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## The Metaphysics of the Eudaimonological Argument.

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CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE METAPHYSICS OF THE EUDAIMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY  
JAMES H. JOINER

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

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To Rachel, Isaiah, Jaden, Elijah, & Simona

*'He who has been instructed thus far in the things of love, and who has learned to see the beautiful in due order and succession, when he comes toward the end will suddenly perceive a nature of wondrous beauty (and this, Socrates, is the final cause of all our former toils)—a nature which in the first place is everlasting, not growing and decaying, or waxing and waning; secondly, not lovely from one point of view and ugly from another, or at one time or place lovely, at another time or place polluted, or in the likeness of a face or hands or any other part of the bodily frame, or in any form of speech or knowledge, or existing in any other being, or in heaven, or in earth, or in any other place; but beauty absolute, simple, and everlasting, which without diminution and without increase, or any change, is imparted to the ever-growing and perishing beauties of all other things. He who from these ascending under the influence of true love, begins to perceive that beauty, is not far from the end. And the true order of going, or being led by another, to the things of love, is to begin from the beauties of earth and mount upwards for the sake of that other beauty, using these as steps only, and from one going on to two, and from two to all beautiful forms, and from beautiful forms until he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is. This, my dear Socrates,' said the stranger, 'is that life above all others which man should live, in the contemplation of beauty absolute; ...But what if one had eyes to see the true beauty—the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed, not congested with the pollutions of mortality and all the vanities of human life? ...Would that be an ignoble life?'*

~ Plato,

*The Symposium*

*...if the idea of goodness presupposes the simpler, more absolute and universal notion of being; ...if the intellect alone can receive being into itself, completely possess it, become one with it; ...If the will, on the contrary, cannot receive being into itself in this manner, completely possess it and become one with it, but can only tend towards it when it is absent, and take delight in it when it is made present by an act of the intellect; ...then the dialectic of love engenders a certitude which is objectively adequate and absolute, and this by reason of the dialectic of the intellect which it implies.*

~ Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange,

*God: His Existence and His Nature*

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## ABSTRACT

This work gives attention to a trajectory that attempts to chart a course from the human quest for happiness and ultimately arrives at a transcendent, universal terminus or *summum bonum* as the natural end of this quest. This trajectory of ascent has given rise to a specific kind of project in natural theology; namely, the Eudaimonological Argument. Herein I set out to defend the analysis and development of the thought of Thomas Aquinas on this ascent by the 20th century Neoscholastic, Réginald Garrigou-Lagrance (1877–1964). The central thesis contends that Garrigou’s Eudaimonological Argument represents a viable project in natural theology within the Thomist tradition when properly understood in light of its underlying metaphysical principles, specifically formal and final causality. To support this contention, attention is first given to Augustine’s account of happiness and its potential as an argument for God’s existence. However, while he provides criteria which entail God as humanity’s natural end, his account cannot be properly construed along the lines of traditional natural theology. Next, this work turns to Aquinas in order to explore such a project. Although Aquinas provides an extended analysis of happiness and its relation to God, he still left much of the work for a natural theological project along these lines implicit and in need of further development. However, in the work of Garrigou-Lagrance extending Aquinas’ thought, the Eudaimonological Argument comes to full expression. What analysis of Garrigou’s account makes evident is the necessary role of formal and final causality for the argument’s articulation and defense. While Garrigou’s argument is subject to potential defeaters, this work considers and seeks to defend it against these objections. Lastly, the

Eudaimonological Argument's dependence on formal and final causality is further demonstrated by the failure of such arguments which have been attempted apart from these metaphysical foundations. Although Kant and the Transcendental Thomists offered their own version of the argument, it was found that in so doing the argument either moved beyond the critical philosophy or failed to establish its theological conclusions.



## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Tracing the Ascent to God

Reflection in the history of Western philosophy on humanity's appetitive nature has yielded a certain trajectory. This trajectory attempts to chart a course from the quest for happiness, sought initially in lower goods, moving to yet higher goods, and ultimately arriving at a transcendent, universal terminus or highest good (*summum bonum*) as the proper fulfillment of this quest. Further analysis of the trajectory of ascent, which can be traced back beginning with Plato in the ancient period, through figureheads such as Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas in medieval thought, in Immanuel Kant in the modern period, and Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, has given rise to specific kind of project in natural theology. Augustine identified a number of conditions necessary to provide happiness and concluded that the only suitable candidate was God. Similarly, Aquinas analyzed human agency and concluded that there must be a single, ultimate end for human beings, God identified as the universal Good. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange built upon this previous tradition and attempted to explicitly formalize and extended this ascent as a proof of God's existence. Though Immanuel Kant's assumptions and methods differed significantly, he also argued that the necessity of achieving happiness proportioned to virtue could only be realized if God was postulated. This dissertation seeks to explore the prospects of interpreting the ascent beginning in the quest for happiness in each of these figures as a type of natural-theological exercise. However, before turning to the specific aims of this study, a brief overview of the general

ascent from the desire for happiness in a hierarchy of goods leading to a highest good is in order. A survey of the general features of this ascent will help to locate these figures in this broader tradition and see where a natural theological project might fit within it.

In Plato's *Symposium*, the character Diotima leads Socrates up the "ladder of love," which begins with consideration of beautiful bodies, progressing to the beauty of souls, and on to the allure of the underlying principles of beauty, until arriving at the "goal of all loving."<sup>1</sup> This ultimate goal is characterized as the vision of:

Something wonderfully beautiful in its nature ... it always *is* and neither comes to be nor passes away, neither waxes nor wanes ... it is not beautiful this way and ugly that way, nor beautiful at one time and ugly at another.... It is not anywhere in another thing, as in an animal, or in earth, or in heaven, or in anything else, but itself by itself with itself, it is always one in form; and all other beautiful things share in that, in such a way that when those others come to be or pass away, this does not become the least bit small or greater nor suffer any change.... [O]ne goes always upwards for the sake of this Beauty.<sup>2</sup>

Read against the backdrop of Platonic metaphysical realism—that is, Plato's view that the species of material objects is determined by an ideal Archetype or Form of which the material object is an imperfect copy<sup>3</sup>—this ascent begins in the material realm, gazing on material objects, and then rises to the Forms against which these objects are measured, until culminating in Plato's ultimate, namely the Good itself, the cause of all truth, beauty, and being.<sup>4</sup> This movement is reflective of the ascending nature of thought

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<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Symposium*, trans. Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff, 1989 edition. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co, 1989), 210e.

<sup>2</sup> Plato, *Symposium*, 210e-211c.

<sup>3</sup> Plato's Theory of the Forms is given in *The Republic*, 506d-521b. See also James I Conway, "The Meaning of Moderate Realism," *The New Scholasticism* 36, no. 2 (1962): 141–179; Larry Lee Blackman, "Why Every Realist Should Be A Platonist," *Auslegung: a Journal of Philosophy* (1980): 144–162.

<sup>4</sup> Plato, *The Republic* 477a; 508c; 509b; *Phaedo* 97b-99d; *Parmenides*, 137c ff.

discussed in Plato's *Republic*, in which thought of shadows is lower than that of the material objects that cast them; reflection on the connection between material objects and Form is higher still; and higher than both of these is reflection on pure Form.<sup>5</sup> Yet, here Plato introduces the Good as higher than the Forms themselves and the ultimate goal of this rational ascent.<sup>6</sup> In so doing, Plato set out a course that was to be followed in distinctive ways by a host of others.

We see a similar ascent in Plato's famed student, Aristotle. Perhaps the two most obvious occurrences are in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, respectively. Aristotle, in Book I of his *Metaphysics*, begins with the natural human desire for knowledge. Within the Aristotelian corpus, there are two points at issue here. The first is that the proper end (*telos*) of a species is located in the specific difference of that species—that is, what makes it unique relative to others within its genus.<sup>7</sup> In the case of humanity, the species is a rational (specific difference) animal (genus); hence, rationality is central to the proper end of the human person. The second is that any faculty, or power (*dynamis*), has corresponding operations (*energeiai*), and these operations contribute to the actuality of the thing—or it becoming more fully what it is.<sup>8</sup> Bringing these points together, it is no surprise that Aristotle argues that the highest operation of a thing is the chief end of the whole, and thus the locus of it becoming most

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<sup>5</sup> Plato, *The Republic* 80d-86c.

<sup>6</sup> Plato, *The Republic* 477a; 508c; 509b; *Phaedo* 97b-99d.

<sup>7</sup> Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, 2.13.

<sup>8</sup> On the development from Plato to Aristotle on this point, see David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3-5.

fully itself.<sup>9</sup> In the case of the soul of a human person, the highest operation is thinking and reasoning, and thus, “the man who is exercising his mental capacity ‘lives more’ than the man who merely possesses it.”<sup>10</sup> In this light, Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* does not offer a general observation that humans are generally curious; rather, it is a look at the appetite that is most central to a human person becoming fully human, namely the rational appetite. Aristotle traces this desire from the faculty of sensation to the sciences. Identifying scientific knowledge with a discovery of causes, Aristotle argues that the investigation of causes must terminate in the First Cause, which is the crown of metaphysics.<sup>11</sup> Hence, the chief end of the rational soul is to know the First Cause, or Aristotle’s Unmoved Mover (God); only then is a human person most fully human. Likewise in his *Nichomachean Ethics*, having moved beyond various kinds of pleasure, friendship, and family, Aristotle arrives at the very same end as the proper end of a human person. To wit, the contemplation of the divine is not only the proper end of the rational soul but also the height of happiness, which is the aim of all human pursuits.<sup>12</sup>

In Plotinus’ *Enneads*, we find the Neoplatonic account of ascent, first introduced by Plato. Unsurprisingly, Plotinus follows a pattern similar to Plato. As the soul is awakened, it is driven by desire from the perishable material realm to the intelligible realm, beginning with the recognition of beautiful bodies and only later discovering beautiful principles, until ascending up to the three *Hypostases* of Plotinus’ metaphysical

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<sup>9</sup> Aristotle, *Protrepticus*, B79-80, B82-83, and B86.

<sup>10</sup> Aristotle, *Protrepticus*, B86.

<sup>11</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1072a15-1072b10.

<sup>12</sup> Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, Book X, chs. 6-8..

hierarchy, namely the World Soul, the Nous, and the One.<sup>13</sup> Plotinus' description calls to mind both Plato's *Symposium* and his allegory of the cave, in which among those confined to the shadows one is led with difficulty into the brightness of illuminated objects and finally the sun as the ultimate source of light. Plotinus writes, "Like anyone just awakened, the soul cannot look at bright objects. It must be persuaded to look first at beautiful habits, then the works of beauty produced not by craftsman's skill but by the virtue of men known for their goodness, then the souls of those who achieve beautiful deeds."<sup>14</sup> According to Plotinus, the soul is entombed and clouded by the body, which assails it with all manner of passions that lead to vice.<sup>15</sup> The soul's focus on the perishable, on lust, on fear, and on envy—in short, on all that leads to vice—is what clouds the vision of the soul and produces an ugliness of the spirit.<sup>16</sup> Yet, by pursuing the cardinal virtues—temperance, courage, prudence, and justice—the soul is purified, and in so doing, a desire awakens in it for the beautiful itself and it correspondingly becomes more beautiful.<sup>17</sup> This purification and desire is the beginning of the soul's ascent to the Good, and the height of this ascent is the obtaining of a vision, as described in Plato, of the Beauty (which is also the Good, for Plotinus), and herein alone is found human happiness.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.6.

<sup>14</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.9. Cf. Plato, *Symposium*, 210a-e; and Plato, *The Republic*, 506d-21b.

<sup>15</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.5; and I.6.9.

<sup>16</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.5.

<sup>17</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.6.

<sup>18</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, I.6.7.

In the generations after Plotinus, there would emerge a divide within the Neoplatonist school over precisely how the soul ascends and what this looks like. The dispute centered specifically on *theurgy*, or the belief that one might be energized by deities through ritualistic practices. David Bradshaw summarizes:

[Porphyry] brought into the orbit of Neoplatonism the system of ritualized interaction with the gods known as theurgy. Porphyry himself had strong doubts about theurgy; he regarded it as at best a useful way of cleansing the soul, one merely preparatory for the only true salvation, which is achieved through philosophy. But his student Iamblichus rose to its defense, and this quarrel between Porphyry and Iamblichus marked the major parting of the ways in the early history of the school. Iamblichus' writings ultimately became definitive for Neoplatonism in the eastern half of the Empire, whereas they remained virtually unknown in the West.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, Neoplatonism would continue to advocate the ascent of the soul as the main source of happiness, but whether this ascent was to be achieved through asceticism and virtue or also through religious ritual and *theurgy* became a point of contention.

During the patristic period, the trajectory of ascent to the highest good and its connection with happiness continues amongst Christian writers, and, as with the Neoplatonists, can roughly be divided East and West. Amongst Western Christian writers, the primary figurehead is Augustine of Hippo. Throughout his extensive body of work, Augustine follows in suit and begins with the universal human quest for happiness. He identifies the conditions necessary to secure this happiness.<sup>20</sup> Namely, the object of

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<sup>19</sup> Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, 97. See also R. T. Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1995), 105-10, 120-23.

<sup>20</sup> Augustine, *De Beata Vita (On the Happy Life)*, trans. Ruth Allison Brown (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America, 1944); Augustine, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, trans. Edward B. Pusey (Collier-Macmillan, 1961); Saint Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. D. D. Marcus Dods (Modern Library, 1977); Augustine, "On The Morals of the Catholic Church," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: First Series, Volume IV St. Augustine: The Writings Against the Manichaeans, and Against the Donatists*, ed. Philip Schaff (New York, NY: Cosimo, Inc., 2007); Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* (Hayes Barton Press, n.d.).

happiness must be a genuine good, permanently possessed and not subject to loss or corruption, superior in nature to man, able to satisfy his desires, and sought as an end in itself. After considering and rejecting putative objects and states of affairs, such as goods of the home, community, friendship, or supernatural experiences, Augustine finds that the requisite conditions for happiness can only be satisfied by God as the *summum bonum*.<sup>21</sup> This conclusion is eloquently summarized in Augustine's *Confessions*, prompted by his recounting of the devastating loss of a dear friend. Augustine writes:

For wherever the human soul turns itself, other than to you, it is fixed in sorrows, even if it is fixed upon beautiful things external to you and external to itself, which would nevertheless be nothing if they did not have their being from you. Things rise and set: in their emerging they begin as it were to be, and grow to perfection; having reached perfection, they grow old and die.... That is the law limiting their being.... Let these transient things be the ground on which my soul praises you (Ps. 145:2), "God creator of all." But let it not become stuck in them and glued to them with love through the physical senses. For these things pass along the path of things that move towards non-existence. They rend the soul with pestilential desires; for the soul loves to be in them and take its repose among the objects of its love. But in these things there is no point of rest: they lack permanence.... Do not be vain, my soul. Do not deafen your heart's ear with the tumult of your vanity.... The Word himself cries to you to return. There is the place of undisturbed quietness where love is not deserted if it does not itself depart.... Fix your dwelling there... [F]ar superior to these things is he who made all things, and he is our God. He does not pass away; nothing succeeds him.... Rest in him and you will be at rest.<sup>22</sup>

In the 6<sup>th</sup> century, under an unjust arrest and awaiting execution, Boethius penned *The Consolations of Philosophy* in which he too poses questions concerning the achievement of true happiness, about man's nature and ultimate end, all of which he

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<sup>21</sup> Augustine, *The City of God*, Book XIX, Ch. 5–9.

<sup>22</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*, Book V, 10-12. Quotation from Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford / New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

gives to Lady Philosophy to answer.<sup>23</sup> Her reply directs Boethius away from false, ornamental goods—such as riches, status, and political power—to true but transitory and limited goods that still are only fractured and diversified combinations.<sup>24</sup> She continues by directing him from these limited goods to a monolithic and perfect good, in which resides all the others found in perfect unity. It is this good, Boethius argues (via Lady Philosophy), which alone can deliver true happiness. With Augustine before him, Boethius concludes that this highest good is properly identified with God.<sup>25</sup>

In the Eastern Church fathers, this same trajectory is perhaps most evident in the works of Gregory of Nyssa and John Climacus, respectively. Gregory traces the movement of *eros* as the mind's desire striving in perpetual motion towards the transcendent.<sup>26</sup> The mind is depicted as a river running towards the open sea, as it “will somehow be taken up by the nature of the movement to a desire for what is above.”<sup>27</sup> This pattern appears throughout his writings, but Gregory's treatise *On Virginit*y suffices to illustrate his claim. Gregory employs the metaphor of marriage and virginity to picture the difference between the soul that is trapped in a cycle of attachment to lower goods (marriage) with the soul that is untethered (virginity) and is free to successfully make its

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<sup>23</sup> Boethius, *Theological Tractates. The Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. H. F. Stewart, E. K. Rand, and S. J. Tester (Loeb Classical Library, 1973), Book I.

<sup>24</sup> Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, Book II–III.8.

<sup>25</sup> Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, Book III.9–12.

<sup>26</sup> St Gregory of Nyssa, *Saint Gregory of Nyssa Ascetical Works*, trans. Virginia Woods Callahan (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 1999), passim; Gregory of Nyssa and John Meyendorff, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Life of Moses*, trans. Abraham Malherbe and Everett Ferguson (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), passim; Aidan Nichols, *A Grammar of Consent: The Existence of God in Christian Tradition* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), chap. 2.

<sup>27</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginit*y in *Saint Gregory of Nyssa Ascetical Works*, VI; Nichols, *A Grammar of Consent*, 45.



ascent toward God. The latter is not virginity according to lack of sexual intercourse but according to reason (*kata logon partheneuousās*).<sup>28</sup> As in the Neoplatonists, Gregory presumes that the rational spirit, despite its desire for what is above, is assailed by bodily passions that threaten to drag it into vice. The soul that is bound by the passions is attached (or, married) to these worldly goods. Following a Stoic line, Gregory suggests that only the soul that purges itself, cultivating dispassion, can “have immunity [*ateleian*]” from vice and ascend to God.<sup>29</sup> As Mark Hart explains, Gregory sees the danger of “marriage” not as mere pleasure in another, but a complete welding of the soul to another for the sake of happiness. He writes,

...[the] greatest danger for the health of the soul is that bittersweet pleasure of companionship (*symbiōsis*). *Symbiōsis* is seen in the mother who feels her children’s injuries as her own. The desire for it leads some people to find life intolerable and to commit suicide upon the death of a spouse. In these cases we are dealing with more than the simple desire for companionship, and instead are dealing with a certain tendency of human beings to join their very life and soul with another, particular human being so that they not only suffer with the other but even “die” in spirit when the other dies.<sup>30</sup>

Gregory identifies the limitation of lower goods as two. First, they are mixed, involving a cycle of desire and pain that is followed by satisfaction of desire, only to repeat the cycle. If this cycle had an identifiable terminus of satisfaction then continued pursuit would be

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<sup>28</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginity*, 2.2.21. Gregory’s work, *On Virginity*, has been deeply misunderstood for years, being misread by many as a treatise on sexuality—that is, on physical virginity and marriage—as opposed to its proper meaning as a spiritual metaphor of attachment and detachment. See, e.g., Michel Aubineau, *Grégoire de Nysse: Traité de la virginité* (SC 119; Paris: Cerf, 1966), 294-95, n. 2; 83-96; J. Gribomont, “Le panégyrique de la virginité, oeuvre de jeunesse de Grégoire de Nysse,” *Revue d’ascétique et de mystique* 43 (1967), 258; J. Kirchemeyer, “Le *De virginitate* de Grégoire de Nysse: Notes de lecture,” *Science et esprit* 21 (1969), 143; Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University, 1988), 296-304. The work of Mark D. Hart has been important in reversing this misreading. See Mark D. Hart, “Reconciliation of Body and Soul: Gregory of Nyssa’s Deeper Theology of Marriage,” *Theological Studies* 51 (1990), 450-78; and Mark D. Hart, “Gregory of Nyssa’s Ironic Praise of the Celibate Life,” *Heythrop Journal* 33 (1992), 1-19.

<sup>29</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginity*, 4.1.18.

<sup>30</sup> Hart, “Reconciliation of Body and Soul,” 455.

rightly motivated. However, as Gregory points out, appetite and its satisfaction does not satisfy but brings further “greed” (*pleonexia*) with it. Thus, the cycle is vicious, moving the subject into vice and further away from satisfaction, increasing its wants.<sup>31</sup> Second, every lower good is located in an object that is perishable and thus its enjoyment is mingled with fear of loss.<sup>32</sup> Gregory does not suggest that the soul should abandon lower goods; rather, he suggests that only the ‘virgin’ who clings to God can truly enjoy lower goods, since the virgin alone does not fear their loss; her happiness is in God.<sup>33</sup> Only the virgin can actualize the indwelling of God, transcend attachment, and participate in the incorruptible community, thereby attaining true happiness.<sup>34</sup>

John Climacus also catalogues a ladder that stretches from lower earthly goods to the divine.<sup>35</sup> John’s ladder draws on the picture of the ladder stretching from earth to heaven in the biblical patriarch Jacob’s dream (Gen 28:12). This picture had already been used by earlier Eastern writers to illustrate the soul’s ascent from the passionate life to God through divine grace.<sup>36</sup> In John Climacus’ work, however, this ascent is systematically worked through in an effort to instruct spiritual pilgrims—specifically monks—on how such ascent is to be achieved.<sup>37</sup> Similar to what we see in Gregory of

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<sup>31</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginit*y, 4.5.12-35.

<sup>32</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginit*y, 3.3.2-8; 3.5.10-6.34; 3.7.2-7.

<sup>33</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginit*y, 2.2.21; 3.4.16-18.

<sup>34</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *On Virginit*y, 2.1.

<sup>35</sup> John Climacus, *John Climacus: The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, trans. Colm Luibheid and Norman Russell (New York: Paulist Pr, 1982).

<sup>36</sup> E.g., Gregory of Nazianzen, *Oration* 43, 71 (PG 36.529d); John Chrysostom, *Homilies on John* 83, 5 (PG 59.454); and Theodoret of Cyrillus, *History of Monks in Syria* 27 (PG 82.1484c).

<sup>37</sup> The fact that John’s target audience is monastics is evident from his remarks in the first step on detachment: see John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, step 1 passim, but esp. 78 (PG 88.640d).

Nyssa, the ladder begins with the basic pursuit of detachment from earthly goods, to which the soul naturally clings, in order that the soul might begin its approach to God. The first three rungs of John's thirty-three rung ladder focus on letting go of lower goods—through renunciation, detachment, and exile—followed by the pursuit of virtue and the corresponding mortification of the passions over the next twenty six steps. The final four steps focus on the contemplative life, which turns the soul toward God in stillness, prayer, dispassion (*apatheia*), and love.

In the medieval period, the trajectory of ascent continues in both Eastern and Western Christianity. In the East, it is evident in the dispute between Gregory Palamas and Barlaam in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>38</sup> Barlaam argued that the divine essence is both completely knowable and that it can be successfully explicated through natural theology. In reply, Palamas reiterates the Eastern patristic insistence that God is *hyperousios* ('super-essential' or 'beyond being') and thus beyond the grasp of human knowledge within its inherent capacities.<sup>39</sup> He then distinguishes the natural knowing about God as possessed by the philosophers from the Christian knowledge of God by spiritual ascent. Palamas employs the distinction of the Eastern Church fathers (originally established by Aristotle)<sup>40</sup> between the nature (*ousia*) of a thing and its operative powers (*energeiai*).<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> For a synopsis of the Palamas-Barlaam dispute, see John Meyendorff, "Introduction," passim in *Gregory Palamas: The Triads*, ed. John Meyendorff, trans. Nicholas Gendle (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 183). See also Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, ch. 9.

<sup>39</sup> Anastasius Sinaita, *Hodegus sive viae dux*, 2 (PG 89:53b); Arethas of Caesarea, *Commentarius in apocalypsin*, 1.8 (PG 106:512c); John Damascene, *Homiliae* 8.1 (PG 96:700b); *De fide orthodoxa*, 1.4, 1.8 (PG 94:797b-801c, 807b-34b); Dionysius the Areopagite, *De divinis nominibus*, 1.1, 1.4 (PG 3:588b, 592a); *Epistula*, 4 (PG 3:1072b); Gregory of Agrengentius, *Explanatio supra Ecclesiasten*, 4.5 (PG 98:936d); Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*, 5.5, 71.3 (PG 91:1049a, 1409d); *Capita theologica*, 1.4, 1.6, 2.1 (PG 90:1083c-6a, 1085a-6b, 1123d-6c); *Opuscula theologica et polemica* (PG 91.128c); Modestus Hierosolymitanus, *In dormitionem BMV*, 8 (PG 86:3297b); Synesius of Cyrene, *Hymni* 1.62 (PG 66:1589).

<sup>40</sup> Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, ch. 1.

Palamas insists that while the divine essence is beyond our conceptual grasp, we can come to know God by participation in his operative powers, just as metal comes to participate in fire when its heating and lighting properties are communicated to it.<sup>42</sup> So, with creatures, while the divine essence is beyond our mental grasp, the divine operative powers (or energies) are given for utilization.<sup>43</sup> In this utilization, the soul is transformed and comes to apprehend God by transcending its own limitations and being itself transformed by participation in God. The anthropological assumption is that man can transcend his own nature,<sup>44</sup> and in this transcending, the soul finds union with God and the only possible rest from its pursuits. The persistence of this Eastern Christian theme of the lifting of the soul to God and finding rest in union with—or partaking of—God is testified to in the collection of the *Philokolia*. The work is a collection of writings from the patristic period. The texts show this thematic element of the soul’s need to quiet itself, tame the passions, raise itself up to God through prayer, and do so in the aim of partaking of God by way of the divine energies.<sup>45</sup>

In the medieval West, we see this emphasis on the soul’s ascent to God in two notable figures of the period; the first is Bonaventure. In his *The Soul’s Journey into God*, the illumination of the soul is accomplished through reflection in successive stages,

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<sup>41</sup> On the Eastern reception of this concept from Aristotle, see Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West*, passim, esp. chs. 7 and 8. A classic example of the reception and transmission of this distinction is seen in John of Damascus’ *Expositio fidei orthodoxae*, III, 15; 17 (PG 94:1046c-1061d; 1068b-1072b).

<sup>42</sup> Cf. John Damascene, *Expositio fidei orthodoxae*, III, 15; 17 (PG 94:1046c-1061d; 1068b-1072b).

<sup>43</sup> Gregory Palamas, *Tr.* 3.3.4. Cf. Basil of Caesarea, *Ep.* 234.2 (PG 32:869b-870c).

<sup>44</sup> John Meyendorff, “Introduction,” p. 14 in *Gregory Palamas: The Triads*, ed. John Meyendorff, trans. Nicholas Gendle (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 183).

<sup>45</sup> “Foreword,” 5-6 in *Writings from the Philokalia*, 5 vols., trans. E. Kadloubovsky and G. E. H. Palmer (London: Faber and Faber, 1992).

beginning with the sensible world, proceeding to reflection on the mind's own powers, and arriving last at contemplation of the divine essence as pure being. Bonaventure is clear that the aim of this ascent is happiness. He writes, "Since happiness is nothing other than the enjoyment of the highest good and since the highest good is above, no one can be made happy unless he rise above himself, not by the ascent of the body but of the heart."<sup>46</sup> Like the Platonists, the lowest contemplation focuses on the world as presented to us by the senses. Here we observe the order of creation, and through this contemplate divine power, wisdom, goodness.<sup>47</sup> Yet, like the Platonists, Bonaventure suggests that the soul is able to ascend beyond this order to eternal principles, and, as Bonaventure notes, "Everything that is eternal is either God or in God."<sup>48</sup> Hence, in these eternal principles, the soul discovers those eternal Ideas, or Forms, that are in God.<sup>49</sup> From this point forward, however, Bonaventure's rendition of the soul's journey takes a uniquely Christian turn. He argues that the mind, turning back on itself as an image of God, discovers in itself a picture of the Holy Trinity. Drawing on Augustine's psychological analogy for the Trinity, Bonaventure writes, "your soul loves itself most fervently; that it could not love itself unless it knew itself, nor know itself unless it remembered itself, because our intellects grasp only what is present to our memory."<sup>50</sup> This threefold psychological pattern offers to the mind an inner picture of the Holy Trinity. Yet, the soul

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<sup>46</sup> Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 1.1. Quotations of *The Soul's Journey into God* are from *Bonaventure: The Soul's Journey into God, The Tree of Life, The Life of St. Francis*, trans. Ewert Cousins (New York: Paulist Press, 1978).

<sup>47</sup> Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 1.14-15.

<sup>48</sup> Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 2.9.

<sup>49</sup> Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 2.9.

<sup>50</sup> Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 3.1. Cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, X.14.19.

must still purge itself. Like other Christian writers, Bonaventure understands this purging to be more than the mere taming of vice, for “Christ . . . is our Ladder: bodily, spiritual and divine.”<sup>51</sup> Thus, the soul requires illuminating grace through the redemptive work of Christ. Only through grace is

...the inner sense restored to see the highest beauty, to hear the highest harmony, to smell the highest fragrance, to taste the highest sweetness, to apprehend the highest delight, the soul is prepared for spiritual ecstasy through devotion, admiration and exultation according to the three exclamations in the Cantic of Canticles.<sup>52</sup>

Through illuminating grace, the soul recognizes the difference between that which is subject to becoming and corruption and that which is eternal, and in this the soul discovers the divine nature shared by the persons of the Trinity.<sup>53</sup> Yet, having been awakened to the Holy Trinity through its self-reflection, there is a further stage of ascent in realizing that this nature is shared, undivided amongst the Persons of the Holy Trinity.<sup>54</sup> All of this culminates in spiritual ecstasy in which our affections pass into God, finding rest for its desire in the highest Good.

The second notable figure of the medieval West to dedicate significant attention to this ascent is Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas addresses this ascent in various places including the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (Book III, q. 2-44) and *The Compendium of Theology* (ch. 102-108), but his most concentrated and comprehensive account is provided in questions 1-5 in the *prima secundae* of his *Summa Theologiae*, often entitled

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<sup>51</sup> Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 1.3.

<sup>52</sup> Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 4.3.

<sup>53</sup> Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 5.2-3.

<sup>54</sup> Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God*, 6.3.

“The Treatise on Happiness.”<sup>55</sup> In this treatise Aquinas draws on much of the aforementioned western tradition, pulling mostly from Augustine, Aristotle, and Boethius. The point of departure for Aquinas is in consideration of human agency. In the first question,<sup>56</sup> he seeks to establish that there is only one single and ultimate end for human beings, which is their completion or perfection, which Aquinas terms their “*beatitudo*.”<sup>57</sup> Yet this only identifies man’s formal end, leaving the material end—the states of affairs in which happiness consists—unresolved. It is the second question,<sup>58</sup> which takes up the subsequent task of resolving the material end. Here Aquinas proceeds initially by a type of *via negativa*, successively surveying external goods,<sup>59</sup> bodily goods,<sup>60</sup> and lastly goods of the soul,<sup>61</sup> each of which he determines to be deficient. He concludes in the final article that, in principle, no finite good provides the necessary conditions for human completion or perfection.<sup>62</sup> Yet he also offers positive consideration in defense of the movement from finite goods to a transcendent one. According to

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<sup>55</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Volume 16, Purpose and Happiness: 1a2ae. 1-5*, ed. Thomas Gilby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Thomas Aquinas, *Treatise On Happiness*, trans. John A. Oesterle, ND Series in Great Books (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991); Thomas Aquinas, *The Treatise on Happiness • The Treatise on Human Acts*, ed. Christina Van Dyke and Thomas Williams (Indianapolis ; Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2016). For the parallel treatments in Aquinas, see Thomas Aquinas, *Compendium of Theology*, trans. Richard J. Regan, 1st edition. (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), ch.102–108; St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles: Book Three: Providence: Part I*, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), q. 2–44.

<sup>56</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 1.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 1, aa. 6 and 7.

<sup>58</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 2.

<sup>59</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 2, aa. 1-4.

<sup>60</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 2, a. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 2, a. 6.

<sup>62</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 2, a. 7.

Aquinas, human completion or perfection entails that the will is completely satiated; nothing remains to be desired. However, since the appetitive power of the will is responsive to the ends presented by the intellect, which is able to grasp the universal, the will remains insatiate apart from a universal good. But because the universal good is not found in any particular, finite good, it can only be found in God. The remaining questions in the treatise on happiness are given primarily to exploring the nature of the union or relation between man and God.<sup>63</sup>

In the modern period, one of the most notable revisitations of the quest for the *summum bonum* after Aquinas is that of Immanuel Kant. Despite the Copernican revolution in Kant's system of philosophy—that is, his turn from metaphysics to the thinking subject himself—Kant nevertheless offers his own account from human nature and its aspirations to a case for the existence of God (at least as a postulate of knowledge). Kant extends the provocative and somewhat surprising claim for those with a strictly agnostic or theological non-realist reading of his work, that “morality ... inevitably leads to religion.”<sup>64</sup> Kant's explication of this relationship centers on his particular construal of the notion of the *summum bonum*. Throughout and after his critical period, Kant addresses this notion and does so in a way that connects it with his moral philosophy and gives rational grounds for the moral agent's need of God. As we have

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<sup>63</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, qq. 3-5.

<sup>64</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, 6:6. Quotation is from Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: And Other Writings*, trans. Allen Wood and George Di Giovanni (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999). All Kant citations refer to the German *Akademie* pagination, which can be found in the margins of *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*, edited by Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. Citations of Kant's work. For an overview of the theologically non-realist interpretations and alternatives, see Chris L. Firestone and Stephen R. Palmquist, “Editors' Introduction,” in *Kant and the New Philosophy of Religion*, eds. Chris L. Firestone and Stephen R. Palmquist (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).



seen, Kant is not exhibiting an innovative trajectory but flowing within a long-running stream of ancient and medieval philosophers. In the hands of Kant's critical philosophy, however, this course takes a unique route and is intimately connected with a range of key Kantian doctrines and positions, which depart substantially from the presuppositions uniting the tradition he succeeded. Kant presents his notion of the highest good and the grounds for ascending to God principally in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, *The Critique of Practical Reason*, *The Critique of Judgment*, and *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*.<sup>65</sup> Although his arguments have been construed in a variety of ways, a common and summary presentation often proceeds along the following lines. Practical reason designates that the ultimate end of rational finite beings is found in the highest good. This highest good is to be understood as a synthesis of two distinct elements, happiness in proportion to virtue. Since we are required to pursue or promote the highest good, it must be regarded as capable of realization. Our awareness of the sensible world makes evident that this end is not achieved therein. Thus, in order to provide for the realizability of the highest good, two critical conditions must be maintained: God and immortality.<sup>66</sup> Thus, Kant begins with human nature and its imminent desires and moral duties and then rises in his own way to the transcendent terminus.

The aforementioned history of this ascent is replete with dissimilarities and disagreements. The differences include differences between Plato and Aristotle, between

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<sup>65</sup> For an example of this type of characterization of the arguments see A. W. Wood, *Kant's Moral Religion* (Cornell University Press, 1970).

<sup>66</sup> See Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason*, B834-B847; *The Critique of Practical Reason*, 5:107-141; *The Critique of Judgment* (5:429-453); and *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, 6:3-6:6. Other important references are found in *On the Common Saying* 64-68, 277-84, 87-9, 307-314; *What is Orientation in Thinking* 298-99, 139-140; *Perpetual Peace* 108-124, 361-80; and *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View*, propositions 6-9.

Eastern and Western Neoplatonists, between Eastern and Western Christians, and even differences amongst Western Christians, not to mention the philosophical innovations of Kant. However, what can be said is that each of these aforementioned accounts share in common a movement from human appetitive nature and its attendant desires concentrated in an aspiration for happiness, often through a hierarchy of goods, culminating in the prospects of a union with a universal, transcendent, or absolute, divine Good.

## **2. The Aims of This Study**

Given this history of various ways of tracing this movement in the Western philosophical and theological tradition, we can profitably distinguish two distinct phases when analyzing this ascent. The first phase addresses the movement beginning with natural desires, culminating in God as man's ultimate end and source of perfection. The second phase, however, seeks to address the nature of the union with God.<sup>67</sup> These two phases can be understood by distinguishing the object and mode of our ultimate end, where the first phase focuses on the nature of the ascent and concludes that the ultimate object is God<sup>68</sup> and second phase is concerned to analyze the mode of union with God. Each of these two phases generates their own distinct sets of questions.

The questions generated by the second phase are concerned with issues such as the possibility of post-mortem re-embodiment, libertarian freedom in heaven, the form of the beatific vision, etc., and will not be the concern on of this study. The questions

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<sup>67</sup> John Peterson tracks a similar distinction in the Thomistic tradition, noting the difference between “the final *natural* perfection of persons and not the final *supernatural* perfection...which is the beatific vision.” John Peterson, *Aquinas: A New Introduction* (Lanham, Maryland: UPA, 2008), 100 n. 29.

<sup>68</sup> Or, at least, that will be the position taken in this dissertation.

generated by the first phase however bring us closer to the purpose of this dissertation. Should this ascent, surveyed at the outset of this introduction, be understood along the lines of a practical, spiritual discipline and exercise? Or should this ascent be interpreted as providing something of a descriptive phenomenology of religious experience? Perhaps it should be considered a guide to moral action and an account of practical reason with an arrangement of hierarchically ordered obligatory ends. Alternatively, this ascent might best be understood as a potential rebuttal to the existential, evidential, and logical problem(s) of reconciling evil with the existence of God. Even further, it might be interpreted as a type of explanatory metaphysics, offering an ontology delineating the hierarchical structure of the universe.

Each of these would be valid avenues for further analysis of the ascent. However, there is one additional way of characterizing this phase of ascent, which will be the focus of this work. Can this ascent be construed as an intellectual ascent? That is to ask, can the movement of the desire for happiness from lower goods upwards be traced by the mind in discursive analysis to arrive via inference to the supreme good? Even more specifically, can this ascent be construed as a project in natural theology?<sup>69</sup> Might the ascent from humanity's appetitive nature and the aspiration for happiness provide grounds for inference(s) to the existence and reality of a transcendent or universal terminus? In short,

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<sup>69</sup> This work will take *natural theology* to designate attempts to warrant knowledge of God through the use of arguments on the basis of knowledge made available to all, without recourse to special revelation. Rodney Holder, *The Heavens Declare: Natural Theology and the Legacy of Karl Barth* (West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation Press, 2012), 3; Michael Peterson et al., *Reason & Religious Belief: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, 5 edition. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 377; Andrew Chignell and Derk Pereboom, "Natural Theology and Natural Religion," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Stanford, CA: Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, July 6, 2015), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2015/entries/natural-theology/#Bib>. I do not assume, however, that natural theology is necessary or even central to the task of justifying theistic belief.

can we construct a *Eudaimonological Argument* for God's existence (hereafter, 'EA')?<sup>70</sup> It is this last, but very possible, characterization of this phase of ascent that will be the focus of this study.

Given the history of ideas on this ascent outlined above, this investigation could cover a wide range of thinkers. For our purposes, I will narrow this investigation to the Thomist version of ascent. First, however, I will argue that Augustine's account of the ascent provides the initial groundwork for formulating an EA. However, what becomes evident is that Augustine's groundwork is incomplete in this regard. Thomas Aquinas takes the argument further, developing much of what is needed to flesh out Augustine's initial reflections. However, even Aquinas leaves much of the work for a natural theological project along these lines implicit and in need of further explication. Herein enters the work of the 20<sup>th</sup> century French Dominican Thomist, Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange (hereafter, "Garrigou"). In *Le Realisme du Principe de Finalité*, Garrigou rhetorically asks, "Is there not here, in the natural desire for happiness, proof of the existence of God as the supreme good?"<sup>71</sup> In *God, His Existence and His Nature*, during his exposé of proofs for the existence of God, Garrigou reports that "St. Thomas ... also rises to the *maxime bonum* ... with the argument that concludes that there is a first and sovereign good, ... by which we rise to the primary object of desire, ... the source of all

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<sup>70</sup> Although contemporary usage varies widely, since 'happiness' typically connotes hedonic desire-satisfaction assumptions and 'beatitude' usually connotes theologically developed accounts of post-mortem blessedness, the term *eudaimonia* connoting 'well-being' best captures the features usually designated in such arguments. Thus, this work will stipulatively label the family of projects in natural theology which start with human desire for perfection or completion and infer some transcendent, divine ultimate as *Eudaimonological Arguments*.

