be a *circumstance* can play a role in the specification of an act if that feature has a bearing on the object (for example, the fact that what is stolen is a sacred object gives the act of theft the further species of *sacrilege*); in such a case, the “circumstance” is actually forms part of the object. Cf. *ST* I-II.18.10c: “[S]icut species rerum naturalium constituuntur ex naturalibus formis, ita species moralium actuum constituuntur ex formis prout sunt a ratione conceptae, sicut ex supradictis patet. Quia vero natura determinata est ad unum, nec potest esse processus naturae in infinitum, necesse est pervenire ad aliquam ultimam formam, ex qua sumatur differentia specifica, post quam alia differentia specifica esse non possit. Et inde est quod in rebus naturalibus, id quod est accidens alicui rei, non potest accipi ut differentia constituens speciem. Sed processus rationis non est determinatus ad aliquid unum, sed quolibet dato, potest ulterius procedere. Et ideo quod in uno actu accipitur ut circumstantia superaddita obiecto quod determinat speciem actus, potest iterum accipi a ratione ordinante ut principalis conditio obiecti determinantis speciem actus. Sicut tollere alienum habet speciem ex ratione alieni, ex hoc enim constituitur in specie furti, et si consideretur super hoc ratio loci vel temporis, se habebit in ratione circumstantiae. Sed quia ratio etiam de loco vel de tempore, et aliis huiusmodi, ordinare potest; contingit conditionem loci circa obiectum accipi ut contrariam ordini rationis; puta quod ratio ordinat non esse iniuriam faciendam loco sacro. Unde tollere aliquid alienum de loco sacro addit specialem repugnantiam ad ordinem rationis. Et ideo locus, qui prius considerabatur ut circumstantia, nunc consideratur ut principalis conditio obiecti rationi repugnans. Et per hunc modum, quandocumque aliqua circumstantia respicit specialem ordinem rationis vel pro vel contra, oportet quod circumstantia det speciem actui morali vel bono vel malo.”



Therefore, the object “coincides” or “is identified”<sup>27</sup> with the immediate or proximate *finis operis*, not in the sense that the “object” and “*finis operis*” are synonymous, but in the sense that they share the same referent.<sup>28</sup> In other words, they are distinct *rationes*, or aspects, of the same reality, two ways of looking at the same element of a human act. If we considered “cooking,” for instance, it possesses some features that are comparatively speaking on the content-side of the act, such as dough’s being kneaded and bread’s being baked. Other features of the same act are comparatively speaking on the purposive-side, such as the food’s being made edible as such. Thus, object and the *finis operis*, according to their first meaning, can be distinguished in a particular act of cooking (though in other broad senses they can be used interchangeably). The object of a particular act of cooking is that on which the action is brought to bear, or even the action itself taken materially; that is, it is the “matter about which” (*materia circa quam*) of the action, a formula that can be taken as the primary sense of object.<sup>29</sup> Yet the food’s being made edible is properly the *finis operis* because it is that to which the particular act of cooking is immediately and directly ordered. This end is the *hoc ad quod opus ordinatum*

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *De beatitudine* (Turin: L.I.C.E. – R. Berruti & C., 1951), 319 (emphasis added): *Finis de quo in praesenti non est finis operis, qui identificatur cum objecto, sed finis operantis . . . Hoc non satis notaverunt quidam historici qui recenter de hac parte Summae theologiae tractaverunt.*

<sup>28</sup> Commentators and Aquinas scholars are practically unanimous in interpreting the text of *ST I-II.18* (esp. art. 2) as identifying the object of the human act with the *finis operis* (and the “end” of the human act with the *finis operantis*); to mention a few representative authors: Cajetan, *ST I-II.18.4 ad 3*, where he identifies the end with the “*finis adjunctus*,” Domingo Bañez, on *ST I-II.18.4*, sol, in *Comentarios ineditos a la Prima secundae de Santo Tomás. Tomo I: De fine ultimo et de actibus humanis* (Salamanca: Biblioteca de Teólogos Españoles, 1942); Charles René Billuart, *Summa sancti Thomae*, t. II, 294-5; Garrigou-Lagrange, *De beatitudine*, pp. 319ff; Ramirez, *De actibus humanis* (Madrid: Instituto de Filosofía “Luis Vives,” 1972), 546.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. *ST I-II.18.2 ad 2*: [O]biectum non est materia ex qua, sed materia circa quam, et habet quodammodo rationem formae, in quantum dat speciem.

*est ab agente*, a formula that we may take as the proper *ratio* of the *finis operis*.<sup>30</sup> In the example of a theft done for the sake of adultery, the object and immediate *finis operis* is the taking of the property of another. In this case, it appears difficult to distinguish sharply object and *finis operis*. The property of another is that on which the action is brought to bear (*materia circa quam* or object), and making it one's own is that to which the action is naturally ordered (*finis operis*).

Here one might add a consequence that somewhat anticipates distinctions that appear later in the chapter. If an action is naturally good in its species (for example, to give one's father a dignified burial), it is impossible for its natural end, that is, an end necessarily concomitant upon the object (for example, to honor one's father), to be evil. However, it is possible for the same good action to be done for an evil end that arises from the will of the agent for an end other than the immediate *finis operis*, that is, for what is properly a *finis operantis* (for example, for the sake of vainglory through the display of one's wealth). Thus, it is evident how the object and the *finis operis* are so closely tied together that one cannot be good without the other's being good. What is true of the relationship between the object and the *finis operantis* (namely, that one can be good while the other is evil) is not true here. The morality of the *finis operis* coincides with that of the object. If the object has an evil *finis operis*, then it is an intrinsically evil moral object; if it has a good *finis operis*, then it is an intrinsically good moral object. Hence, speaking of the goodness or malice of the *finis operis* over and above the goodness or malice of the object would be superfluous in a discussion on the moral determinants of the human act. The *finis operis*, as the text previously cited from

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<sup>30</sup> II *Sent* d. 1, q. 2, a. 1c, found in the first note of Chapter 2.

Aquinas' *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* goes on to say, provides the very *ratio* of the work done. The *finis operantis* is the only one of these two types of "end" that, given the object, can alter the morality of the act. It alone can be at variance with the morality of the object, as in the examples given above involving almsgiving. Therefore, because Aquinas is discussing the moral determinants of the human act in this question, one must interpret him as using the term "end" unequivocally to mean the *finis operantis*, the end that matters to the morality of the act.

#### **d. Conclusion**

In conclusion, when Aquinas speaks of the end of a human act in *ST I-II.18* he means the *finis operantis*, not the *finis operis*. When he speaks of "object," he means what coincides with the *finis operis*, even if they are notionally distinct. If one turns to *ST II-II.81.5*, however, one sees that Aquinas utilizes the same language of "object" and "end" with reference to religion: *cultus* is the "object" and God is the "end." If one makes this application directly, there arises an apparent discrepancy between the two texts: whereas in *ST I-II.18* "end" means *finis operantis*, in *ST II-II.81.5* Aquinas is clearly not intending to say that God is merely one of the possible, subjective *fines operantis* of an act of religion, but its natural, objective *finis operis*. This discrepancy seems to imply that one may not read *ST II-II.81.5c* in light of *ST I-II.18*.

## B. IS GOD THE *FINIS OPERIS* OR *FINIS OPERANTIS* OF RELIGION?

*ST I-II.18* originally looked promising for the issue of the finality of religion because it appeared to provide a perfect parallelism with *ST II-II.81.5*: in the former text, Aquinas seems to be speaking of the general relationship between the “end” and the “object” of a human act, and in the latter he speaks of the “end” and “object” of religion. However, given what I have discussed thus far, this parallelism now appears imperfect. In *ST I-II.18*, the “object” is or coincides with the *finis operis*, and the “end” is the *finis operantis* in a particular human act; whereas it is quite clear that in *ST II-II.81.5*, Aquinas is concerned with arguing that God is the *finis operis* of religion. This fact raises the worry that perhaps *ST I-II.18* and *ST II-II.81.5* are incompatible insofar as they apparently equivocate on the meaning of “end.” Is there really such an equivocation? And, further, does this “equivocation” amount to an impasse for this study?

I argue that, in a sense, the two passages do involve a certain equivocation on the meaning of “end.” Whereas *ST I-II.18* speaks of the *finis operantis* of human acts in general, *ST II-II.81.5c* speaks of the *finis operis* of religion. However, this “equivocation” does not entail an impasse once the senses of “end” are properly distinguished.

The apparent discrepancy is resolved if one considers the *finis operis* / *finis operantis* distinction, not as a radical separation of two irreconcilable realities, but as connoting two distinct, but related, *rationes*, or aspects, of ends of human acts. Based on this fact, I argue that the “equivocation” on end does not entail inapplicability between the two texts. *ST I-II.18* is applicable to *ST II-II.81.5c*, so long as one keeps certain things in mind. Aquinas’ focus in the former text is on the complete act that stems voluntarily from an agent. When he speaks there of the “end” of a human act in general, he simply

means a particular end willed by the agent. This is the *finis operantis*, in the sense that such an end is willed by the agent, and not necessarily in the sense that the object is always ordered to it in a merely accidentally way. Thomas is not concerned there with whether the willed end ensues naturally or accidentally from the act. One must bear this fact in mind if one intends to apply the discussion of the “end” of a human act (in *ST I-II.18*) to the context of religion (in *ST II-II.81*).

Whereas in *ST I-II.18* Aquinas is speaking of “end” in a more general sense than in *ST II-II.81*, he nonetheless still has the doctrine of the former question very much before him while writing the latter question. The doctrine on religion in the latter is only a particular application of the more general doctrine on the end of a human act in general that is expressed in the former. More precisely, whereas in *ST I-II.18* the doctrine of “end” in general is analogically applicable to *any* of the *finis operantis* (proximate as well as remote) within the “chain” of ends of a given human act, the doctrine in *ST II-II.81* concerning the “end” of the virtue of religion is applicable *only* to the *finis operantis* of an act of religion that coincide with the *finis operis*. That is to say, whereas in *ST I-II.18* he means to say that any one of the *finis operantis* of a particular act can alter the morality of the act, in *ST II-II.81* he means only to say that God is a *finis operis* and, therefore, a *finis operantis*, in any act of religion.

To illustrate the analogical nature of the notion of “end” as understood in *ST I-II.18*, one need only look at the body of Article 7 of the same question, where Aquinas discusses the different types of “end” in a human act, and then compare it with his discussion of the end of religion in *ST II-II.18.5c*. As I showed previously in this chapter, in *ST I-II.18.7* Thomas admits that the object can be ordered to the “end of the will” (*finis*

*voluntatis*)—that is, to the *finis operantis*—either in a *per se* manner or in a *per accidens* manner.

The object of the external act can stand in a twofold way to the end of the will: first, as being *per se* ordered thereto; thus to fight well is of itself ordered to victory; secondly, as being ordered thereto *per accidens*; thus to take what belongs to another is ordered accidentally to the giving of alms.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, the *finis operantis* can either ensue naturally from the object or be accidentally ordered thereto; that is, it may or may not coincide with the *finis operis*. Given this text, it would not be unreasonable for us to assume that throughout the entire question (*ST* I-II.18) Aquinas has been using the term “end” in the most general sense, so as to include both of these possible relationships between the object and the end of a particular human act. In *ST* II-II.81, however, he assigns to religion its *per se* end: God; that is, that to which it is of itself invariably ordered by agents. Aquinas has already said that an object can have a *per accidens* relationship with any number of ends<sup>32</sup>; therefore, it would not make sense for him to take God (or any one end) as *the only per accidens* end of a virtue. Thus, it is also reasonable to think that the one end that he assigns to religion (namely, God) is conceived as having a *per se* relationship to the object of the said virtue (and not a *per accidens* relationship). From this fact, it follows that, whereas in *ST* I-II.18 Aquinas conceives of “end” generally (to include both *per se* and *per accidens* ends), in *ST* II-II.81.5 he is conceiving of “end” narrowly to mean exclusively the *per se* type of end.

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<sup>31</sup> *ST* I-II.18.7c, quoted above in note 15.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *ST* I-II.18.7 s.c., quoted above in note 14.

### C. CONCLUSION

As I said in the previous chapter, I have set out in this study to seek the *finis operis* of religion, not any of its arbitrary *fines operantis*. In this chapter, I first determined that, in *ST I-II.18*, when speaking of the “end” of a human act in general, Aquinas is speaking of its *finis operantis*. However, in *ST II-II.81.5c*, when speaking of the “end” of the virtue of religion, he seems to mean its *finis operis*. I overcame the potential impasse between these texts by exploring in detail the distinction between *finis operis* and *finis operantis*. All *fines operis* are, in a way, also *fines operantis*, insofar as the agent must will the *finis operis* of an act for the act to have its species. Hence, even though Aquinas is speaking of God as the *finis operis* of religion in *ST II-II.81*, one must conclude that God is also a *finis operantis* in religion.

***SUMMA THEOLOGIAE I-II.18.6-7:***  
**THE END AS THE *RATIO VOLENDI* OF THE OBJECT**

In the first part of Chapter 3, I concentrated on *ST I-II.18.2c*, where Aquinas considered the moral determinants of a human act, especially objects and ends in general. I established that *ST I-II.18*, if properly understood, can be utilized as the interpretive key for *ST II-II.81.5*.

Now I turn to *ST I-II.18.6-7*, two articles that are particularly helpful for the issue of religion, for there Aquinas proposes a complex and nuanced analysis of the end's role in the specification of the human act, and he explains that the end is the formality under which the object is willed (that is, the *ratio volendi* of the object), thus giving the act its species in a more formal manner than does the object itself. This doctrine is of paramount importance for the issue of the finality of religion in Chapter 5. There I shall argue that God, as the end of religion, is the formality under which the object, *cultus*, is willed. Therefore, even if the object of religion, *cultus*, is something created and not God himself, it is nonetheless seen as something related to God, as something done "for God's sake." In this way, the theocentricity of religion, the idea that religion is done somehow for God as an end, is saved without thereby compromising the tenets of Classical Theism, especially the belief that God cannot benefit from human acts. But first, I shall give in this chapter a detailed account of the doctrinal underpinnings of my solution, in order that it rest on a solid foundation.



### A. *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE* I-II.18.6: EXTERIOR ACT VS. INTERIOR ACT OF THE WILL

In *ST* I-II.18.6, Aquinas introduces what has hitherto been called the “object” as being properly the object of the *exterior* element of the human act, adding that the human act also consists of an *interior* act of the will, which itself has its own proper “object,” namely, the end.

Some acts are called “human acts” insofar as they are voluntary, as was said above. [1] Now, in a voluntary act, a twofold act is found, namely, the interior act of the will, and the exterior act: and each of these acts has its object. Now, the end is properly the object of the interior act of the will; but that with which the exterior act is concerned is its object. [2] Therefore, just as the exterior act takes its species from the object with which it is concerned, so the interior act of the will takes its species from the end, as from its proper object. [3] Now, what is on the part of the will is related as [something] formal to that which is on the part of the exterior act, because the will uses the members, as if instruments, so as to act; and exterior acts have the aspect of morality only insofar as they are voluntary. For this reason, the species of the human act is considered formally according to the end, but materially according to the object of the exterior act. Hence, the Philosopher says, in *Ethics* 5, that “he who steals so that he may commit adultery is, speaking *per se*, more an adulterer than a thief.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *ST* I-II.18.6c (enumeration added): [A]liqui actus dicuntur humani, in quantum sunt voluntarii, sicut supra dictum est. [1] In actu autem voluntario invenitur duplex actus, scilicet actus interior voluntatis, et actus exterior, et uterque horum actuum habet suum obiectum. Finis autem proprie est obiectum interioris actus voluntarii, id autem circa quod est actio exterior, est obiectum eius. [2] Sicut igitur actus exterior accipit speciem ab obiecto circa quod est; ita actus interior voluntatis accipit speciem a fine, sicut a proprio obiecto. [3] Ita autem quod est ex parte voluntatis, se habet ut formale ad id quod est ex parte exterioris actus, quia voluntas utitur membris ad agendum, sicut instrumentis; neque actus exteriores habent rationem moralitatis, nisi in quantum sunt voluntarii. Et ideo actus humani species formaliter consideratur secundum finem, materialiter autem secundum obiectum exterioris actus. Unde philosophus dicit, in *V Ethic.*, quod ille qui furatur ut committat adulterium, est, per se loquendo, magis adulter quam fur.

In this article, Aquinas lays out three very important principles (see the numbers within the text) concerning the relationship between the object and the end of the human act. In this chapter, I examine the doctrine contained in these three principles in three separate sub-sections. Aquinas' example, although a bit odd (he speaks of an act of theft that is done for the sake of adultery<sup>2</sup>), is quite helpful. Therefore, I utilize this example throughout each subsection to illustrate the principle in question.

### **1. First Principle: Interior vs. Exterior Acts**

The first principle that Aquinas presents in this text is that the human act is a complex reality: it involves not only an exterior act, but also an interior act of the will that directs, in a sense, the exterior act. The interior act of the will is the desire of the end (of the *finis operantis*). The exterior act, then, is that which is done for the sake of the *finis operantis*; it is the means to attain the end. Hence, in the example of theft for the sake of adultery, the interior act of the will is the will's intent to commit adultery, and the exterior act is the theft itself.

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<sup>2</sup> Perhaps he has in mind a man who "steals" someone else's wife in order to commit adultery with her. Ripperger fleshes out the example thus: "[S]uppose a man decides to commit adultery but the woman with which he wants to commit adultery is across town. He does not own any means of transportation so if he wishes to fulfill his desire to commit adultery, the only means available to put him in proximity of the woman with which he wishes to commit adultery is to steal his neighbor's car" (*The Morality of the Exterior Act in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 27). Aristotle's example in *Nicomachean Ethics*, V.2 (Bk 1130a24), which is Aquinas' source, is actually the reverse: adultery for the sake of profit. This fact perhaps reveals that Aquinas was not too concerned with the details of how his version of the example could play out in reality—or perhaps it simply shows that Aquinas made a rare mental mistake in citing the example. Even though Aquinas cites the Aristotelian example in its reversed form several times throughout *ST I-II.18*, he later cites it accurately (for example, in *ST II-II.11.1 arg 2 & ad 2*).

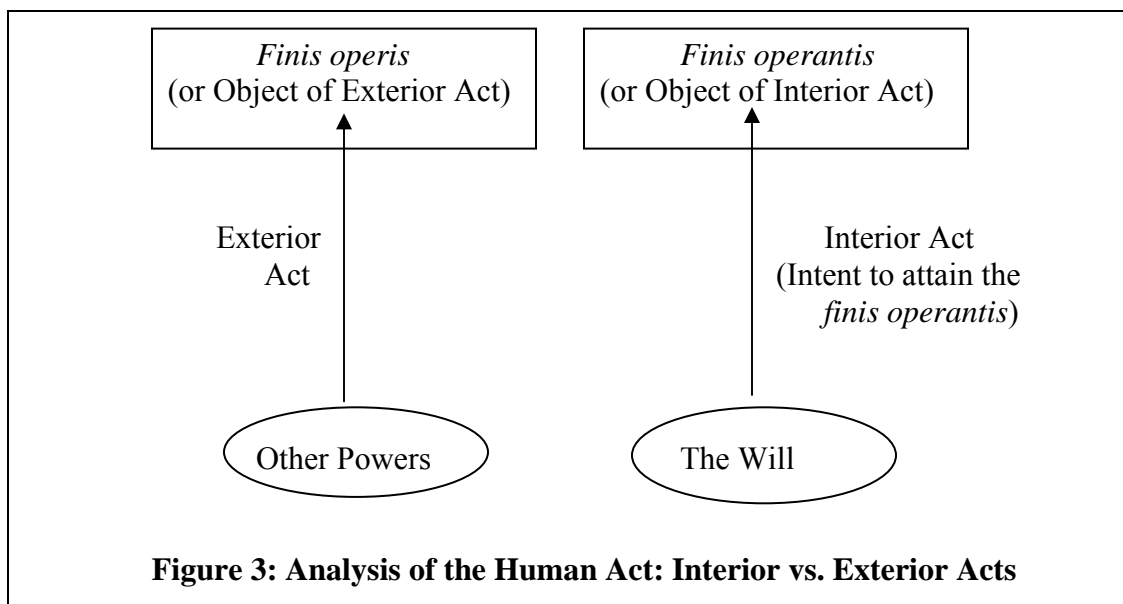
Each of these two “acts” has its own object. On the one hand, what in *ST I-II.18.2* Aquinas had called “the object” is in reality the object of the exterior act. On the other hand, the interior act of the will is its own reality. It is the desire of the end (the intent to attain the *finis operantis*); this end is its own object. Thus, in the case of theft for the sake of adultery, the object of the act of the will is adultery.<sup>3</sup>

Further, what is true of acts is also true of the powers that elicit them. In the example, adultery is an object with respect to the interior act of the will and, therefore, with respect to the will itself. The object of theft, moreover, is both an object with respect to the act of theft and with respect to the faculties that carry out the act of theft (for example, the intellect in formulating a plan, the locomotive power in approaching and snatching the property, etc.). The following diagram<sup>4</sup> is helpful in illustrating this first principle:

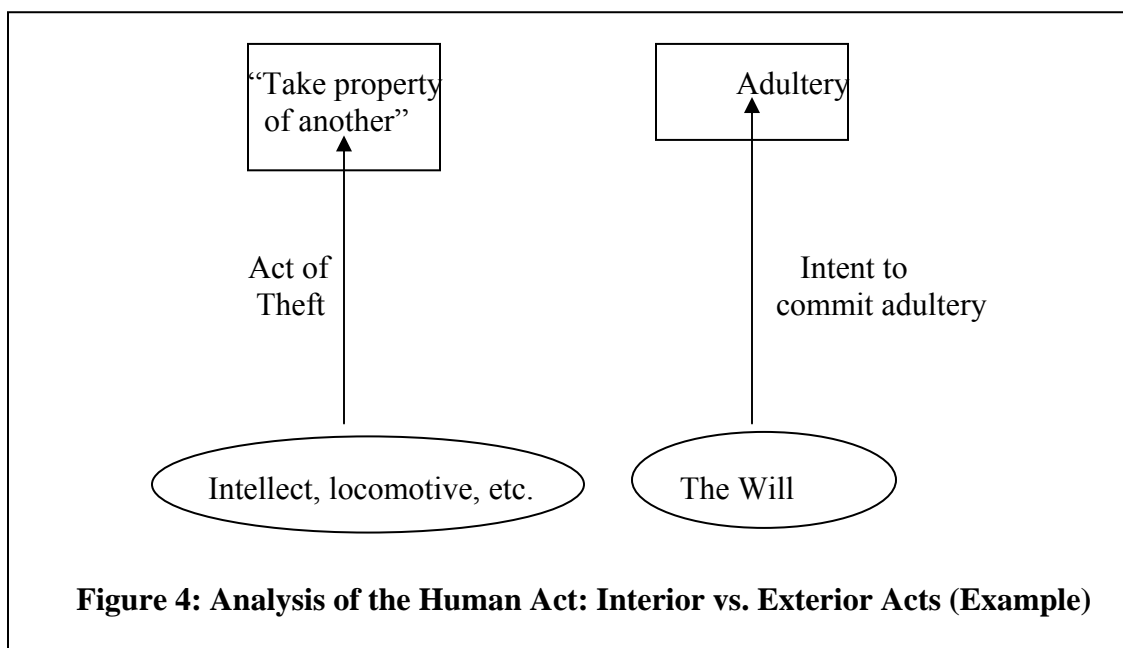
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<sup>3</sup> It should not be of surprise that the object of one act can be another act, as in this case, where the object of the interior act of the will is the act of adultery. This possibility is especially clear in the case of the interior act of the will. Because the will is a rational appetite, it can have, as its object, anything that falls under the aspect of good (which is the formal *ratio* of the will). An action as well as a thing can contain this aspect. Hence, Aquinas says in *ST I-II.13.4*: “Finis . . . vel est actio, vel res aliqua.” However, when it is the case that one act (for example, the interior act of the will) has, as its object, another act (for example, adultery), one must not confuse their corresponding objects. In the example, whereas the object of the interior act of the will is adultery, the object of adultery itself is a person who is not one’s spouse.

<sup>4</sup> In this, and subsequent, diagrams in this chapter, the arrows represent the interior and exterior acts (into which Aquinas analyzed the human act as a whole); the ovals represent the faculties that elicit these acts; and the rectangles represent the objects of the corresponding faculties and acts.



Thus, each of the two sets of powers (namely, the will and the “other powers”) is eliciting its corresponding act; together, the power and its corresponding act share the same object in the concrete act. If one applies Aquinas’ example to the diagram, one obtains this:



*Excursus: “Exterior” = “Commanded,” “Interior” = “Elicited”*

Now, there seems to be a problem with this scenario. It does explain well the case of an exterior act that is ordered to an end desired by the will, such as when theft is done for the sake of adultery; and in this case a distinction between the interior and exterior acts seems to make sense. One might ask, however, what happens when an *interior* (that is, spiritual) act is ordered to an end of the will, for instance—to use Cajetan’s example—hating or rejecting God for the sake of having dominion over a kingdom.<sup>5</sup> In that case, it would seem that the whole act would not be divided into exterior and interior, but into two “interior” acts. Therefore, Aquinas’ division of the human act into exterior and interior acts seems to fail.

The solution lies in the question immediately preceding the text (*ST I-II.17.5*). There, Aquinas admits the possibility that one interior act of the will be ordered to another. When he discusses such a possibility, however, far from explicitly raising the problem, he avoids the terminology of “interior” and “exterior” acts altogether. Instead, he adopts the language of “commanded” acts of the will, and explains that one act of the will can command another:

Command is nothing other than the act of reason ordering something, with a certain motion, to act. Now, it is manifest that reason can order the act of the will, for just as it can judge that it is good to will something, so it can

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. *InST I-II.18.6*, quoted below in note 9.

order by commanding what man wills. From this it is clear that the act of the will can be commanded.<sup>6</sup>

This passage is best understood within the context of the “elicited” and “commanded” acts of the will, respectively—a distinction that Aquinas had presented in the first question of the *Prima secundae*:

[A] certain action is called voluntary in two ways: in one way, because it is commanded by the will, such as to walk or to speak; in another way, because it is elicited by the will, such as willing itself.<sup>7</sup>

By the “exterior” and the “interior” acts of the will, then, he means nothing other than the elicited and commanded acts of the will, respectively. Thus, in the case of walking, the will commands the act and the locomotive power elicits it. The commanded (or exterior) act in this case is the act of walking. If one were to add that the walking is done for the sake of exercise, one would also have to say that the will, in addition to commanding the exterior act of walking, also elicits the interior act of desiring the end of exercise. The act of desiring the end of exercise is an interior or elicited act of the will. In the example of theft for the sake of adultery, the desire of adultery (and I mean the *desire* of adultery, not the physical act of adultery itself) is essentially a spiritual act of the will and, therefore, is

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<sup>6</sup> *ST I-II.17.5c*: [I]mperium nihil aliud est quam actus rationis ordinantis, cum quadam motione, aliquid ad agendum. Manifestum est autem quod ratio potest ordinare de actu voluntatis, sicut enim potest iudicare quod bonum sit aliquid velle, ita potest ordinare imperando quod homo velit. Ex quo patet quod actus voluntatis potest esse imperatus.

<sup>7</sup> *ST I-II.1.1 ad 2*: Actio autem aliqua dupliciter dicitur voluntaria, uno modo, quia imperatur a voluntate, sicut ambulare vel loqui; alio modo, quia elicitor a voluntate, sicut ipsum velle.

an action proper to, or elicited by, the will. Furthermore, the theft (the *act itself* of stealing, not the *desire* to steal) is a complex, exterior act that involves the elicited acts of many powers (the intellect, the locomotive power, etc.). Therefore, there are two acts being elicited by their corresponding power, but one of these, the exterior act, is, additionally, commanded by the will.

Now, to complicate matters a bit more, it must be noted that the exterior act elicited by the many powers is governed or commanded by an *interior* act of the will. That is to say, the will is, in fact, doing two things: it is eliciting its own act of willing the end *and* commanding, for example, the act of walking. This second act of the will, the act itself of commanding the exterior acts, is an elicited act of the will. The command of the will is not the same as the locomotive power's elicited act of walking. The exterior act is elicited by the other powers, but the command itself is an act of the will. The will's act of command is not what is being commanded by the will; rather, what is commanded by the will is the *object* of that command, namely, the exterior act. Therefore, the will is eliciting *two* acts: the desire of the end and the *command* itself.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> More precisely, command is an act of reason, presupposing an act of the will. Reason commands the other powers, but the will moves them. Thus, reason commands through the power of the will (*in virtute voluntatis*). Cf. *ST* I-II.17.1c: “[I]mperare est actus rationis, praesupposito tamen actu voluntatis. Ad cuius evidentiam, considerandum est quod, quia actus voluntatis et rationis supra se invicem possunt ferri, prout scilicet ratio ratiocinatur de volendo, et voluntas vult ratiocinari; contingit actum voluntatis praeveniri ab actu rationis, et e converso. Et quia virtus prioris actus remanet in actu sequenti, contingit quandoque quod est aliquis actus voluntatis, secundum quod manet virtute in ipso aliquid de actu rationis, ut dictum est de usu et de electione; et e converso aliquid est actus rationis, secundum quod virtute manet in ipso aliquid de actu voluntatis. Imperare autem est quidem essentialiter actus rationis, imperans enim ordinat eum cui imperat, ad aliquid agendum, intimando vel denuntiando; sic autem ordinare per modum cuiusdam intimationis, est rationis. Sed ratio potest aliquid intimare vel denuntiare dupliciter. Uno modo, absolute, quae quidem intimatio exprimitur per verbum indicativi modi; sicut si aliquis alicui dicat, hoc est tibi faciendum. Aliquando autem ratio intimat

Hence, in morality, when one speaks of the “commanded act,” one means the exterior act, that is, the object of the command of the will. The act that is typically known as “the elicited act” is the desire of the end, even though in fact there are three acts being “elicited,” generally speaking: two acts are elicited by the will (the command itself and the desire of the end), and a third act, the exterior act, is elicited by its corresponding powers. Based on this understanding, Cajetan explains that, in *ST* I-II.18.6, by “interior” act Aquinas just means the “elicited” act of the will (that is, the desire of the end), and that by “exterior” act he just means the act *commanded* by the will—and not necessarily that such an act is “physical” or “material.” Therefore, a spiritual act can be commanded by, and thus ordered to, another. In that case one of these spiritual acts would be

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aliquid alicui, movendo ipsum ad hoc, et talis intimatio exprimitur per verbum imperativi modi; puta cum alicui dicitur, fac hoc. Primum autem movens in viribus animae ad exercitium actus, est voluntas, ut supra dictum est. Cum ergo secundum movens non moveat nisi in virtute primi moventis, sequitur quod hoc ipsum quod ratio movet imperando, sit ei ex virtute voluntatis. Unde relinquatur quod imperare sit actus rationis, praesupposito actu voluntatis, in cuius virtute ratio movet per imperium ad exercitium actus.” Hence, the shorthand, “acts *commanded* by the will;” cf. *ST* I-II.1.1 ad 2, quoted in note 7. The will’s movement of the other powers is properly called “use” (*usus*). Cf. *ST* I-II.16.1c: “[U]sus rei alicuius importat applicationem rei illius ad aliquam operationem, unde et operatio ad quam applicamus rem aliquam, dicitur usus eius; sicut equitare est usus equi, et percutere est usus baculi. Ad operationem autem applicamus et principia interiora agendi, scilicet ipsas potentias animae vel membra corporis, ut intellectum ad intelligendum, et oculum ad videndum; et etiam res exteriores, sicut baculum ad percutiendum. Sed manifestum est quod res exteriores non applicamus ad aliquam operationem nisi per principia intrinseca, quae sunt potentiae animae, aut habitus potentiarum, aut organa, quae sunt corporis membra. Ostensum est autem supra quod voluntas est quae movet potentias animae ad suos actus; et hoc est applicare eas ad operationem. Unde manifestum est quod uti primo et principaliter est voluntatis, tanquam primi moventis; rationis autem tanquam dirigentis; sed aliarum potentiarum tanquam exequentium, quae comparantur ad voluntatem, a qua applicantur ad agendum, sicut instrumenta ad principale agens. Actio autem proprie non attribuitur instrumento, sed principali agenti, sicut aedificatio aedificatori, non autem instrumentis. Unde manifestum est quod uti proprie est actus voluntatis.”



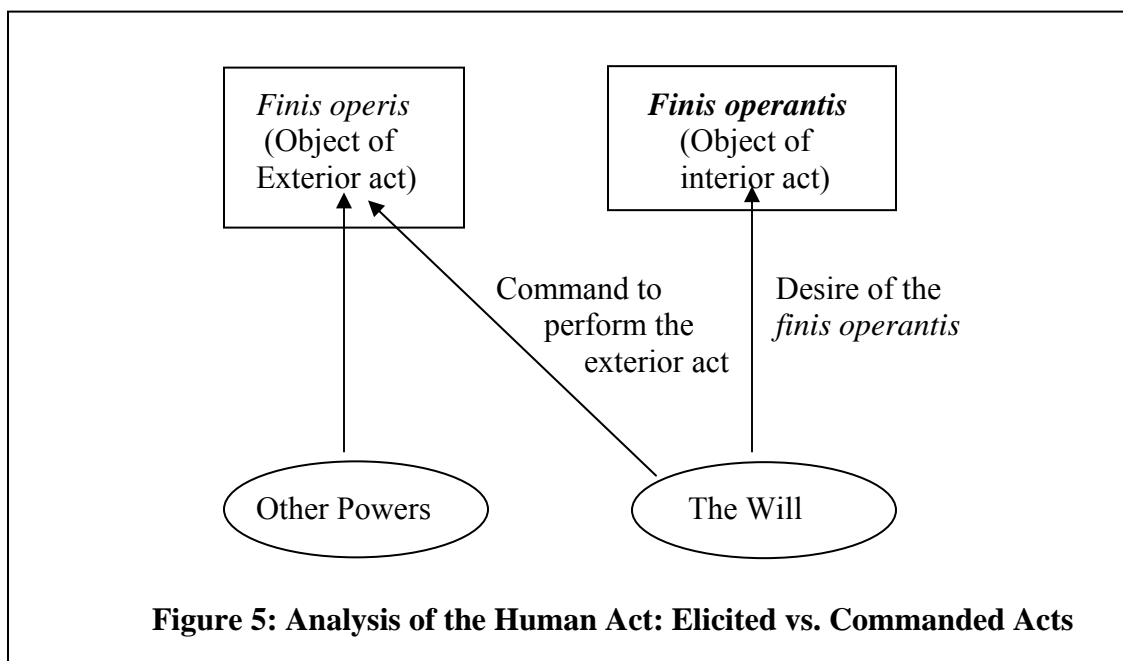
“exterior,” in the sense of “commanded,” with respect to the other, even through neither is “exterior” in the sense of physical or material:

Gather diligently the words of the text, so that you may evade difficulties. For it is not only said in the text that it belongs to the exterior act alone to be ordered to such an end. For this would be false: for being ordered to such an end can occur also in the case of the interior act of the will, as it is clear in him who hates God for the sake of acquiring a kingdom, or something of the sort. But it is said in the text that such order *does not befall to the interior act of the will that is related to the exterior [act] as formal to material*: such that he does not deny such accidentality to all interior acts, but to that which is related to the exterior [act] as formal. Now, that act which is related as formal, as it has already been determined above, is the commanding act: but when the interior act itself is ordered to another end, then it is related as a commanded act, and falls in the same order with the exterior act. Have, therefore, this also before your eyes, so that you may understand in this treatise, by the name “the interior act,” not the act as commanded, but either as considered in itself, or as commanding: for thus it is distinguished from the exterior act.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> *InST* I-II.18.6: “[C]ongrega diligenter verba litterae, ut evadas difficultates. Non enim dicitur in littera quod soli actui exteriori accidit ordinari in talem finem. Hoc enim esset falsum: potest namque etiam interiori voluntatis actui accidere ordo in talem finem; ut patet in odiente Deum propter consequendum regnum, vel aliquid huiusmodi. Sed dicitur in littera quod talis ordo *non accidit interiori actui voluntatis qui comparatur ad exteriorem ut formale ad materiale*: ita quod non omni actui interiori denegant hanc accidentalitatem, sed illi qui habet se ad exteriorem ut formale. Ille actus autem qui se habet ut formalis, ut iam determinatum est superius, est actus imperans: quando autem ipse actus interior voluntatis ordinatur ad alium finem, tunc se habet ut actus imperatus, et in eundem incidit ordinem cum actu exteriori. Habeto igitur et hoc prae oculis, ut intelligas in hoc tractatu, actus interioris voluntatis nomine, ipsum non ut imperatum, sed vel secundum se, vel imperantem: sic enim contra exteriorem distinguitur.” Cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *De beatitudine*, p. 332 (commenting on *ST* I-II.18.6c): “Ad intelligentiam harum conclusion[um] S. Thomas distinguit actum interiorem et actum exteriorem voluntatis. Actus interior est primus actus virtute cujus voluntas se movet ad secundum. Sic intentio dicitur actus interior relate ad electionem, et est actus imperans relate ad actum imperatum, sive actus imperatus sit materialiter exterior, ut motus membrorum, sive sit actus intelletus aut voluntatis, ut electio, aut imaginationis, aut appetitus sensitivi.” Whereas a “commanded” act may be either a spiritual or a physical act, an elicited act of the will can only be a spiritual act, given the spiritual nature of the

The relationship between the commanded and elicited acts is illustrated in the following diagram:<sup>10</sup>

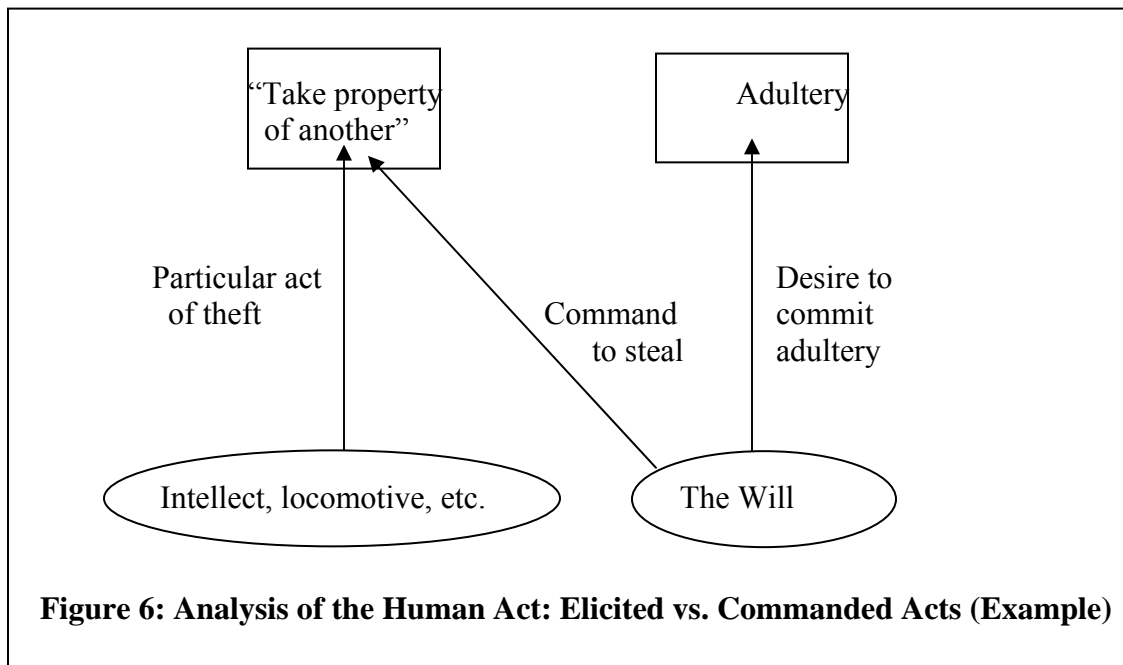


If we apply to this Aquinas’ example of theft for the sake of adultery, we obtain the following scenario:

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will. Therefore, a physical act can only be classified within this framework as a “commanded” act. Physical acts are, in a sense, the primary instances of commanded acts; this is probably why Aquinas labels commanded acts as “exterior,” despite the possibility of commanded acts of a spiritual nature.