<sup>71</sup> Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalité* (Paris, France: Desclée de Brouwer, 1932), chap. 5. English quotations of this text are my own translation.

happiness.”<sup>72</sup> Reflecting on this, Garrigou affirms his assessment “in the absolute validity of this proof for the existence of God.”<sup>73</sup> Moreover, Garrigou saw much value in advancing this natural theological argument, as evidenced by the fact that it occurs throughout his corpus and does so more than any other of the arguments for God’s existence he considers.<sup>74</sup> Garrigou’s work represents the most sustained, developed, and rigorous attempt to develop an EA for God’s existence, not only in the Thomistic tradition, but in the broader philosophical and theological tradition as well. So exceptional was his attention to and development of this project in natural theology—both in his analysis of Aquinas and his attempt to reformulate his own version of the argument—that this dissertation could be considered as a development of the EA in the line of Garrigou-Lagrange.

This work aims to fill critical lacunae and address some conceptual challenges pertaining to the EA. Exploring and developing the Augustinian-Thomist EA addresses two important lacunae, one in historical scholarship and one in contemporary analytic philosophy of religion. The first lacuna is evident when surveying historical scholarship

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<sup>72</sup> Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature: A Thomistic Solution of Certain Agnostic Antinomies, Volume 1*, trans. Bede Rose, 5th ed., vol. 1 (London; St. Louis: Herder Book Co, 1949), 332.

<sup>73</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:334.

<sup>74</sup> The principal sources for Garrigou’s exposition of the EA, listed according to the extensiveness of the treatment, are: Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5; Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:302–337; Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence* (Charlotte, NC: TAN Books, 1998), pt. I, sec 4; Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought* (St. Louis: Herder Book Co, 1950), chap. 45; Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Beatitude: A Commentary on St. Thomas’ Theological Summa, Ia Iiae, Qq. 1-54* (B. Herder Book Co, 1956), chap. 2; Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God: A Commentary on the First Part of Saint Thomas’ Theological Summa*, trans. Bede Rose (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012), chap. 2; Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Life Everlasting and the Immensity of the Soul: A Theological Treatise on the Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell*, trans. Patrick Cummins (Charlotte, NC: TAN Books and Publishers, 2009), pt. 1, ch. 3.

that considers this ascent. While ample literature exists on talk of spiritual ascent in the history of ideas, even the most notable surveys focus exclusively on the second phase of this ascent, ignoring entirely its role and prospects in natural theology.<sup>75</sup> For example, Lawrence Feingold's *The Natural Desire to See God According to St. Thomas and His Interpreters* states, "St. Augustine ... develops this Platonic line of reasoning.... St. Thomas ... takes his point of departure in expounding this theme not only from the Platonic but from the Aristotelian account of the natural desire of the mind to ascend toward God."<sup>76</sup> Feingold is exclusively set on addressing the history of controversy surrounding the desire to see God in the beatific vision. These Thomist debates concentrate on intellectualism, the speculative characterization of Aquinas' account of beatitude, and whether such a vision involves a gratuitous gift or a necessary entailment of created nature—in short, on the second phase.<sup>77</sup> Likewise, in K. E. Kirk's tracing of the history of the doctrine of the *summum bonum* from the classical period through the end of the medieval period in *The Vision of God*, Kirk gives almost no attention to this topic as an exercise in natural theology; his only concern is to specify the nature of the *summum bonum* for man and its ethical and vocational implications.<sup>78</sup> David Bradshaw's

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<sup>75</sup> Serge-Thomas Bonino, *Surnatural: A Controversy at the Heart of Twentieth-Century Thomistic Thought* (Ave Maria, FL: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007); Brian Himes, "Lonergan's Position on the Natural Desire to See God and Aquinas' Metaphysical Theology of Creation and Participation," *The Heythrop Journal* 54, no. 5 (September 1, 2013): 767–783; Guy Mansini, "Henri de Lubac, the Natural Desire to See God, and Pure Nature," *Gregorianum* 83, no. 1 (2002): 89–109.

<sup>76</sup> Lawrence Feingold, *The Natural Desire to See God According to St. Thomas and His Interpreters*, 2nd ed. (Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2010), p 8.

<sup>77</sup> Peter S. Eardley and Carl N. Still, *Aquinas: A Guide for the Perplexed*, 1st ed. (London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), 71ff.

<sup>78</sup> Another significant parallel which diverges from considering the EA-type project like Kirk's work is Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Harvard University Press, 1976).

*Aristotle East and West* concerns itself with medieval appropriations of Aristotle and the resultant impact on the nature of *beatitudo*.<sup>79</sup> However, as in Kirk's work, Bradshaw is almost exclusively concerned with the nature of the *beatification*, and whether it should be construed as a *visio Dei*, as per much of the Latin West, or as a deification, as characterized primarily in the Greek East.<sup>80</sup> Indeed, one of the foremost attempts to trace the conception of the *summum bonum* from the classical period through Augustine to Aquinas comes in Terence Irwin's *The Development of Ethics*.<sup>81</sup> Irwin's work provides considerable reflection both on the nature of the *summum bonum* (primarily in *eudaimonistic* terms) as well as its metaphysical implications and associations. However, even in this comprehensive sweep, Irwin does not exhibit any consideration of this area as a type of natural theology.

The second lacuna pertinent to this study is found in contemporary analytic philosophy of religion, as practiced in recent Anglophone work. In this vein, there is also a noticeable absence of attention and neglect given to Eudaimonological Arguments. Although work in natural theology has seen a resurgence in recent Anglophone scholarship, little attention has been paid to arguments that begin with natural human goods, happiness, and final causality in practical reason. That there exists a potential

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<sup>79</sup> David Bradshaw, *Aristotle East and West: Metaphysics and the Division of Christendom* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); For a western account of this topic, see Daria Spezzano, *The Glory of God's Grace: Deification According to St. Thomas Aquinas* (Ave Maria, FL: The Catholic University of America Press, 2015).

<sup>80</sup> As another example of this omission, see Matthew L. Lamb's "Wisdom Eschatology in Augustine and Aquinas" in Michael Dauphinais, Barry David, and Matthew Levering, eds., *Aquinas the Augustinian* (Catholic University of America Press, 2007), chap. 11. Lamb is almost entirely concerned with the soteriological and eschatological dimensions of the relationship between Aquinas and Augustine, and does not address the natural theology preceding their respective accounts of ultimate consummation.

<sup>81</sup> Terence Irwin, *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study Volume I: From Socrates to the Reformation by Terence Irwin*, 1 edition. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

natural theological project in this vein is made evident in two recent works. Linda Zagzebski's essay, "Morality and Religion," considers the species of moral arguments which hold that there is a goal or point to morality.<sup>82</sup> Zagzebski's example is Kant's case from the need to correlate happiness and virtue, and she classifies all such attempts as transcendental arguments. Even further, she ties the Kantian argument to Aquinas' treatise on happiness.<sup>83</sup> However, she determines that Aquinas' account necessarily presupposes the existence of God and only implicitly contains a natural theological argument, and only when combined with a transcendental-type Kantian inference.

The second work that makes evident the potential for developing the EA is found in William Schweiker's survey of "Morality and Natural Theology" in *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology*. He identifies a kind of EA project as aspirational natural theology with a long tradition, and as part of a broader moral argument.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, Schweiker only cites Robert Merrihew Adams's *Finite and Infinite Goods* as a contemporary example. While Adams does offer a type of generalized argument for theism from natural goods, the thrust of the work is not a natural theology project but a metaethical account of morality.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, Adams does not develop his argument along the lines nor in recognition of the classical EA project; he gives no particular attention to the traditional starting points from human nature as mentioned above; and he

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<sup>82</sup> Linda Zagzebski, "Morality and Religion," in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Religion*, 1st ed., eds. William Wainwright and Linda Zagzebski (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 344–365.

<sup>83</sup> Zagzebski, "Morality and Religion," 350.

<sup>84</sup> Russell Re Manning, *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology* (Oxford University Press, 2013), chap. 16.

<sup>85</sup> Robert Merrihew Adams, *Finite and Infinite Goods: A Framework for Ethics* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2002), passim.



does not utilize the traditional criteria and metaphysical principles which have traditionally served to further the inference. Thus, Adam's work can be considered in the general family of natural theology developed from the *summum bonum*, but one with little similarities to this tradition.

The closest parallel in contemporary literature comes in recent attempts to rehabilitate the work of C. S. Lewis and his argument from desire, which shows true affinities with the EA Argument but lacks the philosophical sophistication and development of its predecessors.<sup>86</sup> Authors such as Peter Kreeft, Adam Barkman, and Joe Jr. Puckett engage Lewis on this topic. Unfortunately, these works are almost entirely aimed at a popular level, lacking the requisite academic rigor.<sup>87</sup> Thus, it can be said almost without exception that in Anglophone scholarship generally and analytic philosophy in particular, anything along the lines of the Eudaimonological Argument has almost entirely vanished. There is no consideration of or even mention of it in the representative and recent volumes, anthologies, and introductions to philosophy of religion.<sup>88</sup> And perhaps most telling, consideration of the EA is entirely absent even in

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<sup>86</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Complete C.S. Lewis Signature Classics*, 1st ed. (HarperOne, 2002); C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, HarperCollins R. (HarperOne, 2001).

<sup>87</sup> Peter Kreeft, *Heaven, the Heart's Deepest Longing*, Expanded edition. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989); Adam Barkman, *C. S. Lewis & Philosophy as a Way of Life* (Zossima Press, 2009); Joe Jr. Puckett, *The Apologetics of Joy: A Case for the Existence of God from C. S. Lewis's Argument from Desire* (Wipf & Stock Pub, 2012).

<sup>88</sup> Kelly James Clark, ed., *Readings in the Philosophy of Religion, 2nd Edition*, 2nd edition. (Peterborough, Ont. ; Buffalo, N.Y: Broadview Press, 2008); William Lane Craig and J. P. Moreland, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Natural Theology*, 1st ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009); William Lane Craig, ed., *Philosophy of Religion: A Reader and Guide*, 1st ed. (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 2002); Andrew Eshleman, ed., *Readings in the Philosophy of Religion: East Meets West*, 1st ed. (Malden, Mass: Wiley-Blackwell, 2008); Chad Meister and Paul Copan, eds., *Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, 2nd ed. (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge, 2012); Peterson et al., *Reason & Religious Belief*; Louis P. Pojman and Michael Rea, eds., *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*, 7th ed. (Australia; Stamford, CT: Wadsworth Publishing, 2014); Charles Taliaferro and Paul J. Griffiths, eds., *Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology*, 1 edition. (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2003); Philip L. Quinn and Charles

the works of two prominent and contemporary Analytic Thomists, Eleonore Stump and the Dominican philosopher Brian Davies.<sup>89</sup>

This dissertation addresses the Augustinian-Thomist EA, which comes to a fulcrum in Garrigou, as an exercise in natural theology. I will explore the relationship between formal and final causality in philosophical anthropology and the attending metaphysical implications of this relationship for natural theology. The specific natural-theology project I analyze begins with observations concerning human nature (e.g., human goods, human teleology, the structure of practical reason, and the desire for happiness) and arrives at the metaphysical entailment of a single Supreme Good (*summum bonum*) and Final End. The central thesis of this dissertation is as follows: *Garrigou's Eudaimonological Argument represents a viable project in natural theology within the Thomist tradition when properly understood in light of its underlying metaphysical principles, specifically formal and final causality.* My analysis of the Eudaimonological Argument and defense of this thesis will consist of four chapters.

In chapter 1, I will examine Augustine's contribution to the Eudaimonological Argument. We will see that Augustine supplies the initial and very crucial building blocks for an EA project in natural theology. However, his work doesn't provide the components needed to make a final inference to God, namely the requisite resources in

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Taliaferro, eds., *Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, New Ed edition. (Cambridge, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999); Charles Taliaferro, *Contemporary Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction*, 1 edition. (Malden, Mass: Wiley-Blackwell, 1998); Keith E. Yandell, *Philosophy of Religion: A Contemporary Introduction*, 2 edition. (New York: Routledge, 2016); Linda Zagzebski and Timothy D. Miller, eds., *Readings in Philosophy of Religion: Ancient to Contemporary*, 1st ed. (Chichester, U.K. ; Malden, Mass: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

<sup>89</sup> Brian Davies, ed., *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide to the Subject* (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1998); Brian Davies, ed., *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology*, 1 edition. (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Eleonore Stump and Michael J. Murray, eds., *Philosophy of Religion: The Big Questions*, 1st ed. (Malden, Mass: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999).

formal and final causality. In short, what we see in Augustine is promising but ultimately inchoate. In chapter 2, I turn my attention to Aquinas' development of the Augustinian EA project. In Aquinas, we see the same building blocks first established by Augustine, but Aquinas combines these with all of the requisite material for a natural theology argument. Yet, as we will also see, Aquinas' combination of the requisite materials leaves the Eudaimonological Argument implicitly stated; no explicit articulation of the project occurs in Aquinas' work. To find this, we look to the work of Garrigou for the full development and explicit expression of the Thomist EA. Thus, the main thrust of this study will come in considering the EA advanced in the Thomist, Neo-Scholastic tradition as it appears in the work of Garrigou. Chapter 3 takes up problems confronting Garrigou's presentation of the Eudaimonological Argument and brings into further relief the role of formal and final causality. Addressing these potential problems requires attention to the *Via Quarta*, universals, and immanent teleology. Chapter 4 represents a negative demonstration of my main thesis. Because I contend that the Thomist EA requires a realist understanding of formal and final causality for its success, I look at a test case of a fully EA in natural theology that lacks realist formal and final causality, namely that of Kant. In Kant, we see the a modern example of the attempt to turn the ascent into an argument for God's existence, but because of the philosophical shift in first-principles and methods that his philosophy represents, his argument has no recourse to realist formal and final causality. For this very reason, Kant's argument (and Thomist attempts to appropriate it) face substantive difficulties. The difficulties of Kantian Eudaimonological Arguments, therefore, will demonstrate that the realist accounts of formal and final causality are indispensable to the success of the project.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE AUGUSTINIAN ASCENT

The first step to fleshing out the Augustinian-Thomist account of ascent is to look at its fountainhead, Augustine of Hippo.<sup>1</sup> Two reasons for attending specifically to Augustine when considering the trajectory of ascent and the Eudaimonological Argument (EA) are evident upon reflection. First, Augustine's prominence and influence in the history of western theological and philosophical thought makes his treatments of these matters a *locus classicus*. Second, Augustine is one of the first figures after the ancient Hellenistic philosophical period to provide inferential criteria in constructing an argument for a theological terminus to the human desire for happiness. Therefore, in concentrating on Augustine we can begin an inquiry into assessing the potential and prospects of building a natural theology rooted in human nature and its appetitive quest.

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<sup>1</sup> I will focus my attention on five works of Augustine in which he addresses this topic: *De beata vita* (*On the Happy Life*; 386 AD); *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* (*On the Morals of the Catholic Church and the Morals of the Manichees*; 388 AD); *De doctrina christiana* (*On Christian Doctrine*; 397 AD); *Confessiones* (*The Confessions*; 397-401 AD); *De civitate Dei* (*The City of God*; 413-426 AD). English quotations of these works are taken from the following translations: Augustine, *De Beata Vita (On the Happy Life)*, trans. Ruth Allison Brown (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America, 1944); Augustine, "On The Morals of the Catholic Church," in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: First Series, Volume IV St. Augustine: The Writings Against the Manichaeans, and Against the Donatists*, ed. Philip Schaff (New York, NY: Cosimo, Inc., 2007); Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* (Hayes Barton Press, n.d.); Augustine, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, trans. Edward B. Pusey (Collier-Macmillan, 1961); Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford / New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. D. D. Marcus Dods (Modern Library, 1977). Citations will use the Latin title, identify the standard divisions of the work, and note where it can be found in the *Patrologiae cursus completus*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris, 1844-66) or the *Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* (Vienna, 1866-). PL indicates *Patrologiae Latinae*, followed by the volume and column number(s) in which the given reference appears. CSEL indicates *Corpus scriptorium ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, followed by the volume and page number.

In this chapter, I will seek to (a) provide a reconstruction of the Augustinian ascent, uncovering the specific movements of his attempt to trace the desire for happiness to God, and (b) demonstrate both the resources and limitations of this Augustinian ascent as a project in natural theology. Toward this end, I will attempt to recapitulate and formulate Augustine's understanding of, and argument for, the supreme good of humanity. I will do so in three stages. First, I will address the importance of the *summum bonum* in Augustine's thought. Second, I will outline his argument for the nature of the supreme good by grouping it into several major steps. Lastly, I will consider whether or not Augustine's work has the necessary resources, particularly given his more general epistemology, to construct an Augustinian Eudaimonological Argument.

### **1. The Ascent in Augustine**

A primary concern in Augustine's thought, running in consonance with classic Greek thought before him, is the task of identifying the *summum bonum*, or supreme good, of life. For Augustine the *summum bonum* is closely connected but not identical with the Hellenistic concept of *eudaimonia*, or the Latin equivalent, *beatitudo* (hereafter, "happiness"). While I will use the translation "happiness" throughout this work, it is crucial to understand that happiness in the way Augustine uses the term (as well as Aquinas and Garrigou-Lagrange) is different than contemporary academic and folk usage. Though in our contemporary context (both academic and popular) 'happiness' tends to indicate a generally pleasant state of existence (characterized by pleasure or a positive emotional condition), happiness in the more classical sense has less to do with

pleasure—or pleasantness—and more to do with the well being of the subject.<sup>2</sup> One may experience pleasure and be far from well being. In this sense, happiness for Augustine is closer to health than hedonism. Yet, as we will see, this is not to say that Augustine believes happiness can be had without any enjoyment.

Though Augustine draws a close connection between the supreme good and happiness, the supreme good is not identical with happiness, on Augustine's view. The supreme good is the source of happiness, but the source of happiness and the happiness it delivers must be distinguished. Now, admittedly Augustine is not always clear on the distinction between happiness and the source or object of happiness, since he will sometimes refer to happiness itself as the chief good.<sup>3</sup> Yet, as Bonnie Kent observes, "Augustine himself sees no serious conflict between declaring happiness our supreme good and declaring God our supreme good, for love itself works to overcome the distinction."<sup>4</sup> As we will see, the supreme good, according to Augustine, is God; yet, because in loving an object a person becomes relationally intimate, the distinction between subject and object often becomes blurred in Augustine's language about the two. Nonetheless, this distinction between happiness and its source is crucial for a proper tracking of Augustine's argument.

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<sup>2</sup> For more on this distinction in the contemporary literature, see Dan Haybron, "Happiness," ed. Edward N. Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2011, accessed July 18, 2014, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/happiness/>; Daniel M. Haybron, *The Pursuit of Unhappiness: The Elusive Psychology of Well-Being*, 1 edition. (Oxford University Press, USA, 2010), chap. 3.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 3 (PL 32:1312).

<sup>4</sup> Bonnie Kent, "Augustine's Ethics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 216.

Although there are significant ways in which Augustine parts from the Greek philosophical tradition in answering the question of the highest good, he affirms that addressing it is in fact the very task of philosophy generally and of ethics in particular. As Kent notes, “the supreme good is that which makes us happy, and the only purpose of philosophizing is the attainment of happiness.”<sup>5</sup> The pursuit and aim of these disciplines, on Augustine’s view, is the achieving of happiness, which can only come by recognizing the *summum bonum*. For this reason, Augustine submits that the various schools of philosophy can be, and indeed should be, properly categorized by how they each answer the question of the supreme good. And perhaps more provocative, Augustine suggests that no school of thought should be considered distinct from another unless it provides a different answer as to what constitutes the supreme good.<sup>6</sup>

In *De civitate Dei*, Augustine concurs with the Roman philosopher Marcus Varro, and observes:

Varro ... rejects, as a first step, all those differences which have multiplied the number of sects; and the ground on which he does so is that they are not differences about the supreme good. He maintains that in philosophy a sect is created only by its having an opinion of its own different from other schools on the point of the ends-in-chief. For man has no other reason for philosophizing than that he may be happy; but that which makes him happy is itself the supreme good. In other words, the supreme good is the reason of philosophizing; and therefore that cannot be called a sect of philosophy which pursues no way of its own towards the supreme good.<sup>7</sup>

The centrality of this topic for philosophy (viz., the identification of the supreme good for the goal of achieving happiness) is thus for Augustine not a “distinctively Christian view,

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<sup>5</sup> Bonnie Kent, “Augustine’s Ethics,” 218.

<sup>6</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 9; XIX, 1 (PL 41:233-24; 621-24).

<sup>7</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 1 (PL 41:621-24).

much less as an innovation of his own; he reports it as an opinion common among pagans.”<sup>8</sup> In this way, Augustine does not see himself as representing the exception but the general pattern of ancient philosophers—so far as he understands them—who saw their responsibility as to reflect upon, share, and live by a proper understanding of happiness and its source in the *summum bonum*.<sup>9</sup> Hence, Augustine begins his voluminous literary contributions with his reflection on happiness, *De beata vita (On the Happy Life)*, and continues to address, develop, and refine his understanding on this topic throughout his long and productive literary life.

Consistent with this philosophical tradition, Augustine maintains that he will establish his position on the *summum bonum* in the method of the philosophers. He begins his argument concerning the supreme good in *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae* by distinguishing two sources of truth: authority (*auctoritatis*) and reason (*rationis*). Augustine admits that authority is in fact superior to reason. Yet, we must understand what Augustine means by *authority*. As Eugene Portalie explains,

It is not some sort of vague sentiment of the soul which adheres to a doctrine without rational motives. It is rather an intellectual adherence to truths which are certified not by an inner vision of these truths but by evidence worthy of credence.... Thus, according to the great doctor, the essential character of faith is that the only motive for believing be a witness, but a trustworthy witness.... Before any act of faith, reason has to demonstrate not the instinctive truth of the statements of the witness, but his right to be believed on his word ... But once the authority and the existence of the divine testimony have been established, it

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<sup>8</sup> Kent, “Augustine’s Ethics,” 205.

<sup>9</sup> Kent, “Augustine’s Ethics,” 206. For prominent examples of classical philosophers who directly address this topic, see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, as well as, according to Augustine, Cicero’s *Hortensius*, which played a significant role in Augustine’s movement towards Christianity, though it is no longer extant. For the relationship between Augustine and the *Hortensius* see Augustine, *Confessiones*, III, 7 (PL 32:688-89); John Hammond Taylor, “St. Augustine and the ‘Hortensius’ of Cicero,” *Studies in Philology* 60, no. 3 (July 1963): 487–498; Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, 1st ed. (London: Random House, 1960), 3; Augustine, *Contra Academicos*, I, 1, 4, (PL 32:907-08).



would be foolish to wait before believing until all those questions have been solved ...<sup>10</sup>

Thus, while Augustine maintains that the statement of a reliable witness is far better than reliance on what one can himself discern through rational processes, there is here a balancing act, for Augustine: “Authority demands faith and prepares man for reasoning ... On the other hand, reason does not depart from authority altogether when it considers whom it should believe.”<sup>11</sup> While he will ultimately conclude that certain truths that come to us from the authority of the Catholic Church are crucial to understanding the supreme good, his case begins—so he insists—with an investigation of reason.<sup>12</sup> What attention to Augustine’s self-descriptive analysis provides is awareness that the Augustinian project is not simply one of biblical exposition, but a project that is in concert in important ways with the philosophical tradition following a rational investigation.

The first major step in Augustine’s argument for the chief good of man begins with the particular observation of human nature, central to the Hellenist tradition he inherited: all people, by nature, desire happiness.<sup>13</sup> In *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, he writes, “We all certainly desire to live happily; and there is no human being but assents to this statement almost before it is made.”<sup>14</sup> Augustine begins *De beata vita* by acknowledging, in agreement with his conversation partners, that, “We wish to be

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<sup>10</sup> Eugene Portalie, *A Guide to the Thought of Saint Augustine*, trans. Ralph J. Bastian (London: Burns & Oates, 1960), 115-16.

<sup>11</sup> Augustine, *De vera religione liber unus*, XXIV, 25 (PL 34.141).

<sup>12</sup> Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 2 (PL 32:1311-12).

<sup>13</sup> Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, 4.

<sup>14</sup> Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 3 (PL 32:1312).

happy.”<sup>15</sup> He formulates this intrinsic desire in his writings in various ways. For example, in *Confessiones*, he acknowledges, “This blessed life all desire: . . . joy in the truth is the desire of all men.”<sup>16</sup> Here, happiness (or this blessed life) has a particular relationship to truth, or more specifically, the satisfaction of man’s desire is joy in truth.

Yet, it is not merely in the more pure acts of philosophizing or taking joy in truth that Augustine sees this desire. In *De civitate Dei*, Augustine observes how the desire for happiness manifests itself with respect to war. He writes,

Whoever gives even moderate attention to human affairs and to our common nature, will recognize that if there is no man who does not wish to be joyful, neither is there any one who does not wish to have peace. For even they who make war desire nothing but victory,—desire, that is to say, to attain to peace with glory. For what else is victory than the conquest of those who resist us? and when this is done there is peace. It is therefore with the desire for peace that wars are waged, even by those who take pleasure in exercising their warlike nature in command and battle. And hence it is obvious that peace is the end sought for by war. For every man seeks peace by waging war, but no man seeks war by making peace.<sup>17</sup>

Of course, Augustine’s social, political, and ethical reflections provide a classic source for the just war tradition in the west and demonstrate that he does not see the desire for peace as a sufficient condition for justifying armed conflict.<sup>18</sup> Augustine’s point in this context, however, is that even the desire for such conflict can be understood as a mediate goal towards the ultimate end of happiness. The inescapability of this disposition of the human heart is such that, according to Augustine, our desire for happiness is even made

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<sup>15</sup> Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 3 (CSEL 63:124-27).

<sup>16</sup> Augustine, *Confessiones*, X, 23 (PL 32:799). See also John F. Harvey, *Moral Theology of the Confessions of Saint Augustine* (Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2009), 1–2.

<sup>17</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 12 (PL 41:637-40).

<sup>18</sup> Herbert A. Deane, *The Political and Social Ideas of Saint Augustine* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), chap. V; John Mark Mattox, *St. Augustine and the Theory of Just War*, 1 edition. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2009).

evident in evil acts.<sup>19</sup> John Harvey explains how Augustine connects the desire for happiness with participation in sin. Reflecting on the Augustine's *Confessions*, Harvey comments,

When men sin they are seeking the happiness that is found only in God. The sinner strives for a kind of goodness, the reality of which is found in its perfection only in God. The proud seeking greatness, the tyrant seeking power, the lazy seeking peace, the sensual seeking voluptuous pleasures, all are striving for values found lasting, pure, and perfect only in God.<sup>20</sup>

All of men's actions are therefore in some way characterized by the human longing for happiness rooted deep within the heart. Happiness, then, serves as a fulcrum of all human action, unifying our diverse ends and representing the superstructure of all human activities.

The second major step in Augustine's account of the chief good of man is to characterize the specific nature of the *summum bonum* and happiness. If all people seek happiness, what more can be said by way of an account of it? What, in general form, is the nature of the good for human beings? To uncover Augustine's answer to this question, I will delineate a number of necessary conditions that emerge from Augustine's corpus.

To qualify as the chief good for human beings, the *summum bonum* must satisfy a number of conditions. The first condition is perhaps the most obvious, since it is writ large in the very title *summum bonum*. Amongst those goods that compete for our attention, we inevitably find that some goods are superior to other goods. Hence emerges the hierarchy of goods. On the one hand, this presents itself as an ontological fact, but on

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<sup>19</sup> See Augustine, *Confessiones*, II, 6 (PL 32:680-81).

<sup>20</sup> Harvey, *Moral Theology of the Confessions*, 6.

the other hand, the point is exceedingly practical when asking how man can attain happiness. For, we recognize that not all desires can be satisfied, since the objects of our desires often come into conflict with one another and many of our desires are, in the end, incompatible with one another. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate and weigh the relative merits of the respective values so that we may be properly classify in ascending order the goods that compete for our attention in order to identify which goods are superior and thus most likely to deliver on the pursuit of happiness. Once this is done, one good or at least one set of goods must inevitably emerge as highest in rank. The object of the highest love, we refer to as the chief good,

that which will leave us nothing further to seek in order to be blessed, if only we make all our actions refer to it, and seek it not for the sake of something else, but for its own sake. Therefore it is called the end, because we wish other things on account of it, but itself only for its own sake.<sup>21</sup>

This first condition, then, is perhaps most obvious, given the title *summum bonum*. To qualify as the highest good, it must be a good, or set of goods, that is in fact *highest* or ranked above all competitors.

The second condition of the *summum bonum* is closely related to the first, so much so that is tempting to collapse the two without distinction. However, I take this second condition to be important enough that it is worth drawing a distinction between the two. The second condition is this. Whatever good is labeled *highest* must truly be the highest good. In other words, the supreme good must be objectively so, not merely deemed, perceived, or believed to be so. Its preeminence must be so *per se*, regardless of whether it is recognized as such. Augustine's account of the highest good is not a

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<sup>21</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 8; cf. XIX, 1 (PL 41:232-33; cf. 621-24).

subjective account. It is not just a search for *my* highest good—but *the* highest good—that which is in fact a good above all others. The point is crucial to Augustine’s argument. Augustine argues for a hierarchy amongst goods, not in a subjective sense, but in an objective sense; in the sense that our world itself is in point of fact an ontological hierarchy. Nathan Jacobs describes Augustine’s view of creation as follows:

Augustine holds ... that God creates matter *ex nihilo*. Matter, in itself, is neither good (since goodness is a quality of being) nor evil (since Augustine defines evil as a privation of goodness or being, which primordial matter has yet to possess)... Augustine presumes, with the bulk of early Christian thinkers, that matter is properly defined as pure potentiality, which, as such, is mutable (it is capable of taking on any number of forms and continually changes for either better or worse) ... Regarding the forming of matter, we may characterize Augustine’s vision as a divine act of drawing. Within the Word or Wisdom of God, there exist the Ideas that serve as archetypes for God’s creation.... God draws matter toward himself (ontologically speaking), pulling it up from the lowest possible level of ontology—pure potentiality—toward the highest pole of ontology—the pure actuality that is God. In this drawing process, matter manifests the once-foreign properties of being ... in a way that mirrors the Ideas in God. Matter takes on ontic qualities in increasing measure as it moves from the most humble modes of being toward its divine source.... [A]s matter moves toward God it becomes ontologically more like God, taking on order, manifesting actuality, and displaying numerous perfections. Creation images the various ontological perfections stretching between the nothingness from whence it came and the God toward whom it is drawn.<sup>22</sup>

Because the world itself is a hierarchy of ascending ontological goods, the search for the highest good is not an exploration of taste; it is an investigation of the cosmos itself:

*What is the highest good?*

This second condition raises a much-needed aside. For this condition entails an indispensable principle of praxis in the pursuit of happiness to which Augustine calls attention. This praxis is not a condition of the highest good as much as condition of

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<sup>22</sup> Nathan Jacobs, “Contra Clayton: Toward an Augustinian Model of Organism,” *Faith and Philosophy* 25, no. 4 (Oct, 2008), 386.

reciprocity on our part in light of condition 2. The praxis to which I refer is the reshaping of our loves or affections to match reality. In other words, because the highest good is not a subjective pursuit but an objective one, it is crucial to the attaining of happiness that the one pursuing happiness adjusts their affections to reality. If one esteems a lower good that cannot deliver happiness too highly—perhaps highest of all—this very fact will perpetually keep such a person from happiness. As Augustine observes, “if we set ourselves to enjoy those which we ought to use, are hindered in our course, and sometimes even led away from it; so that, getting entangled in the love of lower gratifications, we lag behind in, or even altogether turn back from, the pursuit of the real and proper objects of enjoyment.”<sup>23</sup> Our pursuits, in order to be carried out effectively, must track with this hierarchical nature of goods, esteeming each good according to its actual goodness—no more nor less—and the highest good above all others.

Now, returning to the highest good itself, Augustine assists in narrowing the candidates for the supreme good through a consideration of human nature, and in so doing, he uncovers a third condition of the supreme good.<sup>24</sup> He begins by stating that the chief good cannot be anything inferior to man himself. Augustine allows the logical possibility that man’s chief good may be found in something similar to himself—equal in dignity or goodness. However, this possibility would become plausible if and only if there were no possible goods superior to man. For, as the previous condition makes clear, the search for the *summum bonum* is a search for that which is in fact highest. If there is a good superior to man, then neither man nor any of his hypothetical equals are valid

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<sup>23</sup> Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, I, 3–4 (PL 34:20-21).

<sup>24</sup> Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 3 (PL 32:1312).

candidates for the supreme good. Therefore, Augustine asks, “if we find something which is both superior to man . . . who can doubt that in seeking for happiness man should endeavor to reach that which is more excellent than the being who makes the endeavor?”<sup>25</sup> This leads Augustine to consider human nature itself, and specifically the body-soul relationship.<sup>26</sup> Augustine’s turn to the body-soul relationship follows the rationale of Varro. Varro argues that to identify the supreme good *of man*, “first of all, we must define man. He is of opinion that there are two parts in human nature, body and soul, and makes no doubt that of these two the soul is the better and by far the more worthy part.”<sup>27</sup> Human beings consist of both body and soul, however one may construe this arrangement.<sup>28</sup> And as Augustine notes in *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*,

[T]he chief good of the body is that which is better than the body, and from which the body receives vigor and life, so whether the soul itself is man, or soul and body both, we must discover whether there is anything which goes before the soul itself, in following which the soul comes to the perfection of good of which it is capable in its own kind.”<sup>29</sup>

The argument is that soul should be considered of a higher or more important nature, since it is fundamental to the body in a non-reciprocal way; the soul, for example, gives life to the body and not vice versa. The supreme good of man must therefore be directed towards the higher aspect of the human person, the soul, and not toward the lower aspects of his animal nature. Etienne Gilson recounts Augustine’s reasoning this way,

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<sup>25</sup> Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 3 (PL 32:1312)

<sup>26</sup> Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 7-8 (CSEL 63:132-39); Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 8; XIX, 3 (PL 41:232-33; 625-27).

<sup>27</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 3 (PL 41:625-27)

<sup>28</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 3 (PL 41:625-27).

<sup>29</sup> Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 5 (PL 32:1313).

Man is composed of body and soul brought together in such wise that the soul confers life and movement on the body it animates. Thus the soul is superior to the body. If, then, there is sovereign good above man, it cannot be a mere good of the body, but rather a good of the soul, for the soul is man's highest part.<sup>30</sup>

Augustine, accordingly, begins his analysis of happiness in *De Beata Vita* by asking,

“Does it seem obvious to you that we are composed of soul and body?”<sup>31</sup> He then

proceeds to offer a simple defense of this dualistic conception of the human person.<sup>32</sup>

From these considerations, the arguments seeks to demonstrate not only that the chief good must be something higher than human nature, but something that can satisfy or in some way nourish the soul. Such is the third condition of the supreme good of man—it must be a good that can satisfy or nourish the soul.

The fourth condition of the *summum bonum* is that the chief good must be the object of man's ultimate enjoyment. Augustine provides a crucial elaboration of this condition by way of a distinction between *use* and *enjoyment*, a distinction that appears in both *De doctrina christiana* and *De civitate Dei*.<sup>33</sup> He notes that there are some things we *enjoy* and enjoy in themselves—that is, as ends in themselves. Such objects of enjoyment are a source of happiness and the object of our affection in the very act of enjoyment. In contrast, there are other things that we *use* in order to bring about enjoyment. In the case of such *use*, however, the thing used for enjoyment is only an instrument of happiness and, as such, is an assistant or support to us in our efforts to attain happiness. Now, two additional points are crucial to the distinction. First, an instrument points beyond itself to

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<sup>30</sup> Étienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine* (Random House, 1960), 7.

<sup>31</sup> Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 7 (CSEL 63:132-35).

<sup>32</sup> Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 7-8 (CSEL 63:132-39).

<sup>33</sup> Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, I, 3-4 (PL 34:20-21); Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 8; XIX, 1 (PL 41:232-33; 621-24).



something more desirable, a good higher than itself. Second, Augustine insists that there is something mutually exclusive in the distinction between objects of enjoyment and objects of use: Our loves or affections must not be placed in those things that we use, and we must not use those things in which we place our love. Combining these points, the application to the highest good is evident. Because Augustine sees a strict dichotomy between that which we enjoy and that which we use, the highest good must be either an object of enjoyment or an instrument of enjoyment. But because the highest good is *highest*, it cannot be an instrument, lest it point beyond itself to a good higher still. Therefore, the *summum bonum* must be an object of enjoyment and enjoyment of such a kind that no higher good can be found. In short, the *summum bonum* must be the object of man's ultimate enjoyment.

The fifth condition that the *summum bonum* must satisfy is that it must have permanence such that it cannot be lost or taken away from the enjoyer against his will.<sup>34</sup> In *De beata vita*, Augustine explains that the source of happiness “must always be enduring, not depending upon chance, not subject to any misfortunes, for whatever is mortal and transitory we cannot have whenever we wish and as long as we wish.”<sup>35</sup> Or, as Augustine writes in *Confessiones*:

Things rise and set: in their emerging they begin as it were to be, and grow to perfection; having reached perfection, they grow old and die.... That is the law limiting their being.... But let it [the soul] not become stuck in them and glued to them with love through the physical senses. For these things pass along the path of things that move towards non-existence. They rend the soul with pestilential

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<sup>34</sup> Gilson also attempts a delineation of the conditions for Augustinian happiness, and in so doing recognizes this condition. However, he adds only a second condition, possession of absolute truth, in his analysis. Other conditions might be drawn by implication from his account, but they are not made explicit. Étienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine* (Random House, 1960), 4–5.

<sup>35</sup> Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 11 (CSEL 63:142-44).

desires ... But in these things there is no point of rest: they lack permanence.... [F]ar superior to these things is he who made all things, and he is our God. He does not pass away; nothing succeeds him.... Rest in him and you will be at rest.<sup>36</sup>

In defense of this condition, Augustine asks his readers to consider a person who was in possession of an object, or even several objects, which bring happiness but lack permanence.<sup>37</sup> We might wonder, *Is not the person happy who has an abundant and*

*lavish possession of all that he wishes, even though those possessions may not permanently endure? Should not such a person be said to truly possess happiness?*

Augustine argues that the possession of a contingent object, or objects, cannot yield true happiness. For, he states, “no one can feel confident regarding a good which he knows

can be taken from him, although he wishes to keep and cherish it. But if a man feels no confidence regarding the good which he enjoys, how can he be happy while in such fear

of losing it?”<sup>38</sup> Elsewhere Augustine asks, if someone can lose that which brings them happiness, should that person be afraid? And further, can a person who is afraid be

considered truly happy? The rhetorical implication is that one should rightly fear losing that which brings happiness if it can in fact be lost, and whoever is afraid cannot be truly

happy. Thus, a person whose happiness is tied to an object that can be lost cannot be said to be truly or completely happy.<sup>39</sup> For this reason, concludes Augustine, the object of true

happiness must have permanence and offer some type of security for the person, such that he may rightly rest assured that it cannot be lost.

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<sup>36</sup> Augustine, *Confessiones*, IV, 10-12 (PL 32:699-701).

<sup>37</sup> Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 3 (PL 32:1312); Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 11 (CSEL 63:142-44).

<sup>38</sup> Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 3 (PL 32:1312).

<sup>39</sup> Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 11 (CSEL 63:142-44).

The requirement of permanence leads Augustine to identify a sixth condition of the *summum bonum*, one that is strictly negative, namely the highest good cannot be had in this life. The connection with the previous condition is clear enough: If permanence is required to assuage fear of losing the object of happiness, then no object in this life—including this life itself—can present itself as a suitable candidate for the highest good. However, Augustine is aware that not all would so easily grant this conclusion. The Stoics in particular build their ethics on the assumption that all things external to us are outside of our control; we cannot protect our possessions, our loved ones, even our own bodies from the evils of this world. In fact, the Stoics are committed to the view that we are bound by fate, a power against we cannot win.<sup>40</sup> Hence, Stoics writers commend focus on what we can control, inner virtue and dispassion (*apatheia*) in the face of the desire, fear, and the like. This inner virtue, so the Stoics argue, cannot be taken from the soul, even by God. For, as Epictetus puts it, “like a good prince and true father, [God] has placed [the] exercise [of our free faculties] above restraint, compulsion, or hindrance, and wholly within our own control; nor has he reserved a power even to himself, of hindering or restraining them.”<sup>41</sup> In direct contention of the Stoic conception of happiness, Augustine ridicules the suggested rebuttal:

But such is the stupid pride of these men who fancy that the supreme good can be found in this life, and that they can become happy by their own resources, that their wise man, or at least the man whom they fancifully depict as such, is always happy, even though he become blind, deaf, dumb, mutilated, racked with pains, or suffer any conceivable calamity such as may compel him to make away with himself; and they are not ashamed to call the life that is beset with these evils happy. O happy life, which seeks the aid of death to end it? If it is happy, let the

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<sup>40</sup> E.g., Epictetus, *The Discourses*, 1.1; 1.14; 2.6; 2.14, in *The Loeb Classical Library*, vol. 131, ed. T. E. Page, et al., (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1067), 6-15; 100-05; 246-55; 306-15.

<sup>41</sup> Epictetus, *The Discourses of Epictetus*, trans. George Long (New York: Scott-Thaw, 1903), vi.

wise man remain in it; but if these ills drive him out of it, in what sense is it happy?<sup>42</sup>

Augustine continues, “these philosophers refuse to believe in, because they do not see it, and attempt to fabricate for themselves happiness in this life, based upon a virtue which is as deceitful as it is proud.”<sup>43</sup> Augustine plainly thinks the Stoic dream of attaining inner dispassion of such a kind that it can withstand the evils that assail us in this world is pure fantasy. If Augustine is correct in his pessimism, there remains little hope for the attaining of happiness in this life. For the sorts of deleterious states of affairs described in his rebuttal occur throughout this life. And even if the more tragic can be avoided, the very nature of things in this world is characterized by a common trait, namely, “Things rise and set: in their emerging they begin as it were to be, and grow to perfection; having reached perfection, they grow old and die.”<sup>44</sup> Thus, on Augustine’s account, the supreme good must be had, if at all, in a “world to come.” What precisely this world might look like remains to be seen, but at the very least, it would seem that, as far as the highest good is concerned, it must be permanent and allow for the assurance of the permanent enjoyment of the *summum bonum*.

In addition to these positive conditions of the *summum bonum*, Augustine offers insights into different ways in which we can fail to secure happiness. He delineates three main roads that can be delineated into three forms of unhappiness.<sup>45</sup> The first form of

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<sup>42</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 4 (PL 41:627-31).

<sup>43</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 4 (PL 41: 627-31).

<sup>44</sup> Augustine, *Confessiones*, IV, 10-12 (PL 32:699-701).

<sup>45</sup> Sometimes he categorizes only two groups of unhappiness and at other times provides a more elaborate analysis. For his account of the various forms of unhappiness, see Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 3 (PL 32:1312); Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 1 (CSEL 63:121-23); Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 8 (PL 41:233-32).

unhappiness is instanced in the case of a person failing to possess what they love. As Augustine puts it, “no one can be happy who does not have what he wishes.”<sup>46</sup> If we form an affection or desire for some particular object (irrespective of its inherent worth), and then fail to satisfy this desire by possession of the corresponding object, then we can be properly characterized as in a state of unhappiness. Of this form of unhappiness, Augustine explains, “no one is blessed who does not enjoy that which he loves. For even they who love things which ought not to be loved do not count themselves blessed by loving merely, but by enjoying them.”<sup>47</sup> A probative illustration that Augustine gives of this first form of unhappiness is found in his response to the Academics, delivered in the form of a *reductio ad absurdum*.<sup>48</sup> Augustine notes that the Academics take pride in their constant search and persistent desire for the truth. However, the very act of seeking for some particular thing is indicative of the fact that one does not possess it. Thus, given what he has observed concerning this first form of unhappiness—namely that no one is happy who does not have the object of his desire—the Academics must not be happy. Augustine presses the point a step further in the case of the Academics for the sake of an ironic conclusion. To wit, a person is not wise unless he is happy; hence, there must be no wise Academic.

The second form of unhappiness is brought about in the case of a person that has what is loved or wished for; yet, the object of their love is unworthy or even hurtful. This

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<sup>46</sup> Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 10 (CSEL 63:140-42).

<sup>47</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 8 (PL 41:232-33).

<sup>48</sup> See Augustine, *De beata vita*, II, 14-15 (CSEL 63:174-77). For historical background on the identity of the Academics, see Mary Patricia Garvey, *Saint Augustine: Christian or Neo-Platonist?* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1939), 68, 78, 81, 84, 234.

goes to the point about praxis noted above in reply to the second condition, namely that it is crucial, on Augustine's view, that our affections align with reality if we are to attain happiness. Augustine remarks, "[H]e is not necessarily blessed who enjoys that which he loves (for many are miserable by loving that which ought not to be loved, and still more miserable when they enjoy it)."<sup>49</sup> Augustine takes it as self-evident that the person who forms a love or desire for that which is inherently evil cannot be considered a happy person, even if such a person finds pleasure in possessing such an object. So, for example, a person who desires to dehumanize or enslave another cannot be rightly considered happy upon satiating this desire (even if, for the sake of the thought experiment, the enslaver possessed no other desires and was deeply satisfied in this act). This may perhaps seem paradoxical for those who operate with a modern notion of "happiness," according to which securing a generally pleasurable state of existence is the very meaning of the word. Yet, it is particularly important here to remember what was said above about happiness in the more traditional sense, namely happiness is not reducible to pleasure but concerns the well being, or proper good, of the subject. Thus, all desires must be properly ordered, and to find ultimate satisfaction in something lower than one's proper good is contrary to happiness by metaphysical necessity given human nature. In taking note of this form of unhappiness, Augustine refers to Cicero's *Hortensius*, in which Cicero affirms that the only people who would say a person is happy if they are able to live as they wish, are those who are prone to argue for arguments sake.<sup>50</sup> Concerning this position Augustine opines, "to wish for what is not

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<sup>49</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 8 (PL 41:232-33).

<sup>50</sup> Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 10 (CSEL 63:140-42).

fitting, that is in itself most pitiable. It is not so lamentable not to gain what you wish as to wish to gain what one ought not, for depravity of will brings everyone more evil than good fortune brings good.”<sup>51</sup> Thus, we should consider merely possessing one’s desires an insufficient condition for happiness; one must also desire that which is worthy of such desire, lest they find themselves unhappy.

The third form of unhappiness to which Augustine draws attention is brought about when a person does not desire what he possesses, especially if it is a proper object of love.<sup>52</sup> In this case Augustine states that this person “does not love what he has, although it is good in perfection” and thus they are “diseased” for they “do not seek for what is worth seeking.”<sup>53</sup> In these three forms, therefore, Augustine has provided a taxonomy of unhappiness. He succinctly states of each of these instances,

the title happy cannot, in my opinion, belong either to him who has not what he loves, whatever it may be, or to him who has what he loves if it is hurtful or to him who does not love what he has, although it is good in perfection. For one who seeks what he cannot obtain suffers torture, and one who has got what is not desirable is cheated, and one who does not seek for what is worth seeking for is diseased. Now in all these cases the mind cannot but be unhappy, and happiness and unhappiness cannot reside at the same time in one man; so in none of these cases can the man be happy.<sup>54</sup>

Adding force to the abstract analysis of unhappiness Augustine provides a penetrating overview of unhappiness in *De civitate*, book XIX. Here, he catalogues a litany of specific examples of things that cannot bring happiness and the particular reasons why

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<sup>51</sup> Augustine, *De beata vita*, I, 10 (CSEL 63:140-42).

<sup>52</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, VIII, 8 (PL 41:232-33).

<sup>53</sup> Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 1 (PL 32:1309-11).

<sup>54</sup> Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae Catholicae*, I, 3 (PL 32:1312).

they fail.<sup>55</sup> He considers various alternatives one might offer to the highest good as the source of happiness, such as: the home (ch. 5), the city or state (chs. 5-7), the larger human community (chs. 5-7), friendship (ch. 8), or supernatural experiences (ch. 9). Of these things, Augustine asks rhetorically, “who can enumerate all the great grievances with which human society abounds in the misery of this mortal state?”<sup>56</sup>

Now that the conditions for the *summum bonum* have been enumerated and the forms of unhappiness catalogued, we can attempt to delineate a set of necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for happiness, based on Augustine’s work. Beginning with the object of happiness, Augustine tells us that the object that can alone bring happiness is as follows:

- (1) It must be a good higher than all others.
- (2) Its goodness must be higher in fact and not merely in perception.
- (3) It must bring nourishment to man’s soul.
- (4) It must be an object of enjoyment, not an instrument of enjoyment.
- (5) It must be permanent such the enjoyment of it is free from fear of loss.
- (6) It must be had in a world to come, free from corruption and death.

These six conditions constitute Augustine’s conditions for the supreme good, but, as we have seen, there are additional conditions that must obtain in the seeker of happiness.

These additional conditions are illustrated negatively in Augustine’s various modes of unhappiness.

- (7) The seeker of happiness must possess the object of love.
- (8) Their loves must be directed at a worthy object, loving each good according to its degree of goodness and the supreme good above all.
- (9) If possessing that which is worthy of love, the seeker must love it according.

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<sup>55</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 5–27 (PL 41:631-58).

<sup>56</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 5 (PL 41:631-32).



Having identified the necessary conditions for the highest good of man and having identified the additional conditions for the subject to properly enjoy the supreme good, Augustine has supplied the basic contours for the pursuit of happiness. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, such is the task of philosophy in general and ethics in particular. Hence, Augustine has sought to participate in the task of the philosopher, following the lead of reason in an effort to discern how man might attain happiness. Yet, it should not be missed that Augustine has yet to identify what this supreme good in fact is; he has only identified the necessary conditions that any worthy candidate must meet. It may be obvious given his conditions what the only remaining candidate is for the *summum bonum*. Be that as it may, the task of identifying the true object of human happiness constitutes the third and final step of Augustine's case.

The third step in Augustine's argument is to unite the conditions identified for happiness with their proper object. On Augustine's view, the *summum bonum*—to little surprise—is identified as God, and Him alone. God is the only possible consideration that properly meets the necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for the supreme good and happiness of man. In consideration of conditions 1 and 2, Augustine is clear that God is the highest good not merely in his subjective assessment but in an undisputable ontological sense. In fact, in *De Trinitate* and *De doctrina christiana*, Augustine makes explicit the numerical identity between God and the Good itself.<sup>57</sup> In *De Trinitate*, Book VIII, Augustine writes,

This thing is good and that good, but take away this and that, and regard good itself if thou canst; so wilt thou see God, not good by a good that is other than

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<sup>57</sup> Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VIII, 3 (PL 42:949-51); cf. *De doctrina christiana*, I, 3-5 (PL 34:20-21).

Himself, but the good of all good. For in all these good things, whether those which I have mentioned, or any else that are to be discerned or thought, we could not say that one was better than another, when we judge truly, unless a conception of the good itself had been impressed upon us, such that according to it we might both approve some things as good, and prefer one good to another. . . .if, then, I say thou canst remove these things, and canst discern the good in itself, then thou wilt have discerned God.<sup>58</sup>

God is the supreme source of goodness and all existent things possess their goodness derivatively from him. And he is supremely good independently of whether or not people recognize him as such.

As for the condition of permanence, the attributes of divine immutability, eternity, and aseity ensure that he possesses the requisite permanence for the highest good, and no finite object possesses such properties. In the *Confessiones*, Augustine prayerfully observes,

And I beheld all other things that are beneath thee, and I saw that they had neither any absolute being, nor had they absolutely no being at all. They have a being because they are of thee; and they have no being, because they be not that which thou art. For that truly is, which doth unchangeably remain.<sup>59</sup>

Thus, as John Harvey notes, “in considering the qualities of the object of happiness St. Augustine stresses the immutability of God in contrast to the transient nature of creatures.”<sup>60</sup>

As for the condition of the highest good being had in a life to come, Augustine refers to the final peace that the righteous will experience in the City of God.<sup>61</sup> In this state, the nature of the righteous will be immortal and incorruptible, lacking any deterring

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<sup>58</sup> Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VIII, 3 (PL 42:949-51).

<sup>59</sup> Augustine, *Confessiones*, VII, 11 (PL 32:742). For other places where Augustine stresses this aspect of God, see *Confessiones*, I, 4; 14; 16; and VII, 20 (PL 32:589-90; 605-08; 612; and 646-47).

<sup>60</sup> Harvey, *Moral Theology of the Confessions of Saint Augustine*, 3.

<sup>61</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XIX, 27 (PL 41:657-58).

vices, and experiencing no resistance to the supreme good. This condition, Augustine observes, shall be eternal and we shall be assured of its eternity, thus precluding any fear of loss and securing peace of confidence and assurance. In this way, not only is the condition of the life to come met, but the assurance of permanence and the absence of fear of loss of this highest good are also met. Moreover, insofar as the world to come brings a completion and permanence to the righteous themselves, their affections, dispositions, and desires are rightly ordered and directed in love towards God as the supreme source of enjoyment. Hence, not only are the conditions for the highest good met, but the conditions for the enjoyment of the highest good by man are also met in the righteous. In his work *De doctrina christiana*, Augustine remarks, “the true objects of enjoyment, then, are the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are at the same time the Trinity, one Being, supreme above all, and common to all who enjoy Him.”<sup>62</sup>

Explaining the completion of the necessary conditions for happiness, Augustine illustrates how the heart is drawn towards God.<sup>63</sup> Just as the various elements of creation are attracted to their respective ends, such as fires that tend upwards and rocks tend downwards, the human heart finds its gravitation and attraction in its proper end in God himself. Again, Augustine writes,

My weight, is my love; thereby am I borne, whithersoever I am borne. We are inflamed, by Thy Gift we are kindled; and are carried upwards; we glow inwardly, and go forwards. We ascend Thy ways that be in our heart, and sing a song of degrees; we glow inwardly with Thy fire, with Thy good fire, and we go; because we go upwards to the peace of Jerusalem: for gladdened was I in those

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<sup>62</sup> Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, I, 5 (PL 34:21).

<sup>63</sup> Augustine, *Confessiones*, XIII, 9 (PL 32:848-49).

who said unto me, We will go up to the house of the Lord. There hath Thy good pleasure placed us, that we may desire nothing else, but to abide there for ever.”<sup>64</sup>

Thus, we see in outline form the completion of Augustine’s account of, and argument for, the *summum bonum* and man’s source of true happiness. In the first step, he contends that all people by nature seek happiness. In the second step, he specifies the nature of the supreme good and the possession of this happiness by identifying at least six necessary conditions, as well as conditions for the pursuers of happiness to find it. And lastly, in the third step, Augustine maintains that only in God are the required conditions for happiness and the supreme good able to be met. And, in order for God to satisfy these conditions, God must in fact exist.

## **2. An Augustinian Eudaimonological Argument? *Sic et Non***

Has Augustine provided the resources to make an inference to God’s existence? The Augustinian ascent is often read along experiential and cognitive-perceptual lines. That is to say, it is often read as an existential account of Augustine’s own personal experience of moving from lower goods to an understanding of the highest good rather than as an exercise in natural theology, meant to offer an analytic assessment of the inferential steps emerging from the requisite conditions for happiness to the existence of a supreme Good. The reasons why Augustine’s account of ascent is typically read in the former, rather than the latter way, are three. First, because Augustine’s views are filtered through the narrative of the *Confessiones*, which readily admits—as a biographical account of conversion—that’s Augustine’s ascent in this context is delivered through

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<sup>64</sup> Augustine, *Confessiones*, XIII, 9 (PL 32:848-49)

first-person, direct awareness of God that comes through in his successive experiences. The second, and closely related, reason for reading the Augustinian ascent in this way is due to his Neoplatonic heritage. In Plotinus account, man's return to the One does not come via a path of inferential reasoning, but through a direct awareness of the One's operative power.<sup>65</sup> Hence, when Augustine is read against the backdrop of Neoplatonism, an existential or perceptual interpretation of his account is easy enough to infer. Third, the existential-perceptual reading is bolstered when considering his doctrine of faith and reason as expressed in the maxim "believe in order that you may understand" (*crede, ut intelligas*).<sup>66</sup> Some understand this mantra to preclude any sort of natural philosophy, as if the movement from belief to understanding indicates a dismissal of natural theology in favor of a blind existential leap of faith. When interpreted in this way, as the exclusive paradigm through which to understand Augustinian philosophy of religion, the result is an overt resistance to natural theology that might move from understanding to belief. Given these interpretive lenses, some have concluded that there is no place for natural theology in the work of Augustine.<sup>67</sup>

So what are we to make of this? Does Augustine's theology preclude the very possibility of natural theology? Or at the very least, does it lend itself more easily to an

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<sup>65</sup> Plotinus, *Enneads*, VI.9.4. See also Edward Moore, "Plotinus," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ISSN 2161-0002, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/plotinus/>.

<sup>66</sup> Augustine, *Sermones*, XLIII, 7 (PL 38:257-58); cf. *De libero arbitrio*, II, 2, 5 (PL 32:1346-47)

<sup>67</sup> John E Smith, "Prospects for Natural Theology," *Monist: An International Quarterly Journal of General Philosophical Inquiry* 75, no. 3 (July 1, 1992): 406–420; Dewey J. Hoitenga, "Faith Seeks Understanding: Augustine's Alternative to Natural Theology," *Augustine: presbyter factus sum* (1993), <http://ukeke.calvin.edu/cgi-bin/UDT/driver.pl?query=&target=ebSCO>. Both Hankey and Hall are unclear but appear skeptical of uncovering an Augustinian natural theology, in the sense used in this dissertation. Cf. Wayne Hankey, "Natural Theology in the Patristic Period," in *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology*, ed. Russell Re Manning (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 38–56; Alexander W. Hall, "Natural Theology in the Middle Ages," in *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology*, ed. Russell Re Manning (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 57–74.

existential interpretation of his account of ascent? What is clear is that Augustine does not believe that natural theology is *necessary* to warrant theistic knowledge.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, his general epistemology, governed by his doctrine of divine illumination, clearly seems to advance the experiential-perceptual ascent.<sup>69</sup> The doctrine of divine illumination in Augustine, adopted from the Platonic tradition, uses the analog of visual perception as a model characterizing the intellectual apprehension of supra-sensible objects (such as the eternal Forms and God).<sup>70</sup> He writes,

God, of course, belongs to the realm of intelligible things, and so do these mathematical symbols, though there is a great difference. Similarly the earth and light are visible, but the earth cannot be seen unless it is illumined. Anyone who knows the mathematical symbols admits that they are true without the shadow of a doubt. But he must also believe that they cannot be known unless they are illumined by something else corresponding to the sun. About this corporeal light notice three things. It exists. It shines. It illumines. So in knowing the hidden God you must observe three things. He exists. He is known. He causes other things to be known.<sup>71</sup>

On Augustine's view, this illumination does not include perception of sensible particulars, which are discovered through the typical faculties of sensation. However, we can use such sensible items as signs that direct the mind beyond themselves, but do not constitute facts meant to serve as premises in a demonstration.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Dewey J. Houtenga, *Faith and Reason from Plato to Plantinga: An Introduction to Reformed Epistemology* (SUNY Press, 1991), ch. 3.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. Augustine, *Confessiones*, IV, 15 (PL 32:703-04).

<sup>70</sup> For an overview of Augustine's model of divine illumination, see Frederick Copleston, *History of Philosophy Volume 2: Medieval Philosophy* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2003), ch. 4; For a study of its interpretive and dialectic tradition, see Lydia Schumacher, *Divine Illumination: The History and Future of Augustine's Theory of Knowledge*, 1st ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

<sup>71</sup> Augustine, *Soliloquia*, I, 15 (PL 32:608-12). Other *loci classici* include, *De Trinitate* VIII, 3; XIII, 15 (PL 42:949-51; 1027-29); *De Ordine* II, 3 (PL 32:997-99), 10; *Soliloquia* I, 6; 12 (PL 32:591; 602); *Confessiones* VII, passim (PL 32:733-48); *De civitate Dei*, XI, 2 (PL 41:317-18).

<sup>72</sup> Smith, "Prospects for Natural Theology," 417.

We can read the Augustinian account of happiness, provided above, as an ascent in light of this theory of knowledge. The search for happiness, viewed through the doctrine of divine illumination, is viewed as the experience of the soul turning from lower, outward goods, to inner resources, advancing to the divine ideas and ultimately to the supreme good, all by way of successive and ascending instances of direct intellectual awareness. On such a view, the process does not involve discursive inferences to move the mind from one level to the next. Instead the process is facilitated by the dissatisfaction attendant to lower goods catalyzing the mind's movement upward. We need not enter here into the longstanding debate over the specific nature of illumination in Augustine's thought according to Thomists, Franciscans, Ontologists, and others. Though Gilson, for example, restricts Augustinian illumination purely to formal awareness of the certainty of forms and not their content, he nevertheless allows for a type of mystical knowledge. Other participants in the debate could each adopt versions of the experiential ascent from lower goods into their respective accounts of Augustine's divine illumination.<sup>73</sup> For our purposes, however, the crucial point is that this union between the ascent of happiness and divine illumination in Augustine's thought is further strengthened when considering the role of a virtuous disposition, directed by love, as a requisite of arriving at genuine theological knowledge.<sup>74</sup> An awareness of the finitude and inadequacies of lower goods might direct not only the mind, but the will, upward as well. The human person, in Augustine's view, cannot be neutrally or indifferently

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<sup>73</sup> For a history of these debates, see Schumacher, *Divine Illumination*.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 2, 6 (PL 32:996).

disposed in order to ascend the chain of goods. Rather, the will must be rightly oriented by love towards the supreme good as it ascends to it.<sup>75</sup>

However, it would be a too restrictive reading of Augustinian epistemology to conclude that theistic arguments are epistemically impermissible or prohibited. We need not draw the further non-sequitur conclusion that these three interpretive principles preclude such projects.<sup>76</sup> To allow room for both avenues, we can follow Gilson in seeing gradations in Augustine's account of divine illumination that allows for the distinction between a natural knowledge and a mystical knowledge.<sup>77</sup> A mystical knowledge is a direct vision achieved through contemplation of the divine ideas and of those ideas in God.<sup>78</sup> Whereas, natural knowledge is achieved when our intellect apprehends the truth through reflection, including discursive acts of reasoning. On this distinction, we can grant that a mystical ascent does not exclude and is compatible with an Augustinian discursive, rational ascent, even if the discursive-rational ascent only reaches a

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<sup>75</sup> For a presentation of this view of Augustinian rationality, which emphasizes the role of love in knowledge acquisition, see James R Peters, *The Logic of the Heart: Augustine, Pascal, and the Rationality Of* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009); John Rist, "Faith and Reason," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, Stump, Eleonore (ed), 2005, 31ff.

<sup>76</sup> This seems to be the way that Hoitenga reads Augustine's epistemology; to wit, that natural theology is permitted but not the characteristic or paradigmatic approach to ground knowledge of God. Hoitenga, *Faith and Reason from Plato to Plantinga*, 92–97.

<sup>77</sup> Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, 92ff.

<sup>78</sup> Although not considering whether or not his Augustine's account of happiness can be constructed as an argument for God's existence, Gilson arrives at a similar conditional. He recognizes that "If...there is a sovereign good above man, it can only be God Himself," concluding ultimately that therefore, "Happiness consists in the possession of God." Ibid., 94.



penultimate stage affirming God's existence and nature, prior to the ultimate end of direct perception of the divine.<sup>79</sup>

In fact, *theologia naturalis* was coined by Augustine for subsequent western Christian theology, and most medieval theologians and philosophers were familiar with this expression from Augustine's discussion of Varro's *Antiquities* in Book VI of *De civitate Dei*.<sup>80</sup> Thus, it is not surprising to find interpreters of Augustine have read him as offering the very discursive, rational arguments for God's existence that such a 'natural knowledge' would permit.<sup>81</sup> These can be found in his undeveloped gestures and references to cosmological and teleological arguments in *De civitate Dei*,<sup>82</sup> as well as elsewhere, such as in his account of goodness in *De Trinitate*,<sup>83</sup> and most prominently in his argument from eternal truth in *De libero arbitrio*.<sup>84</sup> This last argument is one Augustine developed most thoroughly and represents the best candidate for an explicit natural theological argument in his body of work.<sup>85</sup> As Garret Matthews notes, it "is the

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<sup>79</sup> Or, even further, the end of the discursive-rational ascent, could precede the temporal vision of God, which itself precedes the ultimate beatific vision. Cf. Ronald H Nash, *The Light of the Mind: St. Augustine's Theory of Knowledge*, 1ST ed. (Kentucky, US: First Academic Renewal Press, 2003), 121.

<sup>80</sup> Holder, *The Heavens Declare*, 3; Alexander W. Hall, "Natural Theology in the Middle Ages," in *The Oxford Handbook of Natural Theology*, ed. Russell Re Manning (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 57.

<sup>81</sup> Copleston, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, 68–71; Gareth B. Matthews, *Augustine* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2005), 89–90; Scott MacDonald, "The Divine Nature," in *The Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 75. Indeed, Copleston's analysis is that the doctrine of divine illumination, when interpreted in a non-Ontologist manner, *requires* an independent theistic demonstration, Copleston, *History of Philosophy*, vol. 2, 61-62.

<sup>82</sup> Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, II, 4 (PL 41:49-50)

<sup>83</sup> Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VIII, 3 (PL 42: PL 42:949-51)

<sup>84</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 3-15 (PL 32:997-1015)

<sup>85</sup> Theodore J Kondoleon, "Augustine's Argument for God's Existence 'De Libero Arbitrio', Book II," *Augustinian Studies* 14 (January 1, 1983): 105–116.

first in a long line of such proofs offered by Christian and Muslim philosophers throughout the Middle Ages into the seventeenth century...[and] that continues right up to the present time.”<sup>86</sup> There are anticipations of the argument in the *De diversis quaestionibus*,<sup>87</sup> a brief outline of it in the *De vera religione*,<sup>88</sup> and the essential elements are present in the *Soliloquia*.<sup>89</sup> There is, of course, a minority report of mystical and experiential readings of this “argument,” which seek to avoid construing it as a natural theology project.<sup>90</sup> Others, however, see Book II of *De libero arbitrio* as an example where Augustine “transforms his intellectual ascent into an elaborate argument for the existence of God.”<sup>91</sup>

Since my purpose is not to defend this argument, but to consider it as a framework to structure a potential EA from Augustine’s account of happiness, a brief overview of the main contours of the argument from *De libero arbitrio* will suffice. In the first two chapters of book II, Augustine provides a number of statements that serve as interpretive markers for the nature of the task they are going to undertake. At the outset, Augustine’s main interlocutor Evodius asserts that “we have our existence from God, and it is from

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<sup>86</sup> Matthews, *Augustine*, 90; Matthews doesn’t provide any examples of recent proponents. However, contemporary instances include, Alvin Plantinga, “Arguments for the Existence of God,” *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Oxfordshire, U.K.: Taylor & Francis, 1998); R.P Phillips, *Modern Thomistic Philosophy, Vol II*, vol. 2 (London: Burns, Oates, & Washbourne, 1934), 298–299; Edward Feser, *The Last Superstition: A Refutation of the New Atheism*, 1st ed. (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s Press, 2010), 90–91; Victor Reppert, *C. S. Lewis’s Dangerous Idea: In Defense of the Argument from Reason* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003), 72–85.

<sup>87</sup> Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus*, LXXXIII (PL 40:100)

<sup>88</sup> Augustine, *De vera religione*, I, 50 (PL 34:165-66)

<sup>89</sup> Augustine, *Soliloquia*, I, 15; II, 14-20 (PL 32:608-12; 635-38)

<sup>90</sup> John A. Mourant, “The Augustinian Argument for the Existence of God,” *Philosophical Studies* 12 (1963): 92–106; Phillip Cary, “Augustine,” in *Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Chad Meister and Paul Copan, 2nd ed. (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge, 2012), 89.

<sup>91</sup> MacDonald, “The Divine Nature,” 75.

him that we deserve punishment for doing wrong and reward for doing good.”<sup>92</sup> Augustine responds to Evodius’ assertion, asking, “I want to know whether you know this for certain, or whether you willingly believe it on the urging of some authority, without actually knowing it.”<sup>93</sup> Further probing Evodius, he asks, “how do you know that we have our existence from God?”<sup>94</sup> To which Evodius responds that this is something he holds by faith, but not something he can see for himself. After raising the contentions of a potential skeptic, Augustine urges them to seek knowledge of what they had already come to believe. To do this, they must seek to answer the question, which begins chapter 3, “how is it manifest that God exists?”<sup>95</sup> Although Copleston and others have claimed that the starting-point of this proof is the mind’s apprehension of necessary and immutable truths, this seems to move too quickly and forgoes a critical conceptual foundation to the case Augustine is attempting to make.<sup>96</sup> Although the argument starts with the first lines of chapter 3, we are not introduced to these necessary and immutable truths until chapter 8. Prior to this, Augustine seeks to establish two critical presuppositions to his argument: an ontology of beings, and a principle for ordering. In chapters 3-5, he is establishing the bare outlines of a conception of reality as a hierarchically constituted universe; one which exists as a chain of beings beginning with material/corporeal objects, through living entities, to beings endowed with understanding and reason. What is crucial at this stage is not the details, nor the precision, but

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<sup>92</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 1 (PL 32:993-95).

<sup>93</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 1 (PL 32:993-95).

<sup>94</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 1 (PL 32:993-95).

<sup>95</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 3 (PL 32).

<sup>96</sup> Copleston, *History of Philosophy*, Vol. 2, 68; Feser, *The Last Superstition*, 90.

establishing a hierarchical structure as inherent to reality. Having done this with external reality in the first section of chapter 3, he moves to recapitulate this same ascending structure as it pertains to the inner reality of the human soul. Here he delineates the bodily senses (which perceive material objects), the inner sense (which perceives the sense-datum as well as the senses themselves), and lastly reason (which perceived everything below it, as well as itself). In the latter part of chapter 4 through chapter 6, this ontology is developed in parallel with a principle for categorizing and prioritizing the hierarchy. Although Augustine states it a few times with some variety, he maintains what I will call *the principle of judgment*: to wit, that “the judge is superior to the thing judged.”<sup>97</sup> Thus, given that the inner sense is a kind of controller and judge over the bodily senses, and that reason is a controller and judge over the inner sense, he concludes that reason and understanding are to be placed at the highest level within the inner hierarchy of the soul. And so, he concludes by asking Evodius rhetorically, “Can you think of anything in human nature more exalted than reason?”<sup>98</sup>

This moves the argument into what might be better characterized as its central premises, though the ontological hierarchy and the principle of judgment as a criterion of excellence remain central throughout. Augustine will seek to establish two general theses: first, that there exists necessary, eternal truths; second, that such truths, given the already established ontological hierarchy from corporeal objects to human reason, represent another higher tier of reality, which is either identical with or implies God’s existence. We can first approach the argument in this way,

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<sup>97</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 5 (PL 32:1347-48).

<sup>98</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 6 (PL 32:1348).

- (1) If anything is superior to human reason, then God exists.  
(2) Truth is superior to human reason.  
Therefore, (3) God exists.

This initial formulation raises a number of difficulties, which Augustine anticipates. Regarding premise (1), Evodius recognizes that this identifies a necessary but not sufficient condition for divinity. Perhaps, as some commentators have suggested, we might postulate an angelic mind, or a whole host thereof.<sup>99</sup> This would undercut the necessity of the consequent in the conditional of premise (1). Augustine, however, anticipated this counter, and included additional criteria to strengthen this premise. First, Augustine (on Evodius' prodding) acknowledges that in addition to being ontologically superior to human reason, in order to be divine it would have to rest on the top of the chain of being. But a close reading of the text also elicits another criterion; that this putative object also possesses the transcendental properties of necessity, immutability, and by entailment, eternity. Thus, we can refine premise (1) to state:

- (1\*) If something exists which is (i) superior to reason, (ii) inferior to nothing else, and (iii) necessary, immutable, & eternal, then God exists.

This then forestalls objections from tiers of imagined or logically possible objects which might reside just one level above human reason but below the supreme, divine good.

The focus now turns to affirming the antecedent, expressed in premise (2). Here Augustine appeals to reason's capacity for apprehending *a priori*, necessary truths as objects of pure thought. In so doing, he raises a range of putative examples of these intelligible objects for consideration. Following Evodius' lead, he begins with numerical

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<sup>99</sup> Hugh Chandler, "Augustine's Argument for the Existence of God," n.d., 7.

objects and mathematical laws. He then turns to considering a range of normative epistemic and moral truths. These candidates include items and propositions such as:

- (a) numbers (ch. 8);
- (b) mathematical laws and relationships;
- (c) unity or oneness;
- (d) one ought to live justly (ch. 10);
- (e) inferior things should be subjected to superior things;
- (f) like should be compared with like;
- (g) everyone should be given what is rightly his;
- (h) the uncorrupted is better than the corrupt;
- (i) the invulnerable is better than the vulnerable;
- (j) one should turn one's soul from corruption to incorruption;
- (k) a life that cannot be swayed by any adversity from its fixed and upright resolve is better than one that is easily weakened and overthrown by transitory misfortunes; etc.

What Augustine further infers is that each of these items and propositions have a universal property in common: truth.<sup>100</sup> Truth then serves as the trans-categorical feature of all these candidates, unifying them into a single class of one transcendental property. Given this listing, Augustine still needs to demonstrate that these candidates (or candidate, 'truth') are superior to human reason to establish premise (2). To do this, Augustine invokes two types of arguments. First, Augustine returns to *the principle of judgment* criterion as identified in the conceptual foundations of this argument, above. If one thing by nature judges another, then the thing that judges is superior to the thing that is judged.<sup>101</sup> But now, in considering the list of putative examples, and truth itself, Augustine is able to affirm that there is in fact something that by nature judges reason: truth.<sup>102</sup> Thus, as Scott MacDonald observes of these items, "They are the normative

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<sup>100</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 12 (PL 32:1355-56).

<sup>101</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 3-5; 12 (PL 32:1346-48; 1355-56).

<sup>102</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 7-15 (PL 32:1349-61).

standard against which our minds are measured. In virtue of their normative relation to reason, he argues that these intelligible objects must be higher than it.”<sup>103</sup>

The second argument Augustine utilizes to establish the truth’s superiority to reason is an argument from transcendent properties.<sup>104</sup> That which is eternal, immutable, and necessary cannot be regarded either as created by the human mind or as existing innately within the mind alone. But of course, Augustine notes that the mathematical and moral truths just delineated inherently possess the essential characteristics of being eternal, immutable, and necessary. This entails that such truths are objective, intelligible realities, transcendent to or "above" the human mind. With this, Augustine concludes that if there are objective intelligible realities which transcend the human mind, then either they are dependent upon God or in some sense can be identified with the divine nature.<sup>105</sup>

Given this overview of the demonstration in book II of *De libero arbitrio*, we can ask: Do we have here the material to adapt in formulating a similar argument from the human desire for happiness and its necessary conditions for fulfillment? There is some reason to think so given Evodius’ jubilant response to the argument’s culmination in the reality of a God who “exists truly and in the highest degree.”<sup>106</sup> Evodius exclaims, “I accept what you say...For I recognize that it is not merely one good among others; it is the highest good, the good that makes us happy”. However, this construal of the conclusion comes entirely tangentially and is more of Evodius’ interpretive overlay than anything that emerges from the argument itself. Having established, via the argument in

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<sup>103</sup> MacDonald, “The Divine Nature,” 77.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 8; and 10 (PL 32:1349-51; 1353-54).

<sup>105</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 15 (PL 32:1360-61).

<sup>106</sup> Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, II, 15 (PL 32:1360-61).

Book II, the existence of the highest being, Evodius then draws the implication about God as the *summum bonum* and thus as the true source for happiness. The existence of God would have to be independently established, and thus presupposed to draw the connection Evodius does here. Moreover, Augustine did not utilize the search for goods or happiness in this argument from eternal ideas nor did he not attempt to connect or apply the inferential steps of the argument to his analysis of happiness which led to the necessary conditions to qualify as the *summum bonum*. And, as can be seen from the layout of the argument above, the natural desire for happiness would be entirely superfluous to his case in *De libero arbitrio*.

Could there be, nevertheless, an EA argument implicit in the Augustinian corpus? To see this option, consider Gilson's view of an Augustinian efficient cause argument, one similar to the first three ways of Aquinas, and other forms of 'sensible evidence' for God's existence.<sup>107</sup> As Gilson notes, Augustine offers no sort of inference from the existence of particulars then proceeding by way of efficient causality, to infer the First Efficient Cause.<sup>108</sup> Nevertheless, there is room for a causal argument since his views contain all the elements necessary to formulate this type of demonstration and thus, "such a proof is consistent with the most authentic Augustinianism."<sup>109</sup> Can the same be said for an EA argument? Frederick Copleston appears to have briefly considered envisioning the Augustinian ascent in this way, commenting, "the soul seeks happiness and many are inclined to seek it outside themselves: St. Augustine tries to show that creation cannot

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<sup>107</sup> Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, 19–21.

<sup>108</sup> Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, 21.

<sup>109</sup> Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, 19.



give the soul the perfect happiness it seeks, but points upwards to the living God who must be sought within.” What isn’t clear, or rather what isn’t explored by Copleston, is whether the upwards trajectory and its theological implications is established independently of the search for happiness, or if such a search can itself be the avenue for arriving at theological conclusions.

Returning to Augustine’s analysis of the necessary conditions for happiness and its ultimate source in the Supreme Good, we can attempt to formalize the argument in this way:

- (I) All people by nature desire happiness
  - (II) Happiness is achieved *iff* conditions (1) through (6) obtain.
  - (III) Conditions (1) through (6) obtain *iff* God exists.
- Therefore, (IV) God exists.

Unfortunately, the argument is simply a non-sequitur; the conclusion (IV) nowhere follows from premises (I)-(III). All we can conclude from premises (I) and (II) is, *all people desire conditions (1)-(6) to be satisfied*. If we then invoke premise (III), the most the inference can yield is the conditional: *if God exists, then conditions (1)-(6) can be satisfied*.<sup>110</sup> From this it would follow that all people by nature desire that God exists (at least by implicit extensional desire, not necessarily by explicit intentional desire). Yet we are not given here grounds to move from the universal natural *desire* for God to the actuality of God’s existence. These considerations offered by Augustine provide no grounds to assume that our appetitive nature tracks with reality. Further, when considering the wildly discordant nature of contingent desires (e.g., desires to fly like superman, say), we have further grounds to question whether the aspirations of our nature

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<sup>110</sup> Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of Saint Augustine*, 7.

have any necessary purchase on reality. It may be the case, given these considerations alone, that humanity has been condemned to ultimate unhappiness. But as Eugène Portalié observes, “Augustine could never pretend that his happiness was a chimera and that nature, a cruel stepmother, plays a barbaric game by deluding us with yearning impossible of fulfillment.”<sup>111</sup> Yet, if a theistic argument were to be developed, such an assumption about the intelligibility of nature would have to be defended, otherwise the argument would only beg the question. Perhaps Augustine could justify this assumption on other grounds, but to do so he would appeal to (i) our knowledge of God acquired via inward illumination, or (ii) an alternative argument for God’s existence. But in so doing, although he may in the end successfully defend his thesis concerning the intelligibility of nature, he would have shifted the question to the plausibility of (i) or (ii) and entirely away from the quest for happiness as a datum from which to begin.