<sup>10</sup> In the diagrams in this chapter, the arrows that issue from the ovals represent the acts that are *elicited* by their corresponding faculties. (They do not represent the means/end relation.) Hence, in the diagrams below, whereas the will is eliciting two acts, namely, the desire of the end and the commanding of the exterior act, the “other powers” are eliciting one act, namely, the exterior act.



Here we have, as before, the two sets of powers, namely, the will and the “other powers,” along with their corresponding elicited acts and objects. However, I have added the will’s command to perform the exterior act. Thus, we have now three elicited acts (represented by the arrows), each with its own object. However, because two of these acts share the same object, namely, the will’s command and the exterior act, there are only two things that count as “objects” (represented by the rectangles): the *finis operis*, which is the object of the “exterior” or commanded act; and the *finis operantis*, which is the object of the “interior” or “elicited” act.

## 2. Second Principle: Each Object Specifies Its Corresponding Act

The second important principle that Aquinas makes in *ST I-II.18.6c* follows from the principle that he established in *ST I-II.18.2c* (and to which I referred in the previous chapter), that the human act is specified by its object. Now, however, Aquinas says that in a particular human act (for example, an act of theft done for the sake of adultery) there is in fact a twofold act: an exterior act commanded by the will and elicited by other powers (for example, the theft itself) and an interior act elicited by the will (for example, the desire of adultery). Furthermore, he states that this interior act is specified by *its own* “object,” which, in the example, is the *finis operantis* of adultery. Clearly, the *finis operantis* also plays a role in specifying the moral act; the specification provided by the object of the exterior act is not the full picture. Both the object (that is, the object of the exterior act) and the end (that is, the object of the interior act) play a role in the specification of the act as a whole. To repeat Aquinas’ words: “just as the exterior action takes its species from the object on which it bears, so the interior act of the will takes its species from the end, as from its proper object.”<sup>11</sup> Thus, on one hand, the exterior act is an act of the species “theft.” On the other, the interior act, given its object, belongs to the species “adultery.” Therefore, in this concrete example,<sup>12</sup> the act has two moral species: “theft” and “adultery.” Finally, the will’s acts concerning the means have their own object: the exterior (or commanded) act. It logically follows that this object also specifies

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<sup>11</sup> *ST I-II.18.6c*, quoted above in note 1.

<sup>12</sup> In the example given, the end willed is not one to which the object is naturally directed. That is to say, is one in which the *finis operantis* in question does not coincide with the natural *finis operis*. As I said earlier, when this is the case, the act contains two separate species of human act; however, when the *finis operantis* in question *does* coincide with the *finis operis*, the entire act belongs to a single moral species.

its corresponding acts. In the example of theft for the sake of adultery, the object of the will's acts concerning the means is the act that belongs to the species "theft." The interior, elicited act of the will, however, is an act of adultery, for its object is the *finis operantis* of adultery.

Now the question is: How do these come together to specify the entire act? The answer to this question lies in the third principle that Aquinas lays out in *ST I-II.18.6c*.

### **3. Third Principle: The End Is Formal with Respect to the Exterior Act**

So far, there is a multiplicity of objects involved in the specification of various acts. It may seem that Aquinas is indulging in distinctions for their own sake, losing sight of the overall picture. However, Aquinas always distinguishes in order to unite. He is making distinctions within the human act in order to explain how all these elements come together to account for the entire reality of the act. He made a distinction between the interior and exterior acts in order to account for the full specification of the human act.<sup>13</sup> He accomplishes this account of the full specification of the human act in the third principle that he lays out in *ST I-II.18.6c*:

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<sup>13</sup> In fact, all of the distinctions made so far within the human act are to be understood within the backdrop of the unity of the human act. All of the parts of a human act form a single human act, not many. Cf. *ST I-II.174c*: "[N]ihil prohibet aliqua esse secundum quid multa, et secundum quid unum . . . . Sicut autem in genere rerum naturalium, aliquod totum componitur ex materia et forma, ut homo ex anima et corpore, qui est unum ens naturale, licet habeat multitudinem partium; ita etiam in actibus humanis, actus inferioris potentiae materialiter se habet ad actum superioris, in quantum inferior potentia agit in virtute superioris moventis ipsam, sic enim et actus moventis primi formaliter se habet ad actum instrumenti. Unde patet quod imperium et actus imperatus sunt unus actus humanus, sicut quoddam totum est unum, sed est secundum partes multa."

[3] Now, what is on the part of the will is related as formal to that which is on the part of the exterior act, because the will uses the members, as instruments, to act; and exterior acts have the aspect of morality only insofar as they are voluntary. Consequently, the species of the human act is considered formally according to the end, but materially according to the object of the exterior act. Hence, the Philosopher says, in *Ethics 5*, that “he who steals so that he may commit adultery is, speaking *per se*, more an adulterer than a thief.”<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the object (that is, the object of the exterior act) specifies the human act “materially;” the end (that is, the object of the interior act) specifies the human act “formally.” The two aspects, namely, the formal and the material, form one single act, along with its morality. As he succinctly states elsewhere:

It was shown above (*ST I-II.18.6c*) that the act of the will is related as something formal to the exterior act. Now from the formal and the material one thing is made. Therefore, there is one goodness of the interior and exterior act.<sup>15</sup>

This point is a difficult one to grasp.<sup>16</sup> The key to understanding this doctrine lies in the reduction of the morality of the entire act to the morality of the movement of the

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<sup>14</sup> *ST I-II.18.6c*, quoted in full above, in note 1.

<sup>15</sup> *ST I-II.20.3 s.c.*: Sed contra est quod supra ostensum est quod actus voluntatis se habet ut formale ad actum exteriorem. Ex formali autem et materiali fit unum. Ergo est una bonitas actus interioris et exterioris.

<sup>16</sup> The Thomistic commentators admit this to be so regarding the question of *ST I-II.18* as a whole. There is a rare lack of consensus among them regarding its finer points and, therefore, they tend to hold some of their opinions on this text to be merely probable, rather than certain. For example, Dominicus Bañez, whom I follow closely in my reading of the question, held his own interpretation to be “by far more probable” (*longe probabilior*), but the opposite not to be altogether improbable (*non omnino improbabilis*); cf. Bañez, *In ST I-II.18.4*, sol. Garrigou-Lagrange, noting that the end of the human act immediately specifies the intention and the act of election only mediately, remarks that he

will. Thus, the exterior act *qua* exterior act (that is, as a purely material or “natural” act) is not in itself a moral reality. An exterior act does not fall into morality except insofar as it is in some way an object of the will. As Aquinas puts it, “exterior acts have the aspect of morality only insofar as they are voluntary.”<sup>17</sup> Therefore, the only acts with whose specification one is ultimately concerned in morality are the acts that are voluntary, that is, that are subject in some way to the will.<sup>18</sup>

Now, in *ST* I-II.12.4c, Aquinas argues that the will’s movement towards the end is in a sense the same as its movement towards the means:

The movement of the will to the end and to “that which is for the end” can be considered in two ways. In one way, according as the will is carried towards each of them absolutely and according to itself. And, thus, there are simply speaking two movements of the will. In another way, it can be considered according as the will is carried towards “that which is for the end,” on account of the end. And, thus, the movement of the will to the end, and to “that which is for the end,” is one and the same in subject. For when I say: “I want medicine on account of health,” I designate only one movement of the will. The reason for this is that the end is the *ratio* of willing (*ratio volendi*) “that which is for the end.” Now the same act falls both on the object and on the *ratio* of the object, just as the same the same [act of] sight is of color and of light, as was stated above (8.3 ad 2). And it

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will discuss this doctrine “[a]d intelligentiam horum trium articulorum, qui revera sunt difficiles . . . .” (*De beatitudine*, 319).

<sup>17</sup> *ST* I-II.18.6c, quoted in full above, in note 1.

<sup>18</sup> The fact that the exterior act enters morality only insofar as it is willed does not mean that it is not a moral determinant in the overall human act. Without reference to an exterior act, one cannot account for the moral specification of the acts of the will concerning the means. The acts of the will concerning the means are specified by the exterior act because the exterior act is their object. The will wills them. This is the reason why the “end cannot justify the means”: if the means were not willed, but only the end, then the end would justify the means. However, the willing of the means is a necessary part of the act; it has a morality of its own, independently of the morality of the end. It is important to place emphasis on this in view of the recent proportionalist trend in ethics that claims that exterior act plays no role in the morality of the human act; cf. Chad Ripberger, *The Morality of the Exterior Act in the Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 7-13.

is similarly [true] of the intellect; for if it considers the principle and the conclusion absolutely, the consideration of each is diverse; but insofar as it assents to the conclusion on account of the principles, it is only one act of the intellect.<sup>19</sup>

How can Aquinas account for the unity of these two acts, willing the end and means, if they have diverse objects, as he himself will say? That is, acts are distinguished according to their objects. There are two objects in question: the end and the means. Therefore, it would seem that Aquinas is violating his own principles by claiming that these two acts are really one. Aquinas himself, however, raises precisely this argument in *ST I-II.12.4* arg. 2:

Further, acts are distinguished according to their objects; but the end and “that which is for the end” are diverse objects. Therefore, the intention of the end and the will of “that which is for the end” are distinct motions of the will.<sup>20</sup>

He replies with his characteristic lucidity:

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<sup>19</sup> *ST I-II.12.4c*: [M]otus voluntatis in finem et in id quod est ad finem, potest considerari dupliciter. Uno modo, secundum quod voluntas in utrumque fertur absolute et secundum se. Et sic sunt simpliciter duo motus voluntatis in utrumque. Alio modo potest considerari secundum quod voluntas fertur in id quod est ad finem, propter finem. Et sic unus et idem subiecto motus voluntatis est tendens ad finem, et in id quod est ad finem. Cum enim dico, volo medicinam propter sanitatem, non designo nisi unum motum voluntatis. Cuius ratio est quia finis ratio est volendi ea quae sunt ad finem. Idem autem actus cadit super obiectum, et super rationem obiecti, sicut eadem visio est coloris et luminis, ut supra dictum est. Et est simile de intellectu, quia si absolute principium et conclusionem consideret, diversa est consideratio utriusque; in hoc autem quod conclusioni propter principia assentit, est unus actus intellectus tantum.

<sup>20</sup> *ST I-II.12.4* arg. 2: Praeterea, actus distinguuntur secundum obiecta. Sed finis, et id quod est ad finem, sunt diversa obiecta. Ergo alius motus voluntatis est intentio finis, et voluntas eius quod est ad finem . . . .



The end, insofar as it is a certain thing, is a distinct object of the will from “that which is for the end.” However, insofar as it is the reason for willing (*ratio volendi*) that which is ordered to the end, it is one and the same object.<sup>21</sup>

The third argument is even more direct than the previous. It simply states that intention and election are different acts.

Further, the willing of “that which is for the end” is called election. However, election and intention are not the same. Therefore, intention of the end and the willing of “that which is for the end” are not the same motion of the will.<sup>22</sup>

In his reply, he argues that they are different in *ratio* only, but identical in subject. The terms refer to a single motion of the will that receives the name of “intention” or “election” depending on whether it is “carried” (*fertur*) towards the end or towards the means:

A motion that is one in subject may differ in *ratio* according to beginning and end, as do ascent and descent, as is said in the third [book] of the *Physics*. Accordingly, insofar as the motion of the will is carried toward “that which is for the end,” insofar as it is ordered to the end, it is called “choice”: but the motion of the will that is carried towards the end, according as it is acquired through “those things that are for the end,” is called “intention.” A sign of this is that there can be an intention of the

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<sup>21</sup> *ST* I-II.12.4 ad 2: [F]inis, in quantum est res quaedam, est aliud voluntatis obiectum quam id quod est ad finem. Sed in quantum est ratio volendi id quod est ad finem, est unum et idem obiectum.

<sup>22</sup> *ST* I-II.12.4 arg. 3: Praeterea, voluntas eius quod est ad finem, dicitur electio. Sed non est idem electio et intentio. Ergo non est idem motus intentio finis, cum voluntate eius quod est ad finem.

end, even while “those things that are for the end”—to which choice belongs—have not yet been determined.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, the will wills both the means (the exterior act along with its object) and the end.

That is to say, the will desires the end as its proper object; but it also wills the exterior act along with its object and under the formality of that object as a means to that end.

Because both the means and the end are willed, one could say that they are both “objects” with respect to the will. Hence, not only are they “objects” with respect to the powers that elicit them (the end with respect to the will and the exterior act with respect to the powers that carry it out), but also “objects” *with respect to the will itself*—“objects” in different senses. To say that they are both “objects” with respect to the will simply means that they are each willed. Accordingly, Aquinas says elsewhere that both the object and the end are “ends” with respect to the will—that is, the will desires them both:

Objects, insofar as they are compared to exterior acts, have the *ratio* of “matter about which” (*materiae circa quam*); but, insofar as they are compared to the interior act of the will, they have the *ratio* of ends; and it is owing to this [latter fact] that they give to the act its species.<sup>24</sup>

The object, even if it is the *materia circa quam* of the act [literally, “the matter about which the act is terminated”], has the aspect of an end

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<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.* ad 3: [M]otus qui est unus subiecto, potest ratione differre secundum principium et finem, ut ascensio et descensio, sicut dicitur in III Physic. Sic igitur in quantum motus voluntatis fertur in id quod est ad finem, prout ordinatur ad finem, est electio. Motus autem voluntatis qui fertur in finem, secundum quod acquiritur per ea quae sunt ad finem, vocatur intentio. Cuius signum est quod intentio finis esse potest, etiam nondum determinatis his quae sunt ad finem, quorum est electio.

<sup>24</sup> *ST* I-II.72.3 ad 2: [O]biecta, secundum quod comparantur ad actus exteriores, habent rationem materiae circa quam, sed secundum quod comparantur ad actum interiorem voluntatis, habent rationem finium; et ex hoc habent quod dent speciem actui.

according as the intention of the agent is carried over into it, as was said above. Now, the form of the moral act depends on the end, as is plain from the above.<sup>25</sup>

Hence, both the means and the end are desired by the will; as such, they are both “objects” from the point of view of the interior act of the will, although not in the same way. The end is *properly* the “object” of the will; the means is only an object of the will *secundum quid*, insofar as it is sought for the sake of the end.<sup>26</sup> The end is the *ratio volendi* of the means; the means is willed only under the formality of the end, that is, insofar as it is a means to the end. In other words, when one wills the means, the means is what is willed, but it is only willed under the aspect of its tending to the end. The end is precisely the formality under which the means is willed.

Therefore, although it is true that, as I said above, the acts of the will concerning the means have the object of the exterior act as their own object, nonetheless, if one wishes to be more precise one must say that the object of the exterior act (the means) is only *materially* speaking the object of these acts; the end is *formally* speaking their object.<sup>27</sup> The acts of consent, election, command, and use are specified only materially by the means, but formally by the end. Thus, for example, the choice of theft for the sake of adultery is materially an act of the species “theft,” but formally an act of the species

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<sup>25</sup> *ST* I-II.73.3 ad 1: [O]biectum, etsi sit materia circa quam terminatur actus, habet tamen rationem finis, secundum quod intentio agentis fertur in ipsum, ut supra dictum est. Forma autem actus moralis dependet ex fine, ut ex superioribus patet.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Cajetan, *InST* I-II.18.6: Obiectum formale omnis actus voluntatis est finis: eo quod est etiam ratio eorum quae sunt ad finem. Unde Auctor, ad insinuandam hanc formalitatem obiecti, apposuit ly proprie, dicens: Finis autem proprie. Et hoc in sequentibus prae oculis habendum est.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *De beatitudine*, 332 (commenting on *ST* I-II.18.6c): 2a Conclusio: Actus exterior voluntatis, seu imperatus, specificatus immediate ab objecto, specificatur etiam, mediate et formaliter, a fine operantis.

“adultery.” Because the end is *formally* the object of the interior act of the will, one could say, with the scholastic tradition, that it is the “formal object” of the act of the will.

Moreover, because the object of the human act is *materially* the object of the interior act of the will, one could say it is the “material object” of the act of the will. Hence, they are both willed, but differently: the end is willed in itself and the object is willed under the formality of the end.<sup>28</sup>

In order to understand this doctrine with precision, it may be beneficial to indulge a bit further in later scholastic distinctions which, though absent from Aquinas’ own writings, nonetheless do have the advantage of communicating very accurately what he is maintaining in his text. The notions of “formal” and “material” objects describe the relationship between object and end with regard to the interior act of the will. However, these notions, and specifically the notion of the formal object, can be taken in at least two senses. Therefore, the term “formal object” can mean either (a) the aspect or formality under which a certain thing (the material object) is considered, taken abstractly from the material object in question, or (b) the complete object, that is, the material object along with the formality under which it is considered. For instance, sacred theology considers God as its material object under the formality of revelation. If, in this context, one were

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<sup>28</sup> This doctrine is the basis of the well-known, yet little-understood, Thomistic teaching on charity as the “form” of all the virtues. Because the object of charity (God) is the ultimate end of all human acts, it commands the acts of all other virtues, ordering them to its end. Hence, it is formal with respect to all other virtues. Cf. *ST* II-II.23.8c: “[I]n moralibus forma actus attenditur principaliter ex parte finis, cuius ratio est quia principium moralium actuum est voluntas, cuius obiectum et quasi forma est finis. Semper autem forma actus consequitur formam agentis. Unde oportet quod in moralibus id quod dat actui ordinem ad finem, det ei et formam. Manifestum est autem secundum praedicta quod per caritatem ordinantur actus omnium aliarum virtutum ad ultimum finem. Et secundum hoc ipsa dat formam actibus omnium aliarum virtutum. Et pro tanto dicitur esse forma virtutum, nam et ipsae virtutes dicuntur in ordine ad actus formatos.”

to ask what is the “formal object” of sacred theology, two slightly different answers would be possible, depending on which sense of the term “formal object” is understood: one could say that the formal object of theology (according to the first meaning) is “revelation or the revealable;” but it could also be said that its formal object (according to the second meaning) is “*God considered as revealed or revealable.*” Now, in order not to confuse the two meanings of the expression “formal object,” modern scholastics and thomistic commentators tend to reserve the term “formal object” to refer to (b) the complete object. They also utilize the more precise term “formal object which” (*objectum formale quod*) to refer to the complete object, in order to avoid confusion. For (a), the formality under which the material object is considered, abstracting from the material object itself, they often resort to precise expressions such as the “formal principle by which” (*principium formale quo*), “the formal aspect under which” (*ratio formalis sub qua*), the “principle or medium through which” (*medium seu principium quo*)<sup>29</sup> or simply the “formal aspect of the object” (*ratio formalis objecti*).

Bañez, utilizing the last of these expressions, explains that the end is the “formal aspect of the object” of the human act.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the end is the formality under which the

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *De revelatione per Ecclesiam Catholicam proposita*, vol. 1 (Paris; Rome: Desclée, 1950), 8-12.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Dominicus Bañez, *InST I-II.18.4: Prima conclusio de circumstantia finis: Sententia quae asserit quod finis est circumstantia respectu actus interioris non est omnino improbabilis; illa tamen quae asserit non esse circumstantiam, sed rationem formalem objecti, est longe probabilior, et in doctrina divi Thomae videtur certa . . . . Ut autem explicetur secunda pars conclusionis, est advertendum quod, sicut in numeris species desumitur ab ultima unitate, v. g., in numero ternario, tertia unitas est forma illius, aliae vero unitates vel numeri quae concurrunt ad numerum habent se materialiter; non dissimiliter in actu interiori species formalissima desumitur ex fine qui est ultimate intentus, et finis est qui dat speciem illi actui. Aliud vero objectum quod est ibi adjunctum est volitum propter finem, concurrat ad speciem illius actus materialiter. Sicut cum quis fornicatur propter furtum, species desumitur ex formalissimo et purissimo, quod*

object of the exterior act is willed. The end is not this object, but it brings to it its ultimate specification. Aquinas points out this fact by saying, “that which is on the part of the will is related as formal to that which is on the part of the exterior action, . . . the species of the human act is considered formally according to the end, but materially according to the object of the exterior act.”<sup>31</sup>

### **B. ST I-II.18.7: TWO WAYS IN WHICH THE END SPECIFIES THE EXTERIOR ACT**

This study of the specification of the human act in general is nearly complete. But before I apply it to the issue of the finality of religion, I must add to it the doctrine contained in the next article, *ST I-II.18.7*. In the previous chapter, when I spoke of the

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est volitum per se ipsum; fornicatio vero quae ibi est adjuncta concurrat materialiter, et non dat speciem. Unde cum Aristoteles dicit in locis citatis, quod qui furatur propter moechiam, magis est moechus, intelligendum est quod formaliter et essentialiter est moechus, materialiter vero fur. *Haec sententia* sic explicata, *probat*. Et primo probatur quod sit ex mente divi Thomae, et inde colligemus ejus majorem probabilitatem. Nam divus Thomas, in articulo sextu hujus quaestionis, in corpore, distinguit inter actum interiorem et exteriorem, et expresse dicit quod finis est proprium et formale objectum actus interioris. Et in solutione ad secundum, loquendo de objecto quod ordinatur ad alium finem, dicit quod, licet accidat actui interiori quod ordinetur in ulteriorem finem, non tamen accidit interiori. Et in solutione ad tertium dicit quod quando multi actus differentes speciei ordinantur ad unum finem, est ibi diversitas in actibus exterioribus, unitas tamen in actu interiori, quoniam illa unitas specifica interioris actus desumitur ex fine, et diversitas quae est in actu exteriori, est materialis respectu interioris actus, sicut diximus de numero. Haec omnia manifeste confirmat nostram sententiam, et rejiciunt oppositam. Ergo.

<sup>31</sup> *ST I-II.18.6c*, quoted in note 1. Cf. *De Malo* 2.2 ad 5: “[I]llud quod est ratio alterius, se habet ad illud sicut formale ad materiale; puta, in actu sensus color videtur per lumen, et se habet ut materiale ad lumen, quod potest videri etiam sine colore, licet color non possit videri sine lumine. Et similiter in actu voluntatis finis est ratio volendi id quod est ad finem; unde finis est appetibilis etiam sine eo quod est ad finem . . . [A]ctus voluntatis se habet ut formale ad actum exteriorem, et actus exterior se habet non accidentaliter sed materialiter ad tale peccatum.” Cf. *II Sent* d. 38, q. 1, a. 4 ad 1: “[F]inis et id quod est ad finem, in quantum hujusmodi consideratum, non sunt diversa objecta, sed unum objectum in quo finis sicut formale est, quasi ratio quaedam volendi; sed id quod est ad finem, est sicut materiale, sicut etiam lumen et color sunt unum objectum.”

possibility of the *finis operantis* ensuing naturally from the *finis operis*, I quoted part of this article (more than once, in fact), but this text is so important that it is worth quoting in its entirety:

The object of the external act can relate in a twofold manner to the end of the will: one way, as being *per se* ordered to it; just as fighting well is *per se* ordered to victory; another way, *per accidens*, as taking the property of another is ordered *per accidens* to the giving of alms. Now, as the Philosopher says in the seventh [book] of the *Metaphysics*, that the differences that divide a genus, and constitute the species of that genus, must divide that genus *per se*. If they divide it *per accidens*, the division does not proceed rightly; as, if one were to say: “Of animals, one is rational, another irrational; and of irrational animals, one winged, another non-winged;” for “winged” and “non-winged” are not *per se* determinative of that which is irrational. One must divide thus: “Of animals, one has feet, another does not have feet; and of those that have feet, one has two feet, another has four, another has many”: for these determine *per se* the former difference. Therefore, when the object is not *per se* ordered to the end, the specific difference that is from the object is not *per se* determinative of that which is from the end, nor vice versa. Hence, one of these species is not under the other, but then the moral act is under two disparate species, as it were. Hence, we say that he who steals so that he may commit adultery commits two evils (*malitias*) in one act. However, if the object is ordered *per se* to the end, one of these differences is *per se* determinative of the other. Hence, one of these species will be contained under the other. Now, it remains to be considered which under which. To make this evident, it must be considered first that the more particular the form from which a certain difference is taken, the more specific is the difference; second, that the more universal the agent, the more universal is the form that comes from it; third, that the more posterior is a certain end, the more universal the agent to which it corresponds, just as victory, which is the ultimate end of the army, is the end intended by the highest leader; but the ordering of this battle line or that one is the end intended by one of the lower leaders. From all of this, it follows that the specific difference that is from the end is more general; and the difference that is from the object which is *per se* ordered to such an end is specific with respect to it. For the will, whose proper object is the end, is the universal motive (*motivum*) with respect to

all of the powers of the soul, whose proper objects are the objects of particular acts.<sup>32</sup>

In the previous chapter, I established that when Aquinas speaks of “end” in this question (*ST I-II.18*), he means the *finis operantis*. I further said that he means *finis operantis* in the sense that such an end is willed by the agent, not in the sense that the object is always ordered to it in a merely accidental way. He is abstracting from the issue of whether the willed end ensues naturally or accidentally from the act.

In this article, Thomas brings to the forefront the distinction between (a) ends that naturally ensue from the objects and (b) ends that are only accidentally related to the

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<sup>32</sup> *ST I-II.18.7c*: [O]biectum exterioris actus dupliciter potest se habere ad finem voluntatis, uno modo, sicut per se ordinatum ad ipsum, sicut bene pugnare per se ordinatur ad victoriam; alio modo, per accidens, sicut accipere rem alienam per accidens ordinatur ad dandum eleemosynam. Oportet autem, ut philosophus dicit in VII *Metaphysicorum*, quod differentiae dividentes aliquod genus, et constituentes speciem illius generis, per se dividant illud. Si autem per accidens, non recte procedit divisio, puta si quis dicat, animalium aliud rationale, aliud irrationale; et animalium irrationalium aliud alatum, aliud non alatum, alatum enim et non alatum non sunt per se determinativa eius quod est irrationale. Oportet autem sic dividere, animalium aliud habens pedes, aliud non habens pedes; et habentium pedes, aliud habet duos, aliud quatuor, aliud multos, haec enim per se determinant priorem differentiam. Sic igitur quando obiectum non est per se ordinatum ad finem, differentia specifica quae est ex obiecto, non est per se determinativa eius quae est ex fine, nec e converso. Unde una istarum specierum non est sub alia, sed tunc actus moralis est sub duabus speciebus quasi disparatis. Unde dicimus quod ille qui furatur ut moechetur, committit duas malitias in uno actu. Si vero obiectum per se ordinetur ad finem, una dictarum differentiarum est per se determinativa alterius. Unde una istarum specierum continebitur sub altera. Considerandum autem restat quae sub qua. Ad cuius evidentiam, primo considerandum est quod quanto aliqua differentia sumitur a forma magis particulari, tanto magis est specifica. Secundo, quod quanto agens est magis universale, tanto ex eo est forma magis universalis. Tertio, quod quanto aliquis finis est posterior, tanto respondet agenti universaliori, sicut victoria, quae est ultimus finis exercitus, est finis intentus a summo duce; ordinatio autem huius aciei vel illius, est finis intentus ab aliquo inferiorum ducum. Et ex istis sequitur quod differentia specifica quae est ex fine, est magis generalis; et differentia quae est ex obiecto per se ad talem finem ordinato, est specifica respectu eius. Voluntas enim, cuius proprium obiectum est finis, est universale motivum respectu omnium potentiarum animae, quarum propria obiecta sunt obiecta particularium actuum.



object. The primary premise of the article is precisely this distinction. However, he expresses it in slightly different terms: object of a human act (that is, the *finis operis*) can be ordered to the end (that is, *finis operantis*) in two ways: naturally or *per se* (such as the case of fighting well for the sake of victory or burying one's father in a dignified manner for the sake of honoring him) and accidentally or *per accidens* (as in the case of the theft for the sake of almsgiving).

He will use this distinction to show how the “end” (*finis operantis*) specifies the “object” or means chosen (*finis operis*). From *ST I-II.18.6c* one learns that in both cases the end plays a specifying role: the end is formal in relation to the object. Now, in the seventh article, Aquinas is adding to this account. The exact specifying role of the end, he argues, is different in each case. When the object is only accidentally ordered to the end (when the *finis operantis* does not ensue naturally from the *finis operis*) the specifying role of the end is more independent from that of the object than when there is a *per se* order. When there is an accidental order, the two unrelated “ends” or formalities form two separate species of human acts. In the case of stealing in order to relieve the poor, for instance, the act falls into two (as it were) disparate species (*species quasi disparatae*): “theft” and “almsgiving.” Aquinas would say “*as it were* disparate” because it is still true that the end is formal with respect to the object, such that in this case the act would be *formally* an act of almsgiving, and only materially an act of theft. “Consequently we say that he that commits theft for the sake of adultery is guilty of a twofold malice in one action,”<sup>33</sup> and yet “he who steals so that he may commit adultery is, speaking *per se*,

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<sup>33</sup> *ST I-II.18.7c* quoted above in full in note 32.

more an adulterer than a thief.”<sup>34</sup> In other words, when there is an accidental order, the object and end are separate and independent as far as species go, but the end remains primary, because it is the motive for willing (*ratio volendi*) the object.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *ST* I-II.18.6c, quoted in note 1.

<sup>35</sup> Bañez denies that the doctrine of *ST* I-II.18.6 regarding the formality of the end with respect to the object is applicable to the case of an end that is only *per accidens* ordered to the end. He wants to restrict that relationship only to the case of an object that is *per se* related to the end. Cf. Bañez *InST* I-II.18.7: “[Q]uando objectum et finis non habent ordinem inter se, tunc forma quae sumitur ex objecto et quae desumitur ex fine sunt disparatae, et una non se habet respectu alterius ut forma. Sed sicut albedo et dulcedo quae sunt in eodem pomo sunt formae disparatae, et una non comparatur ad alteram ut forma, ita formae illae morales quae reperiuntur in eodem actu humano. Ceterum, si objectum per se ordinetur ad finem, forma quae sumitur ex objecto habet se ut materia et ut magis contracta respectu formae quae desumitur ex fine; forma vero quae ex fine desumitur habet se ut formalior et perfectior. Et haec est mens divi Thomae.” However, there are in Aquinas’ text enough indications that Thomas does mean to say that *in both cases* (namely, both when the object is ordered to the end *per se* and when it is only so *per accidens*) the end is formal with respect to the object. First, it is clear that the example that he gives in Article 6 to illustrate how the end is formal with respect to the object is precisely the Aristotelian example of theft for the sake adultery, which in Article 7 is the example he uses to illustrate how an object is ordered *per accidens* to the end: “Et ideo actus humani species formaliter consideratur secundum finem, materialiter autem secundum obiectum exterioris actus. Unde philosophus dicit, in V *Ethic.*, quod ille qui furatur ut committat adulterium, est, per se loquendo, magis adulter quam fur.” Aquinas says as much in his own words, without citing Aristotle: “actus alicuius habitus, prout imperatur ab illo habitu, accipit quidem speciem moralem, formaliter loquendo, de ipso actu; unde cum quis fornicatur ut furetur, actus iste licet materialiter sit intemperantiae, tamen formaliter est avaritiae” (*Quaestiones disputatae*, vol. 2: *Quaestiones disputatae de virtutibus cardinalibus*, ed. E. Odetto, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. [Marietti, Turin-Rome, 1965], 1.10.10). Cf. Billuart, *Summa sancti Thomae*, T. II, Diss. IV, Art. III, § IV, “Prima difficultas”: “Ad primum: qui furatur ad moechandum, dicitur magis moechus quam fur, non quia actus furandi habet speciem essentialem a fine moechiae, sed quia voluntas moechandi imperans est principalior, et agens magis afficitur ad moechiam quam ad furtum, cum velit furtum propter moechiam . . .” Finally, in *ST* I-II.13.1c, Aquinas explicitly admits that two acts that belong to different habits can relate to one another as matter and form insofar as one is ordered to the other: “Est autem considerandum in actibus animae, quod actus qui est essentialiter unius potentiae vel habitus, recipit formam et speciem a superiori potentia vel habitu, secundum quod ordinatur inferius a superiori, si enim aliquis actum fortitudinis exerceat propter Dei amorem, actus quidem ille materialiter est fortitudinis, formaliter vero caritatis.”

In the case of a *per se* order, however, the specification furnished by the end is intimately related to the specification from the object. The specification from the end is more generic and universal than that of the object. The difference from the object is “determinative” of that which is from the end. The example that Aquinas gives here is fighting well for the sake of victory. Fighting well is the specific way of attaining the more general end of victory.

Nevertheless, one must not conclude that, since it is more “specific” than the end, the object must be related to the end as form to matter. To say so would involve a contradiction given what he established in the previous article, namely, that the object relates to the end as matter to form. Aquinas raises this problem in the third objection to article 7:

Further, the more formal a difference, the more specific it is, for the difference is compared to the genus as form to matter. Now, the species that is from the end is more formal than that which is from the object, as stated above. Therefore, the species that is from the end is contained under the species that is from the object, as the most specific species (*species specialissima*) under its subaltern genus . . . .

His reply is that of a masterful logician:

The difference is compared to the genus as form to matter, inasmuch as it makes the genus be in act. However, the genus is also considered as more formal than the species inasmuch as it is more absolute and less contracted. Hence, also the parts of a definition are reduced to the genus of formal cause, as is stated in the book of the *Physics* [2.3]; and, according

to this, the genus is the formal cause of the species, and the more universal (*communius*) it is, the more formal it will be.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, on the one hand, it is true: the genus relates to the difference as matter to form, insofar as the difference brings actualization to the genus. On the other hand, however, the genus can be seen as formal with respect to the species, insofar as it is less limited or “contracted” (*minus contractum*) and more absolute or common (*absolutius, communius*) than the species. Therefore, the end, which provides a more generic and universal specification for the human act, can be seen as formal with respect to the object, which provides the less generic (more determinate) specification.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *ST* I-II.18.7 arg 3: Praeterea, quanto aliqua differentia est magis formalis, tanto magis est specialis, quia differentia comparatur ad genus ut forma ad materiam. Sed species quae est ex fine, est formalior ea quae est ex obiecto, ut dictum est. Ergo species quae est ex fine, continetur sub specie quae est ex obiecto, sicut species specialissima sub genere subalterno . . . . Ad 3: [D]ifferentia comparatur ad genus ut forma ad materiam, inquantum facit esse genus in actu. Sed etiam genus consideratur ut formalius specie, secundum quod est absolutius, et minus contractum. Unde et partes definitionis reducuntur ad genus causae formalis, ut dicitur in libro *Physic*. Et secundum hoc, genus est causa formalis speciei, et “tanto erit formalius, quanto communius.

<sup>37</sup> Bañez’s comment on this text (*InST* I-II.18.7) is worth reading: “Tertia conclusio: Quando dicimus quod species quae est ex obiecto continetur sub specie quae est ex fine sicut sub genere, intelligendum est si sumatur genus respectu speciei ut forma simplicior et universalior; non vero si consideretur genus ut materia respectu differentiae . . . . Et vult dicere divus Thomas quod illa bonitas vel malitia quae est ex obiecto est magis coarctata et determinata respectu bonitatis vel malitiae quae est ex fine. Et bonitas vel malitia ex fine est simplicior et magis universalis et minus coarctata, et hac ratione dicitur generica; non quod proprie sit generitca, sed quod se habeat ut ratio generica. Ad cuius expositionem est *secundo notandum*, quod id quod habet rationem finis per se loquendo semper est aliquid perfectius, universalius et minus determinatum quam id quod est ad talem finem. Nam, ut docet divus Thomas q. 6 *De veritate*, a. 6 ad septimum, id quod est universalius in causando causalitate causae formalis vel finalis, simpliciter est perfectius et formalius. Et ita esse, quod est actualitas respectu omnium, et finis, in intentione agentis, est perfectissimum et formalissimum omnium. Finis vero respectu eorum quae sunt ad finem est universalis in causando causalitate finis, et ideo respectu eorum qu[u]ae sunt ad finem habet rationem formalissimi et perfectissimi. Unde divus Thomas in solutione ad tertium se explicat. Dicit enim quod finis respectu eorum quae

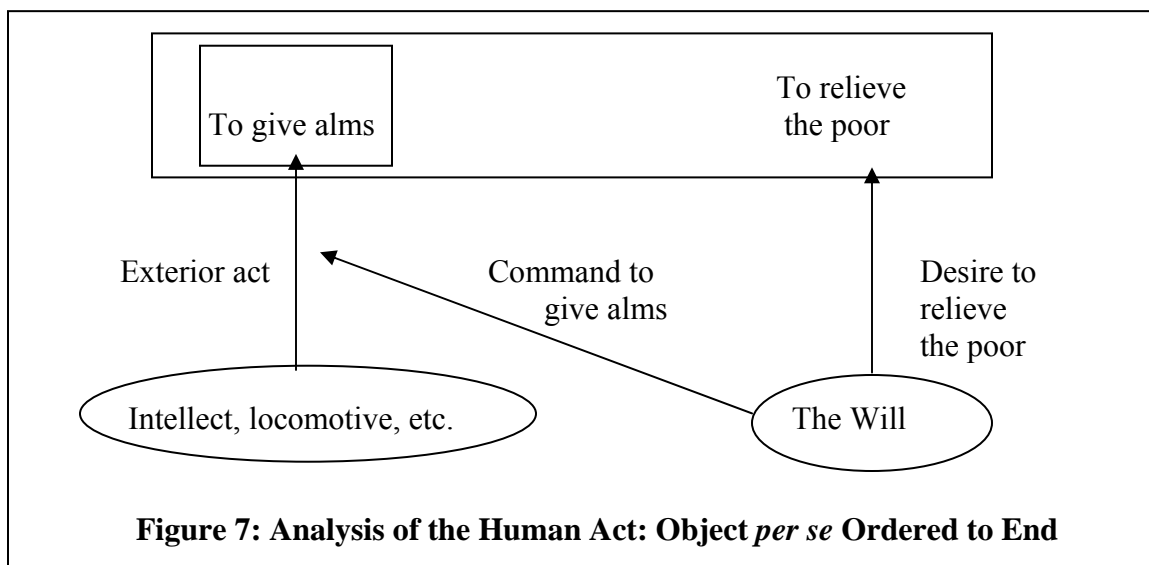
Now, it must be noted that not all of the *finis operis* of a given act (or the *finis operantis* that ensue *per se* from them) are identical to the object. Only the immediate *finis operis* is identical to the object. The other, remote *finis operis* (and naturally-ensuing *finis operantis*) are distinct from the object, even if they are *per se* related to it. That point must be kept in mind if one wishes to understand the doctrine contained in *ST* I-II.18.7. There, Aquinas speaks of the different “goodnesses” furnished by the object and end, even when the former is *per se* ordered to the latter. He clearly has in mind, not that the object and end *coincide* (that is, are identical), but that, although the latter naturally ensues from the object, they are distinct. Because they are distinct, they can furnish different “goodnesses” to the act. In other words, if, by saying that they are “*per se* ordered” he merely means that the object and end are identical, then it would be impossible for them each to have a different moral “goodness,” or for the two to specify the act differently. Whereas the object is identical to the immediate *finis operis*, it is not identical to the other naturally ensuing *finis operis* (or *finis operantis*); the remote *finis operis* are more general, and, therefore, have a more general moral “goodness” than the proximate ones.<sup>38</sup>

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sunt ad finem habet rationem generis in quantum genus est forma quaedam universalior et simplicior respectu speciei; non vero in quantum genus est aliquid potentiale et materiale. Et quod haec sit mens divi Thomae constat etiam eo quod docet q. 13, a. 1, quod qui exercet actum fortitudinis propter Deum summe dilectum, ille actus formaliter est caritatis, materialiter fortitudinis. Ubi expresse significat quod forma quae desumitur ex fine est formalior et perfectior, ea vero quae desumitur ex objecto proximo materialior et imperfectior. Ex quo colligitur tota doctrina huius articuli . . . .”