To attempt a theistic argument from happiness in Augustine would not only represent a totally innovative and implausible interpretation, it would, at best, strain the resources of his thought. Thus, Gilson and others who have read the Augustinian ascent through the natural desire for happiness as necessarily presupposing God are not only interpretively but analytically correct. That God is presupposed in this ascent seems to be not only the best reading of Augustine’s own views, but the only way of ascending given his conceptual resources. What Augustine needs is to further exposit human nature along the lines of formal causality and final causality. Although both are present in his work, the EA cannot be birthed in his writing since he does not sufficiently developed these two

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<sup>111</sup> Portalié, *A Guide to the Thought of Saint Augustine*, 271–72.

causal modes with respect to an analysis of human appetitive and intellectual capacities in the search for happiness.

### **3. Conclusions**

In conclusion, what can be gleaned from Augustine's account of happiness and the *summum bonum* for projects in natural theology? Augustinian happiness is characterized by its close attention to a classical analysis of human nature. In this regard, he contends that all people by nature seek happiness. His account of happiness is also deeply teleological, as it seeks to specify the conditions for human well-being in the fulfillment of essential dispositions. Further, he specifies the nature of the supreme good and the possession of this happiness by identifying at least six necessary conditions of its realization. And Augustine maintains that only in God as the ultimate end are the required conditions for happiness and the supreme good able to be met. Therefore, his view provides some impetus and inferential criteria for undermining finite goods as a source for happiness given human nature. Along this line, he also vividly captures the phenomenology of restlessness, characterizing the experience of dissatisfaction with lower goods. Moreover, Augustine highlights the directionality of natural desires and our natural propensity towards the supreme good. Nevertheless, he does not give any further inferential grounds to move from this dissatisfaction to *inferring* God's existence. He does have the material to make such an inference (e.g., the argument from eternal truths), but it is not applied nor does it require the inferential criteria developed from the search for happiness. What is needed to formulate an EA is to take a developed account of formal and final causality and apply these to the human aspiration for happiness.

Therefore, it must be concluded here that although Augustine allows for projects in natural theology and although he has some of the preliminary resources in his thought to construct an EA, he does not in fact do so. It would be premature to read such an argument into his work and also conceptually insufficient to try and construct such an argument from the material he provides. What this analysis makes clear is that to develop a viable Eudaimonological Argument and thus advance the thesis of this dissertation, we must find grounds for inferring not only that finite goods are inadequate sources of happiness but also find grounds that entail that an infinite and transcendent good exists as the proper source of happiness and ultimate end of human nature. To do so, we must look to connect an analysis of human nature along the lines of formal and final causality in the realist tradition. To see the development of such a project and its potential as a natural theological argument we must turn in the next chapter to Thomas Aquinas.

CHAPTER 2  
AQUINAS, GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE,  
AND THE EUDAIMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Aquinas provides his own account of the ascent from human nature to a supreme good, drawing on the work of Aristotle, Augustine, Boethius, and others.<sup>1</sup> Though an analysis of Augustine's account of this ascent found some grounds and initial inferential criteria for mounting a natural theological argument, it was concluded that he did not develop the ascent in this way and that such a project could not be constructed from within his thought alone. Should the same judgment be rendered for Aquinas' work on human desire and the quest for happiness? The reasons for attending to Aquinas' answer to this question are many. First, his prominence in western theological and philosophical history is distinctively influential. Second, Thomistic arguments for the existence of God have remained an integral part of natural theological investigation since they were first propounded by Aquinas. The third reason for attending to Aquinas when considering whether a viable Eudaimonological Argument can be formulated is that he gave prolonged and systematic attention to the nature of happiness and its theological implications. The central passage relevant for grasping Aquinas' account of the ascent to God and for considering whether or not a Eudaimonological Argument (EA) can be developed is found in his 'Treatise on

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<sup>1</sup> Aquinas' primary sources followed by number of citations in *ST* I-II, questions 1-5 are: Aristotle (66), Augustine (42), Boethius (13), and Pseudo-Dionysius (11). cf. James McEvoy, Michael Dunne, and Servais Pinckaers, eds., "The Desire for Happiness as a Way to God," in *Thomas Aquinas: Approaches to Truth: The Aquinas Lectures at Maynooth, 1996-2001* (Dublin, Ireland: Four Courts Press, 2002), 53.

Happiness' in *Summa Theologiae, prima secundae*, questions 1-5.<sup>2</sup> This section has been lauded by some as "the most finely-structured and complete treatise on happiness ever written in theology or in philosophy."<sup>3</sup> In this treatise Aquinas begins with lower goods and concludes to an infinite good and ultimate end for humanity. It was left however to Garrigou-Lagrange to exposit and develop Aquinas' ideas into the form most relevant to this dissertation. Garrigou maintained that a Eudaimonological Argument in the form of traditional, Thomistic natural theology could plausibly be constructed from the resources provided by Aquinas.

This chapter will argue that Garrigou's development of the EA rightly falls within the Thomistic tradition, particularly by utilizing the metaphysical principles of Aquinas. To advance this position, I will seek to (i) address concerns with Garrigou's EA as regards its continuity and fidelity to the thought of Thomas Aquinas; (ii) provide an exposition and analytic reconstruction of the argument within Garrigou's corpus, identifying its structure, operative assumptions, and underlying metaphysics; and (iii) set Garrigou's construal of the argument in light of and in comparison with the Neo-Scholastic and broader Thomistic tradition. Since part of the aim of this chapter is to identify and locate the EA within the Neo-Scholastic-Thomist tradition, and to surface the underlying metaphysics and operative principles as they pertain to this argument, it will not attempt a comprehensive presentation or defense of this broader philosophical

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<sup>2</sup> The following passages are critical supplements: prima pars, Q.4, A.1-3; Q.5, A.1-6; Q.6, A.1-4; Q. 12, A.1; Q.15, A.1-2; Q.26, A.1-4; A.44, A.3-4; Q.62, A.1; Q. 103, A.1-8); the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book 3, chapters 2-3, 16, 17- 63 (with the following supplemental passages: book 1, ch. 1, 10, 38, 40-42, 72, 74-75, 80, 93, 95, 101-102; book 2, ch. 15, 30-31, 39, 46, 83); *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, book 1 and 10; and the *Compendium Theologiae* I.100-108, 148-149, 165; II.9 (supplements: I.21-22, 68, 71-78, 163, 166-167; II.8).

<sup>3</sup> James McEvoy and Michael Dunne, eds., *Thomas Aquinas: Approaches to Truth: The Aquinas Lectures at Maynooth, 1996-2001* (Dublin, Ireland: Four Courts Press, 2002), 53.

framework itself. Thus, I will not attempt to provide a full exploration of Thomistic action theory, nor enter debates concerning Aquinas' (and thus Garrigou's) intellectualism over and against voluntarism. Neither will there be an attempt at a wholesale defense of positions such as a substance metaphysic, a moderate realist account of formal causality, or the reality of natural teleology. This constraint then precludes addressing various objections to the EA that arise outside this tradition. For example, objections which might be lodged by evolutionary psychology and naturalistic accounts of religious experience, hedonic accounts of happiness, or moral non-realist views of obligation must be relegated to another project. Before these objections could be addressed, one would need a carefully formulated and philosophical substantive presentation of the EA; and this precisely is the burden of this work.

Before considering the interpretive options of Aquinas' EA, it will help to provide a précis of the ascent as he presents it in the 'Treatise on Happiness.' The treatise begins in question one with the end-oriented character of human actions (I-II, 1, 1) and arrives in question two at the pinnacle of the ascent with the conclusion that happiness is only found in possessing God (I-II, 2, 8). The subsequent questions are primarily given to explicating the way or mode in which God is possessed.<sup>4</sup> Van Dyke & Williams aptly summarize the overall thrust of this section,

the central purpose of the *Treatise on Happiness* is to first establish that there is an ultimate end of human life and then to identify what that ultimate end is. The secondary goal is to clarify the mechanic of the actions by which human beings achieve this ultimate end.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Questions 3-5 are mostly focused on what the introduction designated the second phase of analyzing the ascent. See Introduction, pp. 18ff.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Aquinas, Christina Van Dyke, and Thomas Williams, *The Treatise on Happiness • The Treatise on Human Acts* (Indianapolis ; Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2016), 216.

Aquinas begins his detailed analysis with a consideration of the natural teleology inherent in human agency. In the first question (ST I-II, 1) he seeks to establish that there is only one single and ultimate end for human beings, which is their perfection or completion, which Aquinas terms their '*beatitudo*' (cf. articles 6 and 7). To establish this, he first contends that every agent (rational and nonrational) necessarily acts for an end, because the end as a final cause is the cause of all other causes. That is, formal, material, and efficient causes are all only brought about in virtue of the final cause, which inaugurates these other ontological structures. And since agents (personal and non-personal) act as causes, they must therefore act for ends (art. 2). Further, any individual series of human actions necessarily involves a final end, a goal intended for its own sake (art. 4). For, in an essentially ordered series (i.e., of *per se* causes), if the first member is removed, then all other members ordered to the first must also be removed. And, Aquinas maintains, human actions are an essentially ordered series, of means-ends. Thus in human action there must be something first. But, he continues, the first principle in human action is the intention which moves the appetite. If this principle is removed, nothing remains to move the appetite, and if nothing moves the appetite, then nothing is desired; hence no activity would be engaged in. Therefore, there must be a first principle in human action, the intention or end, for the sake of which all subordinated activities in the series are generated. However, this conclusion only establishes that in any given series of human action, something must be sought as an end in itself; it does not establish that there is a single ultimate end for all human activity.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> This point is easily missed, given Aquinas' titling of article 4. However, a number of commentaries have noted the circumscribed nature of the conclusion. Alfred J. Freddoso writes, "Note that the question here is, in effect, whether there is at least one ultimate end of human life. (In fact, what the



In order to demonstrate that there is such a single, ultimate end for all of humanity, Aquinas employs three independent arguments in article 5. First, Aquinas maintains that a thing's ultimate end is its own perfection; and a thing's perfection satisfies all its desires. Thus, a thing's ultimate end satisfies all its desires. Now, he continues, if all desires of a thing are satisfied, then it cannot desire something else. Thus, a thing cannot desire something else beyond its ultimate end. This then entails that the species *humanity* is intended to have all of its desires rest in its perfection; and this, it follows, is humanity's ultimate end. This argument trades off the assumption that all natural substances have an ultimate end; an assumption that naturally entails a final purpose for the nature *human*, but would itself carry little force standing alone without further justification. The second argument in article 5 argues from analogy with the nature of the rational process, understood as a type of foundationalism. Aquinas observes a parallel between our rational and appetitive natures. Just as there are first principles in reasoning, Aquinas argues, so there are first principles in desire; and the first principle in desire is the ultimate end (cf. art. 4). Now, Aquinas invokes a principle concerning the structure of formal causality: *natura non tendit nisi ad unum* (which Gilby's interpretive translation renders, 'nature has a unifying tendency').<sup>7</sup> Thus, the will tends to one thing as its ultimate end. Formal causes unify, coordinate, and subordinate final causes, so as to

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argument seems to show is only that each human act must have an ultimate or last end.) Even if the answer is yes, St. Thomas does not take himself to have shown that there is just one end for any particular human being or, better, human life (this is shown in art. 5) or just one (or the same) end for all human beings (this is discussed in art. 7 and again at the very end of q. 5). His point here is simply that every complete human action presupposes some ultimate end, the desire for which gets the action started." See Alfred J. Freddoso, "Treatise on Beatitude," n.d., chap. 1, art. 4, accessed January 16, 2017, <http://www3.nd.edu/~afreddos/courses/406/happy.htm>; Aquinas, Dyke, and Williams, *The Treatise on Happiness • The Treatise on Human Acts*, 218.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Volume 16, Purpose and Happiness: 1a2ae. 1-5*, ed. Thomas Gilby (Cambridge u.a.: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 21.

arrange them under a single ultimate end. There is another expression which begs for further justification, and entails his conclusion: the operative assumption in the previous argument. The third argument which Aquinas advances is from a genus-species explication of action theory. He argues, since voluntary actions receive their species from their end, they receive their genus from their ultimate end. Since voluntary actions have one genus (e.g., *human*), they have one ultimate end. Again, Aquinas's justification for concluding to an ultimate end for humanity is tied to the broader assumption about the role of ultimate ends of formal causes more generally. Just as there is one ultimate end for all humanity by their nature, so also should an individual's will be set on one ultimate end.

Yet this only identifies humanity's formal end, leaving the material end – the objects or states of affairs in which happiness consists – unresolved. It is the second question (ST I-II, 2) which takes up this subsequent task. To identify the object and state of affairs which constitute the ultimate end, Aquinas initially proceeds by a type of *via negativa*, successively surveying external goods (art. 1-4), bodily goods (art. 5 and 6), and lastly goods of the soul (art. 7), determining that each is deficient. He concludes in the final article that in principle no finite good provides the necessary conditions for human completion and/or perfection (art. 7). Aquinas considers each good individually and offers reasons for rejecting it as well as providing additional general arguments against these types of goods as a whole (cf. art. 5, art. 7). These, however, can here be ignored, because his argument culminates in his case which gives further reason to reject such lower goods, and also offers positive argumentation of the movement from a plurality of finite goods to a single, transcendent one. First, in article 7 (*ad 1*), Aquinas

argues implicitly and enthymematically that happiness must consist in some external object. The form of dynamic substances includes its power/faculty (*potentia*), habit/disposition (*habitus*), act/activity (*actus*); thus the good will constitutes the perfection of each of these. Yet, each of these is inherently related and ordered to the next. Faculties are ordered to developing habits (reliable ways of exhibiting the latent power), and habits are ordered towards acts. However, all acts aim at objects. Given that man is a dynamic substance, constituted by faculty (or, faculties), habit(s), and act(s), then the perfection of each ultimate is directed toward an object as the final good. That is, as Aquinas writes, “the good of the soul is not only power, habit, or act, but also the object of these, which is something outside” (*ST I-II*, 2, 7). Next, and most crucially in his ascent to God, Aquinas develops a second consideration in article 8 that was mentioned in the previous one. According to Aquinas, human perfection or completion entails that the will is completely satiated; nothing remains to be desired. The appetitive power of the will is responsive to the ends presented by the intellect. Now, as Aquinas observes, our intellectual faculties are able to grasp the universal. What this cognitive power for universals entails, however, is that the will remains insatiate apart from possessing a universal good. But since the universal good is not found in any particular, finite good, it can only be found in the supreme good, God. He concisely states,

For happiness is the perfect good, which lulls the appetite altogether... Now the object of the will...is the universal good; just as the object of the intellect is the universal true. Hence it is evident that nothing can lull man's will, save the universal good. This is to be found, not in any creature, but in God alone (*ST I-II*, 2, 8).

The remaining questions in the treatise on happiness are given primarily to exploring the nature of the union or relation between man and God (*ST I-II*, 3-5).

Although this brief outline of the ascent from ends in human actions to God is informative and suggestive, further work and important questions remain before determining whether or not it has the potential for a project in natural theology in the form of a Eudaimonological Argument (EA). It is to that end, that the work of Garrigou-Lagrange comes to the forefront. As noted in chapter one, Garrigou's exposé of proofs for the existence of God maintains that "St. Thomas...also rises to the *maxime bonum*...with the argument that concludes that there is a first and sovereign good, ...by which we rise to the primary object of desire, ...the source of all happiness."<sup>8</sup> Although Garrigou formulates the argument in a variety of different ways and cites numerous passages in Aquinas, he principally references the 'treatise on happiness' (*ST* I-II, question 2, articles 7 and 8) and identifies it as one possible expansion of the *Via Quarta*.<sup>9</sup> This judgment about the prospects for the EA, however, has not been widely recognized in the Thomistic and Neoscholastic tradition. Moreover, since Garrigou addressed this question in a variety of contexts over several decades, and with diverse objectives, his characterization of the topic admits of various construals and formulations into many different possible arguments.

## 1. Interpretive Options in the Thomistic Tradition

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<sup>8</sup> Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature: A Thomistic Solution of Certain Agnostic Antinomies, Volume 1*, trans. Bede Rose, 5th ed., vol. 1 (London; St. Louis: Herder Book Co, 1949), 332.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Beatitude: A Commentary on St. Thomas' Theological Summa, Ia Iiae, Qq. 1-54* (B. Herder Book Co, 1956), 79–81; Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:331–337; Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Réalisme Du Principe de Finalité* (Paris, France: Desclée de Brouwer, 1932), chap. 5.

Prior to attempting to exposit and analytically reconstruct the Eudaimonological Argument in Garrigou's hands, we must investigate its place in the Thomistic tradition and inquire as to whether it represents a genuine elucidation or extension of the work of Aquinas. Perhaps an account of happiness should not be viewed as any kind of project in natural theology, but located and confined to some other area of Thomistic philosophy or theology. This section will first offer a taxonomy of interpretive options on the EA in the Thomistic tradition, noting representative figures in each. Secondly, it will offer a number of reasons for deeming as feasible Garrigou's use of the EA as a committed Thomist.

Three distinct (though not always explicit) positions have been taken on the question of whether or not one can plausibly construct the EA within the Thomist tradition: (i) affirmative readings, which see this argument as faithfully continuing in the thought of Aquinas; (ii) negative readings, which deny that the EA represents a legitimate expression of Aquinas; and (iii) absent readings, which though directly attending to the respective passages and topics within Aquinas nevertheless fail to acknowledge or recognize the EA.<sup>10</sup>

The affirmative reading of the EA as a genuinely Thomistic project is not without representatives. As we have seen, Aquinas presents his own account of the ascent from the desire for happiness, through a hierarchy of goods, to God as the universal good (*ST* I-II, 1-2), and Garrigou repeatedly makes explicit reference to *ST* I-II, 2, 7-8 as the

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<sup>10</sup> It is important to note that this delineation of interpretive positions on the EA is entirely original with this work and is not a simple retracing of familiar lines. Since this topic has only received scant attention, there is no established and recognized literature or history on this particular question.

textual source for his reading of Aquinas as providing a type of proof.<sup>11</sup> Further, Garrigou also directly identifies this argument with Aquinas' *Quinque Viae*, most often with the *Via Quarta* (*ST I, 2, 3*). He notes, "St. Thomas by the *via quarta* also rises to the *maxime bonum*" and that "this demonstration [i.e., the argument from natural desire for an infinite good] does not differ from the *via quarta* of St. Thomas."<sup>12</sup> Indeed, in his extended survey and exposition of the *Quinque Viae* in both *God, His Existence and His Nature* and *The One God*, he addresses the argument from natural desire under the *Via Quarta*. Moreover, Garrigou is not alone in this affirmative reading. Throughout his works Garrigou makes reference to a few immediate Dominican precursors to his own presentation of the argument. He begins his serious study of Aquinas under the direction of Ambroise Gardeil (1859-1931), the regent of studies during Garrigou's time at the Dominican *stadium* at Le Saulchoir.<sup>13</sup> Gardeil offered his own account of the EA in his 1898 article "L'Action, ses Exigences et ses Ressources Subjectives."<sup>14</sup> And Garrigou notes his indebtedness to Gardeil on this front writing that this proof "was explained in a

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<sup>11</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5; Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God: A Commentary on the First Part of Saint Thomas' Theological Summa*, trans. Bede Rose (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012), chap. 2; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Beatitude*, 70–81.

<sup>12</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:332, 335.; Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God*, chap. 2. However, in other places he makes incidental remarks indicating how the argument is tied to one of the other *viae* of Aquinas. We will postpone the question of how specifically the argument is related to the *quinque viae* to the next section.

<sup>13</sup> Richard O. P. Peddicord, *The Sacred Monster Of Thomism: An Introduction to the Life and Legacy of Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P.*, 1st ed. (South Bend, IN: St. Augustines Press, 2004), 11, 115–118; Jude Chua Soo Meng and Thomas Crean, *Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP: Teacher of Thomism* ([www.thomisticenstitute.wordpress.com](http://www.thomisticenstitute.wordpress.com): Thomistic e-nstitute, 2014), 46, 69.

<sup>14</sup> Ambroise Gardeil, "L'Action, Ses Exigences et Ses Ressources Subjectives," *Revue Thomiste* (1898); Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:332; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, 3.

profound manner by Father Gardeil.”<sup>15</sup> Garrigou also notes that Roland-Gosseling defended this proof in the 1924 article, “Le désir naturel du bonheur et l’existence de Dieu”.<sup>16</sup> The last Dominican to propound the argument that Garrigou referenced was the French philosopher Antonin-Dalmace Sertillanges (1863-1948), in his 1905 work *Les Sources de Notre Croyance en Dieu*.<sup>17</sup> Although Garrigou only tangentially referenced these works, his citation of these Dominican theologians and philosophers demonstrates that in constructing his own version of the EA, he was neither operating in a vacuum nor engaging in a purely innovative use of the Thomistic tradition.

Besides these tangential references, a few recent recognitions of the EA in the Thomist tradition are noteworthy. The contemporary Dominican Servais-Théodore Pinckaers recognized the possibility of reading the ‘treatise on happiness’ as an exercise in natural theology.<sup>18</sup> Although his concern with the treatise was to address the relationship between happiness and morality, he suggested that “Thomas traces for us, beginning with the desire for happiness, a path which rises toward God, a path comparable to the ways of demonstrating the existence of God.”<sup>19</sup> The second more recent example of the affirmative reading of the EA in the Thomistic tradition is made evident by the Jesuit philosopher, George Hayward Joyce (1864-1943). Joyce offered one

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<sup>15</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

<sup>16</sup> M. D. Roland-Gosselin, “Le Désir Du Bonheur et L’existence de Dieu,” *Revue Des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 13 (1924): 162–172.

<sup>17</sup> Antonin-Dalmace Sertillanges, vol. 1 (Paris, France: Perrin, 1905), [www.sudoc.fr/099022664](http://www.sudoc.fr/099022664) and [www.worldcat.org/search?q=no%3A458811506](http://www.worldcat.org/search?q=no%3A458811506); Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:337.

<sup>18</sup> McEvoy, Dunne, and Pinckaers, “The Desire for Happiness as a Way to God.”

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 56. Though he doesn’t offer anything further to explain the features of the argument or how it might be related to Aquinas’ demonstration of God’s existence.

of the most detailed treatments of the argument apart from the work of Garrigou, which he set down in his 1923 volume, *Principles of Natural Theology*.<sup>20</sup> As Joyce considered what he designated as a family of ‘moral arguments’, he noted that

[t]he proof of God's existence drawn from man's desire of beatitude resembles that from conscience in that it considers man in his capacity as a voluntary agent, and finds in human nature viewed under this aspect, data which suffice to establish the existence of God.<sup>21</sup>

Other than these examples, however, the Thomistic tradition has not given much place or recognition to the ascent from natural human ends and the desire for happiness as an exercise in natural theology.<sup>22</sup>

One last recognition of the EA in the Thomist tradition comes from the work by recent Transcendental Thomists. Transcendental Thomism began in the work of authors such as Joseph Maréchal (1878-1944), Karl Rahner (1904-84), and Bernard Lonergan (1904-84), in which they sought to reconcile Thomism with a Cartesian subjectivist approach to knowledge in general, and with the Kantian epistemic strictures in particular.<sup>23</sup> But it was two authors in particular, W. Norris Clarke and Joseph Donceel who followed the work of Maréchal, Rahner, and Lonergan, and explicitly adapted a

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<sup>20</sup> George Hayward Joyce, *Principles of Natural Theology* (Longmans, Green & Co, 1923), chap. 5, sec iii.

<sup>21</sup> Joyce, *Principles of Natural Theology*, 166.

<sup>22</sup> There are two brief but noteworthy references corroborating the affirmative reading that should be mentioned here. First, Copleston's review of the *via quarta* connects it with the ladder of love in Plato's Symposium. And Gilby lists *ST I-II*, 2, 8 (a frequent reference of Garrigou's) under the *via quarta* as well. However, neither author offers further considerations. Cf. F. C. Copleston, *Aquinas: An Introduction to the Life and Work of the Great Medieval Thinker* (Westminster, London: Penguin Books, 1956), 43; Thomas Aquinas and Thomas Gilby, *St. Thomas Aquinas: Philosophical Texts* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), 62.

<sup>23</sup> Gerald A. McCool, “Thomism, Modern,” in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, ed. Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Hugh Pyper, 1st ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 704; W. Norris Clarke, *Explorations in Metaphysics: Being-God-Person*, 1st ed. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), xii–xiii.



form of the Eudaimonological Argument so that it was merged with Kantian epistemology and methodology.<sup>24</sup> They begin from with the ‘dynamism of the will’ and the structure of human thought as oriented toward Infinite Being, and attempt to argue either that this establishes the ontological possibility of such a Being, or that it serves as the necessary a priori condition for all thought. Given the adoption of Kant’s framework, however, this represents a notable departure from these preceding formulations of the EA within traditional Thomism. This work will return to Kant and the Transcendental Thomists in chapter four.

In sharp contrast to the *affirmative* reading, we can identify a second collection of interpreters of Aquinas which provide a *negative reading*; in various ways each interpreter denies that the EA represents a legitimate expression of the thought of Aquinas. Most (if not all) of these examples of the negative reading have not read Aquinas’ work as an attempt to demonstrate God’s existence because it is viewed as an account that necessarily assumes that God’s existence has already been independently established. Elders for example, writes, “It appears that wherever [Aquinas] speaks of man’s happiness, God’s existence is presupposed.” And Elders acknowledges and is mindful of the fact that Garrigou views it as a natural theological argument.<sup>25</sup> Russell Pannier considers this question at the close of his article, "Aquinas on the Ultimate End

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<sup>24</sup> W. Norris Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God: A New Thomistic Perspective*, 2nd Edition, 2nd ed. (Fordham University Press, 2007); W. Norris Clarke, *The One and the Many: A Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001); Joseph F. Donceel, *The Searching Mind: An Introduction to a Philosophy of God* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979); Joseph F. Donceel, *Natural Theology* (New York, NY: Sheed and Ward, 1962), chap. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Leo J. Elders, *The Philosophical Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Academic Publishing, 1990), 133.

of Human Existence."<sup>26</sup> Here he concedes and defends Aquinas' argument that only God meets the requisite conditions for happiness; but then he suggests that God's existence is a logically prior issue that must be established independently, and implicitly suggests we need to look to Aquinas separate treatments of God's existence.<sup>27</sup> This assessment is reflected in earlier Scholastics, notably, Désiré-Joseph Mercier and Charles Reinhard Baschab, who both considered the EA inadequate and inconclusive because it depends on assumptions which are unjustified apart from a theological grounding.<sup>28</sup>

Basing the *negative reading* on the view that knowledge of God is presupposed in accounting for human happiness is not surprising given Aquinas' comments in three pertinent passages: *ST I*, 2, 1; *ST I-II*, 2, 5; and *SCG III*, 25, 12. In the first passage (*ST I*, 2, 1), Aquinas observes,

To know that God exists in a general and confused way is implanted in us by nature, inasmuch as God is man's beatitude. For man naturally desires happiness, and what is naturally desired by man must be naturally known to him. This, however, is not to know absolutely that God exists; just as to know that someone is approaching is not the same as to know that Peter is approaching, even though it is Peter who is approaching; for many there are who imagine that man's perfect good which is happiness, consists in riches, and others in pleasures, and others in something else.

Thus, the desire for happiness, at best only results in this obscured awareness and is not capable of providing a demonstration. In the second passage (*ST I-II*, 2, 5, objection and reply 3), Aquinas is addressing an argument meant to establish that the health of the body is what happiness consists in. However, the argument makes the ultimate final cause

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<sup>26</sup> Russell Pannier, "Aquinas on the Ultimate End of Human Existence," *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 3, no. 4 (2000): 189.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Désiré-Joseph Mercier, *A Manual Of Modern Scholastic Philosophy Cardinal Mercier*, vol. II (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1917), 55–56; Charles Reinhard Baschab, *A Manual of Neo-Scholastic Philosophy*, 3rd ed. (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1929). 398-399.

necessarily conditioned upon the first efficient cause. The objection contends that the more universal a thing is, the higher the principle from which it depends, because the higher a cause is, the greater the scope of its power. Now, just as the causality of the efficient cause consists in its flowing into something, so the causality of the end consists in its drawing the appetite. Therefore, just as the First Cause is that which flows into all things, so the last end is that which attracts the desire of all. On these grounds, the last ultimate end (which, in context, is the object of happiness) is premised upon the assumption of the first cause as the efficient source of being; recognition of the former depends upon demonstration of the former. In the third passage (*SCG* III, 25, 12), Aquinas writes,

Moreover, for each effect that he knows, man naturally desires to know the cause. Now, the human intellect knows universal being. So, he naturally desires to know its cause, which is God alone.... Now, a person has not attained his ultimate end until natural desire comes to rest. Therefore, for human happiness which is the ultimate end it is not enough to have merely any kind of intelligible knowledge; there must be divine knowledge, as an ultimate end, to terminate the natural desire. So, the ultimate end of man is the knowledge of God.

It is the desire to know the efficient causes behind effects, which causes the mind to retrace backwards, and this desire remains unsatiated until one can arrive at the ultimate first cause.

The interpretive force of these passages as supporting the *negative reading* is strengthened when considering the contextual placement of Aquinas' extended treatments of happiness in his work. The *Summa Theologiae, Prima Pars* has as its structure the *exitus* of things from God and is where he places his demonstrations for God's existence; but the *Prima Secundae* opens with the 'treatise on happiness' and marks the *reditus* of

all things toward God.<sup>29</sup> In the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book I (ch. 13) is given to arguing for God’s existence, and it is not until well into Book III (chs. 16-63) that Aquinas takes up the topic of human happiness as an ultimate end.<sup>30</sup> In one of his last works, *The Compendium of Theology*, Aquinas offers a brief summary of the First Way in only the third chapter of the first treatise, but does not address questions concerning happiness until chapters 163-166. This interpretation based on contextual placement is illustrated by the analytic Thomist John Haldane’s *negative reading*. Haldane notes that “Aquinas is in a position to use the fact of a natural desire for God to argue for the existence of God. But this he does not seem to do, or at least not directly in the way one might now imagine.”<sup>31</sup> His reason for seeing Aquinas in this way is that “by that point in the *Summa*, however, Aquinas has already presented the ‘five ways’...and so is not arguing for, but presuming the existence of, God.”<sup>32</sup> Thus, although Haldane advances his own version of the EA, he doesn’t see it as representing the thought of Aquinas.

The *negative reading* on the possibility of locating the EA in Aquinas can be divided into two groups. First, there are those that hold that God’s existence must be established through natural reason prior to utilizing the idea in any role explicating human perfection. Jan Aertsen argues that Aquinas presupposes a first efficient cause that has already been established and independently demonstrated via natural reason, which

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<sup>29</sup> Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Aquinas’s Summa: Background, Structure, and Reception* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 27.

<sup>30</sup> Brian Davies, *Thomas Aquinas’s Summa Contra Gentiles: A Guide and Commentary*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016), 222.

<sup>31</sup> John Haldane, *Reasonable Faith*, 1st ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

then prompts the innate natural desire to know this ultimate cause of things.<sup>33</sup> Also, authors such as Copleston, Kretzmann, and Pasnau & Shields, all concur in this reading on Aquinas' account of humanity's *summum bonum*.<sup>34</sup> In addition, Alan Donagan claims that Aquinas' account of the *summum bonum* is only a central piece of his *moral philosophy*, not his natural theology. Besides, his demonstration of God's existence is independent of his reflections in this area.<sup>35</sup> In the second group are those who hold that God must be known supernaturally before giving him a role with respect to human happiness. Charles Covell contends that "the first principles of the natural law were self-evident to human reason, whereas the knowledge that union with God ranked as the final human end could be acquired only through revelation."<sup>36</sup> Henri de Lubac levels a similar charge in his attacks on the possibility of a state of pure nature, writing, "It remains necessary therefore to show how the supernatural is a free gift not only in relation to a

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<sup>33</sup> Jan A. Aertsen, "Aquinas's Philosophy in Its Historical Setting," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump, 1st ed. (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 31–32.

<sup>34</sup> F. C. Copleston, *Aquinas: An Introduction to the Life and Work of the Great Medieval Thinker* (Penguin Books, 1956); Norman Kretzmann, *The Metaphysics of Providence: Aquinas's Natural Theology in Summa Contra Gentiles III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 93-97 chap. 4; Robert Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: A Philosophical Study of Summa Theologiae, 1a 75-89* (Cambridge University Press, 2001); Robert Pasnau and Christopher Shields, *The Philosophy Of Aquinas* (Westview Press, 2003). Kretzmann, citing William Alston, distinguishes the type of theology in *SCG* book III from the way this dissertation defined natural theology (cf. chapter 1), as "attempts to show that we can attain the best understanding of this or that area of our experience or sphere of concern—morality, human life, society, human wickedness, science, art, mathematics, or whatever— if we look at it from the standpoint of a theistic . . . metaphysics (p. 289)." Kretzmann suggests that it is this type of explanatory theology that Aquinas is engaged in book III, which includes his analysis of the happiness and the ultimate end. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>35</sup> Alan Donagan, *Human Ends and Human Actions: An Exploration in St. Thomas's Treatment* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1985), 15.

<sup>36</sup> Charles Covell, *The Defence of Natural Law: A Study of the Ideas of Law and Justice in the Writings of Lon L. Fuller, Michael Oakeshot, F. A. Hayek, Ronald Dworkin and John Finnis*, 1992 edition. (New York, N.Y: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992), 222–223; Anthony J. Lisska, *Aquinas's Theory of Natural Law: An Analytic Reconstruction* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1998), 127.

given hypothetical human nature...but [as] mankind created by God [in order] to see him.”<sup>37</sup> This leads him to reject a natural apprehension of a final end and happiness as this would, on de Lubac’s view, circumvents and mitigates the gratuitous work of God.<sup>38</sup>

The last interpretive stance on the prospects of the EA in the work of Aquinas is the *Absent Reading*, which identifies interpreters who do not acknowledge or recognize a *Eudaimonological Argument*, despite directly attending to the respective passages and topics within Aquinas. Identifying this interpretive option is the most tenuous, as a failure of an author to make reference to or recognize an EA does not entail that they would reject it as an exercise in natural theology. To make this further inference would be to construct a fallacious argument from silence. Nevertheless, the absence of any consideration of the EA in interpreters who are working with the principal texts and are aware of the broader tradition of Thomistic natural theology is noteworthy; if, for no other reason, than to demonstrate the neglect of the EA in the Thomist tradition. Two of the leading NeoThomists in the twentieth century, Etienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain, both engage the topic(s), passages, and issues, which (on Garrigou’s view) naturally give rise to the Eudaimonological Argument, but nevertheless fall short of doing so themselves or even explicitly recognizing the argument. Etienne Gilson, for example, traces the main steps of the EA (see next section) but since he offers no second order reflections on the nature of this ascent, and his presentation is ambiguous as to whether

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<sup>37</sup> Henri de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998), 55.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 15; Lawrence Feingold, *The Natural Desire to See God According to St. Thomas and His Interpreters*, 2nd ed. (Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2010), 313–314.

he considers it a natural theological argument.<sup>39</sup> However, this comes in the final chapter of *The Christian Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*, well after having surveyed his natural theology with no mention of this ascent.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, any such argument resembling the EA is absent from his other surveys of natural theology.<sup>41</sup> In his own survey and presentation of natural theology, *Approaches to God*, Jacques Maritain considers the *Via Quarta*, the natural desire to see God, along with final causality, and recognizes the human desire for the infinite, but does not provide a formulation of references to any type of Eudaimonological Argument.<sup>42</sup> Maritain's analysis of the natural desire to see God is indeed a focus of his, but addresses the second phase of the ascent (cf. the phases noted in the introduction to this dissertation). This second phase seeks to address the *nature of the union with God*.<sup>43</sup>

Contemporary writers also exhibit this same neglect of the argument. Christopher Martin, in his analysis and assessment of the Fifth Way, considers a 'parallel argument' from human well-being that is still in the realm of 'natural theology'.<sup>44</sup> However, he remains uncommitted and expressly skeptical about mounting such an argument. John F.

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<sup>39</sup> Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy Of St Thomas Aquinas* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 352.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. III.

<sup>41</sup> Etienne Gilson, *Elements of Christian Philosophy* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), chaps. 3–4.

<sup>42</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Approaches to God* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1978), chaps. 2 & 5.

<sup>43</sup> Jacques Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, ed. Ralph M. McInerny, trans. Gerald B. Phelan, 1 edition. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 264ff.; Jacques Maritain, *Integral Humanism: Temporal and Spiritual Problems of a New Christendom*, trans. Joseph W. Evans (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968), 20–23; Ralph McInerny, *Praeambula Fidei: Thomism and the God of the Philosophers* (Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 124–125.

<sup>44</sup> Christopher Martin, *Thomas Aquinas: God and Explanations*, 1st ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 201–202.

Wippel, in his detailed inquiry and examination into the *Via Quarta*, actually connects it with Boethius' ascent in the *Consolation of Philosophy* and also references Aquinas' 'treatise on happiness', but never recognizes any possible formulation of a type of Eudaimonological Argument.<sup>45</sup> Other omissions of the arguments are plentiful and are summarily illustrated by (i) commentaries on the 'treatise on happiness' which fail to mention a natural theological argument,<sup>46</sup> (ii) the train of classic and recent Neo-Scholastic writers such as Thomas Harper, Peter Coffey, Maurice Holloway, Charles Hart, and John Peterson, which leave no mention of anything resembling the *Eudaimonological Argument*, and (iii) contemporary Thomists who leave out mention of the EA, including Ralph McInerny and Eleonore Stump.<sup>47</sup>

Given the *negative* and *absent* readings of the EA in Aquinas, the affirmative interpretations of Garrigou and others face two central interpretive problems. First, as made evident by the *absent reading*, the EA is not obviously present in the *Quinque Viae* nor is it included in the most standard exposés of Thomistic natural theology. Even Jesuit philosopher R. P. Phillips, who is aware of and provides a summary for "the argument from natural desire for perfect good" in the second volume of his *Modern Thomistic*

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<sup>45</sup> John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 469–479.

<sup>46</sup> Brian Davies, *Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologiae: A Guide and Commentary*, 1st ed. (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Aquinas, Dyke, and Williams, *The Treatise on Happiness • The Treatise on Human Acts*; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*.

<sup>47</sup> Thomas Harper, *The Metaphysics Of The School*, ed. Paul A. Böer (London: Veritas Splendor Publications, 2012); Peter Coffey, *Ontology or the Theory of Being: An Introduction to General Metaphysics* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1918); Maurice R. Holloway, *An Introduction to Natural Theology* (Charlottesville, VA: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959); Charles A. Hart, *Thomistic Metaphysics: An Inquiry Into the Act of Existing* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959); John Peterson, *Aquinas: A New Introduction* (Lanham, Maryland: UPA, 2008); McInerny, *Praeambula Fidei*; Ralph McInerny, *First Glance At Thomas Aquinas*, 1st ed. (University of Notre Dame Press, 1989), 103-112-179; Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas* (Routledge, 2003).



*Philosophy*, judges that it and similar arguments “have nothing distinctly Thomist about them.”<sup>48</sup> The second interpretive problem, made evident by the *negative reading*, is that the contextual placement of Aquinas’ treatment of the ascent seems to preclude it as an argument for God’s existence and makes it most plausibly read as an explication of Thomistic anthropology, eudemonistic ethics, natural law, or even a mere development of his philosophical theology. As Thomas Williams notes of Aquinas’ account of happiness in the *Summa Theologiae* I-II, “The placement of this argument is no accident, since the notion of an end is of fundamental importance not only in Aquinas’s theory of human action but in his accounts of practical reasoning, law, and the virtues.”<sup>49</sup> Do these considerations undercut the claim of Garrigou and others to be working in line with the angelic doctor?