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Bañez, *InST* I-II.18.7: Praecipue habet vim hoc argumentum, quoniam finis intrinsecus actui vitii vel virtutis non distinguitur ab objecto in esse moris. Loquitur igitur divus Thomas de actu qui habet duas bonitates vel malitias. Et bonitas vel malitia ex objecto *per se* ordinatur ad bonitatem vel malitiam ex fine.

This conclusion has serious repercussions for the model of the human act that I have been laying out. Thus far, the paradigm that I have used in my analysis of the human act has been Aquinas' example of theft for the sake of adultery, where the object is *per accidens* ordered to the end. Let us now illustrate an act where the *finis operis* is *per se* ordered to the *finis operantis* (that of almsgiving for the sake of relieving the poor), taking into account what I have just laid out.



The object (proximate *finis operis*) “to give alms” is *per se* ordered to the end (*finis operis*) of “relieving the poor;” the latter naturally ensues from the former. Therefore, the act is not only formally an act of relieving the poor and materially an act of almsgiving—as could be the case even if the object were *per accidens* ordered to the end; but it is also *generically* an act of relieving the poor and *specifically* an act of almsgiving. Its genus is the relief of the poor, and its species is almsgiving. Thus, I have placed the

rectangle that represents the object within the rectangle that represents the *finis operantis*. The two do not “coincide;” they are not identical. Rather, each brings a different “goodness” to the act: the object a comparatively material and particular goodness, the end a comparatively formal and universal goodness.

### C. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I examined Aquinas’ doctrine in *ST I-II.18* on the end’s contribution to the specification of the human act. In the first part (A), I did three things. First (1), I examined the principle that any particular human act could be analyzed into two “acts:” an interior act, which is the will’s elicited act of desire of the end, and an exterior act commanded by the will and elicited by various faculties. Moreover, I explained that each of these acts has its own object: the “object” generally spoken of in Question 18 is the object of the exterior act, whereas the end is, properly, the object of the interior act. Then (2), I briefly reviewed the principle that an action is specified by its object. Thence Aquinas concludes that each of the two acts in which a human act consists is specified by its object; the exterior act is specified by its object and the interior act is specified by the end, which is its own object. Then (3), I also established the principle that both the object and the end are “objects” from the point of view of the interior act of the will, and that the end is formal with respect to the object of the exterior act. In the second part (B), I made a distinction between two ways in which the end can specify the object. I concluded by stating precisely the most salient point: that the end is the “formal aspect of the object” of the interior act of the will, so that the specification of the act is materially from the object and formally from the end.

This latter principle, that the end provides the ultimate formality under which the object is considered, is the fundamental, guiding principle behind one conclusion of the dissertation, that the end of religion is God's extrinsic glory: the object of religion, which is not God, but *cultus*, is *seen as being related to God*, through the formality furnished by the end of religion, God. Hence, although one cannot perfect the intrinsic glory of God, one can do things "for God's sake" insofar as one can perfect his extrinsic glory, that is something which is materially a creature but formally a manifestation of God himself. In the next chapter, I apply the principle of the formality provided by the end to the issue of the finality of religion. This application is the key to understanding Aquinas' teaching on the finality of the virtue of religion.



**PART THREE:**

**THE SOLUTION**

## THE OBJECT AND THE END OF RELIGION

I have reached the pivotal point of the study. This doctrine of the human act that I have examined has very important applications to Aquinas' teaching on the end of the virtue of religion. In this chapter, I first (A) present a textual study of Aquinas' notion of *cultus* in order to understand Aquinas' claim that the object of religion is *cultus*, and that its end is God. Then (B), I compare the notion of *cultus* with other related concepts in Aquinas' thought, in order to grasp the term's semantic range. Then (C), I ask what is the specific difference of divine *cultus*, what distinguishes it from other kinds of *cultus*. Finally (D), I begin inquiring about the end of the virtue of religion, specifically whether the end of religion is "variable" or "fixed;" that is, whether it admits of different *fines operantis* besides God. This chapter, therefore, sets the stage for the next, where I deal directly with the conceptual core of the issue of the finality of worship. There, I present the two major conclusions of this study,<sup>1</sup> which follow from the application of the principles regarding the end of the human act discussed in the previous two chapters.

### A. FOUR TEXTS ON *CULTUS*

What does Aquinas mean by "*cultus*?" An answer to this can be gathered from Aquinas' various explanations of the term. There are four places within his *corpus* where he tells us in what *cultus* (or its corresponding verbal form, *colere*) consists.

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 1, Section D: Theses, pp. 59-60.

### 1. The *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* on *Cultus*

The earliest explanation of the concept is found in his *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, where he defines *colere* in terms of “mindful aiming” at something (*intentionem attentam*). Speaking of *latria*, he says that:

And this virtue is given four names: for it is called “piety” in relation to the effect of devotion, which occurs first. It is also called “*theosebia*,” that is, divine *cultus*, or “*eusebia*,” that is, good *cultus*, in relation to “a mindful intentness” (*intentionem attentam*); for that is said to be “cultivated” (*coli*) upon which one is earnestly intent (*studiose intenditur*), such as a field or the mind, or whatever else.<sup>2</sup>

*Cultus* here is a very broad concept, which connotes solely the earnest directedness or mindful intentness upon something. As such, the term *cultus* applies differently to cultivating a field, to cultivating a mind and to cultivating God. Accordingly, Aquinas speaks neither of the type of effect that such earnest directedness or mindful intentness may or may not have upon the object “cultivated,” nor of what sort of act the directedness consists in, objectively. Implicit here is a key as to why the act of giving *cultus* to God is not at odds with God’s inability to benefit from our actions: giving *cultus* to something does not necessarily imply *perfecting* that thing, but only earnestly directing oneself to it.

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<sup>2</sup> III *Sent* d. 9, q. 1, a. 1 quaestiunc. 1c: [E]t nominatur haec virtus quatuor nominibus: dicitur enim pietas quantum ad effectum devotionis, quod primum occurrit. Dicitur etiam theosebia, idest divinus cultus vel eusebia, idest bonus cultus, quantum ad intentionem attentam; illud enim coli dicitur cui studiose intenditur, sicut ager vel animus, vel quidquid aliud.

Hence, even though Aquinas here does not tell us in what divine *cultus* positively consists, from this passage we can draw a negative conclusion: *cultus* in general is to be understood in abstraction from the notion of perfecting the object “cultivated.”

## 2. The *Super Boetium De trinitate on Cultus*

The second *locus* for Aquinas’ definition of *cultus* is his *Super Boetium De trinitate (InDT)*. Here he offers an explanation of *cultus* that is consistent with, but which goes beyond, what he had done in the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*. He seems now to be more explicitly concerned with showing why cultivating God is not tantamount to making God better. In order to do so he explains *cultus* in very broad terms:

Now, the *cultus* rendered to any thing seems to be nothing else than the due operation employed concerning that thing. And from this people are diversely said to “cultivate” (*colere*) fields, parents, the fatherland, and other such things, because diverse operations are apt to diverse things.<sup>3</sup>

This account of *cultus* in terms of a “due operation employed concerning some thing” (*debita operatio circa quamlibet rem adhibita*) is very telling. Aquinas is making it clear to us that *cultus* applies not to one operation alone, but to diverse operations (*diversae operationes*), which are apt diversely to diverse things. The concept must be broad enough to encompass any act that has an object, or at least any act that is “due” (and therefore “fitting”) to any object. Because of the broadness of the definition, one is forced

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<sup>3</sup> *InDT* 2.3.2 co. 1: Cultus autem cuiuslibet rei impensus nihil aliud esse videtur quam debita operatio circa illud adhibita. Et ex hoc dicuntur aliqui diversimode colere agros, parentes, patriam et alia huiusmodi, quia diversis diversae operationes coaptantur . . . .

to understand the concept of *cultus* abstractly from any effect that such “due operation” may or may not have on its object. This is brought to light by Aquinas, who, to remove any doubt regarding the compatibility between divine *cultus* and God’s immutability, asserts explicitly that the act of *cultus* has a special sense when applied to God:

Now, God is not worshipped (*colitur*) in such a way that our actions profit or aid him, as is the case in the foregoing [instances of *cultus*], but only insofar as we subject ourselves and show ourselves subject to him. Therefore, this divine *cultus* is designated absolutely by the term *theosebia*.<sup>4</sup>

The type of act that is due to a field or to one’s fatherland may bear a good effect on the field or the fatherland; nevertheless, the type of act due to God does not have an effect on him. Such an act consists in something that does not, and cannot, affect God: our subjection to him. Now, this text is notable not only insofar as Aquinas is explicitly telling us that divine *cultus* does not have an effect on God (does not “profit or aid” him); but also insofar he is telling us exactly in what *cultus* consists, in very concrete terms: subjection to God. Such subjection is our “due operation employed concerning God.”

This is consonant with *ST* II-II.81.3, where Aquinas implicitly identifies divine *cultus* with subjecting ourselves to and serving God. The second argument in the article raises the issue that religion seems to represent many virtues, rather than one, due to the multiplicity and diversity of the actions under that habit:

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<sup>4</sup> *InDT* 2.3.2 co. 1: Deus autem non hoc modo colitur, quod ei nostra operatio aliquid prosit aut subveniat, sicut est in praedictis, sed solum in quantum nos ei subdimus et subditos demonstramus. Hic ergo cultus divinus absolute nomine theosebiae designatur.

Further, of one virtue there is seemingly one act, since habits are distinguished by their acts. Now, there are many acts of religion, for instance to worship, to serve, to vow, to pray, to sacrifice and many such like. Therefore, religion is not one virtue.<sup>5</sup>

Aquinas replies that *cultus* has the same formality as service; they both “regard” the divine excellence.

By the same act man serves God and worships (*colit*) him, for *cultus* regards the excellence of God, to whom reverence is due: while service regards the subjection of man who, by his condition, is obliged to show reverence to God. And to these two belong all acts ascribed to religion, because, through them all, man attests to the divine excellence and his subjection to God, either by showing something to God, or again by receiving something divine.<sup>6</sup>

This link between *cultus* and subjection is a very important, if subtle, development that we should not miss and which I shall later examine in depth.

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<sup>5</sup> *ST* II-II.81.3 arg 2: Praeterea, unius virtutis unus videtur esse actus, habitus enim distinguuntur secundum actus. Religionis autem multi sunt actus, sicut colere et servire, vovere, orare, sacrificare, et multa huiusmodi. Ergo religio non est una virtus.

<sup>6</sup> *ST* II-II.81.3 ad 2: [E]odem actu homo servit Deo et colit ipsum, nam cultus respicit Dei excellentiam, cui reverentia debetur; servitus autem respicit subiectionem hominis, qui ex sua conditione obligatur ad exhibendum reverentiam Deo. Et ad haec duo pertinent omnes actus qui religioni attribuuntur, quia per omnes homo protestatur divinam excellentiam et subiectionem sui ad Deum, vel exhibendo aliquid ei, vel iterum assumendo aliquid divinum. Cf. *ST* II-II.82.2c: Manifestum est autem quod operari ea quae pertinent ad divinum cultum seu famulatum pertinet proprie ad religionem, ut ex praedictis patet.

### 3. The *Summa Contra Gentiles* on *Cultus*

The third passage is found in the *Summa contra gentiles* (SCG), where Aquinas brings together some of the elements of both of the previous accounts of *cultus* (namely, those from the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* and the *Super Boetium De trinitate*):

We are said to “cultivate” (*colere*) those things to which we earnestly apply ourselves (*studium adhibemus*) through our actions. Now, with an act of ours we earnestly apply ourselves (*adhibemus studium*) concerning God, not so that we profit (*proficiamus*) him, as is the case when we are said to “cultivate” (*colere*) other things by our actions, but because by such actions we are advanced towards God.<sup>7</sup>

This text, then, is a sort of digest of the other two. He is here combining the notion of earnestness (*studium*), which he expounded in the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*, with the notion of applying or “employing our due operations concerning a thing” (*debita operatio circa rem adhibita*), which he utilized in *Super Boetium De trinitate*: the result is that *cultus* consists in “earnestly applying ourselves concerning a thing” (*studium adhibemus nostro actu*). Still, the basic point remains: *cultus* consists in a due operation upon something; that is, in an action involving an object, which is due or fitting to that object, and which may, but need not, have an effect on such object.

In this passage, Aquinas is also underscoring, as he did in the *Super Boetium De trinitate*, our inability to “advance” (*proficiamus*) God through our actions. There is, however, a slight novelty in this respect—one that is consistent with, but builds upon, the

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<sup>7</sup> SCG III.119: Illa enim colere dicimur quibus per nostra opera studium adhibemus. Circa Deum autem adhibemus studium nostro actu, non quidem ut proficiamus ei, sicut cum alias res nostris operibus colere dicimur: sed quia per huiusmodi actus proficimur in Deum.

previous doctrine. Instead of saying that divine *cultus* consists in subjection to God, as he did in the *Super Boetium De trinitate*, he speaks here of advancing towards him. This phrase is part of a play on the verb *proficio*: we give *cultus* to God, not insofar as we give God an advantage (*proficiamus Deum*), but insofar as we are advanced towards God (*proficimur in Deum*). In other words, divine *cultus* does not consist in *God's* “advancement,” but ours. Thus, advancing towards God in this passage takes the place of submitting to him. The link between these two concepts plays a significant role when I discuss the finality of religion in the next two chapters.

#### 4. The *Summa theologiae* on *Cultus*

In the fourth and final text on *cultus* we find the mature Aquinas of *ST* giving his last words on the matter. In *ST* II-II.81.1, he asks whether religion orders humans to God alone. Before answering in the affirmative, he considers five objections, the fourth of which contends that religion does not order a human being to God alone, but to his or her neighbor as well:

[C]*ultus* belongs to religion; but man is said to ‘cultivate’ (*colere*), not only God, but also his neighbor, according to the words of Cato, ‘Honor (*cole*) your parents.’ Therefore, religion ordains us to our neighbor also, and not only to God.<sup>8</sup>

To this, he will reply that:

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<sup>8</sup> *ST* II-II.81.1 arg 4: [A]d religionem pertinet cultus. Sed homo dicitur non solum colere Deum, sed etiam proximum, secundum illud Catonis, cole parentes. Ergo etiam religio nos ordinat ad proximum, et non solum ad Deum.



We are said to “cultivate” (*colere*) men whom we celebrate (*frequentamus*) through honor, remembrance, or presence. And also some things that are subject to us are said to be “cultivated” (*coli*) by us: just as farmers (*agricolae*) are thus called from the fact that they “cultivate” fields (*colunt agros*), and inhabitants (*incolae*) from the fact that they “cultivate” (*colunt*) the places that they inhabit. But since a special honor is owed to God, as the first principle of all things, so also a special kind of *cultus* is due to him, which is called in Greek *eusebia* or *theosebia*, as is evident from Augustine, in the tenth book of *The City of God*.<sup>9</sup>

The reply, then, consists in explaining that, although there are many different kinds of *cultus* that do not order humans to God alone, there is a “special” kind of *cultus*, called religion, *eusebia*, or *theosebia*, which *does* order us to God alone.

At first glance, it would appear that Aquinas is only applying his preceding doctrine on *cultus* to this particular objection. But, in truth, this passage represents a significant development of his doctrine. In the previous passages, there seemed to be the following format. First (1), Aquinas would give us somewhat of a definition of *cultus*—whether by telling us that (a) *cultus* in general consists in a certain mindful intentness (*intentionem attentam*) or in something upon which one is earnestly intent (*studiose intenditur*), as he had done in the *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum*; or (b) that it is a “due operation employed concerning a thing” or applied to it (*debita operatio circa rem adhibita*), as he had explained in the *Super Boetium De trinitate*; or (c) that it amounts to “earnestly applying ourselves concerning a thing” (*studium adhibemus circa rem*), as he phrased it in the *Summa contra gentiles*. Second (2), he gave us some instances of *cultus*:

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<sup>9</sup> *ST II-II.81.1 ad 4*: [C]olere dicimus homines quos honorificatione, vel recordatione, vel praesentia frequentamus. Et etiam aliqua quae nobis subiecta sunt coli a nobis dicuntur: sicut agricolae dicuntur ex eo quod colunt agros, et incolae dicuntur ex eo quod colunt loca quae inhabitant. Quia tamen specialis honor debetur Deo, tanquam primo omnium principio, etiam specialis ratio cultus ei debetur, quae Graeco nomine vocatur eusebia vel theosebia, ut patet per Augustinum, decimo *De civitate Dei*.

the *cultus* of fields, of parents, of the fatherland, etc., and of God. Third (3), he remarked that the *cultus* of God does not affect God.

In the fourth passage, however, he bypasses this format. There is no mention that God is unaffected by divine *cultus* (3). Further, and more importantly, instead of giving, as he had done previously, a *definition* of the concept of *cultus* (1), and applying it to its disparate instances (2), here he approaches the problem by performing the opposite logical operation, namely, that of *division* of the concept into its subjective parts (that is, he is also giving an “extensional,” rather than merely an “intensional,” definition). Thus, the (1) definition and (2) instances are replaced by the division or categorization of the concept. This change in format is noteworthy because it allows Aquinas to give us different information regarding the nature of *cultus*: in addition to knowing the genus of which *cultus* is a species (definition), we are now given the various species of which *cultus* is a genus (division). Therefore, if Aquinas’ previous passages had caused confusion regarding how exactly it is possible to apply such a broad concept to such disparate cases as the plowing of fields and the worship of God, now he can provide us with the conceptual tools for understanding such application.

In presenting this division of *cultus* in general, Aquinas is here implying something that he will later teach explicitly, namely, that honor (or “celebrating someone by honoring them”) is not to be equated with *cultus* in general; honoring someone is rather *one way* of giving someone due *cultus*: “By *cultus* not only honor is understood, but also anything else which pertains to the fitting acts whereby a human being is ordered

to another.”<sup>10</sup> There are, of course, other, more mundane sorts of *cultus*, such as remembering the deceased (celebrating through remembrance), visiting the elderly (celebrating through presence), or plowing a field (subjecting what is “cultivated”).

It is significant that *cultus* in this text is broader than divine *cultus*. This complicates our interpretation of the other three texts on *cultus*, for this means that, all along, Aquinas was talking about *cultus* in general, and not divine *cultus* specifically. Thus, what I gathered from Aquinas’ texts on *cultus* applies mainly to *cultus* in general, and not only to divine *cultus* specifically. Thus, being “a due operation employed concerning a thing” is the definition, not of divine *cultus*, but of *cultus* in general. Because divine *cultus* is a kind of *cultus* (in general), certainly it follows that what is true of the latter is true also of the former. Thus, although it is true of divine *cultus* that it is a due operation employed concerning something, this is obviously not unique to divine *cultus*. Even the point that divine *cultus* consists in a certain subjection, as I shall show, is not entirely unique to divine *cultus*. Therefore, one now needs to pay attention to this distinction and its nuances, to see what exactly divine *cultus* specifically consists in. For, in dividing the general concept of *cultus*, Aquinas provides for us the elements of a definition for the special concept of divine *cultus*.

In examining this division of *cultus*, it will serve well to note that Aquinas takes this doctrine directly from St. Augustine’s *De civitate Dei*. A comparison with St. Augustine’s text is very telling, because the latter gives us some missing details and reveals what Aquinas was working with when composing his reply to the argument. Speaking of the kind of worship that is due to God alone (to which he insists assigning a

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<sup>10</sup> *ST* II-II.102.2 ad 1: [I]n cultu non solum intelligitur honor, sed etiam quaecumque alia pertinent ad decentes actus quibus homo ad alium ordinatur.

Greek name, such as *latreia*, because no Latin term can do the job well), Augustine explains that:

Consequently, if this be called simply *cultus*, it would not seem to be due to God alone; for we are said also to “cultivate” (*colere*) men whom we celebrate through an honorific remembrance or presence; and not only those things to which we are subject with religious humility, but even certain things which are subject to us, are said to be “cultivated” (*coli perhibentur*). For farmers (*agricolae*), settlers (*coloni*), and inhabitants (*incolae*) receive their name from this word: and [the pagans] call those gods *coelicolae* just because they supposedly “cultivate” heaven (*coelum colant*)—not, at any rate, by venerating it, but by inhabiting it, as settlers (*coloni*) of heaven, so to speak—not in the manner of those serfs (*coloni*) who owe their condition to their native soil, for the sake of agriculture, under the dominion of the landlord; but as a certain great author of Latin eloquence says, “There was an ancient city held by Tyrian settlers (*coloni*)” [Virgil, *Aeneid* l. 1, v. 12.]. He called them “settlers” (*coloni*) from “inhabiting” (*incolendo*), not from “agriculture” (*agricultura*). Hence, also cities that were built from larger cities, as by a swarming of the people, are called colonies (*coloniae*). Consequently, it is altogether quite true that *cultus*, in the proper sense of this word, is only due to God: but because *cultus* is said of other things as well, thus in Latin the *cultus* due to God cannot be signified by [this] one word.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *De civitate Dei* 10.1 (PL 41, 278): Proinde si tantummodo Cultus ipse dicatur, non soli Deo deberi videtur. Dicimur enim colere etiam homines, quos honorifica vel recordatione vel praesentia frequentamus. Nec solum ea quibus nos religiosa humilitate subjicimus, sed quaedam etiam quae subjecta sunt nobis, coli perhibentur. Nam ex hoc verbo et agricolae et coloni et incolae vocantur: et ipsos deos non ob aliud appellant coelicolas, nisi quod coelum colant; non utique venerando, sed inhabitando; tanquam coeli quosdam colonos: non sicut appellantur coloni, qui conditionem debent genitili solo propter agriculturam sub dominio possessorum; sed, sicut ait quidam latini eloquii magnus auctor, Urbs antiqua fuit, Tyrii tenuere coloni. (Virg. *Aeneid*. l. 1, v. 12.) Ab incolendo enim colonos vocavit, non ab agricultura. Hinc et civitates a majoribus civitatibus velut populorum examinibus conditae, coloniae nuncupantur. Ac per hoc cultum quidem non deberi nisi Deo, propria quadam notione verbi hujus omnino verissimum est: sed quia et aliarum rerum dicitur cultus, ideo latine uno verbo significari cultus Deo debitus non potest.

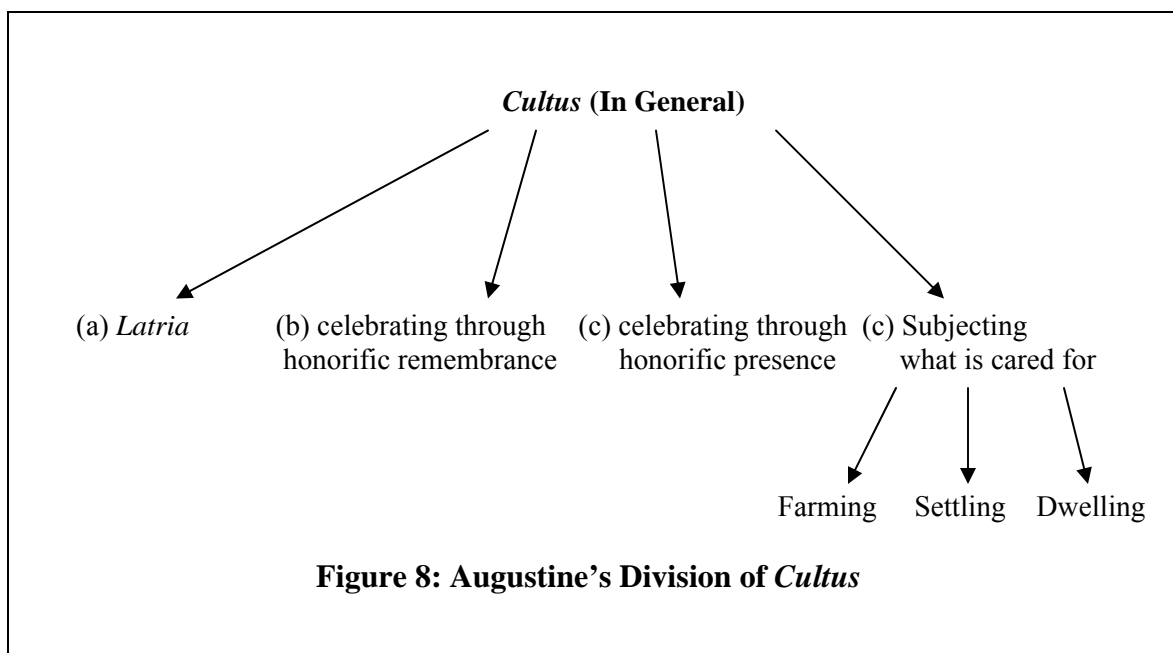
It is evident, then, that Aquinas' fourth text consists essentially in a summary of Augustine's account. By looking at Augustine's text, however, one notices not only a difference in the sheer amount of details provided, but also two other significant differences: a difference in aim, and also a terminological and conceptual difference.

First, Aquinas is using Augustine's thought for a slightly different purpose than Augustine intended it. Augustine, on the one hand, wants to make the point that the term *cultus* cannot fitly connote in an unambiguous way the worship of God. On the other hand, what Aquinas wants to do is to reply to the objection that religion orders us, not only to God, but to others as well. Thus, Augustine's task is more modest than Aquinas'. Augustine, who insists in *not* using "*cultus*" as the proper term for the worship due to God alone, only needs to show that there are other kinds of *cultus* than divine *cultus*: showing that fact will be sufficient for him to prove that "*cultus*" is not an adequate term for divine *cultus*. In other words, because the meaning of "*cultus*" is broader than that of divine *cultus*, if the generic term is used to denote its specifically religious instance, the danger arises of confusing divine *cultus* with other sorts of *cultus*. Appealing to a less-dangerous terminological alternative is enough to avoid the danger. With this aim in mind, Augustine can indulge in details in the cataloging and explaining the different kinds of usages of the term "*cultus*." He is primarily concerned, then, with giving an inventory, as it were, of different instances of the term, and only secondarily with providing a logical *division* of the concept into mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive species. Aquinas, however, who does not mind using *cultus* to denote divine *cultus* so long as the necessary distinctions are kept in mind, needs to *acknowledge* that *cultus* is broader than divine *cultus*, while at the same time insisting that the latter, the specifically

religious sort of *cultus*, orders humans to God *alone*. Because he has to explain *how* divine *cultus* is a “special” sort of *cultus*, he is not interested in expounding the different usages of *cultus*, as Augustine did, but he wants to focus on a more rigorous logical division where he can locate the specifically religious sort of *cultus* and identify it as “special” and as “ordering human beings to God alone.” As a result, one finds that Aquinas is not merely paraphrasing Augustine but is reading him with more logical rigor to obtain a map of how divine *cultus* fits within its remote genus, *cultus*.

The second significant difference is that Aquinas, whether consciously or not, has altered Augustine’s thought by using a very particular variant of the text, according to which Augustine’s phrase “through an honorific remembrance or presence” (*honorifica vel recordatione vel praesentia*) is rendered “through *honor*, remembrance, or presence” (*honorificatione, vel recordatione, vel praesentia*). The adjective *honorifica*, which in Augustine modifies the nouns *recordatione* and *praesentia*, is transformed in the variant into an entirely separate noun, *honorificatione* (which I have translated as “by honor”). As a result, whereas Augustine gives only two ways in which we “celebrate” men (through honorific remembrance and presence), Aquinas lists three (through *honor*, remembrance, and presence). This results in a different *division* of the concept of *cultus* in general between the two authors. Although each author lists four kinds of *cultus*, the items in their lists are different. On the one hand, Augustine has the following four kinds of *cultus*: (a) *cultus* due to God alone; (b) celebrating men through an honorific remembrance; (c) celebrating men through an honorific presence; and (d) the subjection of what is “cultivated.” Under the last of these species, he seems to list farming, settling, and inhabiting, although it is not clear whether these are mutually exclusive and jointly

exhaustive categories (logical divisions), or merely examples illustrating his claims etymologically.<sup>12</sup> In any case, his division would look like this:

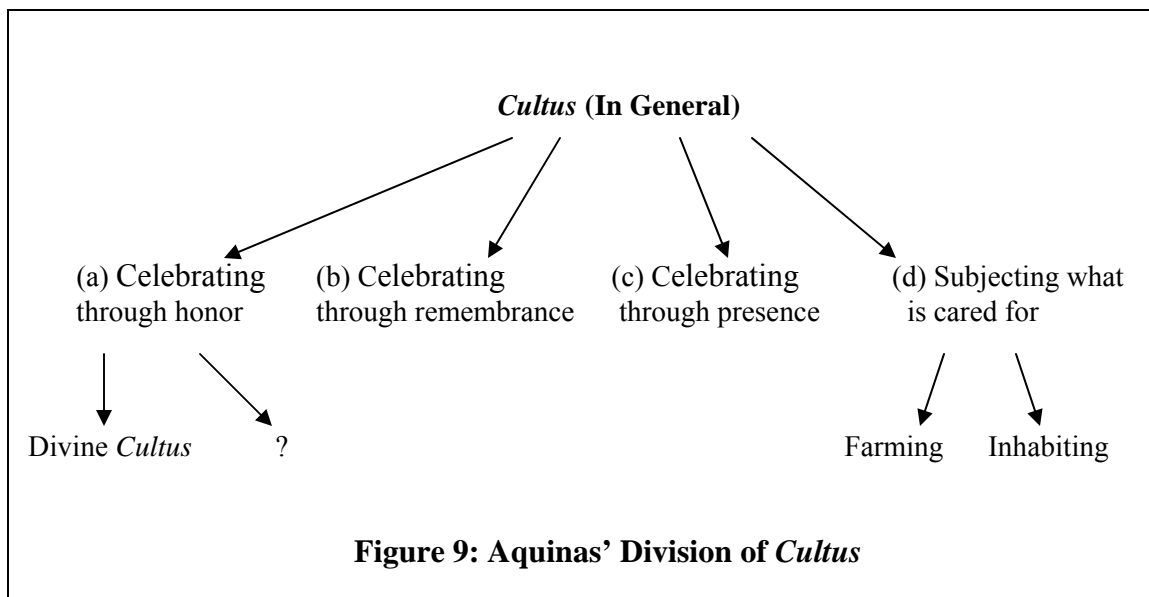


Aquinas, on the other hand, has the following four categories: (a) celebrating through honor; (b) celebrating through remembrance; (c) celebrating through presence; and (d) the subjection of what is “cultivated.”<sup>13</sup> He also lists farmers and inhabitants under category (d); but what is interesting is that, for him, the *cultus* due to God alone is not a separate kind of *cultus*, but a “special” kind of one of the four categories, namely, (a) celebrating through honor. Thus, he performs not only an explicit sub-division of

<sup>12</sup> Farming, settling, and inhabiting are not *just actions*, but they provide examples of actions simply qua actions.

<sup>13</sup> Perhaps Aquinas’ use of *vel* (rather than *aut*, which is more adversative) is an indication that these three categories are not mutually exclusive, but are simply ways of expressing the same thing. I am assuming they are at least distinct in some way, or at least that (b) and (c) are not completely reducible to (a). In any case, my argument does not depend on whether or not this is the case. It only depends on the fact that (a) is distinct from (d)—and this is clear from the context (cf. “et *etiam* aliqua quae nobis subiecta sunt coli a nobis dicuntur”).

category (d), but also an implicit sub-division of category (a) —“implicit” because he does not give us, at least in the text we are presently considering, the other species of (a) celebrating through honor. Thus, Aquinas’ division would look like this:



Aquinas’ innovation, then, lies in the fact that he derives from Augustine’s categories (b) and (c) an entirely new category (celebrating through *honor*) and identifies that new category as the genus of Augustine’s category (a) the *cultus* due to God alone. This fits well with our discussion, in the first chapter, on the different understandings of the nature of religious worship in Augustine and Aquinas. Whereas Augustine will always insist that the religious worship of the One, True God is a *sui generis* category, Aquinas will want to classify it together with other, more mundane, instances of *just* actions (without denying its being “special”). This trait of Aquinas’ account presents us with the advantage that one can learn what is “special” about the specifically religious sort of *cultus* by comparing it and contrasting it with the other, more mundane sorts of (a)



celebrating through honor. Finding what is “special” amounts to discovering its specific difference and, therefore, its most essential and distinctive elements.

## **B. OTHER INSTANCES OF “CELEBRATING THROUGH HONOR”**

Examining other texts allows us to fill in the outline presented in *ST II-II.81.1*. Elsewhere, Aquinas lists other kinds of *cultus* that involve honor. As we saw, in *ST II-II.80* Aquinas mentions three virtues that he classified as potential parts of justice because they fall short of the aspect of equality (*ratio aequalis*). These three virtues are religion, piety, and respect, whereby we “cultivate” (*colimus*) God, our parents and fatherland, and our superiors, respectively.<sup>14</sup> Since we cannot repay entirely these three classes of people, we “repay” our debt by honoring and serving them. In *ST II-II.101.2*, he discusses the virtue of piety in terms of a *cultus* that involves honor:

To our parents . . . we owe . . . that which is fitting to a father insofar as he is a father: to whom reverence and service are owed by his son, since he is superior, existing as the principle of his son . . . And hence Tully says (*De inventione rhetorica* 2) that “piety gives both duty and *cultus*.” so that “duty” refers to service, but *cultus* to reverence or honor; because, as

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. *ST II-II.80.1c*: Sunt enim quaedam virtutes quae debitum quidem alteri reddunt, sed non possunt reddere aequale. Et primo quidem, quidquid ab homine Deo redditur, debitum est, non tamen potest esse aequale, ut scilicet tantum ei homo reddat quantum debet; secundum illud Psalm., quid retribuam domino pro omnibus quae retribuit mihi? Et secundum hoc adiungitur iustitiae religio, quae, ut Tullius dicit, superioris cuiusdam naturae, quam divinam vocant, curam caeremoniamque vel cultum affert. Secundo, parentibus non potest secundum aequalitatem recompensari quod eis debetur, ut patet per philosophum, in VIII Ethic. Et sic adiungitur iustitiae pietas, per quam, ut Tullius dicit, sanguine iunctis patriaeque benevolis officium et diligens tribuitur cultus. Tertio, non potest secundum aequale praemium recompensari ab homine virtuti, ut patet per philosophum, in IV Ethic. Et sic adiungitur iustitiae observantia, per quam, ut Tullius dicit, homines aliqua dignitate antecedentes quodam cultu et honore dignantur.

Augustine says (*De civitate Dei* 10), “we are said to give *cultus* to men to whom we celebrate through honor, remembrance or presence.”<sup>15</sup>

*Cultus*, in contrast to *obsequium*, then, is related to reverence or honor. In *ST* II-II.102.2, moreover, Aquinas defines respect, with Cicero, as the virtue “through which humans who excel by a certain worth are considered deserving of a certain *cultus* and honor.”<sup>16</sup>

*Cultus* and *honor*, one may conclude, are owed in justice to superiors.

Now, since respect, piety, and divine *cultus* are all species of (a) the *cultus* that Aquinas has described as “celebrating through honor,” one may be tempted to order them simply as co-species, each as a different instance of their shared genus. However, Aquinas does not seem to classify them in that way. He does believe that each is, in some way, a “special” virtue; but he orders them in a logical hierarchy, according to which one is a comparatively perfect form of the other. He insists, first, that divine *cultus* is a special and outstanding form of piety. In *ST* II-II.102.3 he presents the objection that both piety and religion show *cultus* to God; therefore, they must be identical.

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<sup>15</sup> *ST* II-II.101.2c: [P]arentibus . . . debetur . . . id quod decet patrem in quantum est pater. Qui cum sit superior, quasi principium filii existens, debetur ei a filio reverentia et obsequium . . . . Et ideo Tullius dicit quod pietas exhibet et officium et cultum. Ut officium referatur ad obsequium, cultus vero ad reverentiam sive honorem; quia, ut Augustinus dicit, in *X de Civ. Dei*, dicimur colere homines quos honorificatione, vel recordatione, vel praesentia frequentamus.

<sup>16</sup> *ST* II-II.102.2 s.c.: [P]er quam homines aliqua dignitate antecedentes quodam cultu et honore dignantur.

Moreover, it is proper to religion to show *cultus* to God. However, piety also shows *cultus* to God, as Augustine says in book 10 of *The City of God*. Therefore, piety is not distinct from religion . . . .<sup>17</sup>

He replies that they are not identical, but that religion is a species, as it were, of piety:

God is in a far more excellent way the principle of being and government than the father or the fatherland; and, therefore, religion, which shows *cultus* to God is a different virtue from piety, which shows *cultus* to parents and to the fatherland. However, those things that belong to creatures are transferred to God through a certain superexcellence and causality, as Dionysius says in the book *On Divine Names*. Hence, through excellence, the *cultus* of God is called “piety,” just as God is also called our Father in an outstanding manner.<sup>18</sup>

Second, there is a similar relationship between piety and respect. In the next question, he presents a similar objection: piety does not seem to be distinct from respect:

It seems that respect is not a special virtue distinct from others. For virtues are distinguished according to objects. However, the object of respect is not distinguished from the object of piety. For Tully says in his *Rhetoric* that “respect is [the virtue] through which men who excel through a

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<sup>17</sup> *ST* II-II.102.3 arg 2: Praeterea, cultum Deo exhibere est proprium religionis. Sed etiam pietas exhibet Deo cultum, ut Augustinus dicit, X *de Civ. Dei*. Ergo pietas non distinguitur a religione . . . .

<sup>18</sup> *ST* II-II.102.3 ad 2: Deus longe excellentiori modo est principium essendi et gubernationis quam pater vel patria. Et ideo alia virtus est religio, quae cultum Deo exhibet, a pietate, quae exhibet cultum parentibus et patriae. Sed ea quae sunt creaturarum per quandam superexcellenciam et causalitatem transferuntur in Deum, ut Dionysius dicit, in libro *de Div. Nom*. Unde per excellentiam pietas cultus Dei nominatur, sicut et Deus excellenter dicitur pater noster. Cf. *Ibid.* 101.1 ad 1: Ad primum ergo dicendum quod in maiori includitur minus. Et ideo cultus qui Deo debetur includit in se, sicut aliquid particulare, cultum qui debetur parentibus. Unde dicitur Malach. I, *si ego pater, ubi honor meus?* Et ideo nomen pietatis etiam ad divinum cultum refertur.

certain dignity are dignified by a certain *cultus* and dignity.” However, piety also shows *cultus* and honor to parents, who excel through dignity. Therefore, respect is not a virtue distinct from piety . . . .<sup>19</sup>

He replies that piety is a special and outstanding form of respect:

Just as it was said above, that religion is called “piety” through a certain supereminence, and nevertheless piety properly so-called is distinguished from religion; so also piety, through a certain excellence can be called respect, and nevertheless respect properly so-called is distinct from piety.<sup>20</sup>

The argument, in a nutshell, is the following. Respect, the most general of the three, is the virtue that gives superiors their due. Parents, moreover, are superiors in a special and outstanding way, insofar as they are the principle of their child’s generation. Therefore, to them a special sort of respect, called piety, is due. Similarly, since God is the principle of generation in a special and more outstanding way than parents, to him is due a special sort of piety (and a *most* special sort of respect), called religion. This is all brought together in *ST* II-II.102.1c:

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<sup>19</sup> *ST* II-II.103.1 arg 1: Videtur quod observantia non sit specialis virtus ab aliis distincta. Virtutes enim distinguuntur secundum obiecta. Sed obiectum observantiae non distinguitur ab obiecto pietatis. Dicit enim Tullius, in sua rhetorica, quod observantia est per quam homines aliqua dignitate antecedentes quodam cultu et honore dignantur. Sed cultum et honorem etiam pietas exhibet parentibus, qui dignitate antecedunt. Ergo observantia non est virtus distincta a pietate . . . .

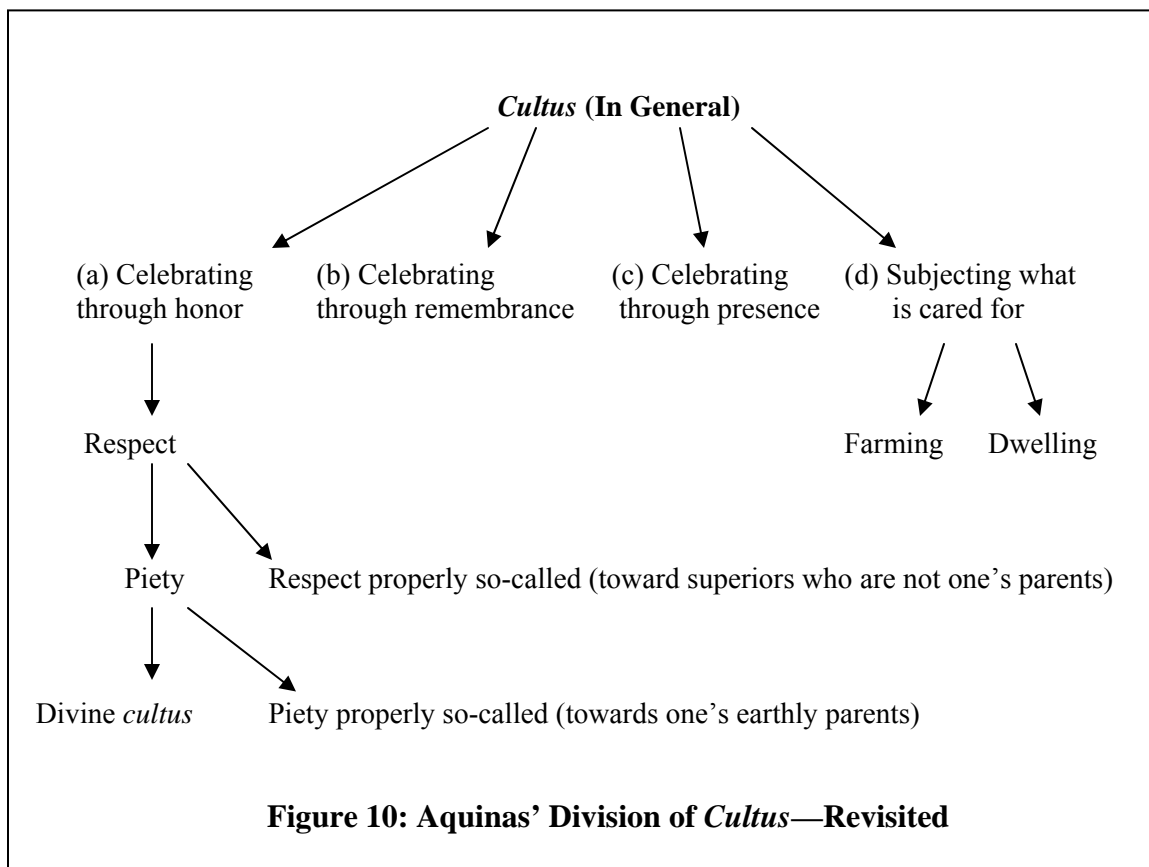
<sup>20</sup> *ST* II-II.103.1 ad 1: [S]icut supra dictum est quod religio per quamdam supereminentiam pietas dicitur, et tamen pietas proprie dicta a religione distinguitur; ita etiam pietas per quamdam excellentiam potest dici observantia, et tamen observantia proprie dicta a pietate distinguitur.

As is evident from the above, it is necessary that virtues be distinguished, according to an ordered descent, as are the different excellences of persons to whom something is to be rendered . . . . Now just as a carnal father partakes of the character (*ratio*) of a principle in a particular way, which character is found in God in a universal way, so too a person who, in some way, exercises providence in one respect, partakes of the character of father in a particular way, since a father is the principle of generation, of education, of learning and of whatever pertains to the perfection of human life: while a person who is in a position of dignity is as a principle of government with regard to certain things: for instance, the governor of a state in civil matters, the commander of an army in matters of warfare, a professor in matters of learning, and so forth. Hence it is that all such persons are designated as “fathers,” on account of their being charged with like cares: thus the servants of Naaman said to him (2 Kings 5:13): “Father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing,” etc. Therefore, just as under religion, whereby worship is given to God, we find piety, whereby we worship our parents; so under piety we find respect, whereby *cultus* and honor are paid to persons in positions of dignity.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, if we gather all the different kinds of *cultus*, we obtain the following:

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<sup>21</sup> *ST* II-II.102.1c: [S]icut ex dictis patet, necesse est ut eo modo per quendam ordinatum descensum distinguantur virtutes, sicut et excellentia personarum quibus est aliquid reddendum. Sicut autem carnalis pater particulariter participat rationem principii, quae universaliter invenitur in Deo; ita etiam persona quae quantum ad aliquid providentiam circa nos gerit, particulariter participat proprietatem patris, quia pater est principium et generationis et educationis et disciplinae, et omnium quae ad perfectionem humanae vitae pertinent. Persona autem in dignitate constituta est sicut principium gubernationis respectu aliquarum rerum, sicut princeps civitatis in rebus civilibus, dux autem exercitus in rebus bellicis, magister autem in disciplinis, et simile est in aliis. Et inde est quod omnes tales personae patres appellantur, propter similitudinem curae, sicut IV Reg. V, servi Naaman dixerunt ad eum, *pater, etsi rem grandem dixisset tibi propheta*, et cetera. Et ideo sicut sub religione, per quam cultus tribuitur Deo, quodam ordine invenitur pietas, per quam coluntur parentes; ita sub pietate invenitur observantia, per quam cultus et honor exhibetur personis in dignitate constitutis.



From this, it follows that what is true of respect is also true, in a more excellent way, of piety. Moreover, whatever is true of piety is also true, in an outstanding way, of religion. This allows us to know more about the virtue of religion by way of analogy with the other two virtues. Since Aquinas' classification results in such a close affinity between the three virtues, it is not difficult to find the specifying difference between them by eliminating their common elements.

For instance, it is obvious that the fact that religion offers *honor* to someone is not unique to the virtue, for these other two types of “celebrating through honor” do the same. Honoring is simply a specific kind of *cultus*. Religion, piety, and respect are not only kinds of *cultus*, but also kinds of honoring. All of these virtues share the same

object, which can be named generally as “cultus” or specifically as “honoring.”<sup>22</sup> Moreover, we have previously seen established<sup>23</sup> that divine *cultus* consists in subjection to God; this perhaps seemed then to be the key to finding the specific difference of divine *cultus*. Nevertheless, if we look at the other two sorts of *cultus* through honor, namely, respect and piety, it will be apparent at once that they consist in a sort of subjection as well. As we saw, piety involves *obsequium*, a submissive sort of service, towards parents: “To our parents . . . we owe . . . reverence and service (*obsequium*).”<sup>24</sup> *Cultus* toward superiors in general also consists in this same submissive service:

To them *cultus* is also due, which consists in a certain service (*quodam obsequio*), that is, insofar as someone obeys their command, and in his own way repays them in turn for their benefits [literally, “good offices”].<sup>25</sup>

It is evident, then, that subjection is not unique to divine *cultus*, for in all three of these virtues, the honor rendered consists in a sort of submission. It is clear that piety, respect and divine *cultus* are similar, not only insofar as they all are instances of *cultus* through honor (and therefore potential parts of justice), but also insofar as this honor consists in a certain submission. One, then, must obviously resist the temptation of

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<sup>22</sup> Due to the close link in Aquinas’ texts between the concepts of “honor” and “reverence,” I postpone the discussion of honor until the next chapter, where I unpack the notion of reverence. It must be noted, however, that because honoring is simply a more specific form of *cultus*, one could say that, while the object of religion is, generally speaking, *cultus*, it is also, more specifically, honor. All acts of divine *cultus* are specifically acts of divine honor.

<sup>23</sup> See the discussion of *InDT* 2.3.2 co 1, in pp. 135-137.

<sup>24</sup> *ST* II-II.101.2c, quoted above in note 15.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*: . . . debetur eis cultus, qui in quodam obsequio consistit dum scilicet aliquis eorum obedit imperio, et vicem beneficiis eorum pro suo modo rependit.

thinking that subjection is itself the specific difference of divine *cultus* (that is, the one element that sets it apart from other sorts of “celebrating through honor”).

### C. THE SPECIFIC DIFFERENCE OF DIVINE *CULTUS*

If not subjection, then what is left? What else can differentiate the *cultus* rendered to God from the *cultus* rendered to parents and from the *cultus* rendered to superiors? The answer, in fact, is rather simple: the end, that is, the person to whom it is rendered. Thus, as I noted previously, divine *cultus* is not special insofar as the honor rendered to him consists in *subjection*; rather, it is special insofar as it is to him that subjection is offered, insofar as God is the end. Similarly, piety involves a special sort of *cultus* through honor insofar as that honor is given to *parents and the fatherland*; and respect involves a special sort of *cultus* through honor insofar as such honor consists in subjection to *superiors*. This only means that the solution to the problem of the specific difference of divine *cultus* is simpler than it perhaps was imagined: even though Aquinas does not define the notion of *cultus* in general in the fourth text presented above,<sup>26</sup> nevertheless, by dividing and subdividing it into its subspecies, he sets up the logical map for a definition of divine *cultus* specifically, which is ultimately what he is after in the context of the *Secunda secundae*. One can easily see that all three kinds of *cultus* through honor consist in subjecting oneself to someone in a position of excellence—a superior, simply speaking, as in the case of respect; one’s parents, as in the case of piety; or God, as in the case of religion. Now, since all species of *cultus* through honor are instances of submission to superiors, and they differ primarily as far as the type of superior involved, then it follows

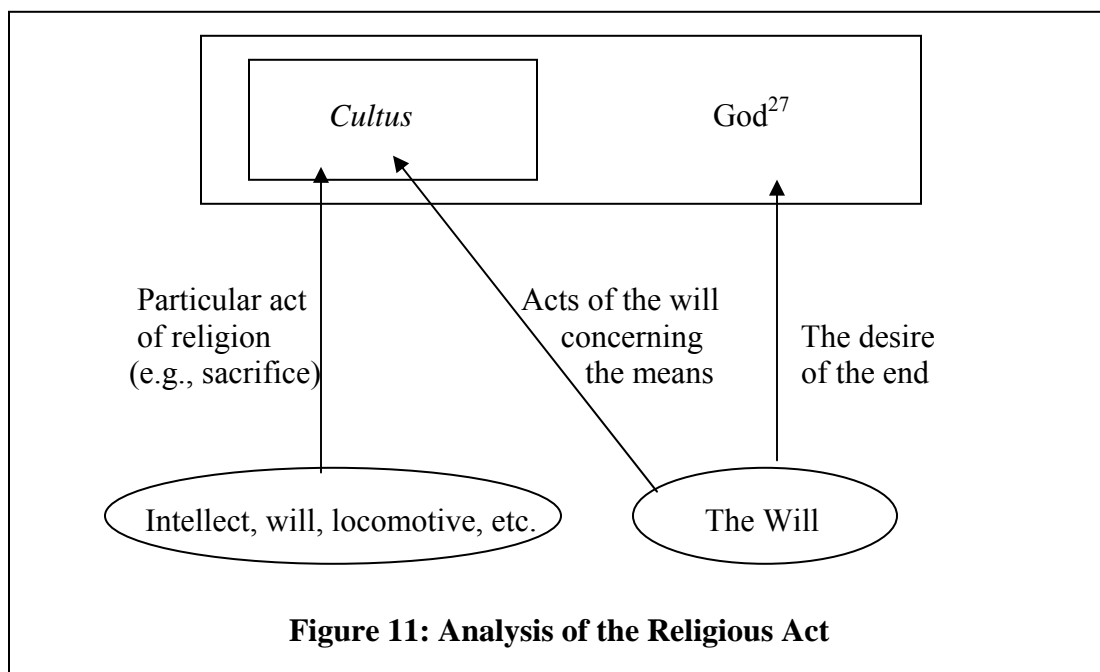
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<sup>26</sup> *ST* II-II.81.1 ad 4, quoted in note 9.



that the specifying difference of divine *cultus* is the fact that it is offered *to God*, whose superiority is supreme. This is, then, divine *cultus*: the type of *cultus* through honor whereby we become subject to God. The specific difference of divine *cultus* is God.

Therefore, God, though not technically the *object* of religion, plays a specifying role in religion. He is not that which directly specifies religion; the object, *cultus*, plays this role. However, whereas religion is specified by *cultus*, *cultus* itself is specified by having God as end. Thus, ironically—though perhaps not so surprisingly—God, as end, indirectly specifies *cultus*, the object of religion.<sup>27</sup>



<sup>27</sup> In the next chapter, I explain that God, simply speaking, does not specify the act of *cultus*. Rather, an action must “intervene.” More precisely, *cultus* is *per se* ordered to the *reverence* of God; thus, the act of the will is specified materially by *cultus*, but formally by *divine reverence*.

This conclusion fits perfectly within the general discussion of the human act presented in the previous chapter. There we saw that, whereas the exterior act is specified by its object, the act of the will is specified materially by the object of the exterior act and formally by the end, particularly in the case where the object of the exterior act is ordered *per se* to the end. This is exactly what is happening here, in the acts of *cultus*. Divine *cultus*, the object of the exterior act, is *per se* ordered to God (“alone”). Therefore, God is the formality under which the end is seen. God, in a sense, specifies the act of *cultus*, making it an act of *divine cultus*. Herein lies the key to my solution.

#### **D. WHY DOES RELIGION ADMIT ONLY OF ONE END?**

Our foregoing discussion lays out how the virtue of religion is specified. The species that the object, *cultus*, provides is material with respect to that provided by the end, God. We see, then, that the end of religion is as essential to it as its object. Now, it is rather odd that Aquinas seems to assign a “fixed” end to religion, and yet allows other virtues and acts to be potentially ordered to an infinity of ends. That is to say, when Aquinas claims that God is the end of religion, he seems to exclude the possibility that the end of said virtue is variable, as it is in the case of other virtues and acts, which may be ordered to a potentially infinite number of ends. Is it the case, then, that, unlike other acts that admit of a potentially infinite number of ends, the acts of religion admit only one? Let us illustrate with an example. Fasting, which is the act of the virtue of abstinence,<sup>28</sup> seems to have the capacity of being ordered to a number of ends; for instance, one may fast in order to be well prepared for a medical procedure, to moderate

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.147.2c.

the appetites and incite reason to contemplate higher things, or in order to obey ecclesiastical positive law. In this case, the act remains within the species “fasting” regardless of what end one chooses for the act. The end does not alter the species of the act. In contrast, however, we have the acts of religion, to which Aquinas seems to be ascribing one end exclusively, namely, God. The acts of religion do not seem to have the ability of being ordered to a number of ends. As I show shortly, it is impossible for there to be an act of religion where the end is not God. Therefore, unlike the other virtues, religion seems to be so intrinsically connected with its end, God, that if one abstracts from this end one no longer has the species of “religion,” but is left with some other species. In other words, if the object of religion, *cultus*, is ordered to an end other than God, then the *cultus* will not count as religion, but as some other virtue, or even a vice. Is religion, then, unique insofar as it alone admits of a fixed end, and not of a potentially infinite variety of ends?

One could begin answering this question by recalling what I have already established: religion, in this respect at least, is not unique in the strict sense, for the same is true of the other species of *cultus* through honor, namely, piety and respect. As we saw in the previous section, religion is a special type of piety; piety is a special type of respect; and respect is a special type of *cultus*. Respect is the virtue whereby we offer *cultus* to superiors in general. Piety is the virtue whereby we offer *cultus* specifically to one’s parents and to one’s fatherland, which are superiors in a special way. Religion is the virtue whereby we offer *cultus* specifically to God, who is our Father in an excellent way. Each of these virtues is distinct from the others only with regard to its end. Thus, respect is distinct from piety only insofar as the latter has more precision with regards to

the end, for piety is the type of respect that is offered to parents or to one's fatherland as to its end. Similarly, piety is distinct from religion only insofar as the latter has more precision with regards to the end, for religion is the type of piety that is ordered to God as to its end. Therefore, we see that each virtue functions as a genus with respect to the next, the end being that which brings about the specification of each. Hence, if the end of the *cultus* that is being given is not specifically one's father, mother, or fatherland, then the act does not belong to the species "piety." If the end of the *cultus* is not a superior, then the action does not fall within the species "respect." That is to say, if we prescind from the specific type of end that makes religion a special type of piety (namely, God), what will remain will be the more generic moral species "piety." Similarly, if we prescind from the specific type of end that makes piety a special type of respect (one's father, etc.), only the more generic virtue of respect will remain. This shows that piety and respect are like religion (but seemingly unlike fasting) insofar as their respective ends form part of the species to which they belong.

Now, if we carry this process of "prescinding" from the end of a virtue to obtain a more "generic" act, we quickly arrive at an act that seems to be unlike religion, piety, and respect, insofar as it *does* admit of a variety of ends that do not alter the species of the act. The next step in the process would be to analyze respect itself into *its* object and end. Since respect is the type of *cultus* that is ordered to one's superior as to its end, we can prescind from the end (one's superior) to obtain the "bare" object (celebrating through honor), which itself is not a virtue, but an indifferent species of human act.<sup>29</sup> This "bare" "celebrating through honor" can be potentially ordered to an infinite number of ends

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. *ST* I-II.18.8-9, on the possibility of indifferent moral species.

without altering its species. Whether it is offered to someone to whom *cultus* is not due (for example, to false gods or idols) or to someone to whom it *is* due, it will always remain an act of *cultus*, or more specifically an act of celebrating through honor. In the case of giving *cultus* to whom it is not due, the result will be a morally evil act, but an act that belongs to the genus “*cultus*” nonetheless. To be precise, to give the *cultus* that is due to God alone to someone other than God is an act that does not belong to the species “religion” or to that of any other virtue, but to the species “idolatry,” which is a part of “superstition,” a vice opposite to religion by way of excess.<sup>30</sup> However, it *is* an act of *cultus* and honor. This seems to indicate that *cultus* and honor are unlike religion, piety, respect, and idolatry (but like fasting), insofar their ends do not alter the species to which they belong. Hence, we are finding, it seems, two different groups of virtues (or acts): in one group the end plays a specifying role, whereas in another it does not. Religion, piety,

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<sup>30</sup> That is, it exceeds the mean of the virtue of religion insofar as it offers divine *cultus* to “more” ends than the one to whom alone it is due (God). Cf. *ST* II-II.93.2c: “[P]otest esse aliquid superfluum secundum quantitatem proportionis, quia scilicet non est fini proportionatum. Finis autem divini cultus est ut homo Deo det gloriam, et ei se subiiciat mente et corpore. Et ideo quidquid homo faciat quod pertinet ad Dei gloriam, et ad hoc quod mens hominis Deo subiiciatur, et etiam corpus per moderatam refrenationem concupiscentiarum, secundum Dei et Ecclesiae ordinationem, et consuetudinem eorum quibus homo convivit, non est superfluum in divino cultu. Si autem aliquid sit quod quantum est de se non pertinet ad Dei gloriam, neque ad hoc quod mens hominis feratur in Deum, aut quod carnis concupiscentiae moderate refrenantur; aut etiam si sit praeter Dei et Ecclesiae institutionem, vel contra consuetudinem communem (quae secundum Augustinum, pro lege habenda est), totum hoc reputandum est superfluum et superstitiosum . . . .” Aquinas also examines the concept of idolatry in detail in *ST* II-II.94.1c, which illustrates quite well, by way of contrast, how essential a role the end of religion (God) plays in specifying the virtue: “[A]d superstitionem pertinet excedere debitum modum divini cultus. Quod quidem praecipue fit quando divinus cultus exhibetur cui non debet exhiberi. Debet autem exhiberi soli summo Deo increato, ut supra habitum est, cum de religione ageretur. Et ideo, cuicumque creaturae divinus cultus exhibeatur, superstitiosum est. Huiusmodi autem cultus divinus, sicut creaturis sensibilibus exhibebatur per aliqua sensibilia signa, puta sacrificia, ludos et alia huiusmodi; ita etiam exhibebatur creaturae repraesentatae per aliquam sensibilem formam seu figuram, quae idolum dicitur.”

and respect seem to be of the sort whose specification depends on the end, whereas others, such as *cultus* and honor (and fasting and almsgiving), seem not to depend on their end for their specification.

Thus, the question is not really whether religion is unique in being specified by an end. Rather, the question is, Are there really two groups of virtues or acts, one in which the species depends on the end, and another in which it does not? If so, why are acts of religion like those of respect, piety, and idolatry, but seemingly unlike *cultus*, fasting, and the like? The answer is that such a division is illegitimate, and the reason lies in our findings from the previous chapter: we must analyze these acts in terms of the distinction between *finis operis* and *finis operantis*. I established that every act has one *finis operis* that is fixed and invariable, but which may be ordered to any number of *fines operantis*, which may or may not coincide with the *finis operis*. Moreover, I said that it is impossible for an agent to will the act without willing its *finis operis*; hence, the *finis operis* always coincides with the proximate *finis operantis*. I gave the example of almsgiving for the sake of vainglory: in that case, the *finis operis* is the relieving of the poor. It is impossible for this end not to be willed in an act of almsgiving. If the agent does not will that *finis operis*, then the act is simply not an act of almsgiving. However, as long as that *finis operis* is willed (and thus is made to coincide with the proximate *finis operantis*), then the act will remain within the species of almsgiving, regardless of what else is willed as an ulterior *finis operantis*.

This brings us to Aquinas' critical doctrine on the commanded and elicited acts of a virtue. To understand this doctrine, it would be helpful to recall the distinction made in Chapter 4 between the "elicited" and "commanded" acts of the will so as to apply it

analogically to our present issue. On the one hand, the will has acts that are proper to it; Aquinas calls them the “elicited” acts of the will. The will’s desire of the end is an example of an elicited act of the will. On the other hand, the will can command the acts that are proper to other powers, ordering them to the end; these are the “commanded” acts of the will. Thus, the act of walking is an act commanded by the will. Now, this distinction between elicited and commanded acts is an analogical correlation that applies not only to powers and their acts, but also to *virtues* and their acts: “By its command, the power or virtue that operates with regards to the end moves the power or virtue that effects those things that are ordered to that end.”<sup>31</sup> Aquinas cashes this out for the first time in the *ST* in his discussion of almsgiving:

Nothing hinders an act that is proper to a virtue “elicitedly” from being attributed to another virtue as commanding it and directing it to its end. And in this way almsgiving is reckoned among works of satisfaction insofar as pity for the defect of a subject is ordered to the satisfaction of sin; and insofar as it is directed to placate God, it has the nature of a sacrifice, and thus it is commanded by *latría*.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, a virtue has, on the one hand, acts that are proper to it. Aquinas calls them the “elicited” acts of that virtue. Visiting one’s father, paying signs of respect to him, etc., are examples of the elicited acts of the virtue of piety. On the other hand, a virtue can “borrow,” as it were, the acts that are proper to other virtues, ordering or commanding

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<sup>31</sup> *ST* II-II.81.5 ad 1, quoted in full below in note 39.

<sup>32</sup> *ST* II-II.32.1 ad 2: [N]ihil prohibet actum qui est proprie unius virtutis elicitive, attribui alteri virtuti sicut imperanti et ordinanti ad suum finem. Et hoc modo dare eleemosynam ponitur inter opera satisfactoria, inquantum miseratio in defectum patientis ordinatur ad satisfaciendum pro culpa. Secundum autem quod ordinatur ad placandum Deum, habet rationem sacrificii, et sic imperatur a *latría*.

them to its own proper *finis operis* and giving them a new formality. These Aquinas calls the “commanded” acts of a virtue. Thus, the acts of each virtue have their own *finis operis*, but they can be ordered or commanded by a higher virtue to its own end (*finis operantis*). In that case, the eliciting virtue provides the *finis operis*, but the commanding virtue provides the *finis operantis*. In the example that Aquinas gives, an act of almsgiving is done for the *finis operis* of relieving the poor, but for the *finis operantis* of placating God. Similarly, the virtue of piety can command an act of fortitude, for example, when a son joins the armed forces in order to honor his father. In this case, the act has acting bravely as its *finis operis*, but its *finis operantis* is to honor the father.

Aquinas brings this teaching to the fore in his discussion on religion. This is how he handles the objection that:

It seems that religion does not order man to God alone. For it is written in James 1:27: “Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself immaculate from this world.” Now “to visit orphans and widows” is said according to an ordering to neighbor, and “to keep oneself unspotted from this world” pertains to an ordering of a man to himself. Therefore, religion is not said only as in an ordering to God.<sup>33</sup>

His reply is the central passage distinguishing between the elicited and commanded acts of religion:

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<sup>33</sup> *ST II-II.81.1 arg. 1: Videtur quod religio non ordinet hominem solum ad Deum. Dicitur enim Iac. I, religio munda et immaculata apud Deum et patrem haec est, visitare pupillos et viduas in tribulatione eorum, et immaculatum se custodire ab hoc saeculo. Sed visitare pupillos et viduas dicitur secundum ordinem ad proximum, quod autem dicit immaculatum se custodire ab hoc saeculo, pertinet ad ordinem quo ordinatur homo in seipso. Ergo religio non solum dicitur in ordine ad Deum.*



Religion has two kinds of act: certain proper and immediate acts, which it elicits, through which man is ordered to God alone, such as to sacrifice, to adore, and other suchlike things; and it has other acts which it produces by means of the virtues which it commands, ordering them to divine reverence. For, the virtue to which the end pertains commands the virtues to which those things that are ordered to the end pertain. And according to this “to visit orphans and widows in their tribulation,” which is an act elicited by [the virtue of] mercy, is put forward as an act of religion by way of command; and “to keep oneself clean from this world” as an act commanded by religion, but elicited by temperance or some other suchlike virtue.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, in every act of religion, the agent *must* will God as his or her *finis operantis*; otherwise, the act would not count as “religion” at all. The virtue of religion, however, can command the acts of any other moral virtue to this end. Thus, religion has, on the one hand, elicited acts, which are those that are proper to the virtue and have no other purpose than to give due *cultus* to God (such as adoration and sacrifice). On the other hand, it also has commanded acts, which are those that are elicited by lower virtues (such as temperance and piety) but ordered by religion—as by a higher, guiding virtue—to the end of religion.

Therefore, religion, like any other “commanding virtue,” has a certain generality in addition to its being a “special” virtue.<sup>35</sup> Accordingly, Aquinas utilizes the term

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<sup>34</sup> *ST II-II.81.1 ad 1*: [R]eligio habet duplices actus. Quosdam quidem proprios et immediatos, quos elicit, per quos homo ordinatur ad solum Deum: sicut sacrificare, adorare et alia huiusmodi. Alios autem actus habet quos producit mediantibus virtutibus quibus imperat, ordinans eos in divinam reverentiam: quia scilicet virtus ad quam pertinet finis, imperat virtutibus ad quas pertinet ea quae sunt ad finem. Et secundum hoc actus religionis per modum imperii ponitur esse visitare pupillos et viduas in tribulatione eorum, quod est actus elicited a misericordia: immaculatum autem custodire se ab hoc saeculo imperative quidem est religionis, elicitive autem temperantiae vel alicuius huiusmodi virtutis.

<sup>35</sup> See *ST II-II.81.4*, where Aquinas argues that religion is a “special” virtue, distinct from all the rest, because it has its own object and its own goodness, namely, the

“sanctity” (*sanctitas*) to refer to the general aspect of the virtue of religion. Thus, insofar as the virtue elicits acts proper to itself, it is called “religion,” but insofar as it commands the acts of the other virtues, ordering them to divine honor, it is called “sanctity”:

Thus, that through which the mind of man applies itself and its acts to God is called “sanctity.” Hence, it does not differ from religion according to its essence, but only conceptually (*ratione*); for it is called “religion” according as it shows to God due service in those things that pertain specifically to divine *cultus*, such as in sacrifices, oblations, and other suchlike things; but it is called “sanctity” according as man refers to God not only these but also the works of the other virtues, or according as man disposes himself by means of good works to divine *cultus*.<sup>36</sup>

Sanctity is a certain special virtue according to its essence; and according to this, it is in a way the same as religion. However, it has a certain generality, insofar as by its command it directs the acts of all the virtues to the divine good, just as legal justice is said to be a general virtue, insofar as it directs the acts of all the virtues to the common good.<sup>37</sup>

This goes to show that practically any act can count as an act of “sanctity” (that is, of religion as a “commanding” virtue) so long as it ordered to God as to an end. Not only

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honor of God, which is not shared with any other virtue. This is discussed in detail in the next chapter, when we speak of the honor of God.

<sup>36</sup> *ST II-II.81.8c*: Sic igitur sanctitas dicitur per quam mens hominis seipsam et suos actus applicat Deo. Unde non differt a religione secundum essentiam, sed solum ratione. Nam religio dicitur secundum quod exhibet Deo debitum famulatum in his quae pertinent specialiter ad cultum divinum, sicut in sacrificiis, oblationibus et aliis huiusmodi, sanctitas autem dicitur secundum quod homo non solum haec, sed aliarum virtutum opera refert in Deum, vel secundum quod homo se disponit per bona opera ad cultum divinum.

<sup>37</sup> *ST II-II.81.8 ad 1*: [S]anctitas est quaedam specialis virtus secundum essentiam, et secundum hoc est quodammodo eadem religioni. Habet autem quandam generalitatem, secundum quod omnes virtutum actus per imperium ordinat in bonum divinum, sicut et iustitia legalis dicitur generalis virtus, in quantum ordinat omnium virtutum actus in bonum commune. Cf. *Ibid.* ad 2: Ad secundum dicendum quod temperantia munditiam quidem operatur, non tamen ita quod habeat rationem sanctitatis nisi referatur in Deum. Unde de ipsa virginitate dicit Augustinus, in libro de virginitate, quod *non quia virginitas est, sed quia Deo dicata est, honoratur*.

can any virtuous act become an act of sanctity, but even otherwise morally-indifferent acts can be transformed into virtuous acts of sanctity. An entire life, in fact, if ordered to God as to an end, can be transformed into an act of the virtue of sanctity.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, in the same way that religion can command the acts elicited by lower virtues, its own acts can themselves be commanded by higher virtues. That is to say, virtues such as prudence and the theological virtues can command the acts elicited by religion and guide them to their own, proper ends.

By its command, the power or virtue that operates with regards to the end always moves the power or virtue that performs those things that are ordered to that end. Now, the theological virtues, namely, faith, hope and charity, have an act with regards to God as with regards to their proper object: and therefore, by their command they cause the act of religion, which performs certain things directed toward God: and therefore, Augustine says that “God is worshipped (*colitur*) by faith, hope and charity.”<sup>39</sup>

Thus, it is evident from the foregoing that religion does admit of ulterior *finis operantis*, at least when it is “commanded” by higher virtues; in this respect, religion is like *cultus*, almsgiving, fasting, etc. While it is technically true that religion is like piety, respect, and idolatry insofar as its “end” forms part of its species (as I have argued in this section),

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<sup>38</sup> This Thomistic moral principle seems to be operative in the teachings of many recent Catholic spiritual writers, notably, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer, and Fr. Joseph Kentenich, as well as in those of other classical spiritual writers, such as St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Francis de Sales.

<sup>39</sup> *ST II-II.81.5 ad 1*: [S]emper potentia vel virtus quae operatur circa finem, per imperium movet potentiam vel virtutem operantem ea quae ordinantur in finem illum. Virtutes autem theologicae, scilicet fides, spes et caritas, habent actum circa Deum sicut circa proprium obiectum. Et ideo suo imperio causant actum religionis, quae operatur quaedam in ordine ad Deum. Et ideo Augustinus dicit quod *Deus colitur fide, spe et caritate*.

“end” here must be understood only in the sense of *finis operis* (or the proximate *finis operantis*) and not in the sense of any of the other *fines operantis*. The same is true of piety, respect, idolatry, *et cetera*: each has a fixed “end,” its *finis operis*; but this *finis operis* is identical only with the proximate *finis operantis* and, thus, can be ordered to an ulterior *finis operantis*. This invariability is explained by the fact that by “end,” Aquinas means their *finis operis*, instead of their ulterior *fines operantis*. The same is true of the other acts or virtues that seemed to have variable “ends,” such as *cultus*, fasting, and the like. If their “ends” seemed to be variable, it is only because, in their case, by “end,” we sometimes understand only their ulterior *fines operantis*, instead of their *finis operis*. Even in the case of fasting—whose “end” seems particularly variable—the essence of the act, or of the material object of “not eating,” is abstaining from food.<sup>40</sup> So long as this *finis operis* is willed, then the act will fall within the species “fasting,” regardless of whether the ulterior end is to undergo a medical procedure, to moderate the appetites and incite reason to contemplate higher things, or to obey positive law.

Hence, all of the acts, virtues, and vices that I mentioned are similar insofar as they exhibit this phenomenon. They all have a fixed *finis operis* (which can also be understood as identical to the proximate *finis operantis*), but which can be ordered to a potentially infinite number of ulterior *fines operantis*. There is no difference among these acts, virtues, and vices in this regard. Hence, there is no legitimate distinction between virtues or acts whose ends play a specifying role and virtues or acts whose ends do not play a specifying role. In other words, the answer to the question that I posed at the beginning of this section of the chapter (“Are there really two groups of virtues or acts,

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<sup>40</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.147.2 ad 1: [I]eiunium proprie dictum consistit in abstinendo a cibis.

one in which the species depends on the end, and another in which it does not?") is, "No." If it seemed that there was such a distinction, it is simply because we were equivocating with regard to the term "end." Thus, any virtue and act can have, on the one hand, a *finis operis* that plays a specifying role and, on the other hand, a series of ulterior *finis operantis* that do not play a specifying role. This is essentially what Aquinas has in mind in the text of *ST I-II.18.7c*, which I discussed in the previous chapter, but which is worthwhile to restate here:

The object of the external act can stand in a twofold relation to the end of the will: first, as being ordered to it *per se*; thus to fight well is of itself ordered to victory; secondly, *per accidens*; thus to take what belongs to another is ordered *per accidens* to the giving of alms . . . . Accordingly, when the object is not of itself ordered to the end, the specific difference derived from the object is *per se* determinative of the species derived from the end, and the reverse is not the case. Hence, neither of these species is under the other, but the moral act is contained under two species that are disparate, as it were. Consequently, we say that he that commits theft for the sake of adultery is guilty of two evils in one act. On the other hand, if the object be *per se* ordered to the end, one of these differences is *per se* determinative of the other. Hence, one of these species will be contained under the other . . . .<sup>41</sup>

Therefore, in the case of a *finis operantis* that naturally ensues from the object (that is, the *finis operis* naturally becomes the proximate *finis operantis*), such as fighting

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<sup>41</sup> *ST I-II.18.7c*: [O]biectum exterioris actus dupliciter potest se habere ad finem voluntatis, uno modo, sicut per se ordinatum ad ipsum, sicut bene pugnare per se ordinatur ad victoriam; alio modo, per accidens, sicut accipere rem alienam per accidens ordinatur ad dandum eleemosynam . . . . Sic igitur quando obiectum non est per se ordinatum ad finem, differentia specifica quae est ex obiecto, non est per se determinativa eius quae est ex fine, nec e converso. Unde una istarum specierum non est sub alia, sed tunc actus moralis est sub duabus speciebus quasi disparatis. Unde dicimus quod ille qui furatur ut moechetur committit duas malitias in uno actu. Si vero obiectum per se ordinetur ad finem, una dictarum differentiarum est per se determinativa alterius. Unde una istarum specierum continebitur sub altera . . . .

well for the sake of victory or burying one's father in a dignified manner for the sake of honoring him, the end plays a specifying role in the act itself. However, when the *finis operis* is *per accidens* ordered to a remote *finis operantis*, the two "ends" form two separate species of human acts. Thus, again, in the case of the theft for the sake of almsgiving, the act of theft is not *per se* ordered to almsgiving and, therefore, this particular human act belongs to two different species, "theft" and "almsgiving," neither of which is under the species of the other.<sup>42</sup> The same is true of divine *cultus*. Divine *cultus* is *per se* ordered to God (that is, to divine reverence<sup>43</sup>), but it can also be *per accidens* ordered to the acts of the theological virtues, for instance, to charity. When the latter is the case, the act will have two separate species, "religion" and "charity," neither of which is under the species of the other.

## E. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, one can clearly see that, whereas the virtue of religion is specified by its object, *cultus*, this object is in turn specified by its end, God. This is perfectly consonant with the principle that we find in Aquinas' discussion on the morality of a human act (*ST I-II.18*): the exterior act is specified by its object, and the object, in turn, is specified by the end from the point of view of the will. The object is formal with respect

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<sup>42</sup> However, even in this case, the species provided by the interior act of the will still provides a formality for the object; hence, Aquinas cites Aristotle saying, "he who steals that he may commit adultery, is strictly speaking, more adulterer than thief" (*Nicomachean Ethics* 5.2, quoted in *ST I-II.18.6c*: "ille qui furatur ut committat adulterium, est, per se loquendo, magis adulter quam fur"). See Chapter 4, note 2, on the inaccuracy of this Aristotelian quote. See also Chapter 4, note 35, for my argument as to why the object is material with respect to the end even in this scenario.

<sup>43</sup> See note 27 above.

to the act, but material with respect to the end. The end is the *ratio volendi*, the motivation, the formal aspect under which the object is willed.

Ultimately, this doctrine means for us that the object of religion, *cultus*, is willed only on account of God. It is clear that the acts elicited by the virtue of religion, such as genuflecting, offering a sacrifice, etc., have no moral meaning in themselves and are willed only insofar as they have God as their end. The fact that the genuflecting, the sacrifice, et cetera, are viewed under a divine formality, that is, from the point of view of their relationship to God, turns these otherwise morally indifferent acts into acts of divine *cultus*. However, even the commanded acts of the virtue of religion, such as being temperate or brave for God's sake, count as acts of the virtue of religion only insofar as they are willed on account of their end, God. Their having God as end is what places them under the species of religion.