Since Garrigou never addressed these concerns, answering this challenge requires marshaling considerations implicit in his writings as well as constructing plausible responses which go beyond his work. In this vein, there are three plausible hermeneutical considerations which make Garrigou’s interpretation and development of the EA a legitimate expression and extension of the work of Aquinas. The first hermeneutical consideration is the methodological distinction, raised only briefly in passing in a few places by Garrigou, between the *via inventionis* and the *via iudicii*. After his exposé of the *Quinque Viae*, Garrigou describes their method as “ascending metaphysics, which rises from sensible things up to God (*via inventionis*)” and then contrasts this with “the

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<sup>48</sup> R.P Phillips, *Modern Thomistic Philosophy, Vol II*, vol. 2 (London: Burns, Oates, & Washbourne, 1934), 299–300.

<sup>49</sup> Thomas Williams, “Happiness,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, ed. Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump, Reprint edition. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 199.

metaphysics of the descending order, which judges everything by the ultimate reasons of things (*via iudicii*).”<sup>50</sup> The recognition of these two inverse methods, Garrigou maintains, is derived from Aquinas himself in *ST I*, 79, 9:

Now these two—namely, eternal and temporal —are related to our knowledge in this way, that one of them is the means of knowing the other. For by way of discovery [*viam inventionis*], we come through knowledge of temporal things to that of things eternal...while by way of judgment [*via vero iudicii*], from eternal things already known, we judge of temporal things, and according to laws of things eternal we dispose of temporal things.

Their reciprocity demonstrates the mind’s freedom to trace the ontological relationship in either direction when considering particular, finite features and substances in the world and their proper cause. In the *via inventionis*, “the intellect proceeds from initial, self-evident principles to scientific conclusions,” while in the *via iudicii* “the intellect judges in light of its more ultimate discoveries.”<sup>51</sup> Given that Aquinas is operating within the *exitus-reditus* metaphysical scheme developed from Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius, it is not surprising to uncover a corresponding epistemological scheme.<sup>52</sup> Elsewhere, Garrigou writes,

Theological speculation follows the reverse order of philosophical speculation; it argues from God to created things, and discusses the great metaphysical problems concerning God and the world, not with reference to the existence of God, but as presented by creation, conservation, and divine movement.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:373; cf. 390.

<sup>51</sup> Thomas Joseph White, *Wisdom in the Face of Modernity: A Study in Thomistic Natural Theology* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2009), xxix.

<sup>52</sup> Aquinas writes, “We must consider, further, that every effect is returned to the cause from which it proceeds, as the Platonists maintain” (DDN 1, 3, 94). Cf. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), 31, 37.

<sup>53</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:73.

This distinction provides a key interpretive principle to working with various sections of Aquinas' material. In any given treatise or section where Aquinas' intention may be primarily concerned with elucidating a topic *via iudicii*, this same topic can nevertheless be considered *via inventionis*. In fact, this same inverse relationship considered by these two methods is exhibited elsewhere by Aquinas; a few examples should suffice. Aquinas considers the doctrine of participation from different directions in passages such as the *Via Quarta*, as well as the *Summa Theologiae* I question 44, and *De Potentia* question 3 article 5. In each of these he is analyzing the essential natures of creatures, which merely share in *esse*, and their relationship to the *ipsum esse subsistens*. However, in the *Via Quarta* Aquinas is utilizing the *via inventionis*, arguing from limited participations of perfections to a *maxime ens*. While in places such as *ST* question 44 and *De Potentia* question 3, he is tracing the *via iudicii*, considering the nature of participation given the existence of God as the ultimate exemplar and as the source of all being. Both passages address the same topic, but do so in a different conceptual directions than the *Via Quarta*. Another example occurs regarding to the work of efficient causation in conserving being. In the *Via Secunda*, he argues from the need of creatures for sustaining efficient causes, while in *ST* I, question 104, and question 3, Aquinas is working in the *via iudicii*, maintaining that given God's nature and work, he must sustain creatures immediately in existence.<sup>54</sup> As a last example, in *De Veritate* question 5 article 2, Aquinas' stated purpose is to show how the world is governed by divine providence. However, in so

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:248.

doing he also presents a natural theological argument from final causality akin to the fifth way.<sup>55</sup>

With this distinction in place, we can understand how Garrigou makes use of Aquinas' ideas in various passages, including the treatise on happiness and as it relates to the EA. An affirmative reading on the EA in the line of Garrigou can concede that in the 'treatise on happiness' Aquinas is conducting 'theological speculation', working from the assumption of God's existence in the manner of the *via judicii*, but this does not preclude the possibility of working in the inverse direction, considering happiness in an ascending metaphysics which leads to God as the terminus. Although not considering the prospects of natural theology, John Oesterle in his introduction and commentary to the treatise, notes that Aquinas approached the question as "a theologian...operating in the framework of revealed truths."<sup>56</sup> Yet, Oesterle cautions, "the discussion and argumentation draw largely on philosophical knowledge" so that "even those who are not aware of God's revelation of a supernatural end for man...can gather much understanding and benefit from these pages on man's quest for happiness."<sup>57</sup> Garrigou himself recognizes and presents the Thomistic account of happiness as presupposing the reality of God and delineating its implications for moral theology in *Beatitude: A Commentary*, and for theological anthropology in *Life Everlasting*.<sup>58</sup> But this, of course, does not prevent

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<sup>55</sup> Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 412.

<sup>56</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Treatise On Happiness*, trans. John A. Oesterle, ND Series in Great Books (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), xiii.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, xv.

<sup>58</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Beatitude*, 71–72; Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Life Everlasting and the Immensity of the Soul: A Theological Treatise on the Four Last Things: Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell*, trans. Patrick Cummins (Charlotte, NC: TAN Books and Publishers, 2009), 9–10.

him from engaging in ‘philosophical speculation’ on happiness, considering the movement from features of human nature to the supreme good.

A second crucial hermeneutical consideration, which makes Garrigou’s interpretation and development of the EA a legitimate expression and extension of the work of Aquinas, is found in examining the interpretive assumptions surrounding the *locus classicus* for Thomistic natural theology, the *Quinque Viae* (ST I, 2, 3). There are two, often unrecognized assumptions about the role of this article in Aquinas’ corpus and that lead to a restrictive construal of the arguments: first, that these five arguments exhaust Aquinas’ natural theology; second, that Aquinas’ presentation of these five arguments in question 2, article 3 is complete and unabridged (or, at least substantially so). This restrictive construal is illustrated by critiques of interpreters who find them insufficiently developed or opaque, without seeking recourse to parallel treatments or related discussions in Aquinas’ works. Christopher Martin, for example, admits to complete perplexity concerning the *Via Quarta*, describing it as a ‘mystery’, and is even pessimistic at the prospects of formulating it as an argument for God’s existence.<sup>59</sup> Yet, Martin finds almost no recourse to material throughout Aquinas’ works which might help elucidate its structure, principles, grounds, and implications.<sup>60</sup> Another illustration of the restrictive construal of the arguments in this article is provided by John F. Wippel’s comments on the *Via Prima*.<sup>61</sup> Wippel asks, “is the argument based exclusively on motion as caused in the order of efficient causality, or does it ultimately shift to the order

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<sup>59</sup> Martin, *Thomas Aquinas*, 171, 176.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 171–178.

<sup>61</sup> Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 458.

of final causality?”<sup>62</sup> He answers the question negatively because the argument does not make explicit reference to the order of desire or final causality and because the examples mentioned only illustrate efficient causality.

Closer investigation however reveals that both of the assumptions which motivate the restrictive construal of the arguments in the *Quinque Viae* are misguided and unnecessarily constricting. First, as John Peterson reminds, Aquinas “was a theist who thought that theism could be proved by metaphysical arguments. These include but are not confined to the celebrated ‘five ways’.”<sup>63</sup> Thus, it does little to circumvent the possibility of developing an authentic Thomistic EA by citing its absence in the *Quinque Viae*. But more importantly, and reflecting an interpretive assumption that runs throughout Garrigou’s presentation of natural theology, the *Quinque Viae* are only summative outlines suited to the novice audience of the *Summa Theologiae*. Garrigou notes that “the schematic outlining of the five proofs was designed, not to satisfy the critical minds of mature philosophers, but as introductory material for ‘novices’ in the study of theology.”<sup>64</sup> Garrigou thus opens the potential of these arguments for explication, application, and development beyond the text in *ST I*, 2, 3. He understands Aquinas in these arguments to be characterizing the genera of natural theology, with their respective species to develop with further elaboration. Garrigou conveys this view of Aquinas’ intent: “Examining these five ways, the saint finds in them generic types under

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Peterson, *Aquinas*, xv.

<sup>64</sup> Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought* (St. Louis: Herder Book Co, 1950), 65.

which all other proofs may be arranged.”<sup>65</sup> Considering the examples above, Martin’s analysis of the *Via Quarta* and Wippel’s interpretation of the *Via Prima*, Garrigou’s expansive interpretation is made evident by the extensive use of Aquinas’ corpus and his recognition of developments, supplements, and applications of the arguments provided in the *locus classicus*. With respect to the *Via Quarta*, in addition to the numerous passages from Aquinas, Garrigou seeks to supplement an understanding of the argument; he sees it further explicated and developed in Aquinas’ argument from graded truths to a First Truth in *ST I*, Q2, A3, and from first principles of the moral law to the Sovereign Good in *ST I-II*, Q91, A2; Q93, A1-2.<sup>66</sup> With respect to the *Via Prima*, Garrigou notes, in direct contrast to Wippel, that Aquinas does in fact apply the principle to the will’s movement towards goodness and thus implicating final causality in passages such as *ST I*, 79, 4; I-II, 9, 4.<sup>67</sup>

This broader construal of the intentions, function, and scope of the *Quinque Viae* is not restricted to Garrigou alone. Charles Hart refers to the ‘elliptical character’ of the arguments in his analysis of the *Prima Via*.<sup>68</sup> And Frederick Copleston notes that “the proofs are given only in very bare outline,” and that therefore it is the role of the modern follower of St. Thomas “to develop the proofs in far greater detail...[and] to justify the

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<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>66</sup> Illustrating how expansive Garrigou’s view of the *Quinque Viae* is, he sees four distinct applications of the argument: (a) “The first intellect”, (b) “The first intelligible”, (c) “The primary and sovereign good, the primary object of desire”, and (d) “The primary and sovereign good as the basic principle of duty.” Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:302–345; Aidan Nichols, ed., *Reason with Piety: Garrigou-Lagrange in the Service of Catholic Thought* (Naples, FL: Sapientia Press, 2008), 57–59. Nichols incorrectly only identified three applications of the argument, most likely because his work relies on an earlier edition of *God, His Existence and His Nature*.

<sup>67</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:247; 268.

<sup>68</sup> Hart, *Thomistic Metaphysics*, 275.

principles on which the general life of proof rests.”<sup>69</sup> So, for example, the *Via Prima* as summarized in the *Summa Theologiae*, is elsewhere amplified and discussed by Aquinas in passages such as *Summa Contra Gentiles* I, chapter 13; *Commentary on Aristotle’s Physics*, Books I and II; and his *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Book II. Providing this interpretive latitude allows then for the plausibility of reading in the ascent from human appetitive nature and the desire for happiness, and Aquinas’ account thereof, as one of many specifications of Thomistic natural theology.

A third hermeneutical consideration, which makes Garrigou’s interpretation and development of the EA a legitimate expression and extension of the work of Aquinas, is traceable to his participation in the tradition of ‘Strict Observance Thomism.’ The ways that Thomists approached the textual corpus of Aquinas during the 20<sup>th</sup> century varied significantly. Although not an exhaustive list of interpretive methods, mention of a few approaches can help to locate what came to be known as Strict Observance Thomism. Some scholars, such as Frederick Copleston, treated Aquinas as any other figure in the history of philosophy, attempting a mostly objective and indifferent placing of Aquinas in the history of ideas, not explicitly seeking to advance or advocate for his positions.<sup>70</sup> Others, such as the French medievalist Marie-Dominique Chenu, attempted to provide an

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<sup>69</sup> Frederick Copleston, *History of Philosophy Volume 2: Medieval Philosophy* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2003), 345; Edward Feser reiterates this assumption: "...it is crucial to understand that [the Five Ways] are summaries. Aquinas never intended for them to stand alone, and would probably have reacted with horror if told that future generations of students would be studying them in isolation." Edward Feser, *Aquinas: A Beginner’s Guide* (Oneworld Publications, 2009), 62–63; John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 442, n. 2.

<sup>70</sup> Copleston, *History of Philosophy Volume 2*, chaps. 31–41.



appreciative, but historically and contextually focused treatment of Aquinas.<sup>71</sup> Some sought to wed the thought of Aquinas with other philosophical systems, as is evident in the attempted merger between him and Immanuel Kant in the hands of the Transcendental Thomists such as Joseph Maréchal.<sup>72</sup> Still others such as Michel Labourdette viewed Aquinas' use of Aristotle as simply adopting the avant-garde system of the time, and therefore permitting the syncretization of Thomistic doctrines with the prevailing modes of thought from any milieu.<sup>73</sup> This position became dominant in the post-Vatican II era, and was characterized by a philosophical pluralism.<sup>74</sup> However, between the historicism of Chenu and the accommodationism of Maréchal falls the approach of Garrigou and the Strict Observance Thomists. This movement sought to avoid the merging of Catholic theology with any other philosophical or theological system than Aquinas' but also focused their interest and commitment to the commentarial tradition as much as Thomas himself.<sup>75</sup> Aidan Nichols, in characterizing this 'Thomism of Strict Observance', writes that one might assume that this

denotes Thomist thinkers who were concerned to remain utterly faithful to the message...of the historical Saint Thomas. ...[and] to be sticklers for such matters as establishing the meaning of Thomas's texts in their historical context...[but] little could be further from the truth.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Helen Helen Damico, *Medieval Scholarship: Biographical Studies on the Formation of a Discipline: Religion and Art* (London: Routledge, 2015), 107–111.

<sup>72</sup> Romanus Cessario, *A Short History of Thomism* (Washington, D. C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 18, 87–88.

<sup>73</sup> Peddicord, *Sacred Monster Of Thomism*, 125–126; Aidan Nichols, "Thomism and the Nouvelle Théologie," *The Thomist* 64, no. 1 (2000): 14.

<sup>74</sup> Ralph McInerney, "Thomism," in *Companion to Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Philip L. Quinn and Charles Taliaferro, 1st ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999), 163.

<sup>75</sup> Nichols, *Reason with Piety: Garrigou-Lagrange in the Service of Catholic Thought*, 2–3.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

Instead, as Nichols describes them, their commitment to the later commentators and expositors of Aquinas could outweigh consideration of the original sources. Thus, if they “explained some matter better than had Thomas himself – that is, more coherently, or with greater precision, or with more manifest attachment to fundamental principles deduced from Thomas’ writing, then one should prefer the commentators.”<sup>77</sup> Garrigou is among the most prominent representatives of this Strict Observance Thomism.<sup>78</sup>

Returning to the question of Garrigou’s development of the EA within the Thomistic tradition, it becomes clear why its explicit absence in the work of Aquinas would not prove problematic for Garrigou. If the EA could ultimately be developed utilizing the principles, metaphysical categories, and methodology of Aquinas, then given the approach of the Strict Observance Thomists, it would represent an authentic extension of his work. If Garrigou could find within Aquinas all the resources to develop a natural theological argument from human ends and the desire for happiness, the finitude of lower goods, and the principles developed from formal and final causality, then to do so would only make explicit what Aquinas had left as implicit, leaving later commentators to work out philosophical and theological implications which he had left undeveloped.

## **2. Formulating Garrigou’s Eudaimonological Argument**

Having cleared the textual and hermeneutical obstacles to developing a Eudaimonological Argument in the Thomist tradition, the burden of this section is to provide an exposition and analytic reconstruction of the argument in the work of

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> James C. Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought, Volume I: The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (Prentice Hall, 1996), 348.

Garrigou. This will allow us to consider the precise steps, principles, and starting points of the EA. In so doing, we will be able to determine its essential contours and metaphysical presuppositions. As previously mentioned, Garrigou gives different presentations of the argument in almost all of his major works, and does so with a variety of contextually different aims. In some places, such as in *The One God* and *God, His Existence and His Nature*, he is seeking to closely exposit and comment on Aquinas' *Quinque Viae*;<sup>79</sup> in other places, such as *Life Everlasting*, his aim is a theologically informed but devotionally focused treatment on last things.<sup>80</sup> While in *Providence*, Garrigou attempts to provide the theological resources for a contemplative and spiritual life rooted in an understanding of divine governance, he presents the EA as part of the foundation for divine action in the world. In *Reality*, his objective is to provide a comprehensive philosophical and theological synthesis of Thomistic thought, and he presents the argument under the section dealing with 'Moral Theology and Spirituality'.<sup>81</sup> And, in *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, his purpose is to defend traditional realism generally and the principle of finality more specifically; considering their implications for a wide range of philosophical topics.<sup>82</sup> But in chapter 5, "*La finalité de la volonté: le désir naturel du bonheur prouve-t-il l'existence de Dieu?*" Garrigou provides his most extensive treatment of the EA. With this wide and varied swath, delineating the essential structure and features of the Eudaimonological Argument(s) in Garrigou can prove

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<sup>79</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God*; Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:302–345.

<sup>80</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Life Everlasting and the Immensity of the Soul*, pt. I.

<sup>81</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought*, 233–235.

<sup>82</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

difficult. However, before beginning this task, it is important to provide a very brief historical situating of Garrigou in order to make his assumptions and motivations more transparent.

Marie-Aubin-Gontran Garrigou-Lagrange (1877-1964), though noted by some as “the leading Thomist theologian of his time”<sup>83</sup> as well as having served as a doctoral director to countless students including Pope John Paul II, has been given very little attention in Anglophone scholarship.<sup>84</sup> Garrigou forsook studies in medicine to enter the priesthood and the Dominican Order as a novitiate in 1897. He was later assigned to the Paris *stadium* where he began his first serious study of Aquinas under Ambroise Gardeil. After his ordination and because of the academic promise he demonstrated, he was sent to study philosophy at the Sorbonne in Paris, where he was to attend lectures by Émile Durkheim and Henri Bergson, and begin his friendship with Jacques Maritain. He began teaching on the history of philosophy for Dominicans in France in 1905 but soon after was abruptly moved to teaching theology and became Chair of Dogmatic Theology in 1906. It was during this time that he dedicated intense study and focus both to Aquinas and additionally, to pivotally important Thomists. Garrigou began his longtime appointment teaching at the Angelicum in Rome in 1909, where he was to teach for five decades, ending in 1959. Philosophy always remained a central focus of his teaching and

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<sup>83</sup> Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Hugh Pyper, eds., *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, 1st ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 176.

<sup>84</sup> Two recent introductions and surveys of the life and thought of Garrigou include: Peddicord, *Sacred Monster Of Thomism*; Nichols, *Reason with Piety: Garrigou-Lagrange in the Service of Catholic Thought*; for an online publication of collected essays reflecting on Garrigou, see Meng and Crean, *Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP: Teacher of Thomism*; A brief entry entirely dedicated to Garrigou is provided by Ralph McInerny, “Garrigou-LaGrange, Reginald,” ed. Edward Craig, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London; New York: Routledge, May 26, 1998); mention of Garrigou in surveys of 20<sup>th</sup> century theology can be found in Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought, Volume I*; and Hastings, Mason, and Pyper, *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*.

writing, having lectured weekly on the metaphysics of Aristotle and Aquinas through his decades at the Angelicum, though his earlier appointment as Chair of Dogmatic Theology and his subsequent appointment as first chair in Ascetical-Mystical Theology brought about a rich diversity in his scholarship.

It is true that Garrigou had notable involvements in political disputes, served as a key figure in the Thomists retreats, and produced work in mystical theology of considerable impact, each of which are worthy of study in their own right. However, since the focus of this work concerns his natural theology, Garrigou's understanding of engagement with Modernism will be our concern for understanding his historical and conceptual milieu. It was the directives of two Papal encyclicals, *Aeterni Patris* by Pope Leo XIII (1879) and especially *Pascendi dominici gregis* by Pope Pius X (1907), which provided the direction of and served as the main impetus for his work in natural theology. While *Aeterni Patris* set out the thought of Aquinas as the chief source for setting the foundations for the revival of Catholic thought, *Pascendi* identified 'Modernism' as the chief target. Thomas Crean, however, mischaracterizes the Modernism to which Garrigou was opposed as the "confused effort, made sometimes with good intentions and sometimes with bad, to 'reinterpret' Catholic doctrines in line with prevailing trends in history, philosophy and the natural sciences." Although Garrigou was critical of many such syncretistic attempts, this misidentifies the chief tenet of Modernism and the root cause to which he was opposed. Garrigou devotes some attention to exposing *Pascendi*, and maintains that "Kantian and post-Kantian criticism had almost ruined the foundation of the traditional proofs for the existence of God, namely, the objectivity of the principles

of right reasoning.”<sup>85</sup> He highlights as central then *Pascendi*’s diagnosis of Modernism as “the agnostic denial of the possibility of demonstrating the existence of God.”<sup>86</sup> And Garrigou takes up its rejection of Kantian skepticism in metaphysics as well as its criticism of the ‘methods of immanence’ which seek “the explanation of religion” solely “in man himself, in vital immanence and the subconscious self” and “admits divine reality as [it]...exists only in the soul of the believer” and as an “object of his sentiment and his affirmations, which are limited to the sphere of phenomena.”<sup>87</sup> Thus, the Pope Pius X encyclical sets in motion the overwhelming thrust of Garrigou’s work in philosophy and natural theology. It was to address these concerns, using the sources of Aquinas and the Thomist commentarial tradition, that Garrigou deployed his concentrated efforts in works such as *God: His Existence and Attributes*, *Le Realisme*, *Reality*, and others. And within this concentrated effort to respond to Modernism as characterized by *Pascendi* and interpreted by Garrigou, he deployed his case from “the soul’s aspiration towards the absolute and infinite Good.”<sup>88</sup> Elsewhere, in what this work has termed, the *Eudaimonological Argument*, he describes it as a “proof of God’s existence by natural desire,”<sup>89</sup> or “the proof for the existence of the sovereign good based on our natural desire for happiness.”<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:33.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:34.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:35–36.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:59.

<sup>89</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

<sup>90</sup> Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence* (Charlotte, NC: TAN Books, 1998), 53.

In order to disentangle, structure, and reformulate the Eudaimonological Argument in Garrigou, I will use the *Quinque Viae* as an interpretive paradigm, since Garrigou's work in natural theology sought to closely follow the thought of Aquinas. Further, Garrigou holds that "These five arguments are typical and universal in range. All others can be reduced to them."<sup>91</sup> Moreover, that each *via* represents a plausible candidate to locate the EA is rooted in the fact that Garrigou understands the *Quinque Viae* to be the outworking of a more general proof.<sup>92</sup> The underlying principle of this general proof is that "the greater cannot come from the less", which can be joined with any particular instance of finite being to form the inference and establish the theological conclusion. This, Garrigou admits, will be ineffectively vague, and requires further specification. According to Garrigou, this general principle can be specified and delineated into the principles which serve the specific *viae*:

- (i) becoming depends on being which is determined
- (ii) conditioned being depends upon unconditioned being
- (iii) contingent being depends upon necessary being
- (iv) imperfect, composite, multiple being depends upon that which is perfect, simple, and one
- (v) order depends upon an intelligent designer

Thus, on Garrigou's view, formulations of Thomistic natural theology exist in a nested hierarchy. The general principle undergirds the respective principles of the five ways, each of which, when combined with differing instances of finite being, can produce further and more specific examples of natural theological arguments. This is why, as mentioned earlier, Garrigou conceives of the *Quinque Viae* as five genera of natural theological arguments. So it is possible that the EA can be framed in different ways

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<sup>91</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:245.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 1, chap. 35.

depending of the features of human appetitive nature identified and the principles used to mount the metaphysical ascent. Thus, in order to understand the EA in Garrigou, we must attempt to locate it in reference to the 5 ways of Aquinas.

*Via Prima.* One possible way Garrigou could have for developing a case from the aspirations of the soul in its search for happiness is along the lines of the principles of efficient causality and essentially ordered series provided in the *Via Prima*. He gives some reason to consider such a formulation along these lines. In his first summary of the first way, Garrigou addresses the mistaken assumption that it only applies to movements of the physical order.<sup>93</sup> Instead, Garrigou notes, Aquinas' holds that God moves agents through their own respective forms and powers to operation (cf. *ST I*, 105, 5) and that this includes movements of the intellect and will (cf. *ST I*, 79, 4; I-II, 9, 4). Although he begs off developing this argument further in either place, we can attempt to construct the argument he alludes to using the *Via Prima* and these correlating passages, in this way:

- (1) Everything that is in motion is moved by another
- (2) The human will is in motion
- Thus, (3) the human will is moved by another
- (4) If the human will is moved by another, then either this series proceeds to infinity, or this series is finite.
- (5) It is impossible that this series proceeds to infinity.
- Thus, (6) this series is finite.
- (7) If the series is finite, there exists an unmoved mover of the human will.
- (8) Thus, there exists an unmoved mover.

Though concerns are naturally raised by (3) concerning psychologically determinist and/or compatibilist notions of human agency, we can forestall these quandaries by noting two important points. First, granting the concerns raised by (3) does not undermine the validity of the argument. Second, we may elude these concerns by

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<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:247.



appealing to Aquinas' claim concerning the nature of God's activity through agents which occurs through their *own* respective forms and powers. We can also leave aside Aquinas' defense of the other premises in this article and elsewhere. Later, in *God*, in his further analysis of the *Via Prima*, Garrigou writes that "the proof from motion may be exemplified...by considering motions of the spiritual order."<sup>94</sup> He reasons,

of itself [the will] does not contain its first act except *in potential*, and when it appears, it is something new, a *becoming*. To find the realizing *raison d'etre* of this *becoming* and of the *being* of this act itself, we must go back to a mover of a higher order, to one that is its own activity, determines itself to act, and, therefore, is self-existent Being itself [emphases in the original].

Aside from considering the soundness of this argument, the pressing question here concerns whether it is plausible to read it as an ascent from human appetitive nature to the *summum bonum*. It seems not; at least not in a way that would distinguish it from any other Thomistic proof from motion. Given this construal, it is difficult avoid identifying the argument as simply reducible to a standard and indistinct version of the *Via Prima*. Moreover, there is nothing in the argument itself which would ascend to the supreme and perfect Good. The argument only re-presents the Unmoved Mover argument using movements of the will and therefore is not substantially distinct from it. Thus, it is difficult to seriously consider this reworking of the proof from motion and efficient causality as a plausible candidate for a Eudaimonological Argument.

Perhaps, however, even if the *Via Prima* cannot ascend by way of efficient causality, it can trace a path to the *summum bonum* by way of final causality. It is premise (2) that gives it the potential as a type of Eudaimonological Argument, especially once we note that in Aquinas the will's movement is inherently towards good (e.g., 'guise

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:268.

of the good thesis'), and ultimately the perfect good (cf. see the exposition of *ST I-II*, 1-2, above). This would constitute a mirroring of the first efficient cause argument, whereby instead of working 'backwards' through the principle of efficient causality, it would work 'forwards' through the principle of final causality. In so doing, it would reflect the *exitus-reditus* model, noted earlier.

(2) [above] The human will is in motion.

(9) If the will moves, then necessarily it moves by its nature towards something [because of the principle of finality].

(10) If the will must necessarily move towards something by its nature, then that will constitute a good.

But, given (4) – (6) [above],

(11) This movement towards good must comprise a finite series.

Thus, (12) the will must necessarily move towards a final good.

This attempt to reconstruct Garrigou's EA using the *Via Prima* is fraught with problems. First, it would not at all be clear why the motion of the human will would be required as opposed to any movement of any creature. Second, as Aquinas notes, the plenitude of Goodness produces an accidentally ordered series of goods, which can proceed indefinitely towards infinity (see *ST I-II*, 1, 4 ad 1). Thus, the argument from (4)-(6) would not apply towards goods intended by the will, for this series of volitions is ordered *per accidens*. It appears as though the attempt to construct the EA along the lines of the *Via Prima* either ends unsuccessfully or becomes indistinguishable from any other version. Since the content and structure of the second and third ways are similar to the *Via Prima*, and Garrigou nowhere expressly identifies the EA with either of them, we can move past them and consider the *Via Quinta*.

There can be little doubt that Garrigou considered the Eudaimonological Argument structured with the frame of the *Via Quinta*. In *The One God*, which is

Garrigou's most direct attempt to strictly exposit the *Quinque Viae*, he observes of the Fifth Way,

It takes in anything whatever that denotes design, and from this it rises up to the supreme Designer. Thus it starts with equal force either from the fact that the eye is for seeing, and the ear for hearing, or that the intellect is for the understanding of truth, or the will for the willing of good. Viewed under this aspect, there are two proofs for God's existence that are referred back to this fifth way. One is the natural tendency of our will to do what is good and avoid what is evil; the other is the natural desire of the will for happiness, or for unlimited good, which is found only in God, who is the essential Good.<sup>95</sup>

The structure of the argument Garrigou has in mind, might simply be rendered in the following way:

- (1) All order requires an ordainer or intelligent cause
  - (2) The will is ordered to goods (or to an infinite good)
- Thus, (3) the will requires an ordainer or intelligent cause

Premise (2) is what would categorize this as an expression of a Eudaimonological Argument, while the movement from order to the intelligent cause would make it an application of the *Via Quinta*. Here, Garrigou is considering the *ordination* of the natural desire to an end, rather than *the end of the natural desire* itself.<sup>96</sup> What gives this rendering of the EA further strength is that in Garrigou, the EA is never presented without an appeal to final causality. And this principle of teleology is taken to be the characteristic feature of the *Via Quinta*.

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<sup>95</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God*, 15.

<sup>96</sup> In *Providence*, Garrigou utilizes this distinction to demonstrate the possibility of *Quinta Via* version of a moral argument, writing, "If, instead of considering simply the end of this natural desire, we consider its ordering to that end—and this demands an efficient, regulating cause (*ordinans vel imperans movet ut agens, non ut finis*)—then the argument pertains to the fifth way of St. Thomas, which is that based upon the presence of order in the world: 'All design presupposes a designer.' In this sense the passive ordering of our will to the *bonum honestum* or moral good, superior alike to the delectable and to the useful, presupposes a supreme regulator" Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 24, note 8.

While this version of the EA can be considered a clear interpretive option taken by Garrigou, it nevertheless faces some difficulties. First, as with the previous attempts to correlate the EA with the other *Viae*, the argument would only require a single ordination towards any good. The inadequacies of finite goods, and the desire for perfect happiness which requires an infinite good, would be completely unnecessary and superfluous. We might further press, not the soundness of Garrigou's argument here, but his interpretive fidelity to Aquinas. What becomes apparent about the divergence between this version of the EA and the *Quinta Via* is not that it *expands* or *supplements* the original argument, but instead that it comes into *direct opposition* to the text. In Aquinas' presentation, the feature of the world which begins the argument are "things which lack intelligence, such as natural bodies" (*ST I*, 2, 3). In contrast, Garrigou's starting point is with intelligences themselves. Thus, although we can conclude that Garrigou understands the *Quinta Via* to represent a genuine framework for developing the EA, this attempt faces interpretive hurdles and considerations which make the desire for happiness, at best, incidental to the argument. This negative appraisal of Garrigou's *Quinta Via* version of the EA does not, however, jeopardize the prospects of the argument, for Garrigou only briefly and secondarily expressed the argument along these lines. Rather, his principal formulations of the EA are repeatedly expressed as applications of the *Via Quarta*.

Garrigou repeatedly affirms that the argument for "the primary and sovereign good, [as] the primary object of desire" is connected with Aquinas' *Via Quarta* and his most detailed statements of the argument are always presented with his exposition and

analysis of the *Via Quarta*.<sup>97</sup> In *Providence*, he writes, “This proof for the existence of God [in the *via quarta*] contains implicitly another which St. Thomas develops elsewhere, Ia IIae, q. 2, a. 8.”<sup>98</sup> Further, in his commentary on Aquinas’ ‘Treatise on Happiness’, he characterizes the argument for the perfect good from the object of natural desires in the following way:

This proof is virtually identified with St. Thomas’ fourth way, which shows the necessary dependence of imperfect goods on an actual infinite Good, which makes them one in goodness. Aquinas, like Plato, rises from multitude to unity, from composition to simplicity, from received good to the Good unreceived.

There can, therefore, be little doubt that the predominant and principal way of conceiving the Eudaimonological argument in Garrigou is in conjunction with the general structure and principles embedded in the *Via Quarta*.<sup>99</sup> Though this focuses the inquiry into how to formulate Garrigou’s version of the argument, it introduces some additional interpretive ambiguities.

There are two plausible ways of construing the EA in conjunction with the *Via Quarta*, though the structure and relationship between the two is opaque in Garrigou’s work. However, both versions begin with the same feature or dynamic of human nature. What both versions share in common is the appeal to what Garrigou labels ‘the dialectic

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<sup>97</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5; Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:302–331; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, chaps. 3–4; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Beatitude*, 79–81; Garrigou-Lagrange, *The One God*, 9–12; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought*.

<sup>98</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 40.

<sup>99</sup> Incidentally, as cited earlier, both Gilby and Copleston make note of the connection between the *Via Quarta*, Aquinas’ ‘treatise on happiness’, and Plato’s ladder of love in the *Symposium*; though neither author offers any further explanation of the connection. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 62; Copleston, *Aquinas*, 43; Nichols, *Reason with Piety: Garrigou-Lagrange in the Service of Catholic Thought*, 57–58; Livingston, *Modern Christian Thought, Volume I*, 350–351. The only extant discussions of Garrigou’s EA in the secondary Anglophone literature, Nichols and Livingston, both categorize it as an application of this argument. However, neither recognizes Garrigou’s version of the argument associated with the *Via Quinta*.

of the will', or alternatively, 'the dialectic of love'.<sup>100</sup> This 'dialectic of the will' summarizes the experiential and phenomenological dimensions of human appetitive nature. Garrigou describes it as "our natural desire for happiness that we all feel so strongly in us. This is the psychological and moral aspect of the argument."<sup>101</sup> It is, according to Garrigou, described by Plato's 'ladder of love' ascending to the Beautiful in the *Symposium* and analyzed by Aquinas in the 'treatise on Happiness'.<sup>102</sup> It consists of a dialectical method of directing the appetites to particular finite goods, only to experience the insatiation incumbent upon their inadequacies, thus turning to ever higher goods seeking satisfaction.

Garrigou is adamant, however, that the dialectic of the will is insufficient to produce any metaphysical demonstrations or establish any theological conclusions on its own, however psychologically compelling it may be. His target of criticism in this regard is the 'method of immanence' exhibited in the work of the French philosopher, Maurice Blondel (1861-1949), particularly in his influential, *L'Action*.<sup>103</sup> Garrigou does not reject the phenomenological analysis of action and the internal dynamics of the will such as is characterized by Blondel. In fact, Garrigou concedes that the method of immanence can engender a 'practical certitude' that may even be 'subjectively adequate.'<sup>104</sup> Although Garrigou does not explain this, what he seems to have in mind is that the experience of

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<sup>100</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 41.

<sup>101</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

<sup>102</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:308–309.

<sup>103</sup> Maurice Blondel and Quadriga, *L'action* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1893); Nichols, *Reason with Piety: Garrigou-Lagrange in the Service of Catholic Thought*, 51.

<sup>104</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:309–310.

dissatisfaction with finite goods and introspective analysis of the will's operations is sufficient to causally produce belief in the infinite good, and dispose the will towards it. However, such internal deliverances produced by this process do not yield the type of justified beliefs which constitute knowledge. Instead, he considers the method of immanence 'objectively inadequate' because it is without grounding in the notion of being and its attending principles made known by the intellect.<sup>105</sup> To concede Blondel's method and remain solely within the immanent frame of human experience is to capitulate to the very tenets of modernism as characterized by the encyclical *Pascendi*. This critique of Blondel leads to the question which surfaces the ambiguity of Garrigou's formulation of the argument that stems in part from identifying the first principles which allow the dialectic of the will to rise to the level of a demonstration.

What is clear in Garrigou is that the 'dialectic of the will' must be combined with the 'dialectic of the intellect'.<sup>106</sup> The reflection on the dialectic of the will results in the awareness that human appetitive nature is not satiated by a finite good and thus seeks an infinite or perfect good. Garrigou is philosophically careful not to illicitly infer from this dynamic alone that such a perfect good exists. In order to further the inference, Garrigou must appeal to some of other desideratum; and the deliverances of the 'dialectic of the intellect' are precisely what fulfill this missing element. What is unclear however is what Garrigou means to identify with the 'dialectic of the intellect'. What is this dialectic, how is it related to the *Via Quarta*, and what role does it play in Garrigou's formulation of the

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<sup>105</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Beatitude*, 47; 80-81; Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:310; *ibid.*, 1:40-60; Nichols, *Reason with Piety: Garrigou-Lagrange in the Service of Catholic Thought*, chap. 4.

<sup>106</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:309-310, 332; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 41.

Eudaimonological Argument? In an interpretively difficult passage, Garrigou suggests the following after having summarized the ‘dialectic of love’,

...if it is true that the idea of goodness presupposes the simpler, more absolute and more universal notion of being; if the will and love presuppose the simply and more absolutely activity of the intellect...; if the intellect alone can receive *being* into itself, completely possess it, become one with it...; if the will...cannot receive being into itself in this manner...but can only tend towards it when it is absent, and take delight in it when it is made present by an act of the intellect, then the dialectic of love engenders a certitude which is objectively adequate and absolute, and this by reason of the dialectic which it implies.<sup>107</sup>

Since the intellect is concerned with being, and abstracts the underlying structures of being formulating them into principles, it is the intellect which is required to provide the conceptual structure to provide an objective ascent from finite goods to the perfect good. Garrigou further explains that reflection on the dialectic of the will only rises to a demonstration, “provided we view this method as a simple application of the [*Via Quarta*]... and which presupposes the objective and transcendental validity of the first principles of reason.”<sup>108</sup> The ‘dialectic of the intellect’ then is the method whereby the mind reflecting on reality provides the underlying principles to be used in formulating the *Eudaimonological Argument* for God’s existence, and those principles are to be located in the *Via Quarta*. Which principle then does Garrigou identify?

This is also unclear, as he notes, “the dialectic of love... [is] based on that of the intellect, which proceeds either through efficient causality (productive or regulative), or by way of final causality.”<sup>109</sup> And when explicating the *Via Quarta*, Garrigou identifies

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<sup>107</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:310.

<sup>108</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:305

<sup>109</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 41; Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:335.



an additional series of formal principles, which only adds to the list of potential principles from the dialectic of the intellect.<sup>110</sup> Even further exacerbating the interpretive challenge, Garrigou notes that in his account of the demonstration, “One can rise to the supreme good, a source of great and unmixed happiness, from imperfect or subordinate goods, or the natural desire that these goods fail to satisfy.”<sup>111</sup> Thus, although we can give some specificity to his account of the ‘dialectic of the intellect’, doing so yields numerous facets which allow for the EA to be formulated along various lines.

The key to untangling this interpretive complex in Garrigou’s numerous presentations of the EA is by identifying and distinguishing (i) the operative rational principle, and (ii) the specific feature of human appetitive nature to which the principle is being applied. The operative rational principles he utilizes are derived from either efficient, formal, or final causality. While the specific feature he appeals to are either the various kinds of good human nature desires, or the failure of these goods to satisfy human natural appetites. Given this matrix of options, the two distinct versions of the EA in Garrigou can be identified, which I will call the ‘Strict 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA’ and the ‘Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA’.<sup>112</sup> These can each be formalized as follows. Both of these versions of the EA start from the various goods that are the object of human nature and rise to the Supreme Good. First the ‘Strict 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA’, which represents Garrigou’s general presentation of the *Via Quarta*, does so in this way:

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<sup>110</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:311–318.

<sup>111</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

<sup>112</sup> In distinguishing two versions of the EA in Garrigou’s application of the *Via Quarta*, I differ from Nichols who only recognizes (what I have termed) the ‘Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA.’ Nichols, *Reason with Piety: Garrigou-Lagrange in the Service of Catholic Thought*, 57–58.