Now we must determine *how* God is the end of the virtue of religion. In the next chapter, I deal directly with the conceptual core of the issue of the finality of religion. This theme takes me first into a systematic exposition of Aquinas' different finality claims regarding the virtue of religion. That is to say, by bringing together his claims that the end of the virtue of religion is (a) divine honor, (b) divine reverence, (c) divine glory, and (d) God himself, I argue that these three constitute a hierarchy, as it were, of ends of religious worship—the first major conclusion of this study. Applying to this conclusion the principles regarding the end of the human act (discussed in the previous two chapters) allows me to draw the second major conclusion of this study, namely, that religion materially perfects creatures, but is sought formally as an act done for God's sake.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> See Chapter 1, Section D: "Theses," p. 59-60.

## THE FINALITY OF RELIGION

In this chapter, I draw the two major conclusions of the study,<sup>1</sup> which consist in a synoptic understanding of Aquinas' finality claims regarding religion. As we saw, in every act where the object is *per se* ordered to the end, the end provides a generic specification for the act, and the object provides a comparatively determinate specification. Thus, in this chapter, I discuss the notions of honor, reverence, and glory, as the “intervening” acts whereby we attain God as our end in the acts of the virtue of religion. I argue that, in an elicited act of the virtue of religion, the proximate *finis operis* is not merely God, but, more precisely the honor of God, the remote *finis operis* is the reverence of God, and the ultimate *finis operis* is the glory of God. From this, it follows that all elicited acts of religion are specifically acts of honor, more generically acts of reverence, and most generically acts of divine glory. This doctrine, then, allows us to make sense out of Aquinas' seemingly disparate claims regarding the roles of “honor,” “reverence,” and “glory” in the finality of religion, which, in the Standard Thomistic Account, were classified as roughly equivalent claims under the category of *finis cuius* (or *causa finalis*) category.<sup>2</sup>

In order to achieve a synoptic understanding of Aquinas' finality claims regarding religion, I divide the chapter into three. In the first section (A), I discuss the distinction between interior and exterior acts of religion. There I address the relationship between (1) the general distinction, which Aquinas discusses in *ST* I-II.18.6, between “interior” and

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 1, Section D: “Theses,” p. 59-60.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Chapter 1, pp. 50-58.



“exterior” human acts, and (2) the distinction between the “interior” and “exterior acts of religion” presented in *ST II-II.81.7*. I argue that, although these two distinctions are not perfectly correlative, the first distinction serves as the interpretive key for understanding the second. Then, (B) I discuss the different “intervening” acts whereby we attain God as an end in the acts of religion: honor, reverence, and glory. The study in Part Two of human acts in general sheds light on these concepts. Honor, on the one hand, is the immediate *finis operis* of the *elicited* acts of religion (where the object is *per se* related to the end). Reverence and glory, on the other hand, are the *finis operantis* of *all* of the acts of religion, including the “commanded” acts (in which the object is *per accidens* related to the end). Then (C), I bring all these elements together in a synoptic account of the finality of religion. In the last section (D), I close the chapter by confirming the theses that I proposed at the end of Chapter 1.

#### **A. THE INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR ACTS OF RELIGION**

In *ST I-II.18.6*, as we saw, Aquinas makes a distinction between the exterior and interior acts that together comprise any particular human act. We also saw that the ultimate formality of the act is derived from the interior act, from the willing of the end. In *ST II-II.81.7*, Thomas speaks of the exterior and interior acts of the virtue of religion.<sup>3</sup> In that article, he also explicitly claims that the ultimate finality of the religious act is derived from the interior act of religion. Seeing the obvious parallel, one cannot help but

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<sup>3</sup> Whereas *ST II-II.81.7* deals with the distinction between exterior and interior acts in general, *ST II-II.84-91* deals with these acts singly.

wonder whether the doctrine contained in the latter text is a direct application of the general principle discussed in the former.

In this subsection (1), I argue that, although the doctrine on “interior” and “exterior” acts in *ST I-II.18.6* is not immediately applicable to the doctrine on the “interior” and “exterior” acts of religion in *ST II-II.81.7* (and subsequent questions), there is, nonetheless, a less obvious application of the former distinction to the acts of religion, an application that sheds much light on the problem of the finality of religion. Then (2), I examine what Aquinas means when he says that the exterior acts of religion are ordered to the interior acts of that virtue. This examination gives us a clearer understanding of how the religious act fits into the context of the doctrine on human acts explained in *ST I-II.18*. The way is thereby prepared for the second section of this chapter (B), where I study the notions of honor, reverence, and glory, and their role in Aquinas’ solution to the question of the finality of religion.

### **1. Devotion and the Religious Acts that Are Commanded by the Will**

In *ST II-II.81.7*, Aquinas addresses the issue of “whether religion or *latria* has an exterior act.” His solution is as follows:

[W]e show reverence and honor to God, not on account of [God] himself, who is in himself full of glory, and to whom nothing can be added by a creature, but on account of ourselves; because, that is, through the fact that we revere and honor God, our mind is subjected to him—and its perfection consists in this; for any thing is perfected through the fact that it is subjected to its superior, just as the body through the fact that it is vivified by the soul, and air through the fact that it is illumined by the Sun. Now the human mind, in order to be united to God, needs to be guided by the sensible things, since “invisible things . . . are clearly seen, being

understood by the things that are made,” as the Apostle says (Romans 1:20). Hence in divine *cultus* it is necessary to make use of corporeal things, that man’s mind may be aroused thereby, as by signs, to the spiritual acts by means of which he is united to God. Therefore, religion has certain interior acts that are, as it were, primary and pertaining *per se* to religion and external acts that are, as it were, secondary, and ordered to the interior acts.<sup>4</sup>

As John of St. Thomas observes, whereas in other places, by “exterior” and “interior” acts, Aquinas usually means “elicited” and “commanded” acts, respectively, here he only distinguishes between *spiritual and corporeal* acts of religion.<sup>5</sup> That this is the case is clear for two reasons. First, he explicitly says that “interior acts” are spiritual, and that “exterior acts” are corporeal: “Now, just as interior acts pertain to the heart, so do exterior acts pertain to the members of the flesh. Therefore, it seems that God is worshipped (*colitur*) not only by interior but also by exterior acts.”<sup>6</sup> What is briefly stated here explicitly is consistently evidenced in practice throughout the *De religione* of the *Summa theologiae*, where Aquinas enumerates eleven “special” acts of religion: two

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<sup>4</sup> *ST II-II.81.7c*: Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibemus non propter ipsum, qui in seipso est gloria plenus, cui nihil a creatura adici potest, sed propter nos, quia videlicet per hoc quod Deum reveremur et honoramus, mens nostra ei subiicitur, et in hoc eius perfectio consistit; quaelibet enim res perficitur per hoc quod subditur suo superiori, sicut corpus per hoc quod vivificatur ab anima, et aer per hoc quod illuminatur a sole. Mens autem humana indiget ad hoc quod coniungatur Deo, sensibilium manuductione, quia invisibilia per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur, ut apostolus dicit, ad Rom. Et ideo in divino cultu necesse est aliquibus corporalibus uti, ut eis, quasi signis quibusdam, mens hominis excitetur ad spirituales actus, quibus Deo coniungitur. Et ideo religio habet quidem interiores actus quasi principales et per se ad religionem pertinentes, exteriores vero actus quasi secundarios, et ad interiores actus ordinatos.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus theologici* (Paris-Rome: Desclée, 1931) in *ST II-II.81.7*: Aliquando S. Thomas sumit actum exteriorem pro quocumque actu imperatu, et actus interior pro imperante, quia imperatus est semper extra imperantem, et comparatur ad illum ut exterior. Hic autem exteriorem actum intellige actum corporaliter exercitum.

<sup>6</sup> *ST II-II.81.7 s.c.*: Sed sicut interiores actus pertinent ad cor, ita exteriores actus pertinent ad membra carnis. Ergo videtur quod Deus sit colendus non solum interioribus actibus, sed etiam exterioribus.

“interior” acts and nine “exterior” acts. The “interior” acts, namely, devotion (the will to give oneself readily to things pertaining to the service of God) and prayer (a petition before God), are treated as being specifically spiritual in nature; the former is an act of the will and the latter is an act of practical reason.<sup>7</sup> More significantly, the “exterior” acts, even though they have an interior or spiritual counterpart (for religion is primarily an interior reality<sup>8</sup>), are explained in the strict sense as being corporeal in nature.<sup>9</sup> In addition, Aquinas’ threefold classification of the exterior acts of religion is especially telling of their corporeal nature. The first type of exterior act is (a) adoration, which consists in corporeal signs of humiliation before God, such as genuflections and prostrations. The second consists in (b) the acts whereby we offer to God a corporeal thing, such as sacrifices (the destruction of a victim as an offering to God), oblations, first fruits, and tithes. Finally, the third are (c) the physical acts whereby we “receive something divine” (in particular, when we verbally use God’s name), such as in vows, oaths, adjuration, and praise.<sup>10</sup> It is obvious from this division of exterior acts that Thomas consistently understands them as being corporeal in nature.

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.82-3.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.81.7c: Et ideo religio habet quidem interiores actus quasi principales et per se ad religionem pertinentes, exteriores vero actus quasi secundarios, et ad interiores actus ordinatos.

<sup>9</sup> I say “more significantly,” because, as I said above (Chapter 4, pp. 107-113), whereas the elicited acts of the will are necessarily spiritual, the commanded acts may be corporeal but need not be. Therefore, the real test as to whether Aquinas means to equate the two distinctions (that is, “interior” and “exterior” acts, on the one hand, and “commanded” and “elicited” acts, on the other) is the question of whether by “exterior” he means commanded or corporeal.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.84-91. Here each act is given its own question, except for oblations and first fruits, which are discussed together in question 86. The *prooemia* to Questions 82, 84, 85, and 89 are particularly informative: they are the main textual source for the above division of the exterior acts of religion.

Second, it is also clear that Aquinas does not mean to equate the distinction between interior and exterior acts of religion with that between its commanded and elicited acts, for he invokes the two distinctions for different purposes. That is to say, he explicitly presents the two distinctions as embodying entirely different conceptual units. It is worthwhile here to quote again the main part of the text on the commanded and elicited acts of religion:

Religion has two kinds of act: certain proper and immediate acts, which it elicits, through which man is ordered to God alone, such as to sacrifice, to adore, and other suchlike things; and it has other acts which it produces by means of the virtues which it commands, ordering them to divine reverence.<sup>11</sup>

One only need compare the two texts (this one and the text above on the exterior and interior acts of religion) to realize that, in making these two distinctions, Aquinas is simply referring to different concepts. The distinction between exterior and interior acts is a distinction between corporeal and spiritual acts, respectively; but the distinction between commanded and elicited acts of religion is one between acts that belong essentially to the virtue of religion and acts that belong essentially to the other moral virtues but that are accidentally ordered to a religious end, *regardless of the spiritual or corporeal nature of the act in question*. Hence, the distinctions embody two separate principles that are by no means equivalent. In fact, this is evident in the text just quoted, where Aquinas' two examples of "elicited" acts of the virtue of religion (adoration and

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<sup>11</sup> *ST II-II.81.1 ad 1*: [R]eligio habet duplices actus. Quosdam quidem proprios et immediatos, quos elicit, per quos homo ordinatur ad solum Deum: sicut sacrificare, adorare et alia huiusmodi. Alios autem actus habet quos producit mediantibus virtutibus quibus imperat, ordinans eos in divinam reverentiam.

sacrifice) are precisely the first two *exterior* acts that he discusses in the *De religione*.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, by the “exterior” acts of the virtue of religion, he cannot mean the commanded acts of that virtue, for these exterior acts are *elicited* by the virtue of religion. Thomas never confuses the two distinctions throughout the *De religione*. He utilizes each set of terms univocally: by the “interior” and “exterior” acts of religion he always means that virtue’s spiritual and corporeal acts, respectively; and by the “elicited” and “commanded” acts of religion he always means the acts that belong to it essentially and the acts that it “borrows” from other moral virtues, respectively.

Now, none of this means that the distinction between the interior and exterior acts of religion is entirely unrelated to the general distinction between the exterior act and the interior act (that is, elicited and commanded acts) of the will in *ST I-II.18*. As I noted above,<sup>13</sup> the general distinction between “elicited” and “commanded” acts is an analogical relationship that can be applied both to *virtues* (and their acts) and to *powers* (and their acts). Accordingly, in the text just quoted (*ST II-II.81.1 ad 1*) he applies this distinction to the *virtue of religion* and its acts—and he will do likewise throughout the *De religione*, whenever he uses the language of “commanded” and “elicited” acts. However, I propose, just as in *ST I-II.18.6* Aquinas applied the distinction to the will and *its acts in general*, one can also apply the distinction here to the will and *its religious acts in particular*. That is to say, among the acts that are elicited *by the virtue of religion*, some are commanded *by the will*—and elicited by other powers—and other acts are elicited *by the will*. Thus, whereas it is clear that, when Thomas speaks of the “exterior” acts of religion, such as sacrifice, adoration (that is, bodily reverence), and vows, he

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<sup>12</sup> See the discussion of the exterior acts of religion below, p. 182-190.

<sup>13</sup> Chapter 5, pp. 160-161.

cannot be taken to mean that these are commanded by religion, such as are the acts of other virtues (for example, prudence or temperance) when done with a religious intent. Nonetheless, by the very fact that they are “exterior” (that is, corporeal), it follows that they are commanded *by the will*, just as in *ST I-II.18.6* Thomas uses the language of “exterior acts” to refer generally to any act commanded by the will.<sup>14</sup>

Similarly, just as I established the general principle that some spiritual acts can be “exterior” insofar as they are commanded by the will,<sup>15</sup> so here, within the specific context of religion, it can be said that at least some of the “interior” (that is, spiritual) acts of religion, may be commanded by the will. This is clearly the case with prayer. In *ST II-II.83.1* Aquinas asks whether prayer is an act of the appetitive power. He replies in the negative, arguing that it is instead an act of practical reason:

According to Cassiodorus [*Comment. in Psalm 38:13*] “prayer (*oratio*) is reason of the mouth (*oris ratio*).” Now the speculative and practical reason differ in this, that the speculative merely apprehends its object, whereas the practical reason not only apprehends but causes. Now one thing is the cause of another in two ways: first perfectly, when it necessitates its effect, and this happens when the effect is wholly subject to the power of the cause; secondly imperfectly, by merely disposing to the effect, for the reason that the effect is not wholly subject to the power of the cause. Accordingly in this way the reason is cause of certain things in two ways: first, by imposing necessity; and in this way it belongs to reason to command not only the lower powers and the members of the body, but also human subjects, which indeed is done by commanding; secondly, by leading up to the effect, and, in a way, disposing to it, and in this sense the reason asks for something to be done by things not subject to it, whether

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<sup>14</sup> I am not claiming that Aquinas is *explicitly* trying to make a distinction between religious acts that are elicited and those that are commanded by the will. Rather, I am only arguing that such a distinction follows very naturally from the principles laid out in *ST I-II.18* and from their application to the doctrine on the interior and exterior acts discussed in *ST II-II.81-91*.

<sup>15</sup> I gave Cajetan’s example of hating or rejecting God for the sake of having dominion over a kingdom; see Chapter 4, note 9, above.

they be its equals or its superiors. Now both of these, namely, to command and to ask or beseech, imply a certain ordering, seeing that man proposes something to be effected by something else; hence they pertain to the reason to which it belongs to set in order. For this reason the Philosopher says (*Ethics* 1.13) that the “reason exhorts us to do what is best.” In this way, moreover, we now speak of prayer according as it signifies a certain deprecation or petition, in agreement with what Augustine says in the book *De Verbo Domini* (Rabanus, *De Universo* 6.14), that “prayer is a certain petition,” and with what Damascene says in the third book (*De Fide Orth.* 3.24) that “prayer is the petition to God for that which is becoming.” Therefore, it is thus evident that prayer, as we speak of it now, is an act of reason.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, prayer is not an act elicited by the will, but commanded by the will and elicited by practical reason.

Devotion, however, which is the other interior act of religion to which Thomas dedicates an entire question of the *De religione*,<sup>17</sup> is clearly an elicited act of the will, for,

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<sup>16</sup> *ST* II-II.83.1c: [S]ecundum Cassiodorum, oratio dicitur quasi oris ratio. Ratio autem speculativa et practica in hoc differunt quod ratio speculativa est apprehensiva solum rerum; ratio vero practica est non solum apprehensiva, sed etiam causativa. Est autem aliquid alterius causa dupliciter. Uno quidem modo, perfecte, necessitatem inducendo, et hoc contingit quando effectus totaliter subditur potestati causae. Alio vero modo, imperfecte, solum disponendo, quando scilicet effectus non subditur totaliter potestati causae. Sic igitur et ratio dupliciter est causa aliquorum. Uno quidem modo, sicut necessitatem imponens, et hoc modo ad rationem pertinet imperare non solum inferioribus potentiis et membris corporis, sed etiam hominibus subiectis, quod quidem fit imperando. Alio modo, sicut inducens et quodammodo disponens, et hoc modo ratio petit aliquid fieri ab his qui ei non subiiciuntur, sive sint aequales sive sint superiores. Utrumque autem horum, scilicet imperare et petere sive deprecari, ordinationem quandam important, prout scilicet homo disponit aliquid per aliud esse faciendum. Unde pertinent ad rationem, cuius est ordinare, propter quod philosophus dicit, in I *Ethic.*, quod ad optima deprecatur ratio. Sic autem nunc loquimur de oratione, prout significat quandam deprecationem vel petitionem, secundum quod Augustinus dicit, in libro de Verb. Dom., quod oratio petitio quaedam est; et Damascenus dicit, in III libro, quod oratio est petitio decentium a Deo. Sic ergo patet quod oratio de qua nunc loquimur, est rationis actus.

<sup>17</sup> See my discussion of the exterior acts of religion, p. 182-190.



as I said above, it consists in the *will* to give oneself readily to the things pertaining to the service of God.

“Devotion” is derived from “devoting;” hence, [those] are called “devout” who, in a way, devote themselves to God, so as to subject themselves totally to him . . . . Hence, devotion seems to be nothing other than a certain will to give oneself promptly to those things that pertain to the service of God . . . . Now, it is evident that the will to do readily what pertains to the service of God is a certain special act. Therefore, devotion is a special act of the will.<sup>18</sup>

The same point is also underscored in Aquinas’ claim that devotion is “the principal act of religion.”<sup>19</sup> In *ST* II-II.83.3, he refutes a very revealing argument:

It would seem that prayer is not an act of religion. Since religion is a part of justice, it resides in the will as in its subject. Now, prayer belongs to the intellective part, as stated above (1). Therefore, prayer seems to be an act, not of religion, but of the gift of understanding whereby the mind ascends to God.<sup>20</sup>

His reply will acknowledge that religion (because it is a part of justice) resides in the will, and because devotion is elicited by the will, it is the act that is most closely related to religion:

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<sup>18</sup> *ST* II-II.82.1c: [D]evotio dicitur a devovendo, unde devoti dicuntur qui seipsos quodammodo Deo devovent, ut ei se totaliter subdant . . . . Unde devotio nihil aliud esse videtur quam voluntas quaedam prompte tradendi se ad ea quae pertinent ad Dei famulatum . . . . Manifestum est autem quod voluntas prompte faciendi quod ad Dei servitium pertinet est quidam specialis actus. Unde devotio est specialis actus voluntatis.

<sup>19</sup> *ST* II-II.104.3 ad 1: [D]evotionem, quae est principalis actus religionis.

<sup>20</sup> *ST* II-II.83.3 arg. 1: Videtur quod oratio non sit actus religionis. Religio enim, cum sit pars iustitiae, est in voluntate sicut in subiecto. Sed oratio pertinet ad partem intellectivam, ut ex supradictis patet. Ergo oratio non videtur esse actus religionis, sed doni intellectus, per quod mens ascendit in Deum.

The will moves the other powers of the soul to its end, as stated above (*ST* II-II.82.1 ad 1), and therefore religion, which is in the will, directs the acts of the other powers to the reverence of God. Now among the other powers of the soul the intellect is the highest, and the nearest to the will; and, consequently, after devotion, which belongs to the will, prayer, which belongs to the intellective part, is the chief of the acts of religion, since by it religion directs man's intellect to God.<sup>21</sup>

Reason is higher than the will, simply speaking. However, religion resides in the will and, therefore, the highest act of religion will be the one that is most closely connected to the will, that is, the one elicited by the will. Prayer, which is elicited by reason, can only be the second highest act of religion. Prayer is the highest of the religious acts that are *commanded* by the will. Devotion is the highest act of religion, simply speaking, because it is the only act of religion that is *elicited* by the will (that is, devotion is the only one that “belongs to the will,” as Thomas says).

Now, if devotion is an act elicited by the will, then it is capable of commanding other acts. The “commanding” nature of devotion with respect to the other acts of religion is evident from an objection in the article on whether devotion is a “special” (that is, unique) act of the will. Aquinas presents the objection that it is not a special act, but a generic one, because it is the “mode” of all other acts of religion:

It would seem that devotion is not a special act, for that which pertains to the mode of other acts does not seem to be a special act. Now, devotion seems to pertain to the mode of other acts, for it is said in 2 *Paralip*.

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<sup>21</sup> *ST* II-II.83.3 ad 1: [V]oluntas movet alias potentias animae in suum finem, sicut supra dictum est. Et ideo religio, quae est in voluntate, ordinat actus aliarum potentiarum ad Dei reverentiam. Inter alias autem potentias animae, intellectus altior est et voluntati propinquior. Et ideo post devotionem, quae pertinet ad ipsam voluntatem, oratio, quae pertinet ad partem intellectivam, est praecipua inter actus religionis, per quam religio intellectum hominis movet in Deum.

29:31: “All the multitude offered victims, and praises, and holocausts with a devout mind.” Therefore, devotion is not a special act.<sup>22</sup>

His reply is very explicit:

The mover imposes the mode of the movement of the thing moved. Now the will moves the other powers of the soul to their acts, and the will, in so far as it regards the end, moves both itself and whatever is directed to the end, as stated above (*ST* I-II.9.3). Hence, since devotion is an act of the will whereby a man offers himself for the service of God who is the last end, it follows that devotion imposes the mode upon human acts, whether they be acts of the will itself about things directed to the end, or acts of the other powers that are moved by the will.<sup>23</sup>

Although he does not introduce here the language of commanding and eliciting (doing so could cause confusion, given that the “exterior” acts of religion that the will *commands* through devotion are themselves *elicited* by religion), he nonetheless uses an equivalent terminology (that of “moving” other powers, and of “imposing a mode” upon other acts) that communicates the same doctrine. This way of speaking is consistent with other texts where he points out that devotion is present in all the acts of the virtue of religion as an act of causing motion, a necessary condition for further motion:

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<sup>22</sup> *ST* II-II.82.1 arg. 1: Videtur quod devotio non sit specialis actus. Illud enim quod pertinet ad modum aliorum actuum non videtur esse specialis actus. Sed devotio videtur pertinere ad modum aliorum actuum, dicitur enim II Paral. XXIX, *obtulit universa multitudo hostias et laudes et holocausta mente devota*. Ergo devotio non est specialis actus.

<sup>23</sup> *ST* II-II.82.1 ad 1: [M]ovens imponit modum motui mobilis. Voluntas autem movet alias vires animae ad suos actus, et voluntas secundum quod est finis, movet seipsam ad ea quae sunt ad finem, ut supra habitum est. Et ideo, cum devotio sit actus voluntatis hominis offerentis seipsum Deo ad ei serviendum, qui est ultimus finis, consequens est quod devotio imponat modum humanis actibus, sive sint ipsius voluntatis circa ea quae sunt ad finem, sive etiam sint aliarum potentiarum quae a voluntate moventur.

Devotion is to be found in various genera of acts, not as a species of those genera, but as the motion of the mover is found virtually in the movements of the things moved.<sup>24</sup>

Devotion is also necessary: but this belongs to religion, for it is its first act and a necessary condition of all its secondary acts, as stated above (82, 1 and 2).<sup>25</sup>

One may conclude, therefore, that, whereas devotion itself is *elicited* by the will, all the other acts of religion (that is, those elicited by the virtue of religion) are *commanded* by the will.<sup>26</sup>

In sum, we see that the principles laid out in *ST I-II.18.6* on the elicited and commanded acts of the will are indirectly applicable to the doctrine on the acts of religion that is presented in *ST II-II.81.7* and subsequent questions. This fact is of paramount importance for understanding the finality of exterior acts.

## 2. The Finality of Exterior and Interior Acts of Religion

A second interpretive remark must be made regarding the text that I examined at the beginning of the previous subsection (*ST II-II.81.7*). Proponents of the Standard Thomistic Account interpret this text as speaking of the general finality of religion.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *ST II-II.82.1 ad 2*: [D]evotio invenitur in diversis generibus actuum non sicut species illorum generum, sed sicut motio moventis invenitur virtute in motibus mobilium.

<sup>25</sup> *ST II-II.83.15c*: Est etiam et devotio necessaria, sed haec ad religionem pertinet, cuius est primus actus, necessarius ad omnes consequentes, ut supra dictum est.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Salmanticenses, *Cursus Theologicus* (Paris: Victor Palmé, 1878), T. VI: De virtutibus, Arbor Praedicamentalis, n. 62: Ex quibus *devotio* est in eadem potentia cum sua virtute, scilicet in voluntate, cujus est se tradere et in alia ferri: estque proinde actus religionis primarius et in toto rigore elicited, et veluti fons a quo emanat quidquid in aliis est reverentiae et religionis.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Chapter 1, pp. 50-58.

According to this reading—which seems *prima facie* to fit the text—the passage is saying that the whole of religion is done for the sake of our own utility (even though it has God as its “end” or *terminus*, in the sense of *finis cuius* or *causa finalis*). However, a contextual reading reveals that the passage intends to give an answer to the general problem, not of the finality of religion, but of the finality of the *exterior* acts of religion. That is to say, the purpose of the article is to determine whether religion has exterior acts, and the answer to this question lies in their finality, not in the finality of religion as a whole. Aquinas already dealt with the issue of the finality of religion as a whole in articles 1 and 5, where he tells us that religion orders humans to God alone (art. 1) and that, whereas the object of religion is *cultus*, its end is God (art. 5). His answer here is that we *show* reverence and honor (that is, that we *express outwardly* our interior reverence), not for God’s sake, but for our own sake. In other words, the exterior acts of religion, which consist in honoring God, or in showing reverence towards him, have only an instrumental value insofar they are intended to arouse the mind to the interior acts, whereby we really achieve the end of religion. In this subsection, I provide contextual evidence to demonstrate this principle, namely, that the exterior acts of religion are ordered to the interior acts as to their end (*finis operis*).

The aforementioned passage, namely, *ST II-II.81.7c*,<sup>28</sup> is not unique within Aquinas’ *corpus*. He develops rather fully elsewhere the same position with regard to the acts of religion, both in general<sup>29</sup> and in particular. His account of the particular acts is

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<sup>28</sup> Quoted in full above, note 4.

<sup>29</sup> In *Contra Gentiles*, for instance, he explains that the exterior acts of religion are done for the sake of the interior acts. *SCG III.119*: “Et quia per interiores actus directe in Deum tendimus, ideo interioribus actibus proprie Deum colimus. Sed tamen et exteriores

especially noteworthy. For instance, when discussing adoration, he unpacks the psychological presuppositions of the doctrine:

[A]s Damascene says in the fourth book (*De fide orthodoxa* IV.12), *since we are composed of a twofold nature, intellectual and sensible, we offer God a twofold adoration*; namely, a spiritual adoration, consisting in the internal devotion of the mind; and a bodily adoration, which consists in an exterior humbling of the body; and since in all acts of *latría*, that which is without is referred to that which is within as being of greater import; therefore, that exterior adoration is offered on account of interior adoration; in other words we show signs of humility in our bodies in order to incite our affections to submit to God, since it is connatural to us to proceed from the sensible to the intelligible.<sup>30</sup>

Here Aquinas brings to the fore his hylomorphic psychology. Human nature consists of both body and soul.<sup>31</sup> The spiritual soul is united to a material body in order to be able to obtain knowledge of physical reality.<sup>32</sup> Now, since “there is nothing in the intellect that

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actus ad cultum Dei pertinent, in quantum per huiusmodi actus mens nostra elevatur in Deum, ut dictum est.”

<sup>30</sup> *ST* II-II.84.2c: [S]icut Damascenus dicit, in IV libro, *quia ex duplici natura compositi sumus, intellectuali scilicet et sensibili, duplicem adorationem Deo offerimus, scilicet spiritualem, quae consistit in interiori mentis devotione; et corporalem, quae consistit in exteriori corporis humiliatione. Et quia in omnibus actibus latría id quod est exterius refertur ad id quod est interius sicut ad principalius, ideo ipsa exterior adoratio fit propter interiorem, ut videlicet per signa humilitatis quae corporaliter exhibemus, excitetur noster affectus ad subiiciendum se Deo; quia connaturale est nobis ut per sensibilia ad intelligibilia procedamus. Cf. Ibid. 3c: [I]n adoratione principalior est interior devotio mentis, secundarium autem est quod pertinet exterius ad corporalia signa.*

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *ST* I.75.4c: [I]llud autem est unaquaeque res, quod operatur operationes illius rei. Unde illud est homo, quod operatur operationes hominis. Ostensum est autem quod sentire non est operatio animae tantum. Cum igitur sentire sit quaedam operatio hominis, licet non propria, manifestum est quod homo non est anima tantum, sed est aliquid compositum ex anima et corpore. Plato vero, ponens sentire esse proprium animae, ponere potuit quod homo esset anima utens corpore. Cf. *Ibid.* 76.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *ST* I.76.4c: [C]um forma non sit propter materiam, sed potius materia propter formam; ex forma oportet rationem accipere quare materia sit talis, et non e converso. Anima autem intellectiva, sicut supra habitum est, secundum naturae ordinem,

does not come first through the senses,”<sup>33</sup> human beings cannot successfully stimulate their mind to submit to God without the aid of the senses. Therefore, adoration, an exterior act, is done that it may bring about an interior “adoration.” This interior adoration is identical with the act of devotion: “even bodily adoration is done in spirit, in so far as it proceeds from and is ordered to spiritual devotion.”<sup>34</sup>

Likewise, when explaining the end of sacrifice (an exterior act of religion), St. Thomas appeals to the same psychological principles:

Natural reason tells man that he is subject to something superior, on account of the defects which he perceives in himself, regarding which he needs to be helped and directed by something superior. Whatever [this superior] may be, this is what everyone calls “God.” Now, just as in natural things the lower are naturally subject to the higher, so too natural reason dictates to man according to a natural inclination that he should

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infimum gradum in substantiis intellectualibus tenet; intantum quod non habet naturaliter sibi inditam notitiam veritatis, sicut Angeli, sed oportet quod eam colligat ex rebus divisibilibus per viam sensus, ut Dionysius dicit, VII cap. de Div. Nom. Natura autem nulli deest in necessariis, unde oportuit quod anima intellectiva non solum haberet virtutem intelligendi, sed etiam virtutem sentiendi. Actio autem sensus non fit sine corporeo instrumento. Oportuit igitur animam intellectivam tali corpori uniri, quod possit esse conveniens organum sensus. Omnes autem alii sensus fundantur supra tactum. Ad organum autem tactus requiritur quod sit medium inter contraria, quae sunt calidum et frigidum, humidum et siccum, et similia, quorum est tactus apprehensivus, sic enim est in potentia ad contraria, et potest ea sentire. Unde quanto organum tactus fuerit magis reductum ad aequalitatem complexionis, tanto perceptibilior erit tactus. Anima autem intellectiva habet completissime virtutem sensitivam, quia quod est inferioris praeexistit perfectius in superiori ut dicit Dionysius in libro de Div. Nom. Unde oportuit corpus cui unitur anima intellectiva, esse corpus mixtum, inter omnia alia magis reductum ad aequalitatem complexionis. Et propter hoc homo inter omnia animalia melioris est tactus. Et inter ipsos homines, qui sunt melioris tactus, sunt melioris intellectus. Cuius signum est, quod molles carne bene aptos mente videmus, ut dicitur in II de anima.

<sup>33</sup> It appears that this objection is the only place in Aquinas’ works where this famous tag is found: *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* 2.3 arg. 19, ll. 147-148 in *Opera omnia*, vol. 22: “Nihil est in intellectu quod non sit prius in sensu.” See, however, *ST* I.84.6c.

<sup>34</sup> *ST* II-II.84.2 ad 1: [E]tiam adoratio corporalis in spiritu fit, in quantum ex spirituali devotione procedit, et ad eam ordinatur.

show subjection and honor, according to his mode, to that which is above man. Now the mode that is necessary for man, since he receives knowledge from perceptible things, is that he should use sensible signs in order to express things. Hence, it follows from natural reason that man should use certain perceptible things, offering them to God as a sign of due subjection and honor, in likeness to those who offer things to their rulers in recognition of their dominion. Now this belongs to the nature of sacrifice, and consequently the offering of sacrifice belongs to the natural law.<sup>35</sup>

However, Aquinas stresses that sacrifice is not a merely physical act: the outward honor and submission that is shown through the exterior act of sacrifice has an interior counterpart, which he calls the “spiritual sacrifice,” an act of the will whereby human beings offer themselves to God. This is the end (*finis operis*) and most essential aspect of the act of sacrifice.

[A] sacrifice is offered in order that something may be signified. Now the sacrifice that is offered outwardly signifies the inward spiritual sacrifice, whereby the soul offers itself to God according to Psalm (50:19), “A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit,” since, as stated above (*ST II-*

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<sup>35</sup> *ST II-II.85.1c*: [N]aturalis ratio dictat homini quod alicui superiori subdatur, propter defectus quos in seipso sentit, in quibus ab aliquo superiori eget adiuvari et dirigi. Et quidquid illud sit, hoc est quod apud omnes dicitur Deus. Sicut autem in rebus naturalibus naturaliter inferiora superioribus subduntur, ita etiam naturalis ratio dictat homini secundum naturalem inclinationem ut ei quod est supra hominem subiectionem et honorem exhibeat secundum suum modum. Est autem modus conveniens homini ut sensibilibus signis utatur ad aliqua exprimenda, quia ex sensibilibus cognitionem accipit. Et ideo ex naturali ratione procedit quod homo quibusdam sensibilibus rebus utatur offerens eas Deo, in signum debitae subiectionis et honoris, secundum similitudinem eorum qui dominis suis aliqua offerunt in recognitionem domini. Hoc autem pertinet ad rationem sacrificii. Et ideo oblatio sacrificii pertinet ad ius naturale.



II.81.07; 84.2), the outward acts of religion are directed to the inward acts.<sup>36</sup>

Aquinas also brings this principle into play when discussing interior acts themselves, for not only is it true that the exterior acts are done for the sake of the interior acts, but also the interior acts themselves depend on the exterior acts, for the latter are frequently prompted by the former.<sup>37</sup> Whereas the intrinsic cause on our part is the meditation or contemplation of divine things<sup>38</sup> (which is an act of the speculative intellect), nonetheless, given the weakness of the human mind, the latter is often in need of being “led by the hand” (*manuduci*), as it were, by certain sensible considerations to the contemplation of these divine things.<sup>39</sup> Thus, devotion, which is the principal act of religion present in all other acts of the same virtue and is that in which the latter acts primarily consist, depends on the aid of the senses; hence the need for exterior acts of religion.

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<sup>36</sup> *ST* II-II.85.2c: [O]blatio sacrificii fit ad aliquid significandum. Significat autem sacrificium quod offertur exterius, interius spirituale sacrificium, quo anima seipsam offert Deo, secundum illud Psalm., sacrificium Deo spiritus contribulatus, quia, sicut supra dictum est, exteriores actus religionis ad interiores ordinantur.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.81.7c, quoted in full in note 4.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.82.3c: Causa autem [devotionis] intrinseca ex parte nostra, oportet quod sit meditatio seu contemplatio. Dictum est enim quod devotio est quidam voluntatis actus ad hoc quod homo prompte se tradat ad divinum obsequium. Omnis autem actus voluntatis ex aliqua consideratione procedit, eo quod bonum intellectum est obiectum voluntatis, unde et Augustinus dicit, in libro de Trin., quod voluntas oritur ex intelligentia. Et ideo necesse est quod meditatio sit devotionis causa, in quantum scilicet per meditationem homo concipit quod se tradat divino obsequio.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.82.3 ad 2: [E]x debilitate mentis humanae est quod sicut indiget manuduci ad cognitionem divinorum, ita ad dilectionem, per aliqua sensibilia nobis nota.

Aquinas invokes the same principle to explain prayer, the other interior act of religion. This act is also sometimes done through the aid of sensibles, that is, when prayer is done vocally:

We use words, in speaking to God, for one reason, and in speaking to man, for another reason. For when speaking to man we use words in order to tell him our thoughts, which are unknown to him. Hence we praise a man with our lips, in order that he or others may learn that we have a good opinion of him: so that in consequence we may incite him to yet better things; and that we may induce others, who hear him praised, to think well of him, to reverence him, and to imitate him. On the other hand we employ words, in speaking to God, not indeed to make known our thoughts to him who is the searcher of hearts, but that we may bring ourselves and our hearers to reverence him. Consequently we need to praise God with our lips, not indeed for his sake, but for our own sake; since by praising him our devotion is aroused towards him, according to Psalm 49:23: “The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the way by which I will show him the salvation of God.” And forasmuch as man, by praising God, ascends in his affections to God, by so much is he withdrawn from things opposed to God, according to Isaiah 48:9, “For My praise I will bridle thee lest thou shouldst perish.” The praise of the lips is also profitable to others by inciting their affections towards God. Hence it is said (Psalm 33:2): “His praise shall always be in my mouth,” and farther on: “Let the meek hear and rejoice. O magnify the Lord with me.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *ST II-II.91.1c*: [V]erbis alia ratione utimur ad Deum, et alia ratione ad hominem. Ad hominem enim utimur verbis ut conceptum nostri cordis, quem non potest cognoscere, verbis nostris ei exprimamus. Et ideo laude oris ad hominem utimur ut vel ei vel aliis innotescat quod bonam opinionem de laudato habemus, ut per hoc et ipsum qui laudatur ad meliora provocemus; et alios, apud quos laudatur, in bonam opinionem et reverentiam et imitationem ipsius inducamus. Sed ad Deum verbis utimur non quidem ut ei, qui est inspector cordium, nostros conceptus manifestemus, sed ut nos ipsos et alios audientes ad eius reverentiam inducamus. Et ideo necessaria est laus oris, non quidem propter Deum, sed propter ipsum laudantem, cuius affectus excitatur in Deum ex laude ipsius, secundum illud Psalm., *sacrificium laudis honorificabit me, et illic iter quo ostendam illi salutare Dei*. Et in quantum homo per divinam laudem affectu ascendit in Deum, intantum per hoc retrahitur ab his quae sunt contra Deum, secundum illud Isaiae XLVIII, *laude mea infrenabo te, ne intereas*. Proficit etiam laus oris ad hoc quod aliorum

This ordering of the particular exterior acts to the particular interior acts is exactly what Aquinas wishes to establish in general *ST II-II.81.7*, and nothing else. He only wishes to say that the *exterior acts* are for our sake, that is, for the sake of arousing in us the interior acts. In none of these passages does he mean to affirm that the *interior acts* are for our sake. Rather, these interior acts, Aquinas tells us, God accepts *per se*, that is, of themselves, and not for the sake of something else:

These external things are not offered to God as though he stood in need of them, according to the Psalm (49:13), “Shall I eat the flesh of bullocks? Or shall I drink the blood of goats?” but as certain signs of interior and spiritual works, which God accepts *per se*. Hence, Augustine says (*De civitate Dei* 10.5): “The visible sacrifice is the sacrament or sacred sign of the invisible sacrifice.”<sup>41</sup>

In fact, in many other places Aquinas contrasts the purely instrumental finality of exterior acts with that of interior acts, which are “that which is principally and *per se* intended in divine *cultus*,”<sup>42</sup> for they are the acts through which humans are “united to God,”<sup>43</sup> through which “the soul offers itself to God,”<sup>44</sup> and through which “our affections . . . submit to God.”<sup>45</sup>

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affectus provocetur in Deum. Unde dicitur in Psalm., *semper laus eius in ore meo*, et postea subditur, *audiant mansueti, et laetentur. Magnificate dominum mecum.*

<sup>41</sup> *ST II-II.81.7 ad 2*: [H]uiusmodi exteriora non exhibentur Deo quasi his indigeat, secundum illud Psalm., *numquid manducabo carnes taurorum, aut sanguinem hircorum potabo?* Sed exhibentur Deo tanquam signa quaedam interiorum et spiritualium operum, quae per se Deus acceptat. Unde Augustinus dicit, in X de Civ. Dei, *sacrificium visibile invisibilis sacrificii sacramentum, idest sacrum signum, est.*

<sup>42</sup> *ST II-II.81.7 ad 1*: [I]d quod est principale et per se intentum in cultu divino.

<sup>43</sup> *ST II-II.81.7c*, quoted in full above in note 4.

<sup>44</sup> *ST II-II.85.2c*, quoted in full above in note 36.

<sup>45</sup> *ST II-II.84.2c*, quoted in full above in note 30.

What do these expressions mean? As one may gather from the context, they mean only that, whereas the exterior acts accomplish the end of religion *per aliud* (through another), that is, through the interior acts, interior acts accomplish the same end *per se*, through themselves, not through another. As we saw, Aquinas states that, “religion has certain interior acts that are, as it were, primary and pertaining *per se* to religion, and external acts that are, as it were, secondary, and ordered to the interior acts.”<sup>46</sup> The exterior acts do not belong *per se*, of themselves, to religion, because they are ordered to the interior acts; they attain the finality of religion, not *per se*, but *per aliud*, through something else. The interior acts do belong *per se* to religion because they attain the finality of religion *per se*. That is to say, the exterior acts are only “secondary” acts of religion in relation to the interior acts, because they are of themselves insufficient for humans to achieve the end of religion. The end of religion is an entirely interior reality. The interior acts attain this end *per se*; the exterior acts do so only mediately, as instruments or signs. It is due to this *per se* finality that the interior acts belong *per se* and primarily to religion; conversely, the exterior acts belong secondarily because their finality lacks the *per se* character of the interior acts. The exterior acts are acts of religion, not *per se*, but through the fact that they are ordered to other interior, *per se* acts of religion.

Thus, *pace* the proponents of the Standard Thomistic Account, in *ST* II-II.81.7, Aquinas is not telling us anything about the finality of interior acts, except that their finality is not merely instrumental, as is the case with the exterior acts.

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<sup>46</sup> *ST* II-II.81.7c, quoted in full above in note 4.

Thus, in this subsection, I have established two things. First, the text of *ST II-II.81.7* is *not* trying to make a claim regarding the general finality of religion, but only regarding the finality of the *exterior* acts of religion in particular: namely, that they are for “our sake,” that is, so that we may perform the interior acts of religion. Second, in that text and throughout the *De religione*, the principle that governs the exterior acts is that their end or *finis operis* is precisely to arouse the mind to engage in the interior acts of religion, acts which attain the finality of religion through themselves, or *per se*.

## **B. HONOR, REVERENCE, AND GLORY**

### **1. God and the “Intervening Acts” of Honor, Reverence, and Glory**

So far, I have focused on the finality of the exterior acts of religion. We saw that they only have an instrumental value insofar as they are ordered to the interior acts. The interior acts attain the end of religion *per se*, but the exterior acts do so only *per aliud*, through the interior acts. Therefore, the true finality of religion lies in the interior acts. Now we can ask how the interior acts (and ultimately all of the acts of religion) attain their finality.

As we saw in the Chapter 1, Aquinas makes various claims regarding this overall finality of religion: that the end of the virtue of religion is (a) divine honor, (b) divine reverence, (c) divine glory, and (d) God himself. How do all these claims fit together? The most “solemn” and deliberate claims made by Aquinas affirm that (d) God is the end. These claims, affirming that God is the end of religion, appear in *ST II-II.81.1c* and in *81.5*, the passage where he is seeking to address the issue of the finality of religion *ex*

*professo*, namely, deliberately, with that very intention in mind.<sup>47</sup> These expressions, however, seem mysterious—incomplete, even. If God is the end *simpliciter*, or simply speaking, then a number of problems seem to arise. First, and most basically, what does it mean that God, *simpliciter*, is the end of a religious act? Such a claim would seem vague, or at least mysterious. Further, how can the natural end of an act be simply something or someone, such as God, and not some activity, or the acquisition of a perfection that bears, somehow, a relation to God? If it means the acquisition of some perfection, then does it mean that the end is the *attainment* of God? This latter cannot be the case, for Aquinas expressly denied it when he attributed the direct attainment of God exclusively to the acts of the theological virtues.<sup>48</sup> What else could this finality mean?

Another reading reveals that Aquinas does not mean that these acts have God, *simpliciter*, as their end. Rather, he means that the interior acts are ordered to an

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<sup>47</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.81.1c: “[R]eligio proprie importat ordinem ad Deum.” Ad 1: “[R]eligio habet . . . actus . . . proprios et immediatos, quos elicit, per quos homo ordinatur ad solum Deum, sicut sacrificare, adorare et alia huiusmodi.” 81.5c: “Unde manifestum est quod Deus . . . comparatur ad virtutem religionis . . . sicut finis.” Ad 2: “[R]eligio ordinat hominem in Deum non sicut in obiectum, sed sicut in finem.” By contrast, the claims regarding divine honor, reverence, and glory as the end of religion seem to be made in passing, while addressing other issues regarding the virtue of religion. Cf. 81.2 ad 1: “Ad religionem autem pertinet facere aliqua propter divinam reverentiam.” 4c: “Bonum autem ad quod ordinatur religio est exhibere Deo debitum honorem.” 4 ad 2: “Omnia, secundum quod in gloriam Dei fiunt, pertinent ad religionem.” 6c: “Religio . . . operatur ea quae directe et immediate ordinantur in honorem divinum.” 7 arg. 2: “Religionis finis est Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibere.” 92.2c: “Ordinatur . . . primo divinus cultus ad reverentiam Deo exhibendam.” 93.2c: “Finis autem divini cultus est ut homo Deo det gloriam . . . .”

<sup>48</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.81.5c, quoted in full below, note 50. Recall that object of religion is different from the object of charity: the object of charity is God himself, whereas the object of religion are the acts of *cultus*. Cf. *ST* II-II.81.2 ad 1: “Ad primum ergo dicendum quod ad caritatem pertinet immediate quod homo tradat seipsum Deo adhaerendo ei per quandam spiritus unionem. Sed quod homo tradat seipsum Deo aliqua opera divini cultus, hoc immediate pertinet ad religionem, mediate autem ad caritatem, quae est religionis principium.”

*operation* concerning God. This is consistent with the doctrine that he presents in *ST I-II.13.4c*, where he asks whether election or choice is always of acts or also of things. He explains that the end of every act is always either: (a) an action; for instance, the end of the physician is the production of health; or (b) a thing, *with an action intervening*; for example, the end of the miser is money, *through the possession thereof*.

Just as intention is of the end, so is election of those things that are ordered to the end. Now the end is either an action or a thing. And when the end is a thing, some human action must intervene; either in so far as man produces the thing which is the end, as the physician produces health (hence the production of health is said to be the end of the physician); or in so far as man, in some fashion, uses or enjoys the thing which is the end; thus for the miser, money or the possession of money is the end. The same is to be said of those things that are ordered to the end. For it is necessary that that which is ordered to the end be either an act or a thing with some act intervening, through which man either does or uses the thing that is ordered to the end.<sup>49</sup>

Interestingly, Ramirez links this distinction between the end as a thing and the end as an action with the Aristotelian distinction between the *finis quo* and the *finis cuius* (or *finis qui*, as he calls it): “The end is either our action—the formal end or *finis quo*—or a thing

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<sup>49</sup> *ST I-II.13.4c*: “[S]icut intentio est finis, ita electio est eorum quae sunt ad finem. Finis autem vel est actio, vel res aliqua. Et cum res aliqua fuerit finis, necesse est quod aliqua humana actio interveniat, vel in quantum homo facit rem illam quae est finis, sicut medicus facit sanitatem, quae est finis eius (unde et facere sanitatem dicitur finis medici); vel in quantum homo aliquo modo utitur vel fruitur re quae est finis, sicut avaro est finis pecunia, vel possessio pecuniae. Et eodem modo dicendum est de eo quod est ad finem. Quia necesse est ut id quod est ad finem, vel sit actio; vel res aliqua, interveniente aliqua actione, per quam facit id quod est ad finem, vel utitur eo. Et per hunc modum electio semper est humanorum actuum.” Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *In decem libros Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nichomacum expositio*, ed. R. Spiazzi (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1949), 3.4, lect. 5, n. 12 (443): “[V]oluntas nominat actum huius potentiae secundum quod fertur in bonum absolute. Electio autem nominat actum eiusdem potentiae relatum in bonum secundum quod pertinet ad nostram operationem, per quam in aliquod bonum ordinamur.”

as it falls under our possession or enjoyment—the material end or *finis qui*.”<sup>50</sup> The *finis cuius* (the thing enjoyed or used) is not, *simpliciter*, the end. Rather, an action must intervene: and this is the *finis quo* (the act itself whereby we use or enjoy the thing). From this one can infer that, in the case of religion, God is not, *simpliciter*, the end; an action—in fact, several actions—“intervene” whereby we “use” or “enjoy” him. These intervening actions between the *cultus* and God are three: the honor, reverence, and glory of God. These are the *finis quo* of religion. This is implicit in many passages of the *De religione*, where he speaks of divine reverence and of God as the end of religion interchangeably. For instance, if we look again at the text of *ST II-II.81.5*, where Aquinas claimed that “God” is the end of religion, we see that what he means is that religious acts are ordered to the *reverence* of God: “Due *cultus* is offered to God insofar as certain acts, whereby God is worshipped (*colitur*), are done *for the sake of God’s reverence* . . . . Hence, it is manifest that *God* is not related to the virtue of religion as matter or object, but as end.”<sup>51</sup> Thus, almost in the same breath, as it were, Aquinas is saying that God is the end and divine reverence is the end. Reverence here is the “intervening action” whereby God is attained as an end. Another example is the momentous text on the elicited and commanded acts of religion, where Aquinas affirms God and divine reverence interchangeably as the end of the acts of religion: “Religion has two kinds of

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<sup>50</sup> Santiago Ramirez, *De actibus humanis* (Madrid: Instituto de Filosofía “Luis Vives,” 1972), p. 335: “[F]inis vel est *actio* aliqua nostra—*finis quo* seu formalis—vel est res aliqua ut sub actione et possessione vel fruitione nostra cadit—*finis qui* vel materialis . . . .”

<sup>51</sup> *ST II-II.81.5c* (emphasis added): [A]ffertur autem Deo debitus cultus in quantum actus quidam, quibus Deus colitur, *in Dei reverentiam fiunt*, puta sacrificiorum oblationes et alia huiusmodi. Unde manifestum est quod Deus non comparatur ad virtutem religionis sicut materia vel obiectum, sed sicut finis.



act: certain proper and immediate acts, which it elicits, through which man is ordered *to God alone*

. . . and it has other acts which it produces by means of the virtues which it commands, ordering them *to divine reverence*.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, in *ST II-II.81.6*, he says the virtue of religion is higher than (*praeferenda*, literally, to be carried before) the other moral virtues. His argument is that all the moral virtues have, as their object, things that are means to the ultimate end, God; but of all of these, the *object* of religion is the one that most approaches the ultimate end, *God*, insofar as its acts are ordered to the *honor of God*.

Whatever is directed to an end takes its goodness from being ordered to that end; so that the nearer it is to the end the better it is. Now moral virtues, as stated above (*ST II-II.81.5*), are about matters that are ordered to God as their end. Now, religion approaches nearer to God than the other moral virtues, insofar as its actions are directly and immediately ordered to the honor of God. Hence, religion is higher than the moral virtues.<sup>53</sup>

Thus, it is clear that the claims that the end of religion is (a) God, and (b) his honor, reverence, and glory, are related, but not exactly equivalent—much less contradictory. Given the doctrine on the “intervening action” with regard to the end, it is evident what Aquinas is doing: when he speaks of honor, reverence, and glory, Aquinas

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<sup>52</sup> *ST II-II.81.1 ad 1* (emphasis added), quoted in full above, note 11.

<sup>53</sup> *ST II-II.81.6c*: [E]a quae sunt ad finem sortiuntur bonitatem ex ordine in finem, et ideo quanto sunt fini propinquiora, tanto sunt meliora. Virtutes autem morales, ut supra habitum est, sunt circa ea quae ordinantur in Deum sicut in finem. Religio autem magis de propinquo accedit ad Deum quam aliae virtutes morales, inquantum operatur ea quae directe et immediate ordinantur in honorem divinum. Et ideo religio praeceminet inter alias virtutes morales.

is speaking of the *fines quo* of religion. This is perfectly consistent with his claim that God himself is the end (that is, the *finis cuius*) of religion.

Now, however, we must address the different “intervening actions” or *fines quo* of religion, namely, honor, reverence, and glory. How are these different? What do they consist in? Are they all *fines quo* of religion in the same sense? The most central of these concepts seems to be that of reverence: of the three *fines quo*, it is the one most referred to in the different texts regarding the finality of religion. However, despite its frequency, it is rather obscure in its meaning, especially if understood as a philosophical notion.<sup>54</sup>

One point that is clear from the texts is that it has a close relationship with the concept of honor. Due to this relationship, in Chapter 5 I postponed the discussion of honor until I was ready to treat the two concepts together. In the next two subsections I proceed as promised. We saw in the same chapter that divine *cultus*, the object of religion, is a type of “celebrating through honor.” I now argue that, among the three *fines quo*, honor is the proximate or immediate *finis operis* of the elicited acts of religion, whereas reverence is only a mediate or remote *finis operis* in these acts. In addition, I conclude that reverence is a *finis operantis* of all acts of religion, whether elicited or commanded. In other words, honor and reverence are the first two “steps,” as it were, in the hierarchy of ends of religion.

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<sup>54</sup> As a theological concept, reverence refers to an act of the gift of fear, one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost (cf. below, “*Excursus: The Problem of Natural Reverence*,” pp. 205-212). For a thorough discussion of reverence within a theological context, see Francis B. Sullivan, “The Notion of Reverence,” *Revue de l’Université d’Ottawa* 23 (1953), 5\*-35\*.

## 2. Divine Honor

As Aquinas explains, honor is, in its primary sense, the exterior testimony or witnessing of someone's excellence: "Honor conveys a certain testimony of a someone's excellence. Hence, men who wish to be honored seek a witnessing to their excellence, according to the Philosopher in the first and eight [books] of the *Ethics*."<sup>55</sup> Now, this excellence inspires an interior reverence, which is, in turn, expressed outwardly in the form of honor. Hence, honor is the exterior manifestation or showing of one's interior reverence towards someone excellent.<sup>56</sup> Thus, it is evident how the two concepts are related: honor is the exterior counterpart of interior reverence. We see here, then, the same relationship between honor and reverence as we saw between the interior and exterior acts of religion: they are two aspects of the same act, one ordered to the other. They even share the same formal object, namely, the excellence of the person honored and revered: "the object of honor or reverence is something excellent."<sup>57</sup>

The corporeal nature of honor is most evident in *ST II-II.103.1*, where Aquinas explicitly affirms it. He raises the following objection:

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<sup>55</sup> *ST II-II.103.1c*, [H]onor testificationem quandam importat de excellentia alicuius, unde homines qui volunt honorari, testimonium suae excellentiae quaerunt, ut per philosophum patet, in I et VIII Ethic. Cf. *InEth* 1.12, lect.18 n. 2 (214): Honor enim importat quoddam testimonium manifestans excellentiam alicuius, sive hoc fiat per verba sive per facta, utpote cum aliquis genuflectit alteri vel assurgit ei.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. *ST III.25.1c*: [N]am honor est reverentia alicui exhibita propter sui excellentiam, ut in secunda parte dictum est. Cf. *Questiones de quolibet* 10.6.1 arg. 3, ll. 26-28, in *Opera omnia: iussu impensaue, Leonis XIII. P.M. edita* [Rome, 1882-], vol. 25: Ex uerbis Philosophi in I Ethicorum colligitur quod honor est exhibitio reverencie in testimonium uirtutis.

<sup>57</sup> *ST II-II.81.4 ad 3*: "[O]biectum autem honoris vel reverentiae est aliquid excellens." Because they share the same object, it is understandable why Aquinas often seems to use the two terms interchangeably. Cf. *ST II-II.81.7c*, quoted in note 3; *Ibid.* 7 arg. 2: "Religionis finis est Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibere."

Further, according to the Philosopher (*Ethics* IV.3), “honor is the reward of virtue.” Now, since virtue consists chiefly of spiritual things, its reward is not something corporeal, for the reward is more excellent than the merit. Therefore, honor does not consist of corporeal things.<sup>58</sup>

He replies that honor is not something spiritual, but corporeal. Because of this, it cannot be a sufficient reward for virtue or excellence. It is only the exterior acknowledgement of virtue and excellence. Because of its intimate relationship to excellence and virtue, however, it is the greatest of corporeal things.

As the Philosopher says in the same place (*Ethics* IV.3), honor is not a sufficient reward of virtue: yet nothing in human and corporeal things can be greater than honor, since these corporeal things themselves are signs that demonstrate surpassing virtue. It is what is owed to what is good and beautiful, however, that [honor] may be made evident, according to Matthew 5:15, “Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but upon a candlestick, that it may shine to all that are in the house.” For this reason is honor said to be the reward of virtue.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> *ST* II-II.103.1 arg. 2: Praeterea, secundum philosophum, in IV Ethic., *honor est praemium virtutis*. Virtutis autem, quae principaliter in spiritualibus consistit, praemium non est aliquid corporale, cum praemium sit potius merito. Ergo honor non consistit in corporalibus.

<sup>59</sup> *ST* II-II.103.1 ad 2: [S]icut philosophus ibidem dicit, honor non est sufficiens virtutis praemium, sed nihil potest esse in humanis rebus et corporalibus maius honore, in quantum scilicet ipsae corporales res sunt signa demonstrativa excellentis virtutis. Est autem debitum bono et pulchro ut manifestetur, secundum illud Matth. V, *neque accendunt lucernam et ponunt eam sub modio, sed super candelabrum, ut luceat omnibus qui in domo sunt*, et pro tanto praemium virtutis dicitur honor. Cf. *InEth* 1.5, lect. 5, n. 11: [H]onor magis videtur consistere in actu quodam honorantis et in eius potestate, quam ipsius etiam qui honoratur. Ergo honor est quiddam magis extrinsecum et superficiale quam bonum quod quaeritur, scilicet felicitas. Secundam rationem ponit ibi, amplius autem videntur et cetera. Quae talis est. Felicitas est quiddam optimum quod non quaeritur propter aliud. Sed honore est aliquid melius propter quod quaeritur. Ad hoc enim homines videntur honorem quaerere ut ipsi firmam opinionem accipiant de se ipsis quod sint boni et quod ab aliis hoc credatur, et ideo quaerunt homines honorari a

Now, as was intimated above, honor is one of the four species of *cultus* (recall the expression, “celebrating through honor”). Accordingly, respect, piety, and religion are not only types of *cultus*, but also, more specifically, types of honor.<sup>60</sup> Respect is the honor given to superiors; piety is the honor given to parents and the fatherland; and religion (or divine *cultus*) is the honor given to God. Divine *cultus* is, thus, coextensive with divine honor:

By the one same act man both serves and worships (*colit*) God, for *cultus* regards the excellence of God, to whom reverence is due: while service (*servitus*) regards the subjection of man who, by his condition, is under an obligation of showing reverence to God. To these two pertain all acts attributed to religion, because, through all of them, man bears witness to the divine excellence and to his own subjection to God, either by showing something to him, or by assuming something divine.<sup>61</sup>

Like honor, *cultus* “regards” (*respicit*) the excellence of God. All of the acts of religion, whose *ratio* or object is *cultus*, consist in giving testimony of God’s excellence, that is, in honoring God.

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prudentibus, qui sunt recti iudicii, et apud eos a quibus cognoscuntur, qui melius possunt de eis iudicare. Et quaerunt honorari de virtute, per quam aliquis est bonus, ut in secundo dicitur. Et sic virtus est aliquid melius honore propter quam honor quaeritur. Non ergo in honore consistit felicitas.

<sup>60</sup> See Chapter 5, pp. 147-153.

<sup>61</sup> *ST* II-II.81.3 ad 2: [E]odem actu homo servit Deo et colit ipsum, nam *cultus* respicit Dei excellentiam, cui reverentia debetur; *servitus* autem respicit subiectionem hominis, qui ex sua conditione obligatur ad exhibendum reverentiam Deo. Et ad haec duo pertinent omnes actus qui religioni attribuuntur, quia per omnes homo protestatur divinam excellentiam et subiectionem sui ad Deum, vel exhibendo aliquid ei, vel iterum assumendo aliquid divinum.

Like *cultus*, honor is also the object or *ratio* of the acts of religion. Aquinas also treats the “showing of reverence” (that is, honor) as being the object of religion. He asks whether religion is one virtue or many, replying that,

as stated above (*ST* I-II.54.2 ad 1), habits are differentiated according to a different *ratio* of the object. Now, it belongs to religion to show reverence to one God under one *ratio*, namely, as the first principle of the creation and government of things. Hence he himself says in the first chapter of Malachi: “If . . . I be a father, where is My honor?” For it belongs to a father to produce and to govern. Therefore, it is evident that religion is one virtue.<sup>62</sup>

Therefore, it could be said that divine honor is also the object of religion. Divine honor and *cultus* are the proximate or immediate *finis operis* of religion, that is, the good that religion directly and immediately brings about. As Aquinas tells us, religion “effects those things that are directly and immediately ordered to divine honor.”<sup>63</sup> This is brought to the fore when Aquinas asks whether religion is a “general” virtue or a “special” virtue, that is, whether it is identical with virtue itself or a particular virtue in its own right. He argues that religion is ordered to a unique good, the honor of God. That is to say, it belongs specifically to religion to honor God; this is not shared by the other virtues. This makes religion a unique virtue:

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<sup>62</sup> *ST* II-II.81.3c: [S]icut supra habitum est, habitus distinguuntur secundum diversam rationem obiecti. Ad religionem autem pertinet exhibere reverentiam uni Deo secundum unam rationem, in quantum scilicet est primum principium creationis et gubernationis rerum, unde ipse dicit, Malach. I, *si ego pater, ubi honor meus?* Patris enim est et producere et gubernare. Et ideo manifestum est quod religio est una virtus.

<sup>63</sup> *ST* II-II.81.6c: Religio . . . operatur ea quae directe et immediate ordinantur in honorem divinum.

Since virtue is directed to the good, wherever there is a special aspect of good, there must be a special virtue. Now, the good to which religion is ordered is to give due honor to God. Again, honor is due to someone under the aspect of excellence: and to God belongs a singular excellence, since he infinitely surpasses all things and exceeds them in every way. Hence to him is special honor due: even as in human affairs we see that different honor is due to different personal excellences, one kind of honor to a father, another to the king, and so on. Hence, it is evident that religion is a special virtue.<sup>64</sup>

Now, although, in general, honor consists in the exterior showing of reverence, in the case of *divine* honor, it can signify something interior. Aquinas tells us that honor can be shown either to a human or to God. If it is shown to a human, it is necessarily something exterior, for humans come to the knowledge of interior things by means of exterior things, as I explained above. However, due to God's omniscience, which includes the knowledge of human spiritual acts, honor can be shown to him in a purely spiritual manner. Hence, even a purely interior act of religion, such as prayer or devotion, can be an act of honoring God.

“Honor” implies a testimony about someone's excellence. Hence, men who want to be honored seek a testimony of their excellence, as is clear from the Philosopher in the first and eight books of the *Ethics* (I.5; VIII.8). Now testimony is rendered either before God or before men. Before God, who is the inspector of hearts, the testimony of conscience suffices. And, therefore, honor as far as concerns God can consist of the interior motion of the heart alone, that is, insofar as someone reflects on either God's excellence or even on another man's excellence before God. However,

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<sup>64</sup> *ST II-II.81.4c*: [C]um virtus ordinetur ad bonum, ubi est specialis ratio boni, ibi oportet esse specialem virtutem. Bonum autem ad quod ordinatur religio est exhibere Deo debitum honorem. Honor autem debetur alicui ratione excellentiae. Deo autem competit singularis excellentia, inquantum omnia in infinitum transcendit secundum omnimodum excessum. Unde ei debetur specialis honor, sicut in rebus humanis videmus quod diversis excellentiis personarum diversus honor debetur, alius quidem patri, alius regi, et sic de aliis. Unde manifestum est quod religio est specialis virtus.

with respect to men, someone can only bear testimony through certain signs, either of words—for example, when one pronounces another’s excellence by [word of] mouth—or by deeds—as by bows, salutations, and by other things of the sort—or also by exterior things—for example, by the offering of presents or gifts, or by the erecting of statues, or by other things of the sort. And according to this [sense], honor consists in exterior and corporeal signs.<sup>65</sup>

Thus, because divine honor is coextensive with divine *cultus*, what has been said of the acts of religion is also true of the acts of honor. Just as the acts of religion are both interior and exterior, so divine honor is both interior and exterior. The interior acts of religion are acts of interior divine honor and the exterior acts of religion are acts of exterior divine honor. Accordingly, the exterior honor is ordered to the interior. Thus, the *per se* finality of the interior acts consists immediately in this interior honor of God. This interior honor is the proximate and immediate *finis operis* of all acts elicited by the virtue of religion. Honor is the “*finis proximus*” of religion, which is identical with its object.<sup>66</sup> For this reason, honor makes the elicited acts of religion “special”—it specifies them, just as *cultus* does.

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<sup>65</sup> *ST II-II.103.1c*: [H]onor testificationem quandam importat de excellentia alicuius, unde homines qui volunt honorari, testimonium suae excellentiae quaerunt, ut per philosophum patet, in I et VIII Ethic. Testimonium autem redditur vel coram Deo, vel coram hominibus. Coram Deo quidem, qui inspector est cordium, testimonium conscientiae sufficit. Et ideo honor quoad Deum potest consistere in solo interiori motu cordis, dum scilicet aliquis recogitat vel Dei excellentiam, vel etiam alterius hominis coram Deo. Sed quoad homines aliquis non potest testimonium ferre nisi per aliqua signa exteriora, vel verborum, puta cum aliquis ore pronuntiat excellentiam alicuius; vel factis, sicut inclinationibus, obviationibus, et aliis huiusmodi; vel etiam exterioribus rebus, puta in exenniorum vel munerum oblatione, aut imaginum institutione, vel aliis huiusmodi. Et secundum hoc, honor in signis exterioribus et corporalibus consistit.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *De Malo* 2.4 ad 9: [D]uplex est finis: proximus et remotus. Finis proximus actus idem est quod obiectum, et ab hoc recipit speciem. Ex fine autem remoto non habet speciem; sed ordo ad talem finem est circumstantia actus.



Thus, we see that all the elicited acts of religion, whose proper object is *cultus*, are essentially acts of honoring God. This is what it means for an act to be elicited by the virtue of religion: to have a *per se* order to divine honor. Therefore, whether they are interior or exterior, the elicited acts of religion are primarily a testimony of God's excellence. The exterior acts are a testimony before God, oneself, and others; the interior acts are a testimony before oneself and God only.

### 3. Divine Reverence

This is not the case, however, with the commanded acts of religion. These do not have *cultus* or honor, but something else, as their object or proximate *finis operis*. They only share the *ratio*, or nature, of religion insofar as they are ordered or commanded by the virtue of religion to the same *finis operantis*, namely, divine reverence. Reverence is not identical to honor, nor is it merely the interior counterpart of honor. Reverence is also the motive and end of religion:

Reverence is not the same as honor: but on the one hand it is the primary motive for showing honor, in so far as one man honors another out of the reverence he has for him; and on the other hand, it is the end of honor, in so far as a person is honored in order that he may be held in reverence by others.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> *ST* II-II.103.1 ad 1: [R]everentia non est idem quod honor, sed ex una parte est principium motivum ad honorandum, in quantum scilicet aliquis ex reverentia quam habet ad aliquem, eum honorat; ex alia vero parte est honoris finis, in quantum scilicet aliquis ad hoc honoratur ut in reverentia habeatur ab aliis.

That is to say, divine reverence (whether understood as one's own reverence for God or as the desire to incite others to it) is the end that moves the will to honor God; therefore, all acts of honor (that is, the elicited acts of religion) proceed from divine reverence. However, because divine reverence is not the same as divine honor, but only the *motive* for honoring God, it is something more general than—and in fact separable from—divine honor. It can also be the motive for other acts, such that there can be acts that are not properly acts of divine honor but that are *per accidens* ordered to divine reverence. These acts would be contrasted with the acts that are properly acts of divine honor, which are ordered *per se* to divine reverence. Thus, on the one hand, the elicited acts of religion are ordered *per se* to divine reverence: “those things that pertain to the reverence of God according to the *ratio* of their species pertain to religion as to an eliciting [virtue].”<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, however, the elicited acts of other virtues, which are not *per se* ordered to divine reverence, can be commanded (that is, ordered *per accidens*) by the virtue of religion to this end. In this way, Aquinas points out that it is on account of an act's being ordered to *divine reverence* that it receives the species “religion,” whether it is ordered *per se* (that is, elicited) or *per accidens* (that is, commanded) by religion. We saw this in the key text on the elicited and commanded acts of religion:

Religion has two kinds of act: certain proper and immediate acts, which it elicits, through which man is ordered to God alone, such as to sacrifice, to adore, and other suchlike things; and it has other acts which it produces by

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<sup>68</sup> *ST* II-II.81.4 ad 2: Illa autem pertinent ad religionem elicentem quae secundum rationem suae speciei pertinent ad reverentiam Dei.

means of the virtues which it commands, ordering them to divine reverence.<sup>69</sup>

Thus, we can say that the elicited acts of religion are ordered *per se* to both divine honor and reverence as to a *finis operis*, whereas the commanded acts of that virtue are only *per accidens* ordered to divine reverence as to a *finis operantis*.

This principle, which Aquinas indicates here expressly, is elsewhere suggested in practice when Aquinas sets about to determine whether a given act belongs to religion as to an eliciting virtue. For instance, he determines that sacrifice is, by its very nature, ordered to divine reverence, and it is on account of this that it belongs to the moral species “religion.”

As stated above, where an act of one virtue is directed to the end of another virtue it partakes somewhat of its species; thus when a man steals in order to commit fornication, his theft assumes, in a sense, the deformity of fornication, so that even though it were not a sin otherwise, it would be a sin from the very fact that it was directed to fornication. Accordingly, sacrifice is a special act deserving of praise in that it is done out of reverence for God; and for this reason it belongs to a definite virtue,

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<sup>69</sup> *ST II-II.81.1 ad 1*: “[R]eligio habet duplices actus. Quosdam quidem proprios et immediatos, quos elicit, per quos homo ordinatur ad solum Deum: sicut sacrificare, adorare et alia huiusmodi. Alios autem actus habet quos producit mediantibus virtutibus quibus imperat, ordinans eos in divinam reverentiam . . . .” Despite its title, the *Literal Translation of the Fathers of the English Dominican Province* renders this last phrase non-literally, as “directing them to the *honor* of God” (my emphasis). The translators are assuming that honor and reverence are interchangeable. From the present discussion, however, it is evident, not only that they are distinct concepts (cf. *ST II-II.103.1 ad 1*, quoted in note 62), but also that the elicited acts of religion are distinguished from its commanded acts *precisely* insofar as the former are ordered to honor and the latter are not. Thus, said translation is mistaken in saying that religion commands the acts of other virtues by “directing them to the *honor* of God.” If this were true, then they would be elicited acts of religion, for being ordered to the honor of God is the prerogative of the latter (cf. *Ibid.* 81.4c, quoted in note 64). They are, instead, being ordered to the *reverence* of God.

namely, religion. Now, it happens that the acts of the other virtues are directed to the reverence of God, as when a man gives alms of his own things for God's sake, or when a man subjects his own body to some affliction out of reverence for God; and in this way the acts also of other virtues may be called sacrifices. On the other hand, there are acts that are not deserving of praise save through being done out of reverence for God: such acts are properly called sacrifices, and belong to the virtue of religion.<sup>70</sup>

The same is true of adoration. The *finis operis* of adoration, like that of all other acts of religion, is divine reverence; therefore, it is an act of religion:

Adoration is ordered to the reverence of him who is adored. Now, it is evident from what we have said (cf. *ST* II-II.81.2 & 4) that it is proper to religion to show reverence to God. Hence, the adoration whereby we adore God is an act of religion.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> *ST* II-II.85.3c: [S]icut supra habitum est, quando actus unius virtutis ordinatur ad finem alterius virtutis, participat quodammodo speciem eius, sicut cum quis furatur ut fornicetur, ipsum furtum accipit quodammodo fornicationis deformitatem, ita quod si etiam alias non esset peccatum, ex hoc iam peccatum esset quod ad fornicationem ordinatur. Sic igitur sacrificium est quidam specialis actus laudem habens ex hoc quod in divinam reverentiam fit. Propter quod ad determinatam virtutem pertinet, scilicet ad religionem. Contingit autem etiam ea quae secundum alias virtutes fiunt, in divinam reverentiam ordinari, puta cum aliquis eleemosynam facit de rebus propriis propter Deum, vel cum aliquis proprium corpus alicui afflictioni subiicit propter divinam reverentiam. Et secundum hoc etiam actus aliarum virtutum sacrificia dici possunt. Sunt tamen quidam actus qui non habent ex alio laudem nisi quia fiunt propter reverentiam divinam. Et isti actus proprie sacrificia dicuntur, et pertinent ad virtutem religionis.

<sup>71</sup> *ST* II-II.84.1c: [A]doratio ordinatur in reverentiam eius qui adoratur. Manifestum est autem ex dictis quod religionis proprium est reverentiam Deo exhibere. Unde adoratio qua Deus adoratur est religionis actus. Cf. *ST* II-II.84.2 ad 2: Ad secundum dicendum quod sicut oratio primordialiter quidem est in mente, secundario autem verbis exprimitur, ut supra dictum est; ita etiam adoratio principaliter quidem in interiori Dei reverentia consistit, secundario autem in quibusdam corporalibus humilitatis signis, sicut genu flectimus nostram infirmitatem significantes in comparatione ad Deum; prosternimus autem nos quasi profitentes nos nihil esse ex nobis.

### ***Excursus: The Problem of Natural Reverence***

From this it is clear that reverence is the end of all religious acts. However, what exactly is “reverence?” Aquinas’ answer seems clear, although it remains problematic for us, given the strictly natural character of the virtue of religion in his thought.<sup>72</sup> He seems to be saying that reverence is part of the supernatural gift of fear. Thus, it seems to be at once the supernatural *finis operis* of a natural act, which would be an oxymoron. By such an affirmation, he seems at once to jeopardize the doctrine on the natural character of the virtue of religion and, ultimately, the very distinction between the natural and the supernatural. To avoid these difficulties, which would vitiate his entire moral thought, I seek an alternative solution to the problem.

First, let us look at the text in question. In *ST II-II.81.2*, Aquinas asks whether religion is a virtue. He raises the objection that it is not a virtue, but a gift of the Holy Ghost, because its object is reverence, which is an act of the gift of fear:

It would seem that religion is not a virtue. Seemingly, it belongs to religion to pay reverence to God. Now, reverence is an act of fear, which is a gift, as stated above (*ST II-II.19.9*). Therefore, religion is not a virtue but a gift.<sup>73</sup>

Aquinas’ reply consists essentially in affirming reverence as the end, not the object, of religion.

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<sup>72</sup> Cf. Chapter 1, note 32.

<sup>73</sup> *ST II-II.81.2* arg. 1: Videtur quod religio non sit virtus. Ad religionem enim pertinere videtur Deo reverentiam exhibere. Sed revereri est actus timoris, qui est donum, ut ex supradictis patet. Ergo religio non est virtus, sed donum.

To pay reverence to God is an act of the gift of fear. Now it belongs to religion to do certain things on account of divine reverence. Hence it follows, not that religion is the same as the gift of fear, but that it is ordered thereto as to something more primary; for the gifts are more primary than the moral virtues, as stated above (*ST* II-II.9.1 ad 3; I-II.68.8).<sup>74</sup>

Thus, Aquinas acknowledges that the act itself of revering God is a supernatural act that belongs to the gift of fear. (More specifically, he teaches elsewhere that reverence belongs to the part of the gift of fear called “filial fear,”<sup>75</sup> which consists in the supernatural turning towards God on account of fear of committing a fault.<sup>76</sup> Elsewhere, however, he says that reverence is properly “initial and chaste fear,”<sup>77</sup> which includes the

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<sup>74</sup> *ST* II-II.81.2 ad 1: [R]evereri Deum est actus doni timoris. Ad religionem autem pertinet facere aliqua propter divinam reverentiam. Unde non sequitur quod religio sit idem quod donum timoris, sed quod ordinetur ad ipsum sicut ad aliquid principalius. Sunt enim dona principaliora virtutibus moralibus, ut supra habitum est.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. *ST* I-II.67.4 ad 2: [T]imor est duplex, servilis et filialis, ut infra dicitur. Servilis quidem est timor poenae, qui non poterit esse in gloria, nulla possibilitate ad poenam remanente. Timor vero filialis habet duos actus, scilicet revereri Deum . . . et timere separationem ab ipso . . . . Cf. *Ibid.* II-II.19.12c: Cum enim ad timorem filialem pertineat Deo reverentiam exhibere et ei subditum esse, id quod ex huiusmodi subiectione consequitur pertinet ad donum timoris. Cf. *Ibid.* 22.2c: Sed timor filialis, qui reverentiam exhibet Deo, est quasi quoddam genus ad dilectionem Dei, et principium quoddam omnium eorum quae in Dei reverentiam observantur.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.19.2c: [D]e timore nunc agimus secundum quod per ipsum aliquo modo ad Deum convertimur vel ab eo avertimur. Cum enim obiectum timoris sit malum, quandoque homo propter mala quae timet a Deo recedit, et iste dicitur timor humanus vel mundanus. Quandoque autem homo per mala quae timet ad Deum convertitur et ei inhaeret. Quod quidem malum est duplex, scilicet malum poenae, et malum culpae. Si igitur aliquis convertatur ad Deum et ei inhaereat propter timorem poenae, erit timor servilis. Si autem propter timorem culpae, erit timor filialis, nam filiorum est timere offensam patris. Si autem propter utrumque, est timor initialis, qui est medius inter utrumque timorem. Utrum autem malum culpae possit timeri, supra habitum est, cum de passione timoris ageretur.