- (1) the various kinds of goods that human nature desires are multiple and imperfect
- (2) the multiple presupposes the one and the imperfect presupposes the perfect
- (3) thus, there is one and perfect Good

Premise (1) is made evident through a consideration of the ‘dialectic of the will’ but restricts itself to a consideration of the goods themselves, rather than the inherently directed tendencies towards those goods. Premise (2) appeals to a combination of both formal and efficient causality in relation to the transcendental and pure perfections. Garrigou’s explication and defense of this premise is detailed and complex, and providing an explanation of his position on these matters first requires uncovering more basic metaphysical considerations which emerge in consideration of the second ‘Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way *EA*’. Thus, I will defer analysis of these specific elements and this version of the argument as a whole until the next chapter of this dissertation. What should be noted here is that in Garrigou’s works, this version is typically presented first and in a more summary fashion before he proceeds to the second, ‘Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way *EA*,’ to which Garrigou gives most attention. The second ‘Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way *EA*’ can be formalized in this way:

- (1) Natural desires correspond to real goods.
- (2) The human will naturally desires a universal, perfect Good.
- Thus, (3) there exists a universal, perfect Good.

This version of the argument can be rightly called Garrigou’s standard Eudaimonological Argument, though the ‘Strict 4<sup>th</sup> Way *EA*’ is still prominent in his work either as an alternative argument or, as we will see, a supplement to this standard one. Versions of the ‘Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way *EA*’ are present within the Thomistic tradition, although they are rare, and when recognized, are only treated briefly. Garrigou’s extended and repeated attention to the argument make him entirely unique in this regard. However, statements of this

version of the EA are present in the works of Neoscholastics such as Joyce, Phillips and the contemporary analytic Thomist, John Haldane.<sup>113</sup>

### 3. Analysis of Garrigou's Standard EA

Having provided a more precise determination of the Eudaimonological Argument in Garrigou, removing initial ambiguities, and locating it with respect to the *Quinque Viae* and the *Via Quarta*, it is important to focus on his explication of the premises, and in so doing, to note its comparison and contrast with the few other formulations of the argument in the Thomistic tradition. To accomplish this, attention to two areas is critical: first, Garrigou's underlying metaphysics, and second, his grounds for affirming the premises. Since Garrigou offers the standard 'Expanded 4th Way EA' in a variety of contexts and for various purposes, clarifying the key terms, metaphysical assumptions, and detailing the grounds for each of the premises represents an exegetical challenge. Nevertheless, doing so is vital to seeing the development of the EA from Augustine, through Aquinas, and then its subsequent deterioration in Kant.

Garrigou identifies premise (1) as the major premise because it contains the metaphysical principle of the argument, and echoing the traditional theme of ascent, describes it as "the principle by which we ascend to God." Most often he simply states

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<sup>113</sup> George Hayward Joyce, *Principles of Natural Theology* (Longmans, Green & Co, 1923), 166–171; Désiré-Joseph Mercier, *A Manual Of Modern Scholastic Philosophy Cardinal Mercier*, vol. II (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1917), 55–56; Charles Reinhard Baschab, *A Manual of Neo-Scholastic Philosophy*, 3rd ed. (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1929), 398–399; John Haldane, *Reasonable Faith*, 1st ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), 66–79; R.P Phillips, *Modern Thomistic Philosophy, Vol II*, vol. 2 (London: Burns, Oates, & Washbourne, 1934), 299–300; J. J. C. Smart and J. J. Haldane, *Atheism and Theism*, 2nd ed. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2002), 246–248.

that “a natural desire cannot be in vain.”<sup>114</sup> In *Reality*, Garrigou expands this and writes, “This proof rests on the following principle: a natural desire, founded, not on imagination nor on error, but on the universal amplitude of man’s will, cannot be vain or chimerical.”<sup>115</sup> In *Providence*, he gives an expanded statement of the premise,

A natural desire, one that has its foundation not in the imagination or the vagaries of reason but in our very nature, which we have in common with all men, cannot possibly be ineffective, chimerical, deceptive; this means that it cannot be for a good that is either unreal or unattainable.<sup>116</sup>

Garrigou’s statement of premise (1) is recognized and similarly stated by various writers in the Thomist tradition. It is conceptually equivalent to the expression given by the Neoscholastic George Joyce in his comparable statement of the EA. Joyce writes, “the existence of this constitutional tendency [for full happiness] is itself a guarantee that a satisfaction corresponding to the desire is to be found.”<sup>117</sup> The modern Thomist R. P. Phillips maintains in his brief presentation of the EA, “a [natural] desire cannot be forever incapable of realization.”<sup>118</sup> The contemporary analytic Thomist John Haldane characterizes the Thomistic premise as “every natural desire has an objective correlate.”<sup>119</sup> What Garrigou’s utilization of the premise makes evident is the indispensability of a realist view of human nature in Garrigou’s formulation of the argument. The dependence on this realist metaphysic is further expressed by his reliance

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<sup>114</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:334–335; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

<sup>115</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought*, 233.

<sup>116</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 53.

<sup>117</sup> Joyce, *Principles of Natural Theology*, 166.

<sup>118</sup> Phillips, *Modern Thomistic Philosophy, Vol II*, vol. 2, 299.

<sup>119</sup> Haldane, *Reasonable Faith*.

on two philosophical presuppositions: formal and final causality. These two combined allow Garrigou to utilize the teleological conception of humanity, inherited from Plato and Aristotle via Aquinas, to underwrite his natural theological project expressed in both versions of the Eudaimonological Argument.

When considering premise (2), it becomes evident that it also utilizes these assumptions. Premise (2) might appear *prima facie* to be philosophically neutral, as it is a statement meant to recapitulate the deliverances of the ‘dialectic of the will’, and what Garrigou calls ‘the fact’ that it is impossible to find true happiness in any limited good.<sup>120</sup> But Garrigou inevitably turns to implicit appeals to more philosophical expressions of the second premise, noting that the universal amplitude of the will is not just a contingent feature of human experience, but “an innate and natural desire, based immediately on the nature of our will.”<sup>121</sup> Further, Garrigou explains that “Our will has for its object the universal good, not this or that particular good known by the senses or the conscience, but the good, according to what is implied by this term and known as such by the intellect.”<sup>122</sup> Since he appeals to the essence of the will and intellect, the will’s proper ‘object’, and the particular-universal good relation, the operation of formal and final causality is apparent.

By contrast, Joyce appeals to a simple descriptive depiction of human activity, writing that “the desire for full and unalloyed happiness (beatitude) is common to the

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<sup>120</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:333.

whole race of man.”<sup>123</sup> However, Joyce’s defense of this premise surfaces his use of philosophical categories. Phillips statement of the premise is almost identical to Garrigou’s except for one critical distinction: Phillips does not disambiguate the desire for perfect happiness and the desire for a perfect good, whereas Garrigou argues that the latter is the only adequate object of the former.<sup>124</sup> Both Baschab and Mercier, who rejected the argument, offer their own statements and affirmations of this premise. Mercier, for example, writes that “Man has been made for the true and the good; he yearns for that yet-to-be when virtue will be clasped in the embrace of happiness and its present divorce forever ended.”<sup>125</sup> In addition, Baschab states, “There is in human nature an irresistible inclination to the enjoyment of perfect happiness.”<sup>126</sup> Nevertheless, in Garrigou’s various expressions of both premises in the EA, he demonstrates a clear philosophical framing. Therefore, an analysis of the argument requires further work to surface and unpack this philosophical undercurrent.

Setting the foundation and introducing the EA in *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, Garrigou explains that in the preceding chapter he has explored “the intimate relationship between the metaphysical realism of intelligence with the principle of finality” and goes on to emphasize that, “there is no less close a relationship between this principle and the special realism of the will.”<sup>127</sup> The metaphysical realism as employed in Garrigou’s project refers to a position on the ontological status of universals. The

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<sup>123</sup> Joyce, *Principles of Natural Theology*, 166

<sup>124</sup> Phillips, *Modern Thomistic Philosophy*, Vol II, vol. 2, 299.

<sup>125</sup> Mercier, *A Manual Of Modern Scholastic Philosophy Cardinal Mercier*, vol. II, 55-56.

<sup>126</sup> Baschab, *A Manual of Neo-Scholastic Philosophy*, 399.

<sup>127</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

question over realism concerns whether or not universal concepts refer to natures or essences which are objectively real, or whether they are mere nominal devices, not rooted in anything other than mental constructs.<sup>128</sup> As Porphyry suggests, the issue is “(i) Whether genera or species exist in themselves or reside in mere concepts alone, (ii) whether, if [the genera or species] exist, they are corporeal or incorporeal, (iii) whether [the genera or species] exist apart or in sense objects and in dependence on them.”<sup>129</sup> Of course, the metaphysical realist affirms that universals do refer and cannot be reduced to mere mental constructs.

Garrigou implicitly sets the Eudaimonological Argument against the backdrop of this debate over metaphysical realism. His intention is to prepare his readers for his discussion of the standard ‘Expanded 4th Way EA’ by demonstrating the importance he sees in the metaphysical presuppositions for defending the argument. He writes,

if one does not accept the absolute realism of the ontologists that transforms this argument into an alleged intellectual intuition of God, we must also avoid falling into nominalism, which denies the metaphysical value of the principle of finality, and recognizes no significance to this argument, unless it becomes the religious experience referred to by the modernists. But between these extreme errors and above them, there is the moderate realism of Aristotle and St. Thomas, which shows the ontological and absolutely universal value of the principle of finality, even before we have proved the existence of God, and that leads us to him.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Bernard Wuellner, *Dictionary of Scholastic Philosophy* (Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire: Loreto Publications, 2013), 105. More recent work on the status of universals and particulars and the realism-nominalism divide include, Frederick C. Copleston, “The Problem of Universals,” in *History of Philosophy*, 9 vols. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1950), 136-55, vol. 2; Gyula Klima, “The Medieval Problem of Universals,” in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Stanford, CA: 2001 & 2013); Jorge J. E. Gracia, *Individuality: An Essay on the Foundations of Metaphysics* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1988), esp. 60-142; Meyrick H. Carré, *Realists and Nominalists* (London: Oxford University Press, 1946); Paul Gould, “The Problem of Universals, Realism, and God,” *Metaphysica* 13 (2012): 183-94.

<sup>129</sup> Porphyry, *Isagoge* (CAG 4.1: p. 1), trans. Edward W. Warren (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1975), 27-28.

<sup>130</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

Garrigou here sets moderate realism between absolute realism and nominalism. Absolute realism, or ‘Exaggerated Realism’ as he sometimes labels it, suggests that the concepts used to identify and characterize particulars refer to ideal archetypes that exist independent of particular material objects.<sup>131</sup> This is a common portrait of Plato’s theory of the Forms, one that Garrigou also ascribes to him.<sup>132</sup> In connection with this metaphysic, Garrigou also identifies the ‘ontologists’. *Ontologism* is an epistemology of absolute realism connected with Malebranche’s development of earlier Cartesian philosophy which maintains that God and divine ideas can be known immediately as the first object of our intelligence and that the intuition of God can thus become the first act of our intellectual knowledge.<sup>133</sup>

In contrast and at the other end of the divide stands Nominalism. Garrigou describes the form of it he is concerned with as “Sensualistic Nominalism” which reduces universals and first metaphysical principles “to mere composite ideas formed by association of images and given a general name.”<sup>134</sup> This, says Garrigou, is a reduction of intelligence to the senses, in the line of the Humean empiricists.<sup>135</sup> Instead, Garrigou urges above that to properly formulate the EA (and any argument in natural theology), we must avoid these three systems of exaggerated realism, ontologism, and nominalism.

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<sup>131</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:117–118.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:308.

<sup>133</sup> George Sauvage, “Ontologism,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York, NY, 1911); Garrigou describes them as contending “that we come to know God’s existence and essence by a direct intuition of his essence.” Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:67.

<sup>134</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:107.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:85.



Instead, Garrigou affirms, we must adhere to the moderate realism of Aristotle and Aquinas.

The traditional construal of Moderate Realism maintains that universals never exist independently from the particulars of which they are predicated; rather, universals subsist in objects, only becoming actual when instantiated in a particular object.<sup>136</sup> We will come to see in the following chapter why the initial feasibility of this common taxonomy of positions on universals is inadequate (particularly with respect to moderate realism), and must be addressed in order to further and defend the EA. However, for present purposes, this is sufficient. Additionally, the notion of formal causality is directly related to realist metaphysics, as articulated by Aristotle and his successors through Aquinas down to the Neo-scholastic successors, including Garrigou.

Aristotle, developing a structure already present in Plato, provided his students with the well-known quadra-causal analysis, including formal causality, material causality, efficient causality, and final causality. A formal cause explains what a thing is, a material cause explains that out of which a thing is made, the efficient cause explains how a thing came to be; and the final cause describes why or for what end a thing exists.<sup>137</sup> Garrigou reiterates this analysis in affirming its indispensability for the possibility of proving the existence of God:

All reality and *becoming* depend for their existence upon various principles: the *formal cause*, which intrinsically specifies them; the *material cause*, which

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<sup>136</sup> Aristotle, *De Anima*, 412a1-4a28; *Metaphysica*, 1013a26-8; 1017b14-6; 1017b21-3; 1028b33-9a33; *Physica* 192b8-3b21; 194b26-9. See also Darrel D. Colson, "Aristotle's Doctrine of 'Universalialia in Rebus'," *Apeiron* 17 (1983): 113-24; Theodore Scaltsas, *Substances and Universals in Aristotle's Metaphysics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), esp. 28-35.

<sup>137</sup> See, for example, Aristotle, *Physica*, 2, 3, 7.

individualizes them; the *efficient cause*, which brings them into being, and the *final cause*, which denotes the end to which they are ordained.<sup>138</sup>

More specifically, the formal cause refers to the form of the thing, or the internal specific principle which provides its nature or essence.<sup>139</sup> For the absolute realist, this refers to the ideal substance in the world of the Forms. For the moderate realist, the formal cause often refers to the imminent form. Yet, regardless of where the form is located (whether external or internal to the substance), in both cases, the realist is identifying the form that determines the species of the substance. Garrigou illustrates,

Why does the bird fly? Because it is looking for food (its goal and purpose). To fly it needs wings (instrumental cause). Its nature requires wings (formal cause). It dies because it is composed of matter and hence is corruptible. These *raisons d'etre*, these sources and causes (final, efficient, formal, material) are accessible to reason only, not to sense and imagination. Reason alone knows purpose as purpose. Imagination grasps the thing which is purpose, but it does not grasp the principle of finality.<sup>140</sup>

Additionally, Garrigou maintains (in addition to the aforementioned standard metaphysical offerings of the Realist tradition) the indispensability of the First Concepts or Notions, the First Principles, and the First Axioms. He upholds under First Concepts the notion of being; then essence, existence, unity, identity, truth, goodness, and substance. As a consequence of these, intelligence is essentially related to being, and volition is essentially related to goodness. Garrigou's First Principles entail identity, contradiction, sufficient reason, causality, and finality. Finally, his First Axioms declare that whatever is a subject of existence is called substance, while the intelligibility of any

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<sup>138</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:192.

<sup>139</sup> Wuellner, *Dictionary of Scholastic Philosophy*, 47.

<sup>140</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Life Everlasting and the Immensity of the Soul*, pt. I, chap. 2.

particular thing corresponds to the degree of its participation in being, and only that which appeals to one as being described as good can be the object of volition.<sup>141</sup>

The realist presupposition and reliance on formal causality concerning human nature in the EA is made evident in two important ways. First, there is the way Garrigou defines the key term ‘natural desire’ (and its various cognates) in both premises. In order to shore up the argument and forestall on obvious rejoinder, Garrigou must circumscribe contingent desires, which may be aimed at non-existent goods, demarcating them from desires which are directly rooted in the human essence. Thus, in contrast to contingent desires, Garrigou maintains that the argument rests on a notion of desire “based immediately on nature, without the intermediary of any judgment; it is not conditioned or vague; it is innate (immediately based on nature), which is something stable, firm, and occurs in all men, all places, all times.”<sup>142</sup> Thus, *humanity* as the formal cause supplies the principle from which appetitive faculties and their corresponding natural desires emerge.

Garrigou, elsewhere drawing on a long, commentarial Thomist tradition, provides a complex analysis of these desires. First, he distinguishes between supernatural and natural desires, where the former come from divinely infused charity and hope,<sup>143</sup> while the latter, by contrast, can be further divined into innate and elicited, where an elicited desire follows upon the apprehension of a particular good. Innate desires are identical with the natural inclination of the will, and precede any specific forms of awareness

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<sup>141</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:84–106.

<sup>142</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

<sup>143</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Beatitude*, 104–107.

provided by our rational faculties.<sup>144</sup> Because elicited desires are not innate, they are also not absolute and efficacious in attaining their end; they can be frustrated or aimed at empty concepts.<sup>145</sup>

The second way that the realist presupposition and reliance on formal causality is made evident is by Garrigou's restriction on the content and specifying object of the second premise. Certain modern attempts at the EA attempt to ground the argument in the *explicit religious* aspirations of humanity. The modern Thomist scholastic Désiré-Joseph Mercier's presentation (and rejection) of the EA begins with the human search for happiness but then immediately designates God as the object and candidate, stating, "since such happiness can only be found in God alone He must therefore exist."<sup>146</sup> The German philosopher Max Scheler attempts to argue that "[o]nly a real being with the essential character of the Divinity can be the cause of man's religious propensity" or the "religious act".<sup>147</sup> Some recent works attempt arguments which begin with "humanity's desire for God".<sup>148</sup> Even John Haldane casts this premise as a desire "for eternal life in the company of God."<sup>149</sup> But Garrigou's formulation prevents rooting the argument with this theological immediacy. Commenting on Aquinas' pivotal article 8 in question 2 of the *Prima Secundae*, Garrigou insists that the "specifying object of the will" must be

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<sup>144</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought*, chap. 8.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Mercier, *A Manual Of Modern Scholastic Philosophy Cardinal Mercier*, II:55–56.

<sup>147</sup> Max Scheler, *On the Eternal in Man* (London: Transaction Publishers, 1960), 261.

<sup>148</sup> Joe Puckett, *The Apologetics of Joy: A Case for the Existence of God from C. S. Lewis' Argument from Desire* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2012), 13.

<sup>149</sup> Smart and Haldane, *Atheism and Theism*, 246.

distinguished from the will's "natural last end."<sup>150</sup> He grants that the natural last end of the will is God (or divine goodness), but only because of the attending argumentative apparatus (including, but not restricted to, the EA). But this is not the specifying of the object of will, which is instead the universal good. That is, the will is naturally and inherently directed immediately to goodness simpliciter. So, for the will to be immediately directed at God is to imply direct divine activity of infused charity, and to distinguish between these two putative objects of the will, however, requires recognition of the internal (and inherent) ordering of the will given its nature. We have in this account, therefore, an appeal to formal causality. What becomes evident then, is that Garrigou's EA argument rests on a series of presuppositions concerning desires, which are integrally explained via formal causality, which in turn is ultimately dependent on a broader metaphysical realism. Without this golden chain, Garrigou's articulation and formulation of the premises becomes impossible.

Having surfaced and addressed the importance of formal causality, we can now turn briefly to address the vital role of final causality in Garrigou's EA, especially and more prominently in the standard 'Expanded 4th Way EA'. The principle of finality is conceptually foundational to both premises of this formulation: that, premise (1) *natural desires correspond to real goods*; and premise (2) *the human will naturally desires a universal, perfect Good*. In *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, Garrigou brings this dependence to the forefront as he notes that "this argument is made explicit by the principle of finality: every agent acts of an end."<sup>151</sup> In fact, Garrigou's trenchant critiques

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<sup>150</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid. Cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, Bk II, ch. 3; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 44, 4; I-II, 1, 2; *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Bk. III, ch. 2.

of Ontologism, Kantianism, and Nominalism in the first part of *God, His Existence and Attributes* are given to show the ontological and transcendental validity of the principle of finality, which plays a pivotal role in both the standard ‘Expanded 4th Way EA’ as well as his entire account of the *Via Quinta*.<sup>152</sup>

Moreover, Garrigou nowhere presents the ‘Expanded 4th Way EA’ without making its reliance on final causality explicit. Garrigou maintains that “all becoming and every composite demands an efficient and final cause, the two external reasons for being.”<sup>153</sup> Giving further explication to the principle, he writes that an “End is not only the terminus or result of an action, but the reason why the action has taken place; it is that for the sake of which an agent acts.”<sup>154</sup> On Garrigou’s view, final causality entails objective correlates for natural desires. If an object, good, or state of affairs is not actual or realizable, then the inclination could not be so directed or aimed. In other words, the principle of finality entails not only that natural desires are inherently directed, but further, in order to be so directed, there must be an actually existing corresponding object, good, or state of affairs.

Without the principle of finality then, Garrigou loses the grounds for both premises in the argument. He can no longer explain why desires should correspond to real goods, nor can he give an account of the teleology of human nature which aims at higher and higher goods until reaching out to the summit of the perfect good. What is more, the intimate ontological relationship between formal and final causality further

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:199.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

locks the EA into the Realist metaphysic. On this traditional realist ontology, a thing's nature is what designates its final ends. Although the final cause is called the cause of the causes, in a particular substance, the ontological order moves from the imminent form which then provides the inherent teleology. It is because we have a human *nature* that we are directed towards, say, rational goods such as knowledge. Thus, formality and finality are inextricable in this realist substance metaphysics. What becomes evident then, is that Garrigou's EA argument rests on a series of presuppositions concerning desires, which are integrally explained via formal causality, which implies attending final causes, and ultimately is dependent on the broader metaphysical realism. Without this golden chain, Garrigou's articulation and formulation of both the premises in his standard 'Expanded 4th Way EA' becomes impossible.

Having provided an analysis of the underlying metaphysics of the argument, what is left in this exposition and analytic reconstruction is to attempt to delineate Garrigou's arguments in support of its two main premises. Consider again premise (2) *the human will naturally desires a universal, perfect Good*. In support of this premise we can include what might be deemed as an argument from authority. Garrigou notes that the "love of the absolute above all things is also the basic principle (or at least, the crown) of the great spiritual and moral systems of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Descartes, Malebranche, Leibniz, [and Spinoza]." <sup>155</sup> Second, in a variety of places Garrigou offers an *a posteriori* justification by appeal to personal reflection and the experiential or phenomenological aspects of dissatisfaction. He cites the celebrated passages from Augustine, "Our heart, O Lord, is restless, until it finds its rest in Thee (*irrequietum est cor nostrum donec*

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 1:337.

*requiescat in Te, Domine*).”<sup>156</sup> Garrigou appeals to first-hand, immediate experience asking, “Which of us has not experienced this fact in his intimate life?” and evokes a series of common, unrequited experiences with finite goods such as health, wealth, honors, power, glory, knowledge, friendship, and even the angelic.<sup>157</sup> In the Neoscholastic Charles Baschab’s presentation of the EA (in line with the standard Expanded 4th Way version), his justification for this premise is reduced solely to this consideration. He defends the human inclination for a perfect good by claiming that “history and our own observation and experience [show] that there is no contingent being, nor any sum of them, which can perfectly satisfy it.”<sup>158</sup> For Garrigou, to rest the argument only on these two considerations would be entirely inadequate.

The third justification for premise (2) is an argument from the nature of the conjunction between intellect and will. This is the primary way Garrigou seeks to establish this premise, and is presented in a variety of ways throughout his corpus. It comes in both negative and positive accounts. The negative account of this justification is the specific chronicling of the inadequacies of finite goods which Aquinas develops in detail in question 2 of the *Prima Secundae*.<sup>159</sup> In Garrigou’s exposition of the ‘treatise on happiness’ he surveys this extended critique, offering his own elaborations and developments to Aquinas’ case.<sup>160</sup> Here, the work of Garrigou closely follows in the long

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<sup>156</sup> Augustine, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*, trans. Edward B. Pusey (Collier-Macmillan, 1961), bk. 1, chap. 1; cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 42.

<sup>157</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 42–44.

<sup>158</sup> Baschab, *A Manual of Neo-Scholastic Philosophy*, 399.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. this was summarized at the outset of this chapter.

<sup>160</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Beatitude*, 64–82.



line of reflection on happiness tracing back through Aquinas, Boethius, Augustine, and Aristotle.<sup>161</sup> However, the argument comes to a focus as it moves beyond the specific inadequacies of the kinds of finite goods to consider the inherent limitations of all limited goods as a source of happiness given the constitution of human nature. In this, Garrigou develops an argument which Aquinas raises in both articles 7 and 8 of question 2. In *Reality*, Garrigou writes,

desire [for complete happiness] cannot be satisfied by any limited and finite good, because, since our intelligence knows good as universal and unlimited, the natural amplitude, the embracing capacity of our will, illumined by our intelligence, is itself universal and unlimited.<sup>162</sup>

Since happiness obtains only when human nature has been perfected or completed, and human nature is specified by our rational and volitional faculties, we must look to these faculties to recognize their proper end. The formal nature of the will is to follow upon the intellect. Thus, when formalized, the Garrigou-Aquinas argument runs as follows:<sup>163</sup>

- (2a) the will naturally desires that which is conceived by the intellect.
- (2b) the intellect conceives of the universal good.
- Thus, (2c) the will naturally desires the universal good.
- (2d) the will can only find happiness by possessing what it naturally desires.
- Thus, (2e) the will can only find happiness by possessing the universal good.
- (2f) If (2e), then the will cannot find happiness in any finite good.
- Thus, (2g) the will cannot find happiness in any finite good.

Garrigou begins in (2a) and (2b) with the formal natures of the will and intellect and arrives at the negative thesis in the final conclusion (2g). It is premise (2b) which identifies the universal reach of the intellect, that serves as the critical piece in both this

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<sup>161</sup> Cf. this was surveyed in the introduction to this dissertation.

<sup>162</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought*, 233–234.

<sup>163</sup> This is a compilation of the argument, addressed by Garrigou in various places, including: Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:333ff.; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, chap. 5; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought*, 233–234; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 44.

negative thesis concerning happiness as well as the positive argument for the will desiring a universal good.

(2h) the nature of the will is derived from the nature of the intellect.

(2i) the intellect is universal in extension by nature [a correlate with 2b, above]

Thus, (2j) the human will is universal in extension.

(2k) If the will is universal in extension by nature, it cannot be satisfied with anything less than the principle of all goodness [a correlate with 2e, above].

Thus, (2l) the will cannot be satisfied with anything less than the principle of all goodness.

(2m) The principle of all goodness, is Goodness itself.

Thus, (2n) the will cannot be satisfied with anything less than Goodness itself.

What has occurred in this argument is consideration of the combination of the formal natures of both humanity and goodness. In the previous argument (2a)-(2g), Garrigou is developing the implications which follow upon substantial formality, whereas in (2h)-(2n) he is combining this with the implications which in turn follow upon the nature of the transcendental, good. This secondary, formal implication introduces an important element into the standard 'Expanded 4th Way EA'. This will come under further consideration in chapter 3 of this work. What the argument (2h)-(2n) yields is a positive thesis concerning the satisfying object of the human will and a putative justification for premise (2).

An investigation and analysis of Garrigou's works also provides a number of potential justifications for premise (1) *natural desires correspond to real goods*. First, as with the other premise of the argument, Garrigou provides an *a posteriori*, inductive consideration to justify the correspondence between desires and goods. Garrigou suggests that experience shows that the natural desires of lower beings is not in vain.<sup>164</sup> An

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<sup>164</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, 6; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 45.

examination of the appetitive natures of beings lower to ourselves (such as herbaceous and carnivorous appetites in animals) are effectual (i.e., they are directed to an actually existing good which properly correlates with those desires). Garrigou observes that throughout the vegetable and animal kingdoms objects (e.g., food) correspond to the natural desires aimed at them.<sup>165</sup> He therefore rhetorically asks, “Could it be that the natural desire of man be misleading, without purpose, while the natural desire of inferior beings is not vain?”<sup>166</sup> Despite his gestures towards this justification, he maintains that it is ultimately insufficient, for demonstration of God’s existence is a metaphysical science and must rest on a more secure foundation.<sup>167</sup> After this justification for premise (1), we see in Garrigou a series of considerations that all center around the principle of finality, discussed above. This principle serves as the main pillar of the argument and therefore receives various specific defenses in conjunction with the argument, in addition to other places in his corpus, an example of which is seen in the entire first part of *God, His Existence and His Nature*. This section is given to establishing and defending the first principles, and included in this is the principle of finality.<sup>168</sup>

In support of the principle of finality, Garrigou claims in numerous places that it is a necessary and self-evident principle. He explains, “[n]ow the end is precisely that determinate good to which the act of the agent or the motion of the mobile object is directed. This principle [is] self-evident to one who understands the meaning of the words

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<sup>165</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:334.

<sup>166</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, 6.

<sup>167</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:334, 62–65.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:84–241, especially section 27.

agent and end....”<sup>169</sup> In *Le Realisme*, he explains that its self-evidency is demonstrated by a consideration of the terms, in that “every agent... tends to something specific that suits it. The end is that towards which an agent moves.”<sup>170</sup> This justification is difficult to assess however, as Garrigou does not offer an explanation of how the terms ‘agent’ or ‘movement’ analytically require ‘end’ in the full sense given by final causality. The next consideration in support of the principle of finality is his primary way of defending the principle of finality and is developed from an argument by Aquinas which seeks to metaphysically link efficient and final causality. Garrigou explains, “whoever recognizes the principle of efficient causality, must also recognize the principle of finality, because there can be no efficiency, tendency, action, or passion without purpose.”<sup>171</sup> The reason for this connection follows the argument given by Aquinas in ‘the Treatise on Happiness’, question 1, article 2. Here Aquinas is concerned to demonstrate the pervasiveness of final causes in all agents (rational and nonrational) acting as efficient causes.<sup>172</sup> To do so, he relies on the notion that the final cause is the ‘first of all causes.’ Specifically, all other causes (formal, material, and efficient) must ultimately be explained by final causality, even as his focus is on efficient causality. In order to establish the metaphysically necessary dependence of efficient causality on finality, he argues in this way:

(1a) If an agent-cause were not determined to some effect, then it would not have a definite effect (i.e., it wouldn’t produce this particular effect rather than any other).

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<sup>169</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 46.

<sup>170</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, 7.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>172</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, pt. I-II, 1, 2.

(1b) agent-causes do have definite effects.  
Thus, (1c) agent-causes are determined to some effect.  
(1d) to be determined to some effect, an agent-cause must intend<sup>173</sup> a definite effect.  
Thus, (1e) agent-causes must intend definite effects.  
(1f) to intend a definite effect is the nature of an end  
Thus, (1g) agent-causes have the nature of an end.

Producing a determined effect comes about by the formal nature acting in its dynamic capacity. And this dynamic capacity's being directed towards the determined effect is the result of finality.<sup>174</sup> Thus, what Aquinas has sought to establish here is that wherever there is a definite effect, it can only be explained by final causality operating through formal causality.

Garrigou sometimes formulates this argument in the form of a *reductio ad absurdum* which essentially entails that if there are no final causes, then there can be no efficient causes. Hence, to maintain that there are no efficient causes would be absurd.

If there were no finality in nature, if no natural agent acted for some end, there would be no reason why the eye should see and not hear or taste, no reason why the wings of the bird should be for flying and not for walking or swimming, no reason for the intellect to know rather than desire. ... There would be no reason why the stone should fall instead of rising, no reason why bodies should attract rather than repel one another and be dispersed.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> "Intend" here, just means to be inherently ordered or directed to something; it does not mean consciously purposive. Aquinas uses the subsequent paragraph in the article to further elaborate on the ambiguity in intending by distinguishing how rational agents move towards an end from how nonrational agents so move.

<sup>174</sup> For more on this argument, see John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 482; Charles A. Hart, *Thomistic Metaphysics: An Inquiry Into the Act of Existing* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959), 65–66; Edward Feser, *Aquinas: A Beginner's Guide* (Oneworld Publications, 2009), 18; 118; Christopher Martin, *Thomas Aquinas: God and Explanations*, 1st ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 191ff.

<sup>175</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 46; cf. Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, 15.

This is why Garrigou’s development of this justification for final causality ultimately appeals to the principle of sufficient reason.<sup>176</sup> The principle of finality is, on Garrigou’s view, implicitly contained in the Principle of Sufficient Reason (PSR). To deny it leads to the absurdity of denying the PSR. If every agent produces a determined effect without being ordered to this effect, then there is no way of ultimately explaining how it is that the particular effect is produced. And to deny the ordering is to deny the *raison d’être* of the determination and inherent goodness or essential appropriateness of the effect produced. In sum, an action of any agent (personal and non-personal) is essentially intentional (ordained towards some end); without this tendency, the effect and the producing activity would be without a sufficient explanation. What his justification for premise (1) demonstrates, whatever its plausibility, is the indispensability of formal—and preeminently—of final causality, in Garrigou’s defense of the *EA*.

In the standard ‘Expanded 4th Way EA’, having set out and defended that (1) natural desires correspond to real goods, and that (2) the human will naturally desires a universal, perfect Good, Garrigou concludes that there must exist a universal, perfect Good. In *Le Realisme*, he comes to the conclusion that “there must be a limitless Good, pure Good, a good unmixed with imperfection, because it alone is truly the universal good that satisfies our will.”<sup>177</sup> In *Providence*, he determines that “The natural desire for true happiness must be possible of attainment and, since it is to be found only in the knowledge and love of the sovereign good, and this is God, then God must exist.”<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:201–205.

<sup>177</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, 11.

<sup>178</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 53.

Garrigou has taken the rising ascent through the ladder of human desires in terms of ascending goods to their ultimate end, as addressed through a long, historical tradition from Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Boethius, and culminating in Aquinas. From this, he has constructed a formal demonstration for God's existence. As Aidan Nichols comments on this project, Garrigou sought

to re-express in more philosophically cogent terms...the mystical notion of ascent to the supremely desirable. That notion becomes at his hands an argument from the 'erotic' – in the widest sense of *desiring* – nature of the human being, rationally tightened form of the kind of spiritual approach we find in the ancient Church in, for example, Saint Gregory of Nyssa.<sup>179</sup>

Establishing the conclusion of the argument required reliance on critical, metaphysical assumptions applied to humanity and its appetitive tendencies. Clarifying, formalizing, and detailing the argument sheds light on these operative assumptions and makes both Garrigou's critical dependence on, and developments of, formal and final causation.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Considering rational appetites for particular goods has provided grounds for thinkers from Plato onward to describe an ascent which rises to a universal Good. This ascent has been variously characterized by different figures in the Western philosophical tradition. In the previous chapter Augustine's account of the desire for happiness yielded certain conditions which suggested (but did not detail) a type of inferential ascent. In this chapter, Aquinas' analysis of happiness provides further explication and philosophically motivated grounds for inferring a transcendent terminus for this quest. However, as addressed in the first section, it was seen that Aquinas' interpreters have not all agreed

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<sup>179</sup> Nichols, *Reason with Piety: Garrigou-Lagrange in the Service of Catholic Thought*, 58.

that his project can be characterized in terms of natural theology. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, however, maintained that a Eudaimonological Argument in the form of traditional, Thomistic natural theology could plausibly be constructed. Although various concerns about Garrigou's interpretation and development of Aquinas have been raised, this chapter has argued that Garrigou's development of the EA within the Thomistic tradition could be developed utilizing the principles, metaphysical categories, and methodology of Aquinas. In addition, given the general methodology of Strict Observance Thomism, this would represent an authentic extension of Aquinas' work. Garrigou finds within Aquinas the necessary resources to develop a natural theological argument from the desire for happiness and the finitude of lower goods.

In the second section of this chapter, I provided an exposition and analytic reconstruction of the argument within Garrigou's corpus, identifying its structure, particularly with reference to the *Quinque Viae*. Although possible formulations of the EA are in line with each of the five ways, it was concluded that the *Via Quarta* provides the general schema and context for Garrigou's formulation of the argument. However, it became apparent that two distinct versions of the EA can be found in Garrigou's work: the 'Strict 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA' and the 'Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA', with the latter representing the standard and central formulation of the argument offered by Garrigou. In this argument, Garrigou maintains that (1) Natural desires correspond to real goods; and since (2) The human will naturally desires a universal, perfect Good, it should be concluded that (3) there exists a universal, perfect Good.

In the third section of this work, I attempted to provide a further analysis of the standard version of the argument in order to identify the underlying metaphysics of



formal and final causality, and set Garrigou's construal of the argument both in light of and in comparison to the Neoscholastic and broader Thomistic tradition which recognized it. While Garrigou's formulation of his standard 'Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA' shows certain affinities and similarities with other presentations of the argument, and thus escapes the appraisal of uniqueness, it was his extended attention to the argument and justification for its premises which distinguished his work. This, in turn, made evident his critical reliance on a realist metaphysical account of human nature and its correlative goods. Therefore, the main contention of this chapter appears to be well grounded: Garrigou's development of the EA rightly falls within the Thomistic tradition, particularly by utilizing the metaphysical principles of Aquinas. This further develops the central thesis of this dissertation; that Garrigou's Eudaimonological Argument represents a viable project in natural theology within the Thomist tradition when properly understood in light of its underlying metaphysical principles, specifically formal and final causality. However, this thesis is still susceptible to notable problems, as Garrigou's standard version of the EA is not without its challenges, even when cast within the Thomist and Neoscholastic tradition. Various objections have been raised against both the 'Strict 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA' and Garrigou's standard 'Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA' (either directly aimed at them or that indirectly implicate them). In the following chapter these objections to Garrigou's standard EA will come to the fore and provide grounds for further exploring the argument.

CHAPTER 3  
FORMAL AND FINAL CAUSALITY  
IN THE EUDAIMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The previous chapters of this work began with the recognition of a movement in the western philosophical and theological tradition which begins in distinctively human appetites centered in the quest for happiness and ascends through varying levels of goods to arrive at an ultimate terminus and perfect Good. Although this ascent has been characterized in various ways, Augustine provided the initial impetus for formulating inferential criteria and principles by which to identify a plausible candidate for this ultimate end. In Aquinas, these steps tracing the movement become more focused and further developed. However, it is in Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange that the ascent takes on an explicit form as a project in natural theology, which this dissertation has termed a Eudaimonological Argument (EA). An analysis of Garrigou's work yielded two distinct versions of the EA, both of which were expressions of Aquinas' *Via Quarta*: the 'Strict 4th Way EA' and the 'Expanded 4th Way EA', with the latter representing the standard and central formulation of the argument offered by Garrigou. Further analysis of the argument shed light on its operative assumptions and made evident Garrigou's critical dependence on formal and final causation. As a project falling within the Thomistic tradition and 20<sup>th</sup> century Neoscholasticism, these assumptions are unsurprising. Nevertheless, further investigation into the reliance of the standard EA on formal and final causality are open to scrutiny, even from within this tradition.

The role of final causality was made evident in the first premise of Garrigou's Standard EA, which is that *natural desires correspond to real goods*. The grounds for this correspondence thesis are tendentious at best apart from the assumption of finality causality which entails that natures are ordered to corresponding proper ends. The role of formal causality became evident particularly in the second premise of the 'Strict 4th Way EA', which maintained that *the multiple presupposes the one and the imperfect presupposes the perfect*. The entailment from multiple and imperfect goods to the single, perfect good requires recognition of both the reality of formal natures and their dependence on, or relation to, a universal. However, questions loom even within the Thomistic and Neoscholastic traditions concerning each of these assumptions. If final causality cannot be justified apart from theological grounds, then Garrigou's standard EA is undercut, as it is supposed to be demonstrating God's existence, not appealing to theological propositions. Further, even granting final causality, if the move from specific final ends to an overarching and ultimate final end is problematic, then Garrigou's standard EA faces another sort of challenge. Regarding formal causation, if formal causality doesn't require or entail the existence of universals, Garrigou's 'Strict 4th Way EA' is in jeopardy. Therefore, it is the purpose of this chapter to first bring these putative objections into sharp relief by making the problems they raise for the EA explicit. Second, this chapter will seek to confront these objections and to undercut and/or rebut them by appealing to the resources within Aquinas, Garrigou, and the broader Neoscholastic tradition itself. What this chapter will argue is that both sets of concerns can be met by further analysis of the features of formal and final causality.