<sup>77</sup> *In Psalmos* 34.17, in Thomas Aquinas, *Opera omnia ad fidem optimarum editionum accurate recognita* (Parma: Petrus Fiaccadorus, 1852-1873), vol. 14: [T]imor initialis et castus proprie reverentia dicitur. Cf. *ST* II-II.19.2 arg. 2: Praeterea, alia est habitudo filii ad patrem, et uxoris ad virum, et servi ad dominum. Sed timor filialis, qui

fear of punishment.<sup>78</sup>) However, the object of the virtue of religion is not to *revere God*, but “to do certain things *on account of* [that is, for the sake of] divine reverence.” Hence, the identification of one with the other does not follow. One might be tempted to think that this solution successfully keeps religion safely within natural bounds because it shows that its object is not supernatural, just as in article 5 he keeps religion from becoming a theological virtue by claiming its object is *cultus* (and not God). Such a solution would not work, however, because it would still affirm—contradictorily—the existence of a natural act that is *per se* ordered to a supernatural act as to an end.

Instead, I argue that one need not read too much into Aquinas’ reply. He is only trying to show that the reasoning of the objection does not follow. It would be illegitimate, he argues, to confuse divine reverence with the acts that are done *for the sake* of divine reverence. He does not intend to claim that the *finis operis* of religion is a supernatural act that belongs to the gift of fear. In fact, the relationship between religion and the gift of fear here seems to be similar to the case of a theological virtue that commands the act of a moral (natural) virtue without thereby violating the natural character of the latter. As he teaches elsewhere, the acts elicited by a moral virtue, such

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est filii in comparatione ad patrem, distinguitur a timore servili, qui est servi per comparationem ad dominum. Ergo etiam timor castus, qui videtur esse uxoris per comparationem ad virum, debet distingui ab omnibus istis timoribus . . . . *Ibid.* ad 2: Ad tertium dicendum quod habitudo servi ad dominum est per potestatem domini servum sibi subiicientis, sed habitudo filii ad patrem, vel uxoris ad virum, est e converso per affectum filii se subdentis patri vel uxoris se coniungentis viro unione amoris. Unde timor filialis et castus ad idem pertinent, quia per caritatis amorem Deus pater noster efficitur, secundum illud Rom. VIII, *accepistis spiritum adoptionis filiorum, in quo clamamus, abba, pater*; et secundum eandem caritatem dicitur etiam sponsus noster, secundum illud II ad Cor. XI, *despondi vos uni viro, virginem castam exhibere Christo*. Timor autem servilis ad aliud pertinet, quia caritatem in sua ratione non includit.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.19.2c, quoted above in note 76.

as an act of fortitude, can be commanded by a supernatural virtue, such as charity.<sup>79</sup> In fact, Aquinas expressly admits such a situation with respect to religion and the theological virtues:

The power or virtue whose action deals with an end, moves by its command the power or virtue whose action deals with matters directed to that end. Now the theological virtues, faith, hope and charity have an act in reference to God as their proper object: hence, by their command, they cause the act of religion, which performs certain deeds directed to God: and so Augustine says that God is worshiped by faith, hope and charity.<sup>80</sup>

Similarly, the gift of fear can command an act of religion, without thereby destroying the natural character of the latter virtue. In this case, the commanded act is not ordered *per se*, but *per accidens*, to the end of the supernatural gift as to a *finis operantis*.

Now, what do we do with the other claims regarding reverence as the *finis operis* of the elicited acts of religion?<sup>81</sup> Here, there can be no separation of species between the object, *cultus*, and the end, reverence, for there is a *per se* relationship between them.

That is to say, they both belong to the same genus (provided by the end) due to the *per se* order, as Aquinas explains thoroughly in *ST I-II.18.7c*. Hence, reverence here cannot

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<sup>79</sup> Cf. *ST I-II.13.1c*: Est autem considerandum in actibus animae, quod actus qui est essentialiter unius potentiae vel habitus, recipit formam et speciem a superiori potentia vel habitu, secundum quod ordinatur inferius a superiori, si enim aliquis actum fortitudinis exercent propter Dei amorem, actus quidem ille materialiter est fortitudinis, formaliter vero caritatis.

<sup>80</sup> *ST II-II.81.5c*: [S]emper potentia vel virtus quae operatur circa finem, per imperium movet potentiam vel virtutem operantem ea quae ordinantur in finem illum. Virtutes autem theologicae, scilicet fides, spes et caritas, habent actum circa Deum sicut circa proprium obiectum. Et ideo suo imperio causant actum religionis, quae operatur quaedam in ordine ad Deum. Et ideo Augustinus dicit quod *Deus colitur fide, spe et caritate*.

<sup>81</sup> *ST II-II.81.4 ad 2*: Illa autem pertinent ad religionem elicentem quae secundum rationem suae speciei pertinent ad reverentiam Dei.



mean the supernatural act of the gift of fear, for it would mean that the elicited acts of religion are necessarily supernatural. In other words, if reverence meant the supernatural act, then the object and the end both belong to the supernatural species of the end, and not to the natural species of the object. It would follow that Aquinas is violating his own principles by making a supernatural act the *finis operis* of a natural virtue. By “divine reverence” he must mean some natural sort of act.

There are doctrinal and textual foundations for believing that Aquinas should admit a natural counterpart to the supernatural act of reverence as the end of the natural virtue of religion. Doctrinally, the following could be said. We know that the object of reverence, understood generally, is a person’s excellence. Thus, one can have reverence for a person who is constituted in a position of excellence: for instance, for one’s superior or one’s father.

*Dulia* may be taken in two ways. In one way, it may be taken in a wide sense as denoting reverence paid to anyone on account of any kind of excellence, and thus it comprises piety and respect, and any similar virtue whereby reverence is shown towards a man. Taken in this sense it will have parts differing specifically from one another. In another way, it can be taken in a strict sense insofar as according to it, a servant displays reverence to his master, for *dulia* signifies servitude, as stated above (3). Taken in this sense it is not divided into different species, but is one of the species of respect, mentioned by Cicero (*De inventione rhetorica* 2), for the reason that a servant reveres his lord under one aspect, a soldier his commanding officer under another, the disciple his master under another, and so on in similar cases.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> *ST* II-II.103.4c: [D]ulia potest accipi dupliciter. Uno modo, communiter, secundum quod exhibet reverentiam cuicumque homini, ratione cuiuscumque excellentiae. Et sic continet sub se pietatem et observantiam, et quamcumque huiusmodi virtutem quae homini reverentiam exhibet. Et secundum hoc habebit partes specie

Accordingly, the virtues of respect and piety, like religion, are ordered to the reverence of one's superior (piety specifically to the reverence of one's parents) as to their end. In the case of respect and piety, it is obvious that the reverence to which they are ordered is not a supernatural act of the gift of fear, but a natural fear of offending the superior in question. Now, religion is simply a subspecies of these virtues, as I explained in Chapter 5. Therefore, it logically follows that the reverence to which religion is ordered is simply a specific form of the reverence to which the former two virtues are ordered.

Textually, we have the following passage as a clear indication that St. Thomas admits such a natural reverence for God:

Obedience proceeds from reverence, which pays *cultus* and honor to a superior, and in this respect it is contained under different virtues, although considered in itself, as regarding the aspect of precept, it is one special virtue. Accordingly, insofar as it proceeds from reverence for a superior, it is contained, in a way, under respect; while insofar as it proceeds from reverence for one's parents, it is contained under piety; and insofar as it proceeds from the reverence of God, it comes under religion, and pertains to devotion, which is the principal act of religion.<sup>83</sup>

Here, he is placing one and the same concept of "reverence" within the three different virtues, without making a distinction between the natural and supernatural forms

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diversas. Alio modo potest accipi stricte, prout secundum eam servus reverentiam exhibet domino, nam dulia servitus dicitur, ut dictum est. Et secundum hoc non dividitur in diversas species, sed est una specierum observantiae, quam Tullius ponit, eo quod alia ratione servus reveretur dominum, miles ducem, discipulus magistrum, et sic de aliis huiusmodi.

<sup>83</sup> *ST* II-II.104.3 ad 1: [O]bedientia procedit ex reverentia, quae exhibet cultum et honorem superiori. Et quantum ad hoc, sub diversis virtutibus continetur, licet secundum se considerata, prout respicit rationem praecepti, sit una specialis virtus. In quantum ergo procedit ex reverentia praelatorum, continetur quodammodo sub observantia. In quantum vero procedit ex reverentia parentum, sub pietate. In quantum vero procedit ex reverentia Dei, sub religione, et pertinet ad devotionem, quae est principalis actus religionis.

of reverence. Accordingly, he uses the same, generic term “reverence” to encompass both the reverence due to God and the reverence due to “excellent creatures”:

Moreover, since those things that are done externally are signs of interior reverence, certain exterior things that pertain to reverence are offered to excellent creatures, among which the greatest is adoration, yet there is something that is offered to God alone, namely, sacrifice.<sup>84</sup>

Moreover, the *ratio*, or aspect, under which God is offered reverence by the virtue of religion is his being the first principle of creation and government of things—a *ratio* that is known naturally, which implies that the reverence given to him is also natural.

As stated above (*ST* I-II.54.2 ad 1), habits are differentiated according to a different aspect of the object. Now it belongs to religion to show reverence to the one God under one aspect, namely, as the first principle of the creation and government of things. Hence he himself says (Malachi 1:6): “If . . . I be a father, where is My honor?” For it belongs to a father to beget and to govern. Therefore, it is evident that religion is one virtue.<sup>85</sup>

Hence, Aquinas must admit that the reverence of which he speaks as being the *finis operis* of religion is a natural act. Thus, it is not surprising that Aquinas makes the claim that, through natural reason, humans can judge it necessary to do certain things for the

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<sup>84</sup> *ST* II-II.84.1 ad 1: Et quia ea quae exterius aguntur signa sunt interioris reverentiae, quaedam exteriora ad reverentiam pertinentia exhibentur excellentibus creaturis, inter quae maximum est adoratio, sed aliquid est quod soli Deo exhibetur, scilicet sacrificium.

<sup>85</sup> *ST* II-II.81.3c: [S]icut supra habitum est, habitus distinguuntur secundum diversam rationem obiecti. Ad religionem autem pertinet exhibere reverentiam uni Deo secundum unam rationem, in quantum scilicet est primum principium creationis et gubernationis rerum, unde ipse dicit, Malach. I, *si ego pater, ubi honor meus?* Patris enim est et producere et gubernare. Et ideo manifestum est quod religio est una virtus.

sake of divine reverence: “It belongs to the dictate of natural reason that man should do certain things for the sake of divine reverence.”<sup>86</sup> If this reverence were supernatural, it would be impossible for natural reason to make this judgment. Hence, we must conclude that there must be a place for a *natural* reverence of God in Aquinas.<sup>87</sup>

#### 4. The Glory of God

Aquinas claims that, “the end of divine *cultus* is that man give glory to God and submit to him in mind and body.”<sup>88</sup> What exactly does Aquinas mean by giving “glory” to God? How is glory related to honor and reverence? Aquinas uses the term *gloria* in different, analogical senses, with reference to both God and creatures. Many of the meanings that he assigns to this term are theological insofar as they rely on Divine Revelation.<sup>89</sup> However, the primary analogate of the term and at least one of its secondary meanings are strictly philosophical; these two are my focus in this section. The primary meaning refers to the goodness intrinsic to the Divine Nature. A secondary sense of the term is used to denote the recognition that rational creatures have of the intrinsic

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<sup>86</sup> *ST* II-II.81.2c: [D]e dictamine rationis naturalis est quod homo aliqua faciat ad reverentiam divinam . . . .

<sup>87</sup> If one were to venture an account of this natural reverence of God, one would have to look at Aquinas’ *De passionibus* in the *Prima secundae*. There, within the context of the object of the passion of fear (a natural act of the soul), he discusses the possibility of fearing God. Cf. *ST* I-II.42.1c.

<sup>88</sup> *ST* II-II.93.2c: Finis autem divini cultus est ut homo Deo det gloriam, et ei se subiiciat mente et corpore.

<sup>89</sup> See especially Aquinas’ references to the “glory” of the Beatific Vision; cf. Roy DeFerrari, *A Lexicon of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 465.

goodness of God.<sup>90</sup> Based on this distinction between God’s own intrinsic glory and the knowledge that rational creatures can have of it, later Thomistic scholars coined the terms *gloria intrinseca* (or *interna*) and *gloria extrinseca* (or *externa*). Aquinas himself never used these terms; however, their meanings are certainly found in the texts. For instance, in his *Super Psalmos*, Aquinas is conscious of the conceptual distinction:

*Bring to the Lord glory to his name.* It is to be noted that the Lord wanted these things to be offered to him, not for his own sake, for he himself has said (Psalm 49), *Shall I eat the flesh of bulls, or shall I drink the blood of goats?*, but in order that we might know that he is the origin of all our good and the end to which all is to be referred . . . . He then says that because God himself is full of glory we ought on that account to glorify him: whence he says, *Bring to the Lord glory to his name.* He is in himself full of glory, but his Name should be full of glory among us, that is, it is to become glorious in our recognition (*notitia*). Moreover, in order that he might be full of glory and illustrious among us, we must give him honor.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Based on Aquinas’ doctrine on analogy, it is evident that these two relate as primary and secondary analogates: the “glory” of God, in the primary sense, is the efficient, formal, and final cause of his “glory” in the secondary sense.

<sup>91</sup> *InPs* 28.3: “*Afferte Domino gloriam nomini eius.* Notandum quod Dominus voluit sibi offerri ista non propter se sed ut cognoscamus eum principium omnium bonorum nostrorum, et finem in quem omnia sunt referenda . . . . Dicit ergo quod ipse Deus est gloriosus, et ideo debemus sibi gloriam; unde dicit, *Afferte Domino gloriam nomini eius.* Ipse in se gloriosus est, sed nomen eius debet in nobis gloriosum esse, idest ut in notitia nostra sit gloriosum. Et quod sit ipse in nobis gloriosum esse, idest ut in notitia nostra sit gloriosum. Et quod sit ipse in nobis gloriosus et clarus, debemus ei honorem dare.” The distinction is very explicit (and the terminology is almost so) in Cajetan; cf. *InST* II-II.81.7: “In nobis ergo glorificatur Deus cultu nostro, in universo extra Deum: non in seipso. Sed tamen hoc ipsum quod est extendi gloriam eius, ad ipsum ordinandum est ut finem propter quem debet fieri, et ad quod universi bona ordinantur, quia est Deus.” The explicit terminology of “gloria externa” vs. “gloria interna” dates back at least to the late 17<sup>th</sup> Century: cf. Pierre Barbay, *Commentarius in Aristotelis Moralem* (Paris: Apud Gregorium Josse, 1690), p. 84: “Duplex est Dei gloria: una Interna & essentialis; altera Externa & accidentalis. Gloria interna Dei est clarissima cum laude notitia, quam habent tres Personae adorandae Trinitatis de suis perfectionibus. Gloria externa Dei est clara cum laude notitia, quam habent creaturae intellectuales de Deo

Aquinas also uses the two meanings specifically within the *De religione*. For instance, in *ST* II-II.81.7c, he uses the term *gloria* in the primary, intrinsic sense: “[W]e show reverence and honor to God, not on account of [God] himself, who is in himself full of *glory* (*gloria plenus*), and to whom nothing can be added by a creature, but on account of ourselves.”<sup>92</sup> Here, “glory” is an attribute of the Divine Nature and, therefore, it is identical with God himself. Hence, Aquinas expressly tells us that increasing the “glory” of God, in this sense, is *not* the end of showing reverence and honor; this would be impossible, since God’s intrinsic glory cannot be increased, due to God’s supreme perfection and immutability.

Frequently within the *Secunda secundae*, however, one finds the secondary sense of divine “glory,” as referring to a creaturely participation of God’s intrinsic glory. God’s extrinsic glory is, thus, said to be neither infinite nor immutable; it can admit of degrees and it can be increased or decreased, as we shall see. This is the “divine glory” that the virtue of religion seeks to increase. Therefore, when Aquinas claims that the end of religion is God’s glory, he means the *extrinsic* glory of God. From this, it is clear that the “glory of God” can only be an end of the virtue of religion in the sense of a *finis quo* (the act of enjoyment, use, etc. itself) not a *finis cuius* (the thing itself that is enjoyed, used, et cetera). Only God himself could be the *finis cuius*. The extrinsic glory of God is something in us, not in God.

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ejusque perfectionibus.” Because the terminology is well founded, I use it in the subsequent discussion for convenience.

<sup>92</sup> *ST* II-II.81.7c, quoted in note 4; emphasis added.

Aquinas derives his understanding of the extrinsic glory of God from Cicero's definition of glory—"frequent fame with praise about someone"<sup>93</sup>—, which Augustine later paraphrased as, "splendorous recognition with praise (*clara cum laude notitia*)."<sup>94</sup> Aquinas develops this notion in his discussion on vainglory in *ST II-II.132.1c*:

Glory signifies a certain splendor (*claritatem*), hence to be glorified is the same as to be given splendor (*clarificari*), as Augustine says in *On John*. Now, splendor (*claritas*) has a certain beauty (*decorem*) and manifestation; and, therefore, the name "glory" properly imports someone's manifestation of what seems beautiful (*decorum*) before men, whether it be a bodily or a spiritual good. Since, however, that which is splendorous (*clarus*) simply can be seen by many, and by those who are far, thus, by the name "glory" one properly designates that someone's good comes to the recognition (*notitiam*), and [meets] the approval, of many . . . .<sup>95</sup>

From this explanation, we see Aquinas' interpretation of the Augustinian definition of glory as "splendorous recognition with praise:" by "glory," he understands the knowledge (or "recognition") with praise (or "approval") that one human being has of the goodness (or "beauty") of another. Hence, applied to religion, the (extrinsic) "glory" of God is the knowledge that human beings have of God's intrinsic goodness.

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<sup>93</sup> Cicero, *De inventione rhetorica* 2.55: [G]loria est frequens de aliquo fama cum laude.

<sup>94</sup> Augustine, *Contra Maximinum* 2.13 (*PL* 42, 770): "[G]loria . . . hoc est, clara cum laude notitia." As we shall see below, in *ST II-II.103.1 ad 3* Aquinas erroneously attributes this definition to a *quaedam glossa Ambrosii*, and in *132.1 arg. 3* to Ambrose himself.

<sup>95</sup> *ST II-II.132.1c*: [G]loria claritatem quandam significat, unde glorificari idem est quod clarificari, ut Augustinus dicit, super Ioan. Claritas autem et decorem quandam habet, et manifestationem. Et ideo nomen gloriae proprie importat manifestationem alicuius de hoc quod apud homines decorum videtur, sive illud sit bonum aliquod corporale, sive spirituale. Quia vero illud quod simpliciter clarum est, a multis conspici potest et a remotis, ideo proprie per nomen gloriae designatur quod bonum alicuius deveniat in multorum notitiam et approbationem . . . .

There seems to be a parallel here between glory, on the one hand, and honor and reverence, on the other. The reference to beauty in this context is reminiscent of the reference to “excellence” within the context of honor and reverence. Just as honor and reverence are human responses to excellence, so glory is a human response to beauty. In fact, in many places Aquinas explicitly establishes a natural relationship between honor (along with praise, which, in one sense, is a verbal form of honor<sup>96</sup>) and glory:

[G]lory is the effect of honor and praise. For, from the fact that we give testimony to someone’s goodness, his goodness becomes splendidous (*clarescit*) in the recognition of many (*in notitia plurimorum*). And the word “glory” indicates this, for “glory” (*gloria*) is said like “splendor” (*claria*). Hence in *Romans* I, a certain gloss of Ambrose says that glory is splendidous recognition with praise (*clara cum laude notitia*).<sup>97</sup>

As stated above (*ST* II-II.103.1 ad 3), glory is a certain effect of honor and praise: because from the fact that someone is praised, or any reverence is paid to him, he becomes splendidous (*clarus*) in the recognition (*notitia*) of others.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Cf. *ST* II-II.103.1 ad 3: Ad tertium dicendum quod laus distinguitur ab honore dupliciter. Uno modo, quia laus consistit in solis signis verborum, honor autem in quibuscumque exterioribus signis. Et secundum hoc, laus in honore includitur. Alio modo, quia per exhibitionem honoris testimonium reddimus de excellentia bonitatis alicuius absolute, sed per laudem testificamur de bonitate alicuius in ordine ad finem, sicut laudamus bene operantem propter finem; honor autem est etiam optimorum, quae non ordinantur ad finem, sed “iam sunt in fine; ut patet per philosophum, in I *Ethic*.

<sup>97</sup> *ST* II-II.103.1 ad 3: “Gloria autem est effectus honoris et laudis. Quia ex hoc quod testificamur de bonitate alicuius, clarescit eius bonitas in notitia plurimorum. Et hoc importat nomen gloriae, nam gloria dicitur quasi claria. Unde Rom. I, dicit quaedam Glossa Ambrosii quod gloria est clara cum laude notitia.” As noted above (note 92), the source of this latter definition is not Ambrose, but Augustine (*Contra Maximinum* 2.13: *PL* 42, 770).

<sup>98</sup> *ST* II-II.132.2c: [G]loria est quidam effectus honoris et laudis, ex hoc enim quod aliquis laudatur, vel quaecumque reverentia ei exhibetur, redditur clarus in notitia aliorum. Cf. *Ibid.* 145.2 ad 2: Ad secundum dicendum quod, sicut supra dictum est, gloria est effectus honoris, ex hoc enim quod aliquis honoratur vel laudatur, redditur clarus in



Thus, the fact that someone is honored and revered causes glory in the minds of others concerning that person. If glory is the effect, then honor and reverence are the cause. Therefore, the acts of religion, which are acts of divine honor, done out of divine reverence, are causes of God's extrinsic glory. Now, if honor and reverence are the efficient causes of glory, then glory is the final cause of honor and reverence. That is to say, glory is the end of honoring and revering someone. One desires to be honored because this makes one be regarded as being excellent; people are honored and revered so that they may be "glorified" in the minds of others. Accordingly, Aquinas writes:

Praise and honor are compared to glory, as was said above, as the causes from which glory follows. Hence, glory is compared to them as an end, for someone loves to be honored and praised on account of the fact that, through this, someone thinks himself to be excellent (*praeclarus*) in the recognition (*notitia*) of others.<sup>99</sup>

Given this *per se* order between honor and reverence, on the one hand, and glory, on the other, it follows that, within the context of religion, honor and reverence—the *fines operis* of the elicited acts of religion—are *per se* ordered to the glory of God. God is given honor and reverence so that he may be glorified. Thus, just as honor is the

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oculis aliorum. Et ideo, sicut idem est honorificum et gloriosum, ita etiam idem est honestum et decorum. Cf. *InHeb 2*, lect. 2: Differt autem honor a gloria, sicut effectus a causa. Est enim honor reverentia exhibita in testimonium excellentiae, unde est testificatio bonitatis eius. Honor ille est, ut omnis creatura revereatur ipsum sicut et patrem. Io. V, 23: *ut omnes honorificent filium sicut et patrem.*

<sup>99</sup> *ST II-II.132.4 ad 2*: [L]aus et honor comparantur ad gloriam, ut supra dictum est, sicut causae ex quibus gloria sequitur. Unde gloria comparatur ad ea sicut finis, propter hoc enim aliquis amat honorari et laudari, in quantum per hoc aliquis aestimat se in aliorum notitia fore praeclarum.

immediate or proximate *finis operis* of the elicited acts of religion, reverence is the mediate or remote *finis operis*, and divine glory is the ultimate *finis operis*.

In the case of the commanded acts of religion, however, glory is only a *finis operantis*: “All things, insofar as they are done for the sake of God’s glory, pertain to religion, not as to an eliciting [virtue] but as to a commanding [virtue].”<sup>100</sup> The commanded acts of religion are *per se* ordered to their proper *finis operis*, from which they receive their immediate specification. These acts are not acts of divine *honor*; they are only *per accidens* ordered to the *reverence* of God, from which they also receive another species, that of “religion,” which relates to the other species as form to matter. As a result, because the commanded acts are *per accidens* ordered to reverence, they are also *per accidens* ordered to the glory of God. Thus, in a commanded act of religion, reverence is the mediate or remote *finis operantis*, and divine glory is the ultimate *finis operantis*.

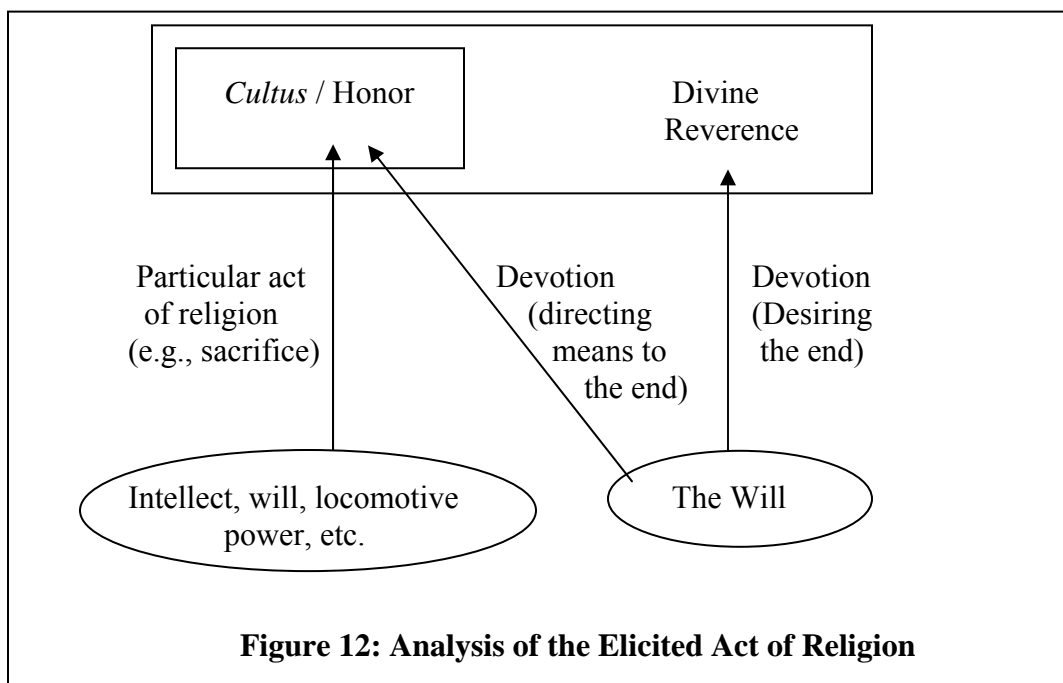
### C. THE END OF THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION: A SYNOPTIC VIEW

From the foregoing, it is evident that the honor, (natural) reverence, and glory of God are part of the finality of religion. Now we are prepared to fit all of the elements of the religious act that I have discussed within the context of my analysis of the human act as a whole. First, we can classify any elicited act of religion (except devotion) as an “exterior” act (even though it may be a spiritual reality) or as an act *commanded* by the will. Its object or immediate and proximate *finis operis* is *cultus* or honor. It is elicited by

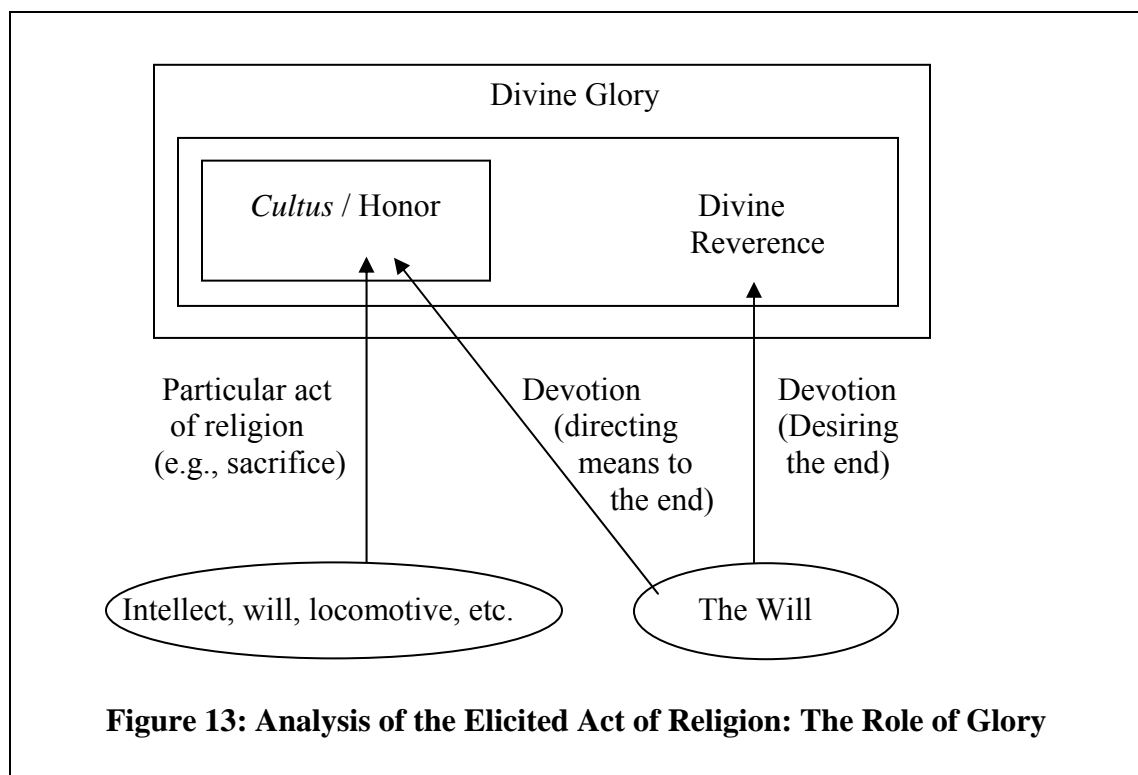
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<sup>100</sup> *ST II-II.81.4 ad 2*: [O]mnia, secundum quod in gloriam Dei fiunt, pertinent ad religionem non quasi ad elicentem, sed quasi ad imperantem.

different powers and commanded by the will's act of devotion. In addition, we need to classify the act of devotion itself, which is the desire to order the act of *cultus* to the reverence of God, as being the properly interior act of the will in any religious act. Because devotion aims to do an act of *cultus* or honor for the sake of divine reverence, it follows that the object of devotion is twofold: materially, it is the act of *cultus* itself; formally, it is divine reverence. Because honor, the object, is *per se* ordered to reverence, which is the end, it follows that reverence provides the generic specification for the act, whereas honor provides the comparatively determinate specification. Reverence is the mediate or remote *finis operis* (and *finis operantis*). So far, then, we can produce the following representation of an elicited act of religion:



This is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of the human act that I discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. However, we have one more element to include. As I said in the previous subsection, in an elicited act of the virtue of religion, not only is there a proximate *finis operis* (namely, the honor of God), and a mediate *finis operis* (the reverence of God); there is also an ultimate *finis operis*: the glory of God. All three are *finis operis* (as well as *finis operantis*). Thus, the act of giving God honor will be a species under the genus of divine reverence, which, in turn, will be a species of the genus divine glory. We could illustrate the full picture, then, in the following manner:

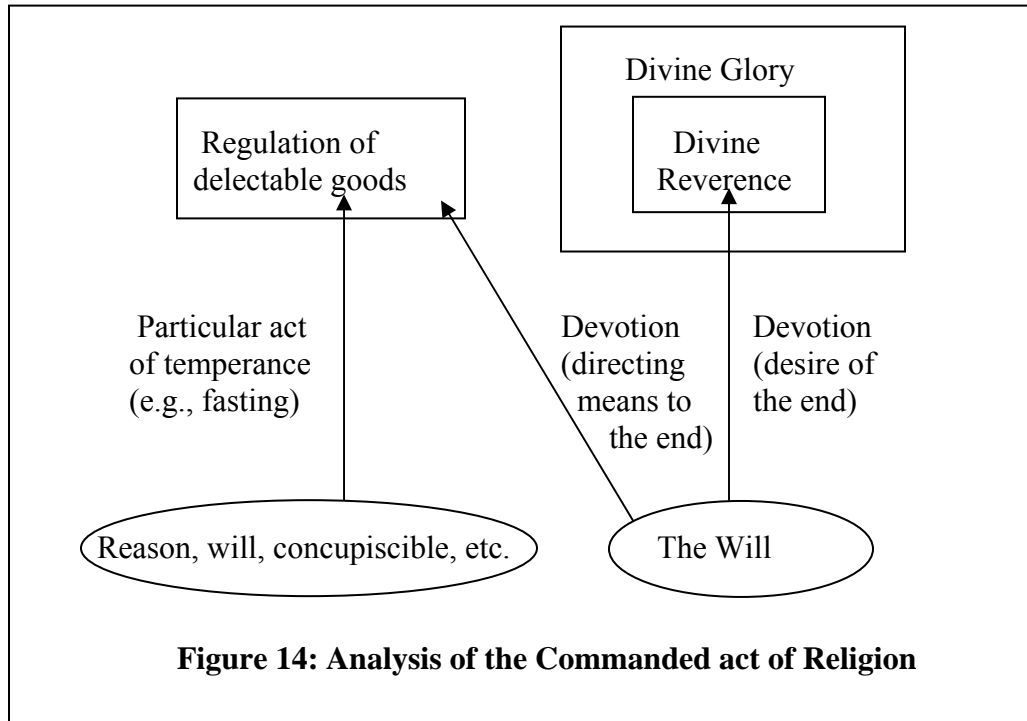


In this particular example, the act of sacrifice is the commanded or exterior act. Its formal object, like that of all elicited acts of religion, is *cultus*; its immediate *finis operis*

is the honor of God. *Cultus*/honor is what makes the particular act belong to the species “religion.” The desire of divine reverence as the end is the interior act. Now, as I explained in Chapter 4, reiterating ST I-II.12.4, the motion of the will towards the end is the same as its motion towards the means insofar as end is the *ratio volendi* of the means. This act moves or commands the exterior act to be done for the sake of the end. In the context of religion, this commanding act is devotion, which is the will to do certain things (the object) for the sake of divine reverence (end). Therefore, the material object of devotion is *cultus*, but its formal object is divine reverence. In addition, divine reverence itself is ordered to the glory of God, which relates to the other two *finis operis* as something formal does to something material.

Now, recall that in an act in which the means is *per se* ordered to the end, the species that are derived from the object and from the end are not identical. Rather, each brings a different “goodness” to the act: the object, *cultus*, provides a more material and particular goodness; the end, reverence, provides a more formal and universal goodness. Thus, because honor is ordered *per se* to divine reverence, and reverence is ordered *per se* to divine glory, each gives to the next a more specific determination for the act. Accordingly, we can say that the act is specifically an act of *cultus*, *more generally* an act of reverence, and *most generally* an act of divine glory. That is to say, its *summum genus* is the glory of God, its subaltern genus is reverence, and its *species specialissima* is religion. *Cultus* is a specific way of doing something for the sake of divine reverence. Divine reverence is also a specific way of glorifying God.

In the case of the commanded acts, however, the act is not an act of honor, but has only a *per accidens* order to reverence. Reverence, however, is still *per se* ordered to divine glory:



The exterior act of fasting is a complex act elicited by multiple powers. Its object is the regulation of delectable goods, which is common to all acts of temperance, and which gives them their species.<sup>101</sup> Such a regulation of the appetite is also the *finis operis* of temperance, the good to which the act is ordered *per se*. Here, however, the act of temperance is additionally commanded by the virtue of religion; that is, it is being ordered (*per accidens*) by the will's act of devotion to the end of divine reverence and, ultimately, to divine glory.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. *ST I-II.63.4c*: [T]emperantiae obiectum est bonum delectabilium in concupiscentiis tactus.

## D. THESES CONFIRMED

Now we have the conceptual tools to understand Aquinas' solution to the problem of the finality of religion. The theses that I proposed at the beginning of the study can now be seen to follow from the application of the general discussion of the human act to the context of religion discussed above.

### 1. First Thesis: The Coherence of the Finality Claims

The synoptic presentation of the ends of religion allows us to make sense out of Aquinas' seemingly disparate claims regarding the roles of "honor," "reverence," and "glory" in the finality of religion, which, in the Standard Thomistic Account, were lumped together into roughly equivalent claims under the category of *finis cuius* (or *causa finalis*). It is now evident that Aquinas is not making equivalent claims when he says that the end of religion is the *honor* of God, the *reverence* of God, the *glory* of God, and even God *himself*. On the one hand, when he says that the *honor* of God is the end of the virtue of religion, he means that it is the immediate *finis operis* of its *elicited* acts. On the other hand, when he says the end of the virtue of religion is divine reverence or glory, he means that these, and not *honor*, are the *fines operantis* of all the acts of that virtue, both elicited and commanded. The elicited acts are *per se* ordered to divine honor, reverence, and glory, while the commanded acts are ordered, not to honor, but only to reverence and glory, and to these only *per accidens*. Moreover, when he says that God himself is the end of religion, he only means that he is the *finis cuius* (the thing itself that

is enjoyed), not the *finis quo* (the act of enjoyment itself). The honor, reverence, and glory of God are the *finis quo*.

## 2. Second Thesis: The Divine Formality of the Acts of *Cultus*

In the ultimate analysis, Aquinas' solution consists in the claim that religion materially perfects humans, but is sought formally as an act done for God's sake. I said that in every act the end is formal with respect to the object. That is to say, in every particular act, the *finis operantis* plays a primary role in the act's moral specification insofar as it is the *ratio volendi* of (the formality under which we will) the object. This fact ultimately means that the *finis cuius* (the thing enjoyed) of the virtue of religion, God, is the formality under which we will the object of the same virtue, *cultus*. Therefore, although the object of an act of religion is not God, but a created act, for example, adoration, sacrifice, etc., the latter is seen under the formality of God and, hence, is ordered to him as to an end. As I have pointed out before, we do not bow our bodies in adoration because such physical activity is good in itself, but because it is seen as an acknowledgement and manifestation of God's excellence. Priests of certain religions, for example ancient Judaism, did not kill animals as a sacrifice to God because such physical activity is good in itself—in fact, the killing of a victim is a natural evil<sup>102</sup>—but because they are seen through a divine formality, as being done for God. Even the commanded

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<sup>102</sup> Animal killing is a natural evil—though not necessarily a moral evil—in much the same way as blindness is a natural evil—but not a moral evil. Cf. *ST* I-II.18.1; 8 ad 2. Morally considered, killing an animal must be an indifferent species of human act for Aquinas, and thus the good end of offering a sacrifice to God can turn that object into a morally good action. If killing an animal were intrinsically a moral evil, then no good end—even offering God a sacrifice—could morally justify that evil object. Cf. *ST* I-II.18.8c & 9c.



acts of religion—for example, fasting, almsgiving, martyrdom, et cetera—which are good in themselves insofar as they are acts of other virtues, are given an additional, specifically religious goodness; that is, an additional divine formality. They are seen as something related to God. Hence, although we cannot perfect God himself, or increase his intrinsic glory (his immutable Divine Nature), nonetheless we can carry out certain actions that bring about a perfection in us and in the universe and regard these actions under a divine formality. We do not directly perfect God, but we can perfect certain things that are thought of as pertaining to God. Thus, ultimately all acts of religion are done for God’s sake, but this does not mean that they are done for the sake of God’s utility. Rather, “a thing is not offered to God on account of his utility, but on account of his glory . . . .”<sup>103</sup>

## E. CONCLUSION

In sum, the ultimate *finis quo* of religion is neither the individual religious agent, nor God himself; rather it is a *tertium quid*: God’s honor, reverence, and ultimately his glory. As such, this *tertium quid* possesses aspects of both elements of the original dichotomy expressed in the statement of the problem (Chapter 1). God’s glory is materially the whole of which the worshipper is a part and formally a manifestation of God himself, that is, of God’s intrinsic glory. This is the unifying core of all of Aquinas’ claims on the finality of worship.