## 1. Formal Causality and the Eudaimonological Argument

What chapter 2 of this dissertation surfaced was that Garrigou's formulation of the EA critically relies upon the doctrine of formal causality, and that in so doing it appeals to the *Via Quarta* as well as a consideration of universals. The difficulty for the EA raised by considerations of formal causality comes to the fore in its appeal to universals. In the previous chapter's formulation of Garrigou's 'Strict 4th Way EA', he began with human desires for limited, finite goods and moved by inference to a single, perfect Good. This was achieved by use of the principle in premise (2), that *the multiple presupposes the one and the imperfect presupposes the perfect*. The entailment from multiple and imperfect goods to the single, perfect good is achieved by appealing both to formal natures (of particular goods) as well as their relation to a universal (Goodness). But this raises a particular and systemic problem for Garrigou given his commitments and those of the broader Thomistic and Neoscholastic tradition concerning universals. Aquinas and the ensuing tradition is supposed to be committed to a moderate realism, which holds that universals are only located in particulars and the minds that abstract them from those particulars. For example, Edward Feser writes, "For a Scholastic like Aquinas, essences do not exist in a Platonic 'third realm' but only as either immanent to the particular things whose essences they are, or as abstracted by an intellect."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Ralph McInerny concludes that "we see Thomas rejecting Platonic Ideas insofar as these are invoked to solve the problem of universals and instead opting for the Aristotelian

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction* (Heusenstamm: Editions Scholasticae, 2014), 226.

solution.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, on a moderate realist account, goodness can be instantiated with specific objects, which the mind then perceives and recognizes as an instance of the universal, Good. But the universal qua universal only exists in the mind. What this entails is that at best, the inference from goods to Good in the EA could yield is that the universal Good exists in the mind alone. And if it is only universal in the mind that has abstracted it from the particular, then the argument has fallen short of demonstrating that there exists an extra-mental Good itself.

This problem can be exacerbated and further illustrated by creating a parallel with other universals. If we take various individual humans into consideration, we can (on moderate realism) come to recognize that they all share in a single common nature, *humanity*. But as Aquinas maintains, although the nature is real and present in particulars and is rightly abstracted by the mind, there is no single *humanity* or perfect *Human* that exists independently of human cognition; for this would be to fall back into the views traditionally associated with Plato. Illustrating this problematic inference, John Peterson describes moderate realism as being opposed to ‘extreme realism’ because

It disagrees with the latter in that it denies that universals are things. ...treeness, is not a thing in its own right but rather a property or quality of a thing. ...There is not in addition to this oak, this maple and this elm, etc., some further thing called treeness. Rather, treeness is always present in this oak, this maple, or this elm, etc. This oak and this maple are similar by virtue of the fact that they are trees but from this it does not follow nor is it the case in the view of the moderate realist that there is some other thing treeness which each of these particular trees as well as all other particular trees exemplify.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ralph McInerny, *St. Thomas Aquinas* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), chap. 4, accessed February 27, 2017, <https://www3.nd.edu/~maritain/jmc/etext/taq.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> John Peterson, *Introduction to Scholastic Realism* (Peter Lang Publishing, 1999), 2.

Garrigou's movement from particular goods to the actual existence of a universal Good would be another example of this same fallacious inference pattern. But this undermines the second premise of the EA, leaving it unsound.

Perhaps Garrigou has a way of avoiding this difficulty. While this criticism clearly applies to his 'Strict 4th Way EA', his standard version of the argument does not require this same movement from particulars to universals. In the standard version of the EA Garrigou began with a desire for the universal Good and then utilizes the principle of finality to establish the correspondence thesis that such *natural desires correspond to real goods*. Thus, it is only final causality as applied to the human appetite for a perfect, universal Good which allows for Garrigou to conclude that such a Good exists; thereby circumventing the problem posed by the moderate realist.

Unfortunately, this attempt to rescue the EA from its incompatibility with moderate realism fails on two fronts. First, even granting the correspondence thesis and the principle of finality, the natural desire would only be properly directed towards a universal *conceived by the mind*. Thus, the argument could only conclude that there exists *a concept* of the Good that humans naturally desire, but not that such a Good exists independent of human cognition. The second reason why the appeal to the standard formulation of the EA does not escape the challenge of a moderate realist framework is because the standard EA, on further analysis, turned out to also critically rely on the same movement from particular goods to the universal good. In chapter 2 of this work, we saw how Garrigou's justification for premise 2 of the Standard EA restricted the specifying object of the will from being immediately identified as God. Instead, he argued that the human will only naturally desires a universal, perfect Good on the basis of the nature of

the intellect as apprehending a universal Good (see the argument from 2h-2n). But this recognition of the universal Good by the intellect is the result of abstracting from particular, finite goods; the same movement that is central to the ‘Strict 4th Way EA’. So, in either version of the argument, Garrigou must appeal to the inference from particular goods to a perfect Good, and given moderate realism this establishes that such a universal only exists in the minds of the faculties of human knowers. So, given that both versions of the EA depend on this inference to a universal, does affirming moderate realism undercut the viability of Garrigou’s Eudaimonological Arguments? Further, must Garrigou concede a form of Platonic realism to rescue the EA from this challenge? This cannot be his response for he clearly denies Platonism and explicitly affirms the moderate realist framework. For example, in his defense of the ontological validity of the first principles, Garrigou affirms that,

the true solution of the problem of universals is to be found only in moderate Realism. Empirical Nominalism abolishes the intellect and intelligibility. Subjectivistic Conceptualism reduces our intellectual life to a coherent dream. Moderate Realism, as formulated by Aristotle, St. Thomas, and the traditional philosophy of the Schools, safeguards our intellectual life and its real validity, without admitting the exaggerated Realism of Plato, Spinoza, and the Ontologists,<sup>4</sup>

It is important to note not only Garrigou’s clear affirmation of the moderate realist position, but also his additional recognition that it represents the traditional Scholastic and Neoscholastic view. It seems that any EA developed from Aquinas by Garrigou runs afoul of a standard Thomistic and Scholastic doctrine.

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<sup>4</sup> Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature: A Thomistic Solution of Certain Agnostic Antinomies, Volume 1*, trans. Bede Rose, 5th ed., vol. 1 (London; St. Louis: Herder Book Co, 1949), 132.

## 1.1 Addressing the Problem of Moderate Realism for the EA

In order to address the challenge from moderate realism to the Eudaimonological Argument, we need to revisit the question of universals. To foreshadow the conclusion to come, this section will argue that accounts of Thomistic moderate realism suffer from a critical ambiguity, and that addressing this ambiguity resolves both the interpretive perplexity of the *Via Quarta* and the objections to the EA from a moderate realist account of universals.

There can be no doubt that Aquinas' position on the question of universals is vexed by ambiguity.<sup>5</sup> But given that Aquinas holds that universals are in some sense real, how shall we distinguish the type of realism to which he holds? In order to disambiguate this problem, we have to identify the particular question under consideration. In virtue of what is he being characterized as a moderate realist? If the view under consideration is epistemic, and the question is 'how do we arrive at knowledge of universals?', then there can be no doubt that Aquinas follows an Aristotelian Realism and denies a Platonic Realism that we might identify with Plato, Plotinus, Augustine, and other 'Ontologists' (as addressed in the last chapter). For Aquinas denies that the mind has an unmediated grasp of forms. Instead he affirms that "human knowledge reaches the intellect by

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<sup>5</sup> Illustrating the full extent of this ambiguity, Brian Leftow remarks, "Aquinas' theory of attributes is one of the most obscure, controversial parts of his thought. There is no agreement even on so basic a matter as where he falls in the standard scheme of classifying such theories: to Copleston, he is a resemblance-nominalist; to Armstrong, a 'concept nominalist'; to Edwards and Spade, 'almost as strong a realist as Duns Scotus'; to Gracia, Pannier, and Sullivan, neither realist nor nominalist; to Hamlyn, the Middle Ages' 'prime exponent of realism,' although his theory adds elements of nominalism and 'conceptualism'; to Wolterstorff, just inconsistent." Brian Leftow, "Aquinas on Attributes," *Medieval Philosophy & Theology* 11, no. 1 (2003): 1. To limit the scope of this discussion I will leave aside direct considerations for interpreting Aquinas as a non-Realist (though the arguments below count against this view). Instead, I will follow the traditional reading of Aquinas as Realist and attempt to further disambiguate and argue for what kind of Realist.



beginning with the senses” (*De Potentia* 3, 5).<sup>6</sup> Further, Aquinas argues that to admit direct apprehension of forms would undermine the purpose of the body (*ST I*, 84, 4).<sup>7</sup> So we cannot come to know universals apart from particular sensibles. Gilson summarizes the standard Thomistic-Aristotelian account of knowledge formation by the natural light of the mind,

Natural light does not confer upon us knowledge of material things by participation alone in their eternal essences. It still requires the intelligible species which it abstracts from things themselves. The human intellect possesses therefore a light just sufficient in order to acquire the knowledge of the intelligibles to which it can raise itself by means of sensible things.<sup>8</sup>

There is no interpretive dispute over this question as the doctrine of abstraction represents the standard reading of Aquinas.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, Garrigou would clearly affirm this doctrine as the proper reading of Aquinas and representative of his own view, as is evident by his rejection of the ‘Ontologists’.<sup>10</sup>

However, many interpreters use this account of Thomistic epistemology as the grounds for a Thomistic ontology of universals. Eleonore Stump, for example, argues that “For Aquinas, a universal is the concept a knower has when he abstracts, for example, redness from a material thing in which the particular form (this redness) is and considers it just as redness, apart from its association with the particular matter it configures.

...What actually exists in reality, however, is just a particular form in a particular

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<sup>6</sup> Aquinas, *On Creation* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 36.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, ed. Thomas Gilby, 1st ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), I, 84, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy Of St Thomas Aquinas* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 215.

<sup>9</sup> Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, Reprint edition. (Oxford; New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2014), 314.

<sup>10</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:132.

thing.”<sup>11</sup> Stump has traced Aquinas’ account of apprehending universals and from this arrives at what she holds to be Aquinas’ ontology of universals. She reasons in this way: since *in human knowledge* we begin with particulars and abstracts the essence as a universal, then *in reality* the universal essence only exists in the mind of the human subjects apprehending them. McInerny and Feser’s conclusions also illustrate this justification.<sup>12</sup> McInerny’s characterization of Aquinas’ view about the status of universals is due to the fact that Aquinas holds that we abstract form from individual matter (as represented by sense images), as well as his analysis of Aquinas’ account of Augustinian illumination.<sup>13</sup> After detailing Aquinas’ theory of knowledge and noting that “essences are universal *qua* abstracted from the particular individuals by an intellect which knows them,” Edward Feser concludes that “for the moderate realist, [there are] no such things as mind independent abstract objects.”<sup>14</sup> Similarly, David Oderberg concludes that “nothing abstract exists without abstraction. And abstraction is an intellectual process by which we recognize what is literally shared by a multiplicity of particular things.”<sup>15</sup>

When the question is moved from the epistemology of universals to their ontology, it first appears that Aquinas is also rightly seen as an Aristotelian. If the view under consideration is ontological, and the question is ‘do universals subsist apart from particulars as separated substances in themselves?’, then again there can be no doubt that

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<sup>11</sup> Eleonore Stump, *Aquinas* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), 49.

<sup>12</sup> McInerny, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, chap. 4.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Feser, *Aquinas*, 15.

<sup>15</sup> David S. Oderberg, *Real Essentialism* (New York ; London: Routledge, 2008), 83.

Aquinas follows an Aristotelian Realism and denies a Platonic Realism. In Wuellner's classic *Dictionary of Scholastic Philosophy*, he characterizes *subsistence* as that which has being and operation through itself, not through union with another; and therefore as existence proper to a whole substance.<sup>16</sup> Aquinas explicitly rejects forms or universals as possessing subsistence. In *Summa Theologiae* I, 6, 4, Aquinas notes that Plato held the existence of separate ideas (*species separatas*) but avers that this opinion appears to be unreasonable in affirming separate ideas of natural things as subsisting of themselves (*per se subsistentes*).<sup>17</sup> Aquinas follows Aristotle and Avicenna and rejects subsistent forms/universals for sensible particulars because of the incoherence this would entail.<sup>18</sup> For the forms subsist immaterially but they would constitute the essences of a material subject. Thus, the form (of a rock, say) which has materiality essentially would have to subsistent but without matter, which is incoherent because this would be to affirm that materiality is both essential and not essential to the essence. Or, eliciting the incoherence from another direction, a doctrine of subsistent forms would entail that the ideal, archetypal *rock* was *immaterial*. Frederick Copleston registers this as the standard read of Aquinas, noting that he is at one with Aristotle in denying the separate existence of universals.<sup>19</sup> And, as we have seen, Garrigou would also affirm this reading of Aquinas and concur. Garrigou writes,

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<sup>16</sup> Bernard Wuellner, *Dictionary of Scholastic Philosophy* (Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire: Loreto Publications, 2013), 119.

<sup>17</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 6, 4. Cf. cf. *ST I*, 44, 3; I, 84, 1-4

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 84, 4.

<sup>19</sup> Frederick Copleston, *History of Philosophy Volume 2: Medieval Philosophy* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2003), 327. Though Copleston notes (p. 330) the odd implication of Aquinas' unique view of Angels and pure forms entails, paradoxically, that Aquinas does affirm the existence of separate, subsistent forms; though he would likely deny that Angelic beings are universal in mode.

Whatever implies a combination of material elements in its very concept, is incapable of existing apart from matter and from the individual in which it is found. E.g., Flesh cannot exist apart from this or that flesh, though it can be thought of separately. The exemplars of material things can never be anything but ideas, not real types. This is what avoids Plato's exaggerated realism.<sup>20</sup>

The moderate realist reading as a form of Aristotelianism over and against the Platonic view appears well grounded when considering the ontological subsistence of universals.

But in asking about the independent subsistence of forms, we have not exhausted questions concerning their ontology. Granting that (on Aquinas' view) universals don't exist as separated substances, we must further ask, 'do the forms exist apart from particulars, and if so, where and how?' The standard interpretation of Aquinas, as noted earlier, affirms that (i) Aquinas hold that universals only exist in particulars and in minds that abstract them from the particulars, and that (ii) this is the moderate realist position. So prevalent is this interpretation that in addition to Feser, McInerney, Stump, and Orderberg, cited earlier, examples of interpreters affirming these conjoined propositions are not difficult to find.<sup>21</sup> John Haldane writes, for example,

Here I follow Aquinas and maintain a position between the view that everything that exists is individual, and the opinion that universals exists as such outside the mind. This *via media* holds that distinct substances may yet possess formally identical (though numerically diverse) natures *but only as abstracted in the*

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<sup>20</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:313–314.

<sup>21</sup> Michael Baur, "Law and Natural Law," in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, ed. Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump, Reprint edition. (Oxford; New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2014), 240; Jeffrey E. Brower, "Aquinas on the Problem of Universals," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 92, no. 3 (May 1, 2016): 9–13; Ralph W. Clark, "Saint Thomas Aquinas's Theory of Universals," *The Monist* 58, no. 1 (1974): 164; W. Norris Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God: A New Thomistic Perspective*, 2nd Edition, 2nd ed. (Fordham University Press, 2007), 44–46; Haldane, *Reasonable Faith*, chap. 2; Gyula Klima, "The Medieval Problem of Universals," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2016. (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2016), accessed May 2, 2016, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/universals-medieval/>; Anthony J. Lisska, *Aquinas's Theory of Natural Law: An Analytic Reconstruction* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1998), 85ff.; Joseph Owens, "Thomistic Common Nature and Platonic Idea," *Mediaeval Studies* 21, no. 1 (1959): 218; Robert Pasnau and Christopher Shields, *The Philosophy Of Aquinas* (Westview Press, 2003), 68–75.

*intellect...Universals are formed by abstraction from a plurality of formally identical natures existing in materially individuated substances” (emphasis added).*<sup>22</sup>

Or, as Ralph Clark maintains, “It is true that universals exist only in the intellect according to St. Thomas...” Clark further suggests that Aquinas holds that “universals exist neither in things nor apart from things in any sort of ‘Platonic heaven,’ but only in minds conceiving things.”<sup>23</sup> Upon further analysis, however, I will argue that both of the propositions ((i) and (ii)) of the standard interpretation are false. The underlying assumption of this characterization of Aquinas as a moderate realist is the following: if one is a Realist, then they are either a Platonic or an Aristotelian Realist. Aquinas is clearly not a Platonic Realist (because of the reasons just surveyed). Thus, Aquinas is an Aristotelian Realist. This strong disjunctive is exhibited in Gilson’s more general presentation of Aquinas’ relationship to Plato and Aristotle. He writes,

Aquinas was obliged to choose, once and for all, between the only two pure philosophies which can exist, that of Plato and that of Aristotle. Reduced to their bare essences, these metaphysics are rigorously antinomical; one cannot be for the one without being against all those who are with the other, and that is why Saint Thomas remains with Aristotle against all those are counted on the side of Plato...As a philosophy, therefore, Thomism was born out of a pure philosophical option to choose against the philosophy of Plato, in favour of that of Aristotle.<sup>24</sup>

Once it is granted that Aristotelian realism on universals is synonymous with (or, identical to) moderate realism, then the characterization of Aquinas is complete. But the critical error in this reasoning is that it presents us with a false disjunctive; there is a *tertium quid* between Platonic and Aristotelian Realism (which we will call, ‘Thomistic

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<sup>22</sup> Haldane, *Reasonable Faith*, 34.

<sup>23</sup> Clark, “Saint Thomas Aquinas’s Theory of Universals,” 164.

<sup>24</sup> E. Gilson, “Pourquoi Saint Thomas a Critiqué Saint Augustin,” *Archives d’Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge* 1 (1926): 126; Fran O’Rourke and Fergus Kerr, “Aquinas and Platonism,” in *Contemplating Aquinas: On the Varieties of Interpretation* (Virginia: SCM Press, 2003), 1–2.

Realism’); this represents a genuine form of moderate realism. Thus, I suggest that we can identify three separate positions:

Aristotelian Realism =df affirms that forms exist in particulars and as universals (only) in minds that abstract them.

Platonic Realism =df affirms that forms exist as universals independent of minds that abstract them, and subsist individually and separately.

Thomistic Realism =df affirms that forms exist in particulars and as universals in minds that abstract them, as well as existing independent of minds that abstract them, but denies that they subsist individually and separately.

The Thomistic Realist agrees with the Aristotelian against the Platonist in denying that the forms exist as subsistent individuals, as mentioned above. Moreover, the Thomist Realist agrees with the Aristotelian against the Platonist in affirming that forms exist in the particulars that have them. In these two affirmations, both qualify as Moderate Realist positions. But a further question remains, which will further distinguish the Thomistic from the Aristotelian position; can a form exist independent of particulars and the minds that have abstracted it from them? The Aristotelian answers in the negative but the Thomist answers in the affirmative. On Thomistic Realism the reality of universals is not reducible to the abstractive intellect; instead, universals do have reality apart from particulars and the mind’s abstraction. Which is the best reading of Aquinas’ actual position? I will here briefly canvas and assess the reasons for an Aristotelian Realist interpretation before giving my own reasons for affirming Thomistic Realism.

There are a number of textual reasons usually marshaled for reading Aquinas as an Aristotelian Realist. The first type of texts is those supporting a Thomistic epistemology which is then used as grounds for an ontology of universals along Aristotelian lines. For example, Ralph Clark appeals to a passage in *de Veritate*, where Aquinas writes that “it is clear that abstraction, which is common to all intellects, makes

a form a universal.”<sup>25</sup> But this passage doesn’t deny the reality of universals outside of human minds. Clark takes this passage to indicate the etiology of universals; that is, he understands Aquinas to be affirming that a universal comes into existence (solely) through the mind’s activity. But the passage can equally be read as simply identifying the shift in the modal status of a form. Aquinas is only describing the process in which a human mind which takes a particular form and then universalizes it in instances of knowledge-formation. This is the shift in the modal status of the form (from localized and individualized in the subject to being universalized in the apprehension in the intellect), which Aquinas addresses in other places such as *On Being and Essence*.<sup>26</sup>

For example, in the process of abstraction, a particular subject, Rachel (say), is taken up by the intellect and stripped from its particularizing features where it is then conceived in its universal mode as humanity. As Rachel is a specific instance of a human form which structures this parcel of matter that together constitute this form/matter composite. It is in this sense that the intellect ‘makes a form a universal’. Similarly, McInerney appeals to *ST* I, 85, 1 as evidence for Aquinas’ position on universals. But this passage is susceptible to the same interpretation and analysis of *De Veritate II* just given. In fact, far from restricting the existence of universals to human cognition alone, Aquinas here suggests that while “our intellect understands material things by abstracting from the phantasms,”

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<sup>25</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate*, ed. Joseph Kenny, trans. Robert W. Mulligan, James V. McGlynn, and Robert W. Schmidt (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1954), II, 6, ad 1, accessed November 9, 2016, <http://dhspriority.org/thomas/QDdeVer.htm>.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *On Being and Essence*, 2nd Revised edition. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1968), chap. 3.

it is “through material things thus considered [that] we acquire some knowledge of immaterial things (immaterialium).”<sup>27</sup> Thus, what must be kept in mind is that analyzing universals exclusively through the question of epistemology does not warrant the question about their ontological status and a closer investigation of the textual material demonstrates that the ontological conclusions do not follow from the observations about abstraction. It doesn’t necessarily follow from Aristotelian-Thomistic epistemology that the ontological location of universals must be reduced to solely within in the mind.

There are other textual reasons usually marshaled for reading Aquinas as restricting universals to the minds of human cognizers. For example, Baur, Clark, and Stump appeal to Aquinas’ comments in *ST I, I, 39, 4, ad 3*. Aquinas considers the use of referents such as ‘God’ and ‘Man’, and writes,

since the form signified by this word "man"—that is, humanity—is really divided among its different subjects, it stands of itself for the person, even if there is no adjunct determining it to the person—that is, to a distinct subject. The unity or community of the human nature, however, is not a reality, but is only in the consideration of the mind.<sup>28</sup>

Baur concludes from this passage that “Aquinas says that what is common by way of predication – such as ‘the unity or community of human nature’ is nothing in reality, but only in the consideration of the mind.”<sup>29</sup> This passage, rather than arguing from silence, offers a categorical denial of the reality of the universal form except as it has been considered in the mind. But Aquinas’ statement here is ambiguous. If he means that the predicate ‘humanity’ has no reality whatsoever apart from the mind, then this would

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<sup>27</sup> Aquinas, *Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate*, II, 6.

<sup>28</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 39, 4.

<sup>29</sup> Baur, “Law and Natural Law,” 240.



reduce Aquinas to a pre-Kantian conceptualist, imposing forms on particulars which do not possess them in themselves. However if Aquinas is addressing the subsistence of *humanity* as an independently existing and perfect archetypal *Human*, then clearly Aquinas intends to convey that a *subsistent Human* is not a reality. However, as we have already seen, to deny the doctrine of subsistent, separated substances independently in a Platonic Heaven is not to deny universals a reality other than the modes that the Aristotelian realist affirms.

Jeffrey Brower's case against reading Aquinas as any type of realist is entirely based on his reading of two passages from his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences: In Sent 1.19.5.1* and *In Sent 2.17.1.1*.<sup>30</sup> Brower contends that based on these texts, "There can...be little doubt that Aquinas explicitly rejects the existence of universals at various places in his writings."<sup>31</sup> Aquinas writes, "Humanity is something that exists in reality, but there it is not universal. For no humanity that exists outside the mind (*extra animam*) is common to many" (*In Sent 1.19.5.1*). Brower suggests that the implication of this passage is that two individuals must have their own distinct natures. To reinforce his interpretation of Aquinas' denial of common natures, he cites the second passage:

Even if this individual [say, Socrates] is a human being and that individual [say, Plato] is a human being, it is not necessary that both have numerically the same humanity—any more than it is necessary for two white things to have numerically the same whiteness. On the contrary, it is necessary [only] that the one resemble the other in having [an individual] humanity just as the other does. It is for this reason that the mind—when it considers [an individual] humanity, not as belonging to this [or that] individual, but as such—forms a concept that is common to them all (*In Sent 2.17.1.1*).

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<sup>30</sup> Brower, "Aquinas on the Problem of Universals," 9–10.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

Brower concludes from these two passages that “Aquinas develops his views in a way that would appear to bring them in line with Ockham’s nominalism an important respect. For Aquinas insists here that things are not members of the same natural kind in virtue of possessing numerically the same nature. On the contrary, they are members of the relevant kind by virtue of possessing distinct but resembling natures.”<sup>32</sup> But Brower’s case here is unconvincing. Contrary to Brower’s claim, Aquinas does not deny the existence of universals; only the universal *mode* when a form is instantiated; for then it becomes individual. Let us return to the question of the modal status forms can take on. In his work, *On Being and Essence*, Aquinas addresses this directly:

...a nature or essence signified as a whole can be considered in two ways. In one way it can be considered according to its proper content, and this is an absolute consideration of it. In the other way an essence is considered according to the existence it has in this or that. 61. And although the intellectually grasped nature has the character of a universal according as it is compared to things outside the soul, because it is one likeness of all of them; still according as it exists in this intellect or in that one, it is something particular.<sup>33</sup>

Since a form’s modal status is something accidental to it, the form can exist as in an absolute way (when, for example, the mind grasps it apart from all the contingent features of the subject) or the form can exist as a particular (when, for example, it is conjoined with matter and an act of existence to make up a subject). In the first former case, the form is universal while in the latter it is singular. Thus, forms can be immanent to individuals and transcend those individuals. In the passages cited by Brower, Aquinas is affirming that there are immanent forms, which are not numerically identical. By contrast, he is simply denying that two particulars (Socrates and Plato) have the

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>33</sup> Aquinas, *On Being and Essence*, 54–55.

numerically same immanent form, while granting that they have the same absolute, universal form. These are discrete form instances; the human form possessed by Socrates is not the numerically same human form possessed by Plato. Both of these are numerically distinct immanent forms, organizing different parcels of matter, which share the same proper notion. The proper notion of humanity when considered in the absolute sense and apart from discrete particulars (such as Socrates and Plato) is the universal. Thus, what Brower should have concluded from the passages in *In Sent* 1 and 2, is not that ‘two individuals must have their own distinct natures’ as if there was nothing which they share in common. Rather he should have concluded that two individuals must have their own distinct natures-instances, or immanent forms; and what they share in common is the absolutely notion conveyed by the universal.

## **1.2 The Case for Thomistic Realism**

Consideration of the grounds for seeing Aquinas as an Aristotelian Realist has demonstrated that this characterization is not inevitable. Although he clearly follows Aristotle in the epistemology of abstraction and in the denial of subsistent forms, neither of these considerations nor their attending textual grounds gave conclusive reasons to reduce the existence of forms to subjects and human minds. But if the case for Aquinas as an Aristotelian Realist is not conclusive, what can be said in favor of the view of Thomistic Realism?

Recall that the Thomistic Realist account of Aquinas on universals as distinguished from Platonic and Aristotelian accounts was the following:

Thomistic Realism =df (i) affirms that forms exist in particulars, and (ii) as universals in minds that abstract them as well as (iii) independent of minds that abstract them, but (iv) denies that they subsist individually and separately.

Denial of (i) would be a return to nominalism and conceptualism (and entertaining Aquinas as a proponent of either one of these is beyond the scope of this paper and strains plausibility). As noted, Aquinas clearly affirms (ii) and (iv) with traditional Aristotelian Realism. The critical and distinguishing proposition is located in (iii), that universals exist independent of minds that abstract them. Does Aquinas affirm this proposition, and if so, why?

In direct contradiction to the Aristotelian Realist interpretation of Aquinas, it can be clearly demonstrated that Aquinas affirms that universals exist independent of particular subjects and the minds that abstract them. This is made evident by considering both his arguments for universals and his doctrine of Divine Ideas, beginning with the latter doctrine. Aquinas' affirmation that universals exist apart from particulars and minds which have abstracted them is most clearly evident in his doctrine of Divine Ideas. In question 84, article 5 in the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas is addressing the question, "Whether the intellectual soul knows material things in the eternal types?"<sup>34</sup> His answer begins with a brief recapitulation of Augustine's teaching on the Divine Ideas from *De doctrina Christiana*.<sup>35</sup> Here Augustine, "who was imbued with the doctrines of the Platonists, found in their teaching anything consistent with faith, he adopted it: and those thing which he found contrary to faith he amended."<sup>36</sup> And what he amended here

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<sup>34</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 84, 5.

<sup>35</sup> Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, II, 11 *Patrologiae cursus completes*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris, 1844-66), (PL 34:20-21).

<sup>36</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 84, 5.

was the Platonists view that the Ideas subsist of themselves and work as creative substances. Thus, Aquinas tell us that “for the ideas defended by Plato, [Augustine] substituted the types of all creatures existing in the Divine mind, according to which types all things are made in themselves, and are known to the human soul.”<sup>37</sup> Aquinas does not merely report Augustine’s view but uses it as the grounds for his answer to the question under consideration. Aquinas concludes that although we do not see the eternal types by directly perceiving God, nevertheless he maintains that “the human soul knows all things in the eternal types, since by participation of these types we know all things.”<sup>38</sup> This knowledge comes instead by way of our own intellectual light, the mind. What is important for our purposes however is not the epistemology, but the ontology, of the eternal types. Aquinas recognizes and affirms Augustine’s emendation of the Platonic Doctrine of Ideas, which principally includes relocating the Ideas. The Ideas are now the ‘types of all creatures existing in the Divine Mind’, which only subsequently come to be instantiated in particulars, and then lastly are known to the human mind.<sup>39</sup> In question 15 of the *Prima Pars*, he is considering, ‘whether or not there are ideas?’<sup>40</sup> Aquinas answers affirmatively, “It is necessary to suppose ideas in the divine mind. For the Greek word ‘*ἰδέα*’ is in Latin ‘*forma*.’” Hence by ideas are understood the forms of things, existing apart from the things themselves.”<sup>41</sup> In *Prima Pars*, question 44, Aquinas also explicitly embraces this view as his own, stating

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., I, 15, 1.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

Now it is manifest that things made by nature receive determinate forms. This determination of forms must be reduced to the divine wisdom as its first principle, for divine wisdom devised the order of the universe, which order consists in the variety of things. And therefore we must say that in the divine wisdom are the types of all things, which types we have called ideas—i.e. exemplar forms existing in the divine mind.<sup>42</sup>

And in *ST I*, 65, 4, Aquinas gives particular attention to both the exemplary and efficient causal role of forms as eternal types. Here Aquinas contends that the forms of corporeal things are immediately-efficiently caused by some composite (form/matter) agent (e.g., this father produces this son), but these very composites must be referred back to God as the first cause.<sup>43</sup> Thus, even the corporeal forms of bodies when first produced came immediately from God. In reply to objection 2, he writes that “Forms received into matter are to be referred, not to self-subsisting forms of the same type, as the Platonists held, but ...still higher [than forms in the angelic intellect], to the types in the Divine intellect, by which the seeds of forms are implanted in created things.”<sup>44</sup> And these forms as types of things in the mind of God, Aquinas reminds, was held also by Boethius.

In a critical passage, Aquinas gives a specific delineation not only of the locales of natures, but their interrelationships and dependence. In *Quodlibet VIII*, I, I, Aquinas writes:

That which is prior is always the reason for what is posterior, and when the posterior is removed, the prior remains but not conversely. Thence it is that what is attributed to a nature according to an absolute consideration is the reason for its being attributed to some nature according to the existence which it has in a singular, and not conversely. For Socrates is rational because man is rational, and not conversely. So if Socrates and Plato did not exist, rationality, would still be attributable to human nature. Likewise, the divine intellect is the reason for the

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 44, 3.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 65, 4.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

nature absolutely considered and for the nature in singulars. And the nature absolutely considered and in singulars is the reason for the human understanding and in some way the measure of it.<sup>45</sup>

There are a number of critical observations which emerge from this passage. First, the nature as such is identified with the divine idea. Second, the nature as such is not dependent on particulars for its truth/reality. Third, the divine mind is the reason for the nature as such and for the existence of natures in singulars. Fourth, the nature as such, and the nature in singulars, is the reason or ground for human understanding. This, therefore, presents the 3-fold structure of forms (in the divine mind, in things, in human minds). And fifth, the nature as such is (in some way) the measure of the nature as apprehended in human minds. This correlates with Aquinas' statement in *De Potentia*, "From the very fact that being is ascribed to a quiddity, not only is the quiddity said to be but also to be created: since before it had being it was nothing, except perhaps in the intellect of the creator, where it is not a creature but the creating essence."<sup>46</sup>

Passages such as these which introduce the role of the divine ideas provide the material and grounds for the following schema of universals.<sup>47</sup> Aquinas affirms:

- (i) *universalia post rem* ('universals after the thing') - the concepts of the human mind posterior to the particulars represented by these concepts.
- (ii) *universalia in re* ('universals in the thing') - the universal features of singular things, inherent in these things themselves.
- (iii) *universalia ante rem* ('universals before the thing') - the universal exemplars in the divine mind.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *The Quaestiones Quodlibetales of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. Alexius M. Driscoll (Catholic University of America Press, 1930), VIII, I, I.

<sup>46</sup> Aquinas, *On Creation*, 39.

<sup>47</sup> Peterson, *Introduction to Scholastic Realism*, 9; Klima, "The Medieval Problem of Universals."

This three-fold schema of the ontology of universals in Aquinas' thought brings into sharp relief the inadequacies of an Aristotelian Realist portrayal of Aquinas. The Aristotelian Realist confines essences/forms to *universalia in re* and *universalia post rem*. But given the doctrine of Divine Ideas, it can be seen that Aquinas also affirms *universalia ante rem*. Thus, contra Stump, Baur, McInerny, Orderberg, and others, it is mistaken to restrict the ontological status of universal forms to particulars and human minds. Perhaps one might try to salvage the Aristotelian Realist reading by considering that this view never meant to deny *universalia ante rem*. In confining universals to particulars and minds, maybe these authors intended to include the divine mind as a locale. Perhaps, when the aforementioned Aristotelian Realist interpreters of Aquinas hold that universals only exist in minds, we might charitably read them as holding that this includes both human and divine minds. Unfortunately, this re-reading fails to salvage the view. To see why, recall that the characterization of this standard interpretation given earlier included two propositions: (i) Aquinas hold that universals only exist in particulars and in minds that abstract them from the particulars, and that (ii) this is the moderate realist position. The reason that this standard interpretation is not able to be harmonized with the schema of universals provided above concerns *universalia ante rem*. Since universals before the particular thing exist in the divine mind, knowledge of them is not gained via abstraction. The divine mind is the cause and source of things, not a passive recipient. God does not apprehend particular subjects, such as a dog, and then strip away all the particularizing features to arrive at a knowledge of caninity. Instead, the

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<sup>48</sup> Similar schemas are provided by: Klima, "The Medieval Problem of Universals"; Ronald H Nash, *The Light of the Mind: St. Augustine's Theory of Knowledge*, 1ST ed. (Kentucky, US: First Academic Renewal Press, 2003), 107; John Peterson, *Aquinas: A New Introduction* (Lanham, Maryland: UPA, 2008), 7.



*universalia ante rem*, canine, serves as the exemplary form by which particulars are brought into existence. However, in contrast, the Aristotelian Realist has universal forms only existing in minds *that have abstracted them* from particulars. Thus, an Aristotelian Realist reading of Aquinas cannot be sustained in light of his doctrine of divine ideas and the reality of *universalia ante rem*.

Before moving on it is important to evaluate both the *Via Quarta* and the critical inference from goods to the universal Good, and see why Aquinas would affirm the existence of universal ideas in the divine mind. On one hand, this can be seen simply as a theological entailment given his views concerning the divine nature and activity. In *Summa Theologiae* I, 44,

Now it is manifest that things made by nature receive determinate forms. This determination of forms must be reduced to the divine wisdom as its first principle, for divine wisdom devised the order of the universe, which order consists in the variety of things. And therefore we must say that in the divine wisdom are the types of all things, which types we have called ideas—i.e. exemplar forms existing in the divine mind.<sup>49</sup>

Since God is the ultimate cause of all things, and since God possesses wisdom and knowledge, it follows that God would use these perfections in creating. To create using knowledge would be to impart forms and principles which preexist in the divine mind to the particular subjects being made. But this entails that the forms and principles preexist in the divine mind, and thus that universals exist independent of particulars and minds that abstract them, giving us a doctrine of divine ideas. Although this rough sketch of a theological justification for positing *universalia ante rem* provides a sound justification, it presupposes and begins with a theological metaphysic. If this is the only way to ground

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<sup>49</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 44, 3.

affirmation of *universalia ante rem*, then both the *Via Quarta* in general and the *Eudaimonological Argument* in particular are in jeopardy; for they would rely on assumptions which can only be justified given the very thing they are attempting to demonstrate. In fact, Aquinas does not rely solely on the theological justification for affirming *universalia ante rem*, but instead he provides two independent arguments, both of which do not presuppose, but conclude to, God's existence.

### 1.3 Aquinas' Argument for Universals

I will here briefly summarize Aquinas' grounds for affirming the existence of universals (apart from theological presuppositions), though I will not attempt to defend or extend these two arguments. It is enough to show that a movement from particulars to universals is present within the Thomistic and Neoscholastic tradition. The first argument for Universals which Aquinas affirms is Plato's traditional 'One Over Many' argument as Aristotle named it.<sup>50</sup> In Plato's *Republic* Socrates states that "We are in the habit of assuming one Form for each set of many things to which we give the same name."<sup>51</sup> That is, multiple individuals exhibit a common feature or admit of common predication, then this is accounted for by reference to some underlying form or essence which the multiples exhibit or instantiate. Two passages illustrate Aquinas' use of the argument. In *De Potentia*, chapter 3, article 5 Aquinas is discussing the question of 'whether there can be

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<sup>50</sup> Aristotle, *Complete Works of Aristotle, Vol. 1*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984), 990b13; 1079a9.

<sup>51</sup> James Adam and D. A. Rees, *The Republic of Plato*, 1st ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 596a6-7.

anything that is not created by God'.<sup>52</sup> However, he begins by addressing the topic of universals (and universal causes), and then he gives three arguments for a universal cause of being. The first argument utilizes the premise, which Aquinas directly attributes to Plato, that *prior to every multitude there must be some unity, not only in number but in the nature of things*. Aquinas develops the claim, arguing

If something is found to be common to many things, it is necessary that it be caused in them by some one cause. For it is not possible that that [common feature] belongs in common to each one in itself, since each one, according to what it is in itself, is distinct from the others, and a diversity of causes would produce diverse effects.<sup>53</sup>

He then utilizes this principle to address universal being. What is important here is that Aquinas is beginning with common predication of a feature to multiple particulars (i.e., the many) and inferring a formal unity (i.e., the one). Of course, as seen above, further analysis will demonstrate that this formal unity cannot subsist in separate existence. Yet, this ontological proscription against subsistent form does not preclude Aquinas from inferring the one from the many. To the point, in *On Being and Essence*, Aquinas argues

In singular things [a nature] has a multiple existence in accord with the diversity of these singular things; yet the existence of none of these things belongs to the nature considered in itself, i.e., absolutely. For it is false to say that the nature of man, as such, has existence in this singular thing; because if existence in this singular thing belonged to man as man, man would never exist outside this singular thing. Similarly, if it belonged to man as man not to exist in this singular thing, man would never exist in it. But it is true to say that it does not belong to man as man to exist in this or that singular thing, or in the soul. ...and it is the nature so considered which is predicated of all individuals.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Aquinas, *On Creation*, 36–39.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>54</sup> Aquinas, *On Being and Essence*, secs. 56–57.