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<sup>103</sup> *ST II-II.81.6 ad 2*: Deo autem non exhibetur aliquid propter eius utilitatem, sed propter eius gloriam . . . .

### EPILOGUE: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AQUINAS' SOLUTION

The picture that emerges at this point is that Aquinas' account of the object and finality of religion arises from and fits perfectly within his doctrine on the human act in general. Aquinas' account explains the relationship between the interior and exterior acts of religion, between its commanded and elicited acts, and between its different ends (namely, honor, reverence, and glory). However, it is incomplete in one respect: it fails to explain how the three *finis quo* of religion—and, therefore, how all of religion—are something good to begin with. Are they good because they perfect humans, or for some other reason? This issue is the crux of our study and should be addressed if a full account of the finality of religion is to be given.

Aquinas' answer to the ultimate finality of religion is founded on the Augustinian doctrine on the three genera of “goods.” Augustine says that goodness consists in three things: “mode,” “form,” and “order:”

For all things, in proportion as they are more measured, formed, and ordered, by so much assuredly do they possess more good. But, in proportion as they are less measured, formed, and ordered, they are less good. These three things, therefore, measure, form, and order—not to speak of innumerable other things that are shown to pertain to these three—these three things, therefore, measure, form, order, are as it were generic goods in things made by God, whether in spirit or in body.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *De natura boni* 3 (PL 42, 553): Omnia enim quanto magis moderata, speciosa, ordinata sunt, tanto magis utique bona sunt; quanto autem minus moderata, minus speciosa, minus ordinata sunt, minus bona sunt. Haec itaque tria, modus, species et ordo, ut de innumerabilibus taceam quae ad ista tria pertinere monstrantur, haec ergo tria, modus, species, ordo, tamquam generalia bona sunt in rebus a Deo factis, sive in spiritu, sive in corpore.

In *ST I.5.5*, St. Thomas develops this doctrine in a systematic fashion. He tells us that, for a thing to be perfect, it must have not only form, but also all that the form requires and all that follows from that form. Accordingly, “mode” signifies the type of good that is presupposed by the form of a thing, its determination through or commensuration to, for example, material or efficient principles; “species” signifies the form itself; and “order” signifies what follows from it:

Everything is said to be good insofar as it is perfect; for in that way it is desirable (as shown above *ST I.1.3*). Now a thing is said to be perfect if it lacks nothing according to the mode of its perfection. Now, since everything is what it is by its form (and since the form presupposes certain things, and from the form certain things necessarily follow), in order for a thing to be perfect and good it must have a form, together with all that precedes and follows upon that form. Now the form presupposes determination or commensuration of its principles, whether material or efficient, and this is signified by the mode: hence, it is said that the measure marks the mode. Now, the form itself is signified by the species; for everything is placed in its species by its form. Hence the number is said to give the species, for definitions signifying species are like numbers, according to the Philosopher (*Metaphysics* 10); for as a unit added to, or taken from a number, changes its species, so a difference added to, or taken from a definition, changes its species. Further, upon the form follows an inclination to the end, or to an action, or something of the sort; for everything, insofar as it is in act, acts and tends towards that which is in accordance with its form; and this belongs to weight and order. Hence, the essence of goodness, insofar as it consists in perfection, consists also in mode, species, and order.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *ST I.5.5c*: [U]numquodque dicitur bonum, in quantum est perfectum, sic enim est appetibile, ut supra dictum est. Perfectum autem dicitur, cui nihil deest secundum modum suae perfectionis. Cum autem unumquodque sit id quod est, per suam formam; forma autem praesupponit quaedam, et quaedam ad ipsam ex necessitate consequuntur; ad hoc quod aliquid sit perfectum et bonum, necesse est quod formam habeat, et ea quae praeexiguntur ad eam, et ea quae consequuntur ad ipsam. Praeexigitur autem ad formam determinatio sive commensuratio principiorum, seu materialium, seu efficientium ipsam, et hoc significatur per modum, unde dicitur quod mensura modum praefigit. Ipsa autem

Aquinas utilizes this doctrine in *ST II-II.81.2* to explain that religion is a virtue. There, he argues that religion is a virtue whose good lies in the genus of “order.”

As stated above (*ST II-II.58.3*; *ST I-II.55.3 & 4*) “a virtue is that which makes its possessor good, and his act good likewise.” Hence we must say that every good act belongs to a virtue. Now it is evident that to render anyone his due has the aspect of good, since by rendering someone his due, one is also placed in a suitable relation to him as though “fittingly ordered to” him. Now, order comes under the aspect of good, just as mode and species, according to Augustine (*De natura boni* 3). Since then it belongs to religion to pay due honor to someone, namely, to God, it is evident that religion is a virtue.<sup>3</sup>

This explanation is very revealing. Religion is good because it places humans in a suitable order with respect to God.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the good of religion transcends a person’s intrinsic perfection, that is, the perfection that depends on his or her having the adequate matter and form (“mode” and “species”). In other words, the acts of religion are good, not because they perfect humans intrinsically, but because through them humans acquire a

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forma significatur per speciem, quia per formam unumquodque in specie constituitur. Et propter hoc dicitur quod numerus speciem praebet, quia definitiones significantes speciem sunt sicut numeri, secundum philosophum in VIII Metaphys.; sicut enim unitas addita vel subtracta variat speciem numeri, ita in definitionibus differentia apposita vel subtracta. Ad formam autem consequitur inclinatio ad finem, aut ad actionem, aut ad aliquid huiusmodi, quia unumquodque, in quantum est actu, agit, et tendit in id quod sibi convenit secundum suam formam. Et hoc pertinet ad pondus et ordinem. Unde ratio boni, secundum quod consistit in perfectione, consistit etiam in modo, specie et ordine.

<sup>3</sup> *ST II-II.81.2c*: [S]icut supra dictum est, *virtus est quae bonum facit habentem et opus eius bonum reddit*. Et ideo necesse est dicere omnem actum bonum ad virtutem pertinere. Manifestum est autem quod reddere debitum alicui habet rationem boni, quia per hoc quod aliquis alteri debitum reddit, etiam constituitur in proportionem convenienti respectu ipsius, quasi convenienter ordinatus ad ipsum; ordo autem ad rationem boni pertinet, sicut et modus et species, ut per Augustinum patet, in libro de natura boni. Cum igitur ad religionem pertineat reddere honorem debitum alicui, scilicet Deo, manifestum est quod religio virtus est.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *ST II-II.81.1*: [R]eligio proprie importat ordinem ad Deum.

suitable order in relation to God. That is to say, through religion, humans give to God honor and reverence, which are his due, and—as the text above reads—“by rendering someone his due, one is also placed in a suitable relation to him as though fittingly ordered to him.” This idea of someone’s being ordered to God is particularly reminiscent of the text of *ST II-II.81.7c*, where Aquinas speaks of the finality of the exterior acts of religion. It is worthwhile to quote it again in full:

[W]e show reverence and honor to God, not on account of [God] himself, who is in himself full of glory, and to whom nothing can be added by a creature, but on account of ourselves; because, that is, through the fact that we revere and honor God, our mind is subjected to him—and its perfection consists in this; for any thing is perfected through the fact that it is subjected to its superior, just as the body through the fact that it is vivified by the soul, and air through the fact that it is illumined by the Sun. Now the human mind, in order to be united to God, needs to be guided by the sensible things, since “invisible things . . . are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,” as the Apostle says (Romans 1:20). Hence in divine *cultus* it is necessary to make use of corporeal things, that man’s mind may be aroused thereby, as by signs, to the spiritual acts by means of which he is united to God. Therefore, religion has certain interior acts that are, as it were, primary and pertaining *per se* to religion and external acts that are, as it were, secondary, and ordered to the interior acts.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *ST II-II.81.7c*: Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibemus non propter ipsum, qui in seipso est gloria plenus, cui nihil a creatura adiici potest, sed propter nos, quia videlicet per hoc quod Deum reveremur et honoramus, mens nostra ei subiicitur, et in hoc eius perfectio consistit; quaelibet enim res perficitur per hoc quod subditur suo superiori, sicut corpus per hoc quod vivificatur ab anima, et aer per hoc quod illuminatur a sole. Mens autem humana indiget ad hoc quod coniungatur Deo, sensibilibus manuductione, quia invisibilia per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur, ut apostolus dicit, ad Rom. Et ideo in divino cultu necesse est aliquibus corporalibus uti, ut eis, quasi signis quibusdam, mens hominis excitetur ad spirituales actus, quibus Deo coniungitur. Et ideo religio habet quidem interiores actus quasi principales et per se ad religionem pertinentes, exteriores vero actus quasi secundarios, et ad interiores actus ordinatos.

We must read these last two texts (Articles 2 and 7) together. Article 2 is the interpretive key for Article 7. In Article 7, Aquinas is saying that the end of the exterior acts of religion is to arouse the mind to the spiritual acts, whereby the mind is subjected and united to God. This subjection, he says, is that in which a person's (intrinsic) perfection consists, for a thing is perfected insofar as it is subjected to its superior. In Article 2, however, he is telling us that the acts of religion are good because, beyond increasing a person's intrinsic perfection, they order persons to God. Hence, we see an interplay between the intrinsic perfection of humans and their being ordered to God. This interplay was seen also in general terms in Aquinas' explanation of the Aristotelian distinction between the *finis quo* and the *finis cuius*, which I discussed briefly in the first chapter with reference to Cajetan's solution. To quote that text again:

Good, inasmuch as it is the end or goal of a thing, is twofold. For an end is extrinsic to the thing ordained to it, as when we say that a place is the end of something that is moved locally. Or it is intrinsic, as a form is the end of the process of generation or alteration; and a form already acquired is a kind of intrinsic good of the thing whose form it is.<sup>6</sup>

Within the specific context of religion, Aquinas expresses this interplay in terms of our utility and God's glory: "Something is shown to God, not on account of his utility, but on account of his glory, and our utility."<sup>7</sup> This interplay is also the basis of Cajetan's

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<sup>6</sup> *InMet* 12.9, lect. 12, n. 2627: Bonum enim, secundum quod est finis alicuius, est duplex. Est enim finis extrinsecus ab eo quod est ad finem, sicut si dicimus locum esse finem eius quod movetur ad locum. Est etiam finis intra, sicut forma finis generationis et alterationis, et forma iam adepta, est quoddam bonum intrinsecum eius, cuius est forma.

<sup>7</sup> *ST* II-II.81.6 ad 2: "Deo autem non exhibetur aliquid propter eius utilitatem, sed propter eius gloriam, nostram autem utilitatem." Aquinas seems to admit that religion has secondary ends, which pertain to human utility rather than to a human being's order to

conclusion that, in religion, we are the “term of utility” (*terminum utilitatis = finis quo*) and God is the “end” (*finis*) or “final cause” (*causa finalis = finis cuius*).<sup>8</sup>

The problem with the Standard Thomistic Account is that it reduces the *finis cuius* to a mere *terminus*, or endpoint. That is to say, for the proponents of this position, God is simply the *terminus*, or object “to which” (*objectum cui*), of our worship.<sup>9</sup> In this view, God is that which religion “aims at” or is “directed to,” but in no way is he the motivation or that on account of which, or for the sake of which (*propter quod*), it is done. Rather, the motivation, that for the sake of which, worship is done is the worshipper’s own utility. This view is entirely based on the text *ST II-II.81.7c*, where Aquinas says that “[W]e show reverence and honor to God, not on account of [God] himself, who is in himself full of glory, and to whom nothing can be added by a creature, but on account of ourselves.”<sup>10</sup> However, I argue that, for Aquinas, the ultimate end of religion is God’s glory, not human utility. That is to say, the primary end is the extrinsic end, the *finis*

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God; cf. *ST II-II.92.2c*: “Et hoc est aliud superstitionis genus, quod in multas species dividitur, secundum diversos fines divini cultus ordinatur enim, primo, divinus cultus ad reverentiam Deo exhibendam. Et secundum hoc, prima species huius generis est idololatria, quae divinam reverentiam indebite exhibet creaturae. Secundo, ordinatur ad hoc quod homo instruatur a Deo, quem colit. Et ad hoc pertinet superstitio divinatoria, quae Daemones consulit per aliqua pacta cum eis inita, tacita vel expressa. Tertio, ordinatur divinus cultus ad quandam directionem humanorum actuum secundum instituta Dei, qui colitur.”

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Cajetan, *InST II-II.81.7*: Cum dicitur, ‘Deo honorem exhibemus non propter seipsum’, ly ‘propter’ non denotat causam finalem, sed terminum utilitatis. Constat namque quod colimus Deum propter seipsum ut finem . . . sed non propter ipsius Dei, sed nostri utilitatem, ita quod nec augmentum gloriae nec quodcumque aliud Deo ex nostro cultu accrescere potest, de quo scriptum est: ‘bonorum nostrorum non indiges’.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Billuart, *Summa sancti Thomae*, T. IV, p. 541: Sic se habet religio ad Deum, sicut justitia, cuius est pars, ad proximum . . . . Objectum vero cui [justitiae], seu potius finis cui, est ipsa persona cui redditur aequale debitum . . . . Pariformiter . . . objectum tandem cui [religionis] ipse Deus . . . .

<sup>10</sup> *ST II-II.81.7c*: Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibemus non propter ipsum, qui in seipso est gloria plenus, cui nihil a creatura adiici potest, sed propter nos.

*cuius*, not the intrinsic end or *finis quo*. The primacy of the *finis cuius* is best understood within the context of the teleology of the entire universe. Aquinas teaches that the ultimate end of the universe is extrinsic, not intrinsic, to the universe itself. The ultimate end of all creation is God.

As the end of a thing corresponds to its beginning, it is not possible to be ignorant of the end of things if we know their beginning. Therefore, since the beginning of all things is something outside the universe, namely, God, it is clear from what has been expounded above (*ST* I.44.1 & 2), that we must conclude that the end of all things is some extrinsic good. This can be proved by reason. For it is clear that good has the nature of an end. Hence, a particular end of a thing consists in some particular good; whereas the universal end of all things is a certain universal good. But the universal good is in itself and by virtue of its essence, which is the very essence of goodness; whereas a particular good is good by participation. Now it is manifest that in the whole universe of creatures, nothing is good that is not good by participation. Hence that good which is the end of the whole universe must be what is extrinsic to the entire universe.<sup>11</sup>

A good existing in the universe, namely, the order of the universe, is an end thereof; this, however, is not its ultimate end, but is ordered to the extrinsic good as to the end: thus the order in an army is ordered to the general, as stated in the twelfth book of the *Metaphysics*.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *ST* I.103.2c: [C]um finis respondeat principio, non potest fieri ut, principio cognito, quid sit rerum finis ignoretur. Cum igitur principium rerum sit aliquid extrinsecum a toto universo, scilicet Deus, ut ex supra dictis patet; necesse est quod etiam finis rerum sit quoddam bonum extrinsecum. Et hoc ratione apparet. Manifestum est enim quod bonum habet rationem finis. Unde finis particularis alicuius rei est quoddam bonum particulare, finis autem universalis rerum omnium est quoddam bonum universale. Bonum autem universale est quod est per se et per suam essentiam bonum, quod est ipsa essentia bonitatis, bonum autem particulare est quod est participative bonum. Manifestum est autem quod in tota universitate creaturarum nullum est bonum quod non sit participative bonum. Unde illud bonum quod est finis totius universi, oportet quod sit extrinsecum a toto universo.

<sup>12</sup> *ST* I.103.2 ad 3: [F]inis quidem universi est aliquod bonum in ipso existens, scilicet ordo ipsius universi, hoc autem bonum non est ultimus finis, sed ordinatur ad bonum extrinsecum ut ad ultimum finem; sicut etiam ordo exercitus ordinatur ad ducem,



The universe can be seen as being one, whole entity with respect to God's causality. That is to say, God can be seen as the Primary Cause or Agent (allowing, of course, for the secondary causality of creatures) and his creation can be seen as his act and effect. In this way, then, the existence and perfection of the universe is the *finis operis* of the act of creation. However, the end of the Primary Agent, God's *finis operantis*, is the manifestation of his goodness.

Now, Aquinas will argue that since the end of the thing being acted upon is the same as that of the agent (for what the agent intends to impress is what the thing acted upon receives), the end of the universe is God's own end as agent. In this case, then, the *finis operis* and the *finis operantis* coincide in the same subject. The manifestation of God's goodness just is the perfection of the universe; there is no dichotomy. They are different *rationes*, or aspects, of the same entity. God creates the universe, not that he

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ut dicitur in XII Metaphys. Cf. *InMet* 12.10, lect. 12, nn. 2629-31: Dicit ergo primo, quod universum habet utroque modo bonum et finem. Est enim aliquod bonum separatum, quod est primum movens, ex quo dependet caelum et tota natura, sicut ex fine et bono appetibili, ut ostensum est. Et, quia omnia, quorum unum est finis, oportet quod in ordine ad finem convenient, necesse est, quod in partibus universi ordo aliquis inveniatur; et sic universum habet et bonum separatum, et bonum ordinis. Sicut videmus in exercitu: nam bonum exercitus est et in ipso ordine exercitus, et in duce, qui exercitui praesidet: sed magis est bonum exercitus in duce, quam in ordine: quia finis potior est in bonitate his quae sunt ad finem: ordo autem exercitus est propter bonum ducis adimplendum, scilicet ducis voluntatem in victoriae consecutionem; non autem e converso, bonum ducis est propter bonum ordinis. Et, quia ratio eorum quae sunt ad finem, sumitur ex fine, ideo necesse est quod non solum ordo exercitus sit propter ducem, sed etiam quod a duce sit ordo exercitus, cum ordo exercitus sit propter ducem. Ita etiam bonum separatum, quod est primum movens, est melius bonum bono ordinis, quod est in universo. Totus enim ordo universi est propter primum moventem, ut scilicet explicatur in universo ordinato id quod est in intellectu et voluntate primi moventis. Et sic oportet, quod a primo movente sit tota ordinatio universi.

may obtain a good from it, but that creatures may obtain, and thus manifest, his Goodness.<sup>13</sup>

Every agent acts for an end. Otherwise, one thing would not follow more than another from the action of an agent, unless it were by chance. Now the end of the agent and of the thing being acted upon considered as such are the same, but in different ways. For the impression that the agent “aims” to produce, and that the thing being acted upon “aims” to receive, are one and the same. Certain things, however, simultaneously both act and are acted upon: these are imperfect agents, and to these it belongs, even in acting, to “aim” to acquire something. But, it does not belong to the first agent, who is agent only, to act for the acquisition of some end. He aims only to communicate his perfection, which is his goodness. And every creature “aims” to attain its own perfection, which is the likeness of the divine perfection and goodness. Therefore, the divine goodness is in this way the end of all things.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *SCG* III.18.4-5: Si aliquid agat propter rem aliquam iam existentem, et per eius actionem aliquid constituatur, oportet quod rei propter quam agit aliquid acquiratur ex actione agentis: sicut si milites pugnant propter ducem, cui acquiritur victoria, quam milites suis actionibus causant. Deo autem non potest aliquid acquiri ex actione cuiuslibet rei: est enim sua bonitas omnino perfecta, ut in primo libro ostensum est. Relinquitur igitur quod Deus sit finis rerum, non sicut aliquid constitutum aut effectum a rebus, neque ita quod aliquid ei a rebus acquiratur, sed hoc solo modo, quia ipse rebus acquiritur. Item. Oportet quod eo modo effectus tendat in finem quo agens propter finem agit. Deus autem qui est primum agens omnium rerum, non sic agit quasi sua actione aliquid acquirat, sed quasi sua actione aliquid largiatur: quia non est in potentia ut aliquid acquirere possit, sed solum in actu perfecto, ex quo potest elargiri. Res igitur non ordinantur in Deum sicut in finem cui aliquid acquiratur, sed ut ab ipso ipsummet suo modo consequantur, cum ipsemet sit finis.

<sup>14</sup> *ST* I.44.4c: [O]mne agens agit propter finem, alioquin ex actione agentis non magis sequeretur hoc quam illud, nisi a casu. Est autem idem finis agentis et patientis, in quantum huiusmodi, sed aliter et aliter, unum enim et idem est quod agens intendit imprimere, et quod patiens intendit recipere. Sunt autem quaedam quae simul agunt et patiuntur, quae sunt agentia imperfecta, et his convenit quod etiam in agendo intendant aliquid acquirere. Sed primo agenti, qui est agens tantum, non convenit agere propter acquisitionem alicuius finis; sed intendit solum communicare suam perfectionem, quae est eius bonitas. Et unaquaeque creatura intendit consequi suam perfectionem, quae est similitudo perfectionis et bonitatis divinae. Sic ergo divina bonitas est finis rerum omnium.

However, there is a sense in which the divine *finis operantis* is still primary: the goodness of the *finis operis* is reducible to that of the *finis operantis* insofar as the former is done for the sake of the latter<sup>15</sup>; the *finis operantis* is the *ratio*, or aspect, under which the *finis operis* is sought. As a result, the proper action of a creature is not without qualification its ultimate end. “A corporeal creature can be considered as made either for the sake of its proper act, or for other creatures, or for the whole universe, or for the glory of God.”<sup>16</sup>

The proper action of the creature is, thus, ordered to the perfection of the universe as a whole, which in turn is ordered to the glory of God as to an extrinsic end:

Now if we wish to assign an end to any whole, and to the parts of that whole, we shall find, first, that each and every part exists for the sake of its proper act, as the eye for the act of seeing; second, that less honorable parts exist for the more honorable, as the senses for the intellect, the lungs for the heart; and, third, that all parts are for the perfection of the whole, as the matter for the form, since the parts are, as it were, the matter of the whole. Furthermore, the whole man is on account of an extrinsic end, that end being the fruition of God. So, therefore, in the parts of the universe also every creature exists for its own proper act and perfection, and the less noble for the nobler, as those creatures that are less noble than man exist for the sake of man, whilst each and every creature exists for the perfection of the entire universe. Ultimately, the entire universe, with all its parts, is ordered towards God as its end, insofar as, in them, through a certain imitation, the divine goodness is represented, to the glory of God.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Cf. II *Sent* d. 1, q. 2, a. 1c: [F]inis operis semper reducitur in finem operantis.

<sup>16</sup> *ST* I.70.2c: [C]reatura aliqua corporalis potest dici esse facta vel propter actum proprium, vel propter aliam creaturam, vel propter totum universum, vel propter gloriam Dei.

<sup>17</sup> *ST* I.65.2c: Si autem alicuius totius et partium eius velimus finem assignare, inveniemus primo quidem, quod singulae partes sunt propter suos actus; sicut oculus ad videndum. Secundo vero, quod pars ignobilior est propter nobiliorem; sicut sensus propter intellectum, et pulmo propter cor. Tertio vero, omnes partes sunt propter perfectionem totius, sicut et materia propter formam, partes enim sunt quasi materia totius. Ulterius autem, totus homo est propter aliquem finem extrinsecum, puta ut fruatur

Hence, the ultimate end of all corporeal things is God—as the text above reads—“insofar as, in them, through a certain imitation, the divine goodness is represented, to the glory of God.” Observe that Aquinas does not say that the end of all things is their intrinsic imitation of God: the creaturely representation of God’s goodness is not the ultimate end. Rather, the creaturely representation is ordered to the ultimate end, which is the extrinsic glory of God. As we saw above, the extrinsic glory of God consists in human beings’ recognizing God’s excellence. Therefore, the end of the representation of the divine goodness in the universe is human beings’ recognition of the divine excellence.<sup>18</sup> This recognition is human beings’ special way of attaining God as an end, which is not shared by other creatures.<sup>19</sup> Human beings’ enjoyment of the knowledge of the divine goodness is the *finis quo*; God himself is the *finis cuius*.

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Deo. Sic igitur et in partibus universi, unaquaeque creatura est propter suum proprium actum et perfectionem. Secundo autem, creaturae ignobiliores sunt propter nobiliores sicut creaturae quae sunt infra hominem, sunt propter hominem. Ulterius autem, singulae creaturae sunt propter perfectionem totius universi. Ulterius autem, totum universum, cum singulis suis partibus, ordinatur in Deum sicut in finem, in quantum in eis per quamdam imitationem divina bonitas repraesentatur ad gloriam Dei, quamvis creaturae rationales speciali quodam modo supra hoc habeant finem Deum, quem attingere possunt sua operatione, cognoscendo et amando. Et sic patet quod divina bonitas est finis omnium corporalium.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *QDVirt* 2.7c: Omnes enim creaturae sunt homini via ad tendendum in beatitudinem; et iterum omnes creaturae ordinantur ad gloriam Dei, in quantum in eis divina bonitas manifestatur.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. II *Sent* d. 1, q. 2, a. 2c: [O]mnis appetitus naturae vel voluntatis tendit in assimilationem divinae bonitatis . . . . Sed tamen ipsamet divina bonitas potest acquiri a creatura rationali ut perfectio quae est objectum operationis, in quantum rationalis creatura possibilis est ad videndum et amandum Deum. Et ideo singulari modo Deus est finis in quem tendit creatura rationalis praeter modum communem quo tendit in ipsum omnis creatura, in quantum scilicet omnis creatura desiderat aliquod bonum, quod est similitudo quaedam divinae bonitatis. Cf. *Ibid.* ad 4: [C]um bonitas Dei sit finis rerum, ad ipsam res diversimode se habent. Ipse enim Deus habet eam perfecte secundum suum esse; unde summe bonus est; et etiam secundum suam operationem, qua perfecte eam cognoscit et amat: unde beatus est, quia beatitudo est operatio perfecta, secundum Philosophum. Creatura autem intellectualis non attingit ad eam secundum suum esse ut

End is twofold, namely, “for which” and “by which,” as the Philosopher says, that is, the thing itself and the use of the thing. Thus, to a miser the end is money, and the acquisition of money. Accordingly, God is indeed the ultimate end of a rational creature, as a thing; but created beatitude is the end, as the use, or rather fruition, of the thing.<sup>20</sup>

As the Philosopher says in *Physics* 2.2 and in *Metaphysics* 5, the end is twofold—the end “for which” (*cuius*) and the end “by which” (*quo*); that is, the thing itself in which is found the aspect of good, and the use or acquisition of that thing. Thus, we say that the end of the movement of a weighty body is either a lower place as “thing,” or to be in a lower place, as “use;” and the end of the miser is money as “thing,” or possession of money as “use.” If, therefore, we speak of man’s last end as of the thing which is the end, thus all other things concur in man’s last end, since God is the last end of man and of all other things. If, however, we speak of man’s last end, as of the acquisition of the end, then irrational creatures do not concur with man in this end. For man and other rational creatures attain to their last end by knowing and loving God: this is not possible to other creatures, which acquire their last end, in so far as they share in the divine likeness, inasmuch as they are, or live, or even know.<sup>21</sup>

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ipsa sit summum bonum, sed secundum operationem intelligendo et amando eam; unde particeps est beatitudinis et non tantum bonitatis divinae. Sed creatura irrationalis accedit ad eam secundum aliquam assimilationem, quamvis non pertingat neque secundum operationem neque secundum esse; unde est particeps bonitatis, sed non beatitudinis.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. *ST* I.26.3 ad 2: [F]inis est duplex, scilicet cuius et quo, ut philosophus dicit, scilicet ipsa res, et usus rei, sicut avaro est finis pecunia, et acquisitio pecuniae. Creaturae igitur rationalis est quidem Deus finis ultimus ut res; beatitudo autem creata ut usus, vel magis fruitio, rei.

<sup>21</sup> *ST* I-II.1.8c: “[S]icut philosophus dicit in II *Physic.* et in V *Metaphys.*, finis dupliciter dicitur, scilicet cuius, et quo, idest ipsa res in qua ratio boni invenitur, et usus sive adeptio illius rei. Sicut si dicamus quod motus corporis gravis finis est vel locus inferior ut res, vel hoc quod est esse in loco inferiori, ut usus, et finis avari est vel pecunia ut res, vel possessio pecuniae ut usus. Si ergo loquamur de ultimo fine hominis quantum ad ipsam rem quae est finis, sic in ultimo fine hominis omnia alia conveniunt, quia Deus est ultimus finis hominis et omnium aliarum rerum. Si autem loquamur de ultimo fine hominis quantum ad consecutionem finis, sic in hoc fine hominis non communicant creaturae irrationales. Nam homo et aliae rationales creaturae consequuntur ultimum finem cognoscendo et amando Deum, quod non competit aliis creaturis, quae adipiscuntur ultimum finem in quantum participant aliquam similitudinem Dei, secundum quod sunt, vel vivunt, vel etiam cognoscunt.” This distinction between God as a human being’s *finis cuius* (the thing itself that is enjoyed) and beatitude as a human being’s *finis quo* (the act of enjoyment itself) is a basic principle in the *Prima secundae*. Cf. *ST* I-

It is evident, then, that human utility forms part of the finality of religion,<sup>22</sup> just as humans themselves form part of the finality of the universe. However, human utility is referred to God as to the end. That is to say, human utility in being aware of the divine excellence derives its specifically religious formality, and hence its moral goodness, from

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II.2.7c: “[F]inis dupliciter dicitur, scilicet ipsa res quam adipisci desideramus; et usus, seu adeptio aut possessio illius rei. Si ergo loquamur de ultimo fine hominis quantum ad ipsam rem quam appetimus sicut ultimum finem, impossibile est quod ultimus finis hominis sit ipsa anima, vel aliquid eius. Ipsa enim anima, in se considerata, est ut in potentia existens, fit enim de potentia sciente actu sciens, et de potentia virtuosa actu virtuosa. Cum autem potentia sit propter actum, sicut propter complementum, impossibile est quod id quod est secundum se in potentia existens, habeat rationem ultimi finis. Unde impossibile est quod ipsa anima sit ultimus finis sui ipsius. Similiter etiam neque aliquid eius, sive sit potentia, sive habitus, sive actus. Bonum enim quod est ultimus finis, est bonum perfectum complens appetitum. Appetitus autem humanus, qui est voluntas, est boni universalis. Quodlibet bonum autem inhaerens ipsi animae, est bonum participatum, et per consequens particulatum. Unde impossibile est quod aliquod eorum sit ultimus finis hominis. Sed si loquamur de ultimo fine hominis quantum ad ipsam adeptionem vel possessionem, seu quemcumque usum ipsius rei quae appetitur ut finis, sic ad ultimum finem pertinet aliquid hominis ex parte animae, quia homo per animam beatitudinem consequitur. Res ergo ipsa quae appetitur ut finis, est id in quo beatitudo consistit, et quod beatum facit, sed huius rei adeptio vocatur beatitudo. Unde dicendum est quod beatitudo est aliquid animae; sed id in quo consistit beatitudo, est aliquid extra animam.” Cf. *ST I-II.3.1c*: “[F]inis dicitur dupliciter. Uno modo, ipsa res quam cupimus adipisci, sicut avaro est finis pecunia. Alio modo, ipsa adeptio vel possessio, seu usus aut fruitio eius rei quae desideratur, sicut si dicatur quod possessio pecuniae est finis avari, et frui re voluptuosa est finis intemperati. Primo ergo modo, ultimus hominis finis est bonum increatum, scilicet Deus, qui solus sua infinita bonitate potest voluntatem hominis perfecte implere. Secundo autem modo, ultimus finis hominis est aliquid creatum in ipso existens, quod nihil est aliud quam adeptio vel fruitio finis ultimi. Ultimus autem finis vocatur beatitudo. Si ergo beatitudo hominis consideretur quantum ad causam vel obiectum, sic est aliquid increatum, si autem consideretur quantum ad ipsam essentiam beatitudinis, sic est aliquid creatum.”

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *ST II-II.92.2c*: Et hoc est aliud superstitionis genus, quod in multas species dividitur, secundum diversos fines divini cultus ordinatur enim, primo, divinus cultus ad reverentiam Deo exhibendam. Et secundum hoc, prima species huius generis est idololatria, quae divinam reverentiam indebite exhibet creaturae. Secundo, ordinatur ad hoc quod homo instruat a Deo, quem colit. Et ad hoc pertinet superstitio divinatoria, quae Daemones consulit per aliqua pacta cum eis inita, tacita vel expressa. Tertio, ordinatur divinus cultus ad quandam directionem humanorum actuum secundum instituta Dei, qui colitur.

the fact that it embodies an ordering of human beings to God.<sup>23</sup> For this reason, the good of religion does not fall within the generic good of “species,” but within that of “order.” As Aquinas tells us in *ST II-II.81.2c*, honor is good because, through it, a human being submits to God and, thus, “by rendering someone his due, one is also placed in a suitable relation to him as though fittingly ordered to him.” A human’s ordering to God is accomplished through one’s subjection and union to God, wherein one’s perfection consists. The order to God is what gives divine honor and reverence, as well as human subjection and union to God, the aspect of good. Therefore, a person’s intrinsic perfection, the *finis quo*, is not without qualification the ultimate end. It is referred to *God*

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. *II Sent* d. 1, q. 2, a. 3c: Respondeo dicendum, quod finis alicujus rei dicitur dupliciter: vel in quem tendit naturaliter, vel ex eo quod ad ipsum sicut ad finem ordinari dicitur, ut utilitatem aliquam consequatur secundum intentionem et ordinem agentis. Utroque autem modo homo finis creaturarum dicitur: et primus quidem ex parte operis, sed secundus ex parte agentis. Differenter tamen homo dicitur finis, et divina bonitas: quia ex parte agentis divina bonitas est finis rerum, sicut ultimum intentum ab agente: sed natura humana non est intenta a Deo quasi movens voluntatem ejus, sed sicut ad cujus utilitatem est ordinatus effectus ejus. Ipse enim duplicem ordinem in universo instituit; principalem scilicet, et secundarium. Principalis est secundum quod res ordinantur in ipsum; et secundarius est secundum quod una juvat aliam in perveniendo ad similitudinem divinam; unde dicitur in *12 Metaph.*, quod ordo partium universi ad invicem est propter illum ordinem qui est in bonum ultimum, et sic dicitur esse propter aliud omne illud ex quo provenit ei utilitas. Sed hoc contingit dupliciter; aut ita quod illud ex quo provenit alicui utilitas, non habeat participationem divinae bonitatis nisi secundum ordinem ejus ad hoc cui est utile, sicut sunt partes ad totum, et accidentia ad subjectum, quae non habent esse absolutum, sed solum in altero: et talia non essent nec fierent, nisi aliud esset, cui ex eis provenit utilitas. Sed quaedam sunt quae habent participationem divinae bonitatis absolutam, ex qua provenit aliqua utilitas alicui rei: et talia essent etiam si illud cui provenit ex eis utilitas non foret: et per hunc modum dicitur, quod angeli et omnes creaturae propter hominem a Deo factae sunt; et sic etiam homo factus est propter reparationem ruinae angelicae: quia haec utilitas consecuta est et a Deo praevisa et ordinata. Similiter ex parte operis ipsae creaturae tendunt in divinam bonitatem sicut in illud cui per se assimilari intendunt. Sed quia optimo assimilatur aliquid per hoc quod simile fit meliori se, ideo omnis creatura corporalis tendit in assimilationem creaturae intellectualis quantum potest, quae altiori modo divinam bonitatem consequitur, et propter hoc etiam forma humana, scilicet anima rationalis, dicitur esse finis ultimus intentus a natura inferiori, ut in *2 De anima* dicitur.

as to the ultimate end, the *finis cuius*.<sup>24</sup> As Aquinas explains in his exposition on the Lord's Prayer in *ST II-II.83.9c*, we primarily will God's glory, and only secondarily do we will to enjoy it:

Thus, it is evident that the first thing to be the object of our desire is the end, and afterwards whatever is directed to the end. Now our end is God, towards whom our affections tend in two ways: first, by our willing the glory of God, secondly, by willing to enjoy his glory. The first belongs to the love whereby we love God in himself, while the second belongs to the love whereby we love ourselves in God. Hence the first petition [of the Lord's Prayer] is expressed thus: "Hallowed be Thy name," and the second thus: "Thy kingdom come," by which we ask to come to the glory of his kingdom.<sup>25</sup>

Therefore, in the ultimate analysis, Aquinas' solution to the problem of the finality of religion goes beyond what is provided for given the conceptual framework of the Standard Thomistic Account. The proponents of the latter reduce God, as *finis cuius*,

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<sup>24</sup> In a sense, the glory of God is the ultimate end and is not "referred" to an ulterior end; cf. *De Malo* 9.1 ad 4: "Ad quartum dicendum, quod cognoscere divinam bonitatem, est ultimus finis rationalis creaturae, in hoc enim beatitudo consistit: unde gloria Dei non est ad aliquid aliud referenda, sed proprium ipsius Dei est ut gloria eius propter seipsam quaeratur." I do not mean to deny this fact; rather, I only mean that *man's perfection* is referrable to God's extrinsic glory. As I have pointed out earlier, the concept of God's extrinsic glory, although materially consisting in man's perfection, is seen under a *divine formality*. When Aquinas speaks of God's extrinsic glory, he has in mind God as end, not man, despite the fact that humans the subject in which that glory resides.

<sup>25</sup> *ST II-II.83.9c*: Manifestum est autem quod primo cadit in desiderio finis; deinde ea quae sunt ad finem. Finis autem noster Deus est. In quem noster affectus tendit dupliciter, uno quidem modo, prout volumus gloriam Dei; alio modo, secundum quod volumus frui gloria eius. Quorum primum pertinet ad dilectionem qua Deum in seipso diligimus, secundum vero pertinet ad dilectionem qua diligimus nos in Deo. Et ideo prima petitio ponitur, sanctificetur nomen tuum, per quam petimus gloriam Dei. Secunda vero ponitur, adveniat regnum tuum, per quam petimus ad gloriam regni eius pervenire.



to a mere *terminus* or *objectum cui* of worship.<sup>26</sup> The result is that worshiper's utility becomes the real motivation. Aquinas, however, holds fast to the primacy of God as the *finis cuius*.<sup>27</sup> The intrinsic end or *finis quo* is ordered to the extrinsic good as to an end. The ultimate reason why religion is good is that it represents an ordering of humans to God. It is true that divine honor, reverence, and glory are the ends of religion, but only in the sense of *fines quo*. In the truest sense, however—in the sense of *finis cuius*—God alone is the end. That is to say, the *fines quo* of religion are not good because in them consists human perfection, but because they represent an ordering of humans to God, that is, because they are referred to God as to their *finis cuius*. In the end, this latter fact means that the theocentric finality of religion may be affirmed in its most robust sense, without thereby compromising in any way God's supreme perfection and immutability.

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. Billuart, *Summa sancti Thomae*, T. IV, p. 541: Sic se habet religio ad Deum, sicut justitia, cujus est pars, ad proximum . . . . Objectum vero cui [justitiae], seu potius finis cui, est ipsa persona cui redditur aequale debitum . . . . Pariformiter . . . . objectum tandem cui [religionis] ipse Deus . . . .

<sup>27</sup> Not only Aquinas, but also Cajetan should be read in light of this principle: cf. *InST* II-II.81.7c: "Sed tamen hoc ipsum quod est extendi gloriam eius, ad ipsum ordinandum est ut finem propter quem debet fieri, et ad quod universi bona ordinantur, quia est Deus." It follows that the Standard Thomistic Account misreads not only Aquinas, but also Cajetan.

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