Here Aquinas is considering the nature considered absolutely (simply as the form itself). He reasons that none of the particulars (i.e., ‘singular things’), nor its apprehension in the mind (‘in the soul’) is sufficient to account for the nature considered absolutely. Singular things (which share some feature in common) require reference to the ‘nature considered in itself’ (*primam considerationem*) or ‘absolutely’ (*absolutam*). Garrigou similarly argues that “If the same note is found in various beings, it is impossible that each should possess it in its own right. ...and thus receives it from another that does possess it in its own right.”<sup>55</sup> Although Aquinas eschews the inference to subsistent, separated Forms, he does not deny and in fact utilizes the inference from multiple particulars to a single universal form; and it is a universal form that ontologically precedes both the mind’s abstraction and the instantiation in particulars as a *universalia ante rem*.

The second argument for Universals which Aquinas affirms is the found in his analysis of degreed perfections. When considering the existence of varying degrees of any positive perfection Aquinas concludes that this variance entails the existence of the full perfection. And as O’Rourke notes, “the existence of varying degrees of perfection merely adds an extra dimension to the phenomenon of the one and the many, of multiplicity and unity in the universe.”<sup>56</sup> Thus, for example, in *De Potentia* 3, 5 Aquinas is once again considering the possibility of a universal cause. His second argument for this conclusion runs as follows: “whenever something is found to be in several things by participation in various degrees, it must be derived from that one in which it exists most

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<sup>55</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:311.

<sup>56</sup> O’Rourke and Kerr, “Aquinas and Platonism,” 266.

perfectly.”<sup>57</sup> Aquinas states that the *Via Quarta* begins with “the gradation to be found in things” (*ex gradibus qui in rebus inveniuntur*).<sup>58</sup> Here he argues, “Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble and the like. But “more” and “less” are predicated of different things, according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum.”<sup>59</sup> As Holloway explains Aquinas’ reasoning here,

the argument consists in showing that degrees of more or less of the same perfection depend for their intelligibility upon the maximum degree of that perfection. Here the argument is concerned directly and explicitly with exemplary causality (the cause of intelligibility of these degrees of perfection).<sup>60</sup>

In this second argument for universals it isn’t accounting for multiplicity but degreed approximation and variance. The intelligibility of varying degrees of a single but common feature requires a standard which perfectly possesses the feature. Garrigou recognizes this principle as critical to the *Via Quarta* and affirms it, writing, “When a perfection is found in various degrees, it must be explained by a being which is that very perfection.”<sup>61</sup>

An additional consideration rarely factored into identifying Aquinas’ view of universals and his version of realism is his doctrine of natural law. Aquinas’ normative and metaethics falls squarely in line with a traditional Natural Law Theory.<sup>62</sup> On this account, a general notion of metaphysical goodness underlies the analysis of the moral

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<sup>57</sup> Aquinas, *On Creation*, 36–39.

<sup>58</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 2, 3.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Maurice R. Holloway, *An Introduction to Natural Theology* (Charlottesville, VA: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959), 125.

<sup>61</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:314.

<sup>62</sup> Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, Reprint. (Oxford University Press, USA, 1993), 245.

good.<sup>63</sup> Goodness is understood teleologically, where good is the realization of a final end. As Aquinas notes, “the end is the measure of things ordered to the end” (or, “...the rule of whatever is ordained to the end”).<sup>64</sup> A thing’s form (nature/essence) entails certain final causes or natural ends. It is the realizing of those particular and distinctive final causes or natural ends which constitutes the good for any given thing.<sup>65</sup> The distinctive form of a thing will entail distinctive natural ends and thus require distinctive forms of fulfillment. The moral good comes about when rational and volitional faculties are used to realize those natural ends; e.g., when persons intellectually grasp what is good given their nature and freely choose to pursue it.<sup>66</sup> As Aquinas explains, “all those things to which man has a natural inclination, are naturally apprehended by reason as being good, and consequently as objects of pursuit, and their contraries as evil, and objects of avoidance.”<sup>67</sup> Thus, human beings can exhibit varying degrees (‘more or less’) of goodness or evil insofar as they willingly depart from the ends given by their nature.

In standard presentations of Aquinas’ moral philosophy, Natural Law is metaphysically linked with Eternal Law (*lex aeterna*).<sup>68</sup> The eternal law, for Aquinas, is that rational plan by which everything is ordered,<sup>69</sup> while the natural law is the distinctive

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<sup>63</sup> David S. Oderberg, “Being and Goodness,” 2014.

<sup>64</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I–II, 1.

<sup>65</sup> Feser, *Aquinas*, 180.

<sup>66</sup> Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy Of St Thomas Aquinas*, 252–256.

<sup>67</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I–II, 94, 2.

<sup>68</sup> Pasnau and Shields, *The Philosophy Of Aquinas*, 218–219; Feser, *Aquinas*, 187–188; Peter S. Eardley and Carl N. Still, *Aquinas: A Guide for the Perplexed*, 1st ed. (London ; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), 78.

<sup>69</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I–II, 91, 1.

way that human beings participate in the eternal law.<sup>70</sup> As Eleonore Stump notes, natural law is a “certain participation on the part of a rational creature in God’s eternal law”, which is “the ordering in God’s mind of created things in the world.”<sup>71</sup> The divine intellect knows the nature of things and the divine will creates in accordance with this knowledge.

What all of this entails, however, is that for Aquinas’ account of natural law the forms (natures/essences) of particular things in the world are not ontologically reducible to particulars and the mind’s abstracting of them. The formal causes of particular things which entail the natural ends and thus their degree of goodness insofar as these ends are realized, are rooted in the eternal law. Thus, Aquinas’ Natural Law Theory requires *universalia ante rem*. Although the implications for Aquinas view on eternal law for his doctrine of universals is rarely recognized, Anthony Lisska’s analytic reconstruction of Aquinas’ Natural Law Theory makes this connection. Lisska observes,

...for Aquinas, eternal law functions as an ontological principle of explanation. Eternal law plays a role similar to what Plato attempted in his ontology through the world of the Forms. ...In Aquinas’s ontology, one must take the world of the Forms schematically and place it into the divine mind. ...What Aquinas meant by eternal law is the set of archetypes, analogous to the world of Forms, which are found as the divine ideas in God’s mind.<sup>72</sup>

What this analysis of Aquinas’ Natural Law Theory entails is that the version of moderate realism characterized by McInerny and others which limits forms to particulars and abstracted in minds does not cohere with Aquinas’ doctrine of Eternal Law.

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., I-II, 91, 2.

<sup>71</sup> Stump, *Aquinas*, 88.

<sup>72</sup> Lisska, *Aquinas’s Theory of Natural Law*, 91–92.

It should be seen then that the form of realism that Aquinas affirms does not coincide with either a Platonic or Aristotelian Realism. With Aristotelian Realism, Aquinas' position concerning universals affirms that forms exist in particulars, and as universals in minds that abstract them. However, given his continuance of the Augustinian doctrine of divine ideas, he also holds that forms exist independent of minds that abstract them, as *universalia ante rem*. Can such a view still be considered a version of moderate realism? Yes, if one characterizes moderate realism (rightly so) as the rejection of separate and subsistent forms existing *in toto*. As we have seen, contra Platonic Realism he denies that they subsist individually and separately. Nevertheless, Aquinas offers a number of reasons for affirming *universalia ante rem*, reasons which do not immediately presuppose a theological framework. First, he utilizes the Platonic 'One Over Many' argument where multiple individuals exhibiting a common feature or admitting of common predication is accounted for by reference to some underlying form or essence, which ontologically precedes the particulars and the form abstracted by the mind. The second argument for *universalia ante rem* which Aquinas affirms emerges from consideration of the existence of varying degrees of any positive perfection which entails the existence of the full perfection as the standard to which the variance is grounded. This second argument is further demonstrated and strengthened when considering Aquinas' account of the natural law. The formal natures of particular things entail natural ends, and their degree of goodness is found in the extent to which these ends are realized. The natural law account of formal and final causality is ultimately rooted in the eternal law as the archetypal plan for particular subjects existing in the divine mind. What these arguments, and the Thomistic Realism they entail suggest is that



the version of moderate realism characterized as Aristotelian fails to capture Aquinas' view of universals. Further, and most importantly for Eudaimonological Argument, Thomistic Realism allows for the movement from particular instances of goods (say) to the universal Goodness; this universal construed as something existing independent of those particulars and as a mere mental abstraction. Given that both versions of Garrigou's EA relied on this inferential movement, Thomistic Realism demonstrates that the EA can coherently fit within the thought of Aquinas and the ensuing Scholastic tradition insofar as it recognizes this aspect of his thought. Therefore, we can conclude that moderate realism does not present a defeater to Eudaimonological Arguments as they have been formulated from the work of Garrigou-Lagrange.

## **2. Final Causality and the Eudaimonological Argument**

Having addressed issues arising from the role of formal causality in the Eudaimonological Argument and the objection from moderate realism, a second set of concerns arises when considering the role of final causality in the Eudaimonological Argument. Two particular problems come to the fore in this regard. I will seek to further elucidate these two problems as they concern the EA, addressing each one in turn. The first problem comes from challenges posed to the inference to a single, ultimate end for all human beings. The second problem comes from the contention that appeals to final causality necessarily presuppose God's existence; and thus the use of finality in the EA makes it structurally invalid. If either of these two types of problems concerning final causality succeeds, the EA must be deemed unsound. Let us take a closer look at these problems and consider how they might be addressed.

## 2.1 The Problem of Inferring a Single, Ultimate End

The first problem arising from final causality as applied to the EA is aimed at the inference to a single, ultimate end for human beings. As analyzed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, Aquinas' 'Treatise on Happiness' in *Summa Theologiae, prima secundae*, seeks to establish that there is an ultimate end to human life from an analysis of human agency.<sup>73</sup> In so doing his method resembles Book I of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, wherein Aristotle reasons, "Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good; and for this reason the good has rightly been declared to be that at which all things aim."<sup>74</sup> Aquinas similarly argues in the following manner. Since all agents act for ends,<sup>75</sup> the structure of human acts is an essentially ordered series of means-ends which must ultimately terminate in an ultimate end sought for its own sake.<sup>76</sup> Then Aquinas argues that this ultimate end is one and the same for all human beings: their perfection which brings all their desires to rest.<sup>77</sup> Garrigou's standard Eudaimonological Argument utilizes this characterization of the ultimate human end to establish premise (2) *the human will naturally desires a universal, perfect Good*.

However, some have protested that the inference to a single, ultimate end is fallacious or unwarranted for a variety of reasons. Elizabeth Anscombe and Peter Geach

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<sup>73</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, 1-5.

<sup>74</sup> Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1998), bk. I.

<sup>75</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, 1, 1.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, I-II, 1, 4.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, I-II, 1, 5.

have claimed that this inference involves an illicit quantifier shift that renders it invalid.<sup>78</sup>

Anscombe identifies the problem in this way,

The old arguments were designed to show that the chain [of human actions] could not go on forever; they pass us by, because we are not inclined to think it *must* even begin; and it can surely stop where it stops, no need for it to stop at a purpose that looks intrinsically final, one and the same for all actions. In fact there appears to be an illicit transition in Aristotle, from ‘all chains must stop somewhere’ to ‘there is somewhere where all chains must stop.’<sup>79</sup>

A quantifier shift fallacy occurs when the quantifiers of a series of statements (e.g., ‘some’ and ‘every’) are erroneously transposed; they shift positions in the first and second statement. On this charge, the fallacy occurs from concluding that there is one good at which everything aims from the fact that everything aims at some good.

Analogously, it would be fallacious to infer that since every object has a shape, there must be one single shape that every object has. Anthony Kenny alleges that even if Aristotle can evade this fallacy, “it entrapped some of his followers, notably Aquinas (*S.T. Ia IIae, I, 4-6*).”<sup>80</sup> Does the inference to a single, ultimate end exhibit a fallacious inference and does this undermine the standard Eudaimonological Argument?

This charge against Aristotle and Aquinas has not gone unaddressed, and a number of proposed solutions have been offered. First, in Michael Pakaluk’s analysis of book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, what Aristotle is offering is not an argument to a single good but identifying the essential nature of goodness. Pakaluk explains,

What Aristotle wishes to claim, in effect, is that ‘good’ should be defined as ‘aimed at.’ To be a good is to be a goal (or an ‘end’). To confirm that this is his

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<sup>78</sup> G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd ed. (Harvard University Press, 2000), sec. 21; P. T. Geach, *Logic Matters* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1972), 1–13.

<sup>79</sup> Anscombe, *Intention*, 34.

<sup>80</sup> Anthony Kenny, “Happiness,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 66 (January 1, 1965): 95.

purpose, note that the rest of the chapter presupposes this identification. ...His introductory lines are designed not to give a grand argument, but to replace talk of goods with talk of goals.<sup>81</sup>

What this reading entails is that Aristotle, and Aquinas following him, is seeking to establish not that there is some single highest particular, but instead provide a criterion or condition that would suffice to establish such an ultimate good.<sup>82</sup> If there is such an ultimate good it must be that which is desirable for its own sake, with all other goods subordinated to it. But this is not the only resolution to the alleged quantifier shift fallacy from the desire for goods to a good of all desires. David Oderberg also suggests that this is not Aristotle' (and by extension Aquinas') argument.<sup>83</sup> Oderberg raises a parallel inference to illustrate the difference:

Every material object has some colour; therefore, there is some property, namely *being coloured*, that every material object has.<sup>84</sup>

Given this parallel, Aristotle's argument is that since every activity aims at some good, there is a property of goodness at which all things aim. An analysis of human action and practical reason yields the recognition of a single property which serves as the object of action. When developed this analysis of practical reason is sometimes labeled as the 'guise of the good' thesis; namely, that whenever we act we necessarily do so for the sake

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<sup>81</sup> Michael Pakaluk, *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics: An Introduction* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 49.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>83</sup> David S. Oderberg, *Moral Theory: A Non-Consequentialist Approach*, 1st ed. (Oxford, UK ; Malden, Mass: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000), 37; David S. Oderberg, "On an Alleged Fallacy in Aristotle," *Philosophical Papers* 27, no. 2 (1998): 107–118.

<sup>84</sup> Oderberg, *Moral Theory*, 37.

of something we take to be good in some way (whether it is actually in fact good or not would be a secondary matter).<sup>85</sup>

Careful attention to Aquinas' argument in the 'Treatise on Happiness', however, demonstrates that acquitting Aquinas of the charge illicit quantifier shift doesn't depend on these interpretive moves regarding Aristotle's opening of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. For, as noted in the previous chapter, Aquinas does not make the simple inference from a good sought as an end in itself to a single good that all seek. Instead, Aquinas develops three independent arguments which seek to establish that there is a single, ultimate end for all human beings: (i) the argument from natural perfection; (ii) the analogical argument from rational first principles; and (iii) and argument from the common genus of human action.<sup>86</sup> Whatever assessment one might have of these arguments, they make evident that Aquinas has attempted to move from particular ends to an ultimate end by a variety of considerations and principles rather than a simple and illicit shift in quantifying some goods to one good.

There is one additional and critically important response to the objection from using mediate ends and particular goods to rising to an ultimate end and final good that must be brought to bear on the discussion. However, before so doing, introducing another formulation and further development of this objection is in order. The work of New Natural Law Theorists such as Robert George, Germain Grisez, and Christopher Tollefsen holds to an incommensurability thesis regarding final goods for human beings

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<sup>85</sup> David S. Oderberg, "All for the Good," *Philosophical Investigations* 38, no. 1–2 (January 1, 2015): 72–95.

<sup>86</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I–II, 1, 5.

(e.g., there are multiple final goods for human beings, but that they cannot be hierarchically arranged or prioritized).<sup>87</sup> For example, John Grisez writes,

Yet, considered precisely as the ultimate reasons for acting, the whole set of basic goods does not constitute a hierarchy. Rather as ultimate reasons for acting, they are incommensurable: neither equally good nor more or less good than one another. For, as reasons for which there are no further reasons, the basic human goods are irreducible; and as pertaining to diverse categories, they are good in diverse ways.<sup>88</sup>

This suggests that the inference to an ultimate end and final good is subject to the objection from the incommensurability of human goods; namely, that since natural human goods cannot be arranged hierarchically, there can be no extrapolation to a single, highest good. This New Natural Law thesis has not gone without significant challenges. That it runs at odds with the traditional Natural Law Theory as developed by Aquinas, Thomists, and Scholastics is easily demonstrable. On the traditional view, the morality of human actions is ultimately characterized by the rational ordering of goods to which we are inclined by our natures/essences.<sup>89</sup> As Aquinas writes, “Reason was given to man that he might ensue those things to which his nature inclines, not in all cases, but in accordance with the order of reason.”<sup>90</sup> The function of practical reason is to make the evaluative comparisons between various ends and to properly order them.<sup>91</sup> Thus, as Daniel McInerney contends,

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<sup>87</sup> Robert P. George, *In Defense of Natural Law* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2001), 92–94; Germain Grisez, “Natural Law, God, Religion, and Human Fulfillment,” *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 46 (January 2001): 3–36; Christopher Tollefsen, “The New Natural Law Theory,” *The LYCEUM* X, no. 1 (2008).

<sup>88</sup> Grisez, “Natural Law, God, Religion, and Human Fulfillment,” 14–15.

<sup>89</sup> Baur, “Law and Natural Law,” 250.

<sup>90</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II–II, 69, 4; I–II, 94, 2.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, II–II, 110, 1; I–II, 17, 2.

the incommensurability thesis runs counter to...the ‘neo-scholastic’ [and] Thomistic understanding that the human good exists naturally as a hierarchical arrangement...in which goods are ordered both to one another and to the absolutely ultimate end. ...non-arbitrary choices between contending substantial, or intrinsically valuable, goods are only possible when one of the goods is seen either as a necessary or expedient means for the attainment of another and intrinsically more valuable good.<sup>92</sup>

What the incommensurability thesis undermines is the grounds for ordering goods and thus for making decisions between competing goods, resulting in the moral equivalency of all pursuits.

Whatever the shortcomings (or strengths) of the incommensurability thesis, in the end its plausibility does not serve to defeat the Eudaimonological Argument. The inability of the New Natural Law Theory and its incommensurability thesis to undercut the standard Eudaimonological Argument is made evident by the fact that the Thomistic-Garrigou formulation can allow for such a plenary distribution of basic goods. The standard EA is compatible with this thesis for it only requires that (i) natural desires have corresponding goods, (ii) the intellect perceives a universal good, (iii) desires emerge from perceived goods, and (iv) perfection or happiness requires satiation of natural desires. Each of these claims is consistent with the assumption that the range of basic goods admits no prioritization or standard of ranking. As long as human nature desires a universal, infinite good, final causality suggests that such a desire has a corresponding referent, irrespective of how or if it may be ranked among others. Moreover, and returning to the earlier objection concerning the conclusion to an ultimate end arising from the nature of human action and practical reason, the EA can also grant this objection

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<sup>92</sup> Daniel J. McInerney, “Hierarchy and Direction for Choice,” in *Virtue’s End : God in the Moral Philosophy of Aristotle and Aquinas*, ed. Fulvio Di Blasi, Joshua P. Hochschild, and Jeffrey Langan (South Bend, Ind.: St. Augustine’s Press :, 2008), 125.

while remaining essentially sound. Theses (i)-(iv) do not specifically require that we can deduce a single, ultimate end for human beings from the particular end driven nature of action. All that the EA requires is that human nature does in fact seek a perfect, universal good; and does so because of the universal reach of the intellect. Whether or not the natural desire for a universal good can be reached via an analysis of desires for lower or basic goods, or the structure of human action itself, would not affect the argument. Therefore, objections from the quantifier shift, the impossibility of inferring a single, ultimate end, and the incommensurability of basic goods should not be seen as successful defeaters to the standard Eudaimonological Argument as offered by Garrigou and formalized in this work.

## **2.2 The Problem of Final Causality and Theistic Assumption**

While the use of final causality and a teleological view of human action and nature may avoid these aforementioned objections, there is one repeated and persistent problem pertaining to final causation that, if successful, completely undermines the Eudaimonological Argument. This objection maintains, in essence, that appeals to such teleology are vacuous apart from theological presuppositions; and from this it follows that the standard Eudaimonological Argument is an extended exercise in *petitio principii* – assuming in the premises the very conclusion the argument is attempting to demonstrate. Garrigou is not unaware of this type of objection to the argument he is developing. He notes that “certain theologians maintain that the principle, ‘the desire of



nature cannot be purposeless,' is not certain for us except and until we have demonstrated that our nature is the work, not of chance, but of an intelligent and good God."<sup>93</sup>

To see the force of this problem, consider again the standard 'Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> Way EA' as expounded in chapter two of this dissertation. This formulation of the argument highlighted the 'correspondence thesis' as the critical first premise: (1) *Natural desires correspond to real goods*. It was there further demonstrated that this premise critically relies on the doctrine of final causality. In *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, Garrigou brings this dependence to the forefront as he notes that "this argument is made explicit by the principle of finality: every agent acts of an end."<sup>94</sup> And, on Garrigou's view, final causality entails objective correlates for natural desires. If an object, good, or state of affairs is not actual or realizable, then the inclination would not be properly so directed or aimed. In other words, the principle of finality entails not only that natural desires are inherently directed, but further, in order to be so directed, there must be an actually existing corresponding object, good, or state of affairs (thus, the 'correspondence thesis'). Now, given the EA's reliance on final causality, a set of concerns comes to the fore even from within the broader Thomistic and Neoscholastic tradition. The prominent 20<sup>th</sup> century Cardinal Désiré-Joseph Mercier well-articulates this concern:

Granted that human nature is not vitiated by some radical flaw, undoubtedly God must exist as the end of its higher activities. But can we postulate that our nature is so made? Is it not precisely because it is God who made it that we know it is a perfect production? How, in consequence, can we affirm the existence of God by basing it on the needs of our nature? It is true we can say that, if God did not

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<sup>93</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:334. As an example of a theologian who advances this criticism, Garrigou cites De Munnuick in *Praelectiones de Existencia Dei*.

<sup>94</sup> Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite* (Paris, France: Desclee de Brouwer, 1932), chap. 5. cf. Aristotle, *Physics*, Bk II, ch. 3; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 44, 4; I-II, 1, 2; *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Bk. III, ch. 2.

exist, man alone of all creatures would be irremediably unhappy. ...why have we need of God as the satisfaction of our nature except because He is necessary as an explanation of the world?<sup>95</sup>

The teleological view of human nature required for the standard Eudaimonological Argument to get off the ground is intelligible, according to Mercier, only within explicit theological presuppositions. The view that finality could not be recognized or demonstrated through natural reason can be traced back to William of Ockham. He claimed that

someone who is just following natural reason would claim that the question ‘For what reason?’ is inappropriate in the ask of natural actions. For he would maintain that it is no real question to ask for what reason a fire is generated; rather, this question is appropriate only in the case of voluntary actions.<sup>96</sup>

Such a recognition of the reasons for natural agents acting, according to Ockham, could only come from divine revelation. He contests, “If I accepted no authority [i.e. of the truth of faith], I would claim that it cannot be proved either from propositions known per se or from experience that every effect has a final cause...For it cannot be sufficiently proved that every effect has a final cause.”<sup>97</sup>

Robert Pasnau similarly sees Aquinas’ final causality as critically dependent on his theistic assumptions, which precludes using teleology as grounds apart from those assumptions. This would make the EA fatally dependent on a comprehensive natural

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<sup>95</sup> Mercier, *A Manual Of Modern Scholastic Philosophy Cardinal Mercier*, II:55–56.

<sup>96</sup> William of Ockham, *Quodlibetal Questions: Quodlibets 1-7*, trans. Alfred J. Freddoso and Francis E. Kelley, New edition edition. (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1998), 249; Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics*, 94.

<sup>97</sup> Ockham, *Quodlibetal Questions*, 246; For more on Ockham's views on final causation, see Marilyn McCord Adams, “Ockham on Final Causality: Muddying the Waters,” *Franciscan Studies* 56, no. 1 (1998): 1–46.

teleology that is no longer plausible.<sup>98</sup> Consider Pasnau's critique of Aquinas' argument for immortality, which utilizes a parallel to premise (1) of the standard EA. In considering 'whether the human soul is incorruptible', Aquinas argues, "everything that has an intellect naturally desires always to exist. *But a natural desire cannot be in vain.* Therefore every intellectual substance is incorruptible" (emphasis added).<sup>99</sup> But, Pasnau responds, this argument depends on strong teleological assumptions that are no longer plausible.<sup>100</sup> Pasnau explains, however, that Aquinas is committed to final causation because he thinks that nature is the work of a governing intelligence, without which it could not stand.<sup>101</sup> Pasnau's assessment in this regard rests, in part, on his analysis of the structure of natural ends. He writes, "Ends exert their seemingly magical backward influence only through mind; if nature does not act according to the divine plan, then there is no genuine acting for ends, no genuine teleology in nature."<sup>102</sup> Thus, when he characterizes Aquinas' account of the perfected happiness, it is one that necessarily presupposes God's existence as independently demonstrated.<sup>103</sup> Pasnau is not alone in this; Mark C. Murphy concurs. In his explication of the Natural Law and whether the content of the good includes God, he writes,

*If there is a being that is the most fundamental explanatory principle of all, ... then of course it will be good for human to know that being. ... if there is a being of*

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<sup>98</sup> Robert Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: A Philosophical Study of Summa Theologiae, 1a 75-89* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 177–178; 208–209; 362; Pasnau and Shields, *The Philosophy Of Aquinas*, 214.

<sup>99</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 75, 6.

<sup>100</sup> Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature*, 178. cf., cf.362.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 178–179.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

<sup>103</sup> Pasnau and Shields, *The Philosophy Of Aquinas*, 214.

perfect knowledge and goodness, ...then of course it will be good for humans to be in friendship with that being. These accounts of the truth of the propositions *it is part of the human good to know God* and *it is part of the human good to be friends with God* do not even entail God's existence, so God's existence can hardly be asserted by those accounts.<sup>104</sup>

What the analysis of Mercier, Pasnau, and Murphy demonstrate is that if final causality and the teleological view of human nature necessarily rely on theistic assumptions, then any attempt to utilize these tenets to demonstrate God's existence will fallaciously beg the question.<sup>105</sup> Although, as noted in chapter 2 of this dissertation, Garrigou and others often work from theological assumptions in developing accounts of human happiness and perfection, the human quest for perfection can be carried out independent of such assumptions and will yield grounds for affirming God's existence. But if those such as Mercier, Pasnau, and Murphy are correct, this option is not left open.

What can be said in way of response to this challenge posed to the standard Eudaimonological Argument? Addressing this challenge raises an important set of issues regarding final causation that I will explore at some length. However, before so doing, a couple preliminary responses are in order. First, to require theological knowledge before identifying teleology is directly at odds with the method Aquinas uses in the *Via Quinta*,

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<sup>104</sup> Mark C. Murphy, *God and Moral Law: On the Theistic Explanation of Morality* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2012), 75–76.

<sup>105</sup> We can implicitly include advocates of the objection all those interpreters, surveyed in chapter 2, that held that God's existence is necessarily presupposed in Aquinas' treatment of human happiness. See Jan A. Aertsen, "Aquinas's Philosophy in Its Historical Setting," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump, 1st ed. (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 31–32; F. C. Copleston, *Aquinas: An Introduction to the Life and Work of the Great Medieval Thinker* (Penguin Books, 1956); Leo Elders, *The Philosophical Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Brill Archive, n.d.), 133; Russell Pannier, "Aquinas on the Ultimate End of Human Existence," *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 3, no. 4 (2000): 169–194; Baschab, *A Manual of Neo-Scholastic Philosophy*, 398–399.

so it can hardly be said to represent the traditional Thomist or broader Scholastic position. As John Wippel explains in his exposition of the *Via Quinta*,

Thomas's text makes it clear that he really has in mind an argument based on final causality in nature. ...this argument begins with something which Thomas regards as evident to us from the world of everyday experience. Natural bodies, that is to say, things which are equipped with their own natures but lack the power of cognition, act for the sake of an end.<sup>106</sup>

Indeed, as Christopher Martin notes in his extended analysis of the *Via Quinta*, Aquinas thinks it almost unquestionable that particular things act for an end.<sup>107</sup> Instead, what is more difficult to establish "is the step from the unconscious end-directedness which we see all around us to the conscious end-directedness which he needs to assert if he is to prove the existence of God."<sup>108</sup> In fact, even those such as Mercier who objected to the appeal to final causality for the EA, make parallel appeals to the obviousness of finality and order in developing their own formulations of the *Via Quinta*. Mercier affirms, "that there is order in the universe is abundantly manifest," and he goes on to delineate four distinct levels or classes of order to underscore its ubiquity.<sup>109</sup> And Mercier is not here engaging in theological explanation of the world taking God's existence for granted; he is developing an argument in natural theology wherein the presence of final causality is taken as his premise.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 480.

<sup>107</sup> Martin, *Thomas Aquinas*, 180.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> Mercier, *A Manual Of Modern Scholastic Philosophy Cardinal Mercier*, II:49–50.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, II:49–54; Similarly, Baschab argued that the EA was inadequate and inconclusive because it depended on teleological assumptions which he claimed were unjustified apart from theological grounding, offers his own teleological argument. He contends, "Of all the arguments for the existence of God, the most obvious as well as the most forceful is the teleological. Its appeal is direct and universal. Its solid foundation is the manifest order in the universes perceptible even to the untrained eye and undeveloped mind." Baschab, *A Manual of Neo-Scholastic Philosophy*, 405–406.

Secondly, there are prominent examples of scholars who recognized and affirmed teleology while holding to philosophical naturalism or at least holding that teleology didn't have theistic presuppositions or implications. Although Aristotle is a type of theist affirming an Unmoved Mover, he sees no particular relationship between the final causality intrinsic to natural substances and this ultimate Being. In *Metaphysics* XII, even while recognizing the teleology of the universe as a whole,<sup>111</sup> he does not end 'with a positive account, but with a criticism of his predecessors who have advanced an account of an extrinsic cause of the cosmos.'<sup>112</sup> On Aristotle's views, final causality did not derive from a divine source.<sup>113</sup> Philippa Foot in *Natural Goodness*, sets out to establish a natural normativity based on an analysis of natural kinds as teleological Aristotelian categoricals and applies this account to human beings.<sup>114</sup> However, Foot's teleology and ensuing moral realism is defended along naturalist lines.<sup>115</sup> She is prepared to recognize inherent final causation that not only doesn't require a theistic metaphysics, but denies it.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Aristotle, *Complete Works of Aristotle, Vol. 1*, bk. *Metaphysics* XII (Lambda).

<sup>112</sup> Monte Ransome Johnson, *Aristotle on Teleology* (Oxford : Oxford ; New York: Clarendon Press, 2006), 271–286; see also, Stephen Menn, "Aristotle's Theology," in *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle*, ed. Christopher Shields (Oxford University Press, USA, 2012), 444–448.

<sup>113</sup> Edward Feser, "Teleology: A Shopper's Guide," *Philosophia Christi* 12, no. 1 (2010): 148. It should be noted here, that the form of moderate realism labeled 'Aristotelian' in the previous section, which Feser identified with Aquinas' views is something he later appears to shift. In the work cited here, Feser identifies 'Scholastic Realism' as a tertium quid between Platonic and Aristotelian Realism, and identifies it with Aquinas. The 'Scholastic Realism' therein expressed coincides with the 'Thomistic Realism' defined in this dissertation.

<sup>114</sup> Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, 1st ed. (Oxford (UK): Clarendon Press, 2003), chaps. 2, 4.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>116</sup> For another example of a contemporary philosopher who acknowledges teleology but denies any theistic implications, see Thomas Nagel, *Mind & Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature Is Almost Certainly False*, 1st edition. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

For the third response to the objection under consideration, it must be noted, as chapter 2 demonstrated, that Garrigou actually offers a series of independent arguments in support of premise (2) and its appeal to finality; none of which relied on theological presuppositions.<sup>117</sup> First, Garrigou provided an a posteriori, inductive consideration to justify the correspondence between natural desires and goods. Garrigou suggests that experience shows that the natural desires of lower beings are not in vain.<sup>118</sup> Second, Garrigou advanced the notion of finality as a self-evident principle. He explains, “[n]ow the end is precisely that determinate good to which the act of the agent or the motion of the mobile object is directed. This principle [is] self-evident to one who understands the meaning of the words agent and end.”<sup>119</sup> Third, his primary consideration in support of the principle of finality, developed from an argument by Aquinas, seeks to metaphysically link efficient and final causality. Garrigou explains, “whoever recognizes the principle of efficient causality, must also recognize the principle of finality, because there can be no efficiency, tendency, action, or passion without purpose.”<sup>120</sup> Final causality is taken to be the overarching explanation for the totality of causal analysis, as it is the cause of all causes; ultimately linking it to the Principle of Sufficient Reason.<sup>121</sup> While an assessment of these justifications is beyond the scope of this dissertation, and aside from their plausibility, what they clearly demonstrate is that the standard

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<sup>117</sup> See chapter 2 of this dissertation, pp. 59ff.

<sup>118</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Le Realisme Du Principe de Finalite*, 6; Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 45.

<sup>119</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *Providence*, 46.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>121</sup> See chapter 2 of this dissertation, 64ff. for the details of this argument.

Eudaimonological Argument need not make appeal to God's existence prior to motivating its premises. Instead, Garrigou's case rests on his broader metaphysics: the first principles and notions, derived from the intellect's awareness of being, systematically delineated and defended against various objections and metaphysical alternatives. In point of this fact, in Garrigou's *magnum opus* and principal defense of God's existence consisting of just under 400 pages, the first 241 pages are given to the systematic and extended defense of the ontological and transcendental validity of the first principles before arguments for God's existence are even broached.<sup>122</sup> As Garrigou himself observes,

Perhaps some may be surprised that so many pages of this book are taken up with the abstractive intuition of intelligible being and of the first laws of beings. The reason is that it seems to us impossible to reply to the current objections against the traditional proofs for the existence of God, without recurring to these preliminary fundamentals of general metaphysics concerning being, identity, becoming, multiple, substance, causality, and finality.<sup>123</sup>

Whether or not Garrigou's case for this philosophical grounding and his argument for final causality are successful is another question and open for dispute. However, what they demonstrably exhibit is the dubious nature of the claim that final causality is only grounded in explicit theological presuppositions.

One last response to the objection that the standard Eudaimonological Argument begs the question is to offer an ontological analysis of finality which makes its immediate and direct recognition plausible. This analysis and its implication for recognizing final causality (apart from theological presuppositions) derives from the scholastic distinction

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<sup>122</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:241–242.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:110.



between *extrinsic* and *intrinsic* finality.<sup>124</sup> However, in order to get clear on this distinction, we must return to the consideration of formal causation on a Thomistic Realist view addressed in the first section of this chapter. What the analysis in the first section demonstrated is the two-fold nature of forms. Forms, as natures or essences, can be both immanent to a particular as well as universal *ante rem* in the mind of God. This yields the distinction between *intrinsic* vs. *extrinsic* formal causes, where the intrinsic formal cause is the nature or essence present within a particular joined with a parcel of matter and the extrinsic formal cause is the exemplary idea of the form in its universal mode.<sup>125</sup> As Aquinas notes, “a formal cause... [can be] either inherent or exemplar.”<sup>126</sup> And detailing the relation between the two, Aquinas writes,

Forms received into matter are to be referred, not to self-subsisting forms of the same type, as the Platonists held, but ...to the types in the Divine intellect, by which the seeds of forms are implanted in created things, that they may be able to be brought by movement into act.<sup>127</sup>

The previous section of this chapter focused on universals and thus extrinsic formality. However, in order to address the problem of recognizing final causality, the focus here turns to the intrinsic formal cause.

Since all particular subjects possess immanent forms, this entails that the underlying principles are inherent to the thing itself. This is what makes something a

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<sup>124</sup> Peter Coffey, *Ontology or the Theory of Being; An Introduction to General Metaphysics* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1918), 405–406; Phillips, *Modern Thomistic Philosophy, Vol II*, 2:246.

<sup>125</sup> Garrigou recognizes this distinction, noting, “The exemplary idea is an extrinsic formal cause.” Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:192, note 65.

<sup>126</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 5, 2.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 65, 4.

natural substance as opposed to an artifact.<sup>128</sup> Natural substances have characteristic activities which derive from something intrinsic to them. As Aristotle explains, “The nature of a thing, then, is a certain principle and cause of change and stability in the thing, and it is directly present in it – which is to say that it is present in its own right and not coincidentally.”<sup>129</sup> Whereas with all products (of human art), “none of them intrinsically contains the source of its own production.”<sup>130</sup> Take the difference between a tree and a wooden chair. A tree is a natural substance whereas the wooden chair is a kind of artifact. The parts of the tree have an inherent propensity to function coordinately, allowing it to metabolize, grow, reproduce, etc. In contrast, the parts of the chair have no inherent tendency to function coordinately; they must be arranged to do so by an extrinsic source (i.e., a carpenter). Whereas the tree possesses immanent constitutive principles that are due to its inherent substantial form, “any ordinary artifact is configured only with an accidental form. The production of an artifact...brings together already existing things...which in the new composite still remain the things they were before being conjoined.”<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> For an extended analysis of this distinction on Aquinas’ view, see Stump, *Aquinas*, 38–44.

<sup>129</sup> Aristotle, *Physics* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), Book II, part I, 33.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> Stump, *Aquinas*, 39; Similarly, Gilson distinguishes between natural beings and works of art: “Matter, form, and the end are real constituents of being. ... This is what distinguishes the teleology of nature from that of art. The artist is external to his work; the work of art is consequently external to the art which produces it. The end of living nature is, on the contrary, consubstantial with it. The embryo is the law of its own development. It is already of its nature to be what will be later on an adult capable of reproducing itself. Descriptions of natural teleology which situate the cause of it outside of it appear to be conceived in view of justifying the negation of such teleology.” Etienne Gilson, *From Aristotle to Darwin & Back Again: A Journey in Final Causality, Species and Evolution* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009), 148.

Now, as already noted, on Aquinas' view final causes follow from formal causes; that is, a thing's nature determines the ends appropriate to it. Since Rachel has a human nature, knowledge and friendship constitute proper ends for her; and since some specific oak has the nature of a tree, photosynthesizing light and absorbing nutrients from the ground are proper ends for it. What follows from this is that since forms are inherent to particular subjects, so are their natural ends. That is, because natural substances have intrinsic formal causes, they also possess intrinsic final causes (i.e., intrinsic finality). As Peter Coffey explains,

Scholastic philosophers...following the thought of Aristotle, consider that every agency in the universe is endowed with an *intrinsic principle of finality* which constantly directs its activities towards the realization of a perfection which is proper to it and which constitutes its intrinsic end.<sup>132</sup>

The intrinsic final causes are what account for the natural tendencies and orientations towards certain ends. Teleology is 'built in' to things possessing intrinsic forms, whereas things like artifacts have teleology imposed 'from the outside' (i.e., extrinsic finality).<sup>133</sup> For artifacts, "those tendencies are...there only insofar as an artificer has put them there."<sup>134</sup> A defining characteristic of a substantial form is that it allows for properties and causal powers that are irreducible to the parts of a particular thing.<sup>135</sup> Those causal powers represent the tendencies towards actualization, which are a thing's natural ends. Thus, since Rachel has a human nature in virtue of an immanent substantial form, she has

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<sup>132</sup> Coffey, *Ontology or the Theory of Being; An Introduction to General Metaphysics*, 406.

<sup>133</sup> Feser, *Scholastic Metaphysics*, 166.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> Eleonore Stump, "Substance and Artifact in Aquinas's Metaphysics," in *Knowledge and Reality: Essays in Honor of Alvin Plantinga*, ed. Thomas M. Crisp, Matthew Davidson, and David Vander Laan (Springer Science & Business Media, 2006), 70–71.

powers of rationality which are not reducible to any parts (e.g., neuronal cells), and the exercising of those rational powers (through reasoning and apprehending truth, c-fiber firings, etc.) are her natural ends. Therefore, her natural ends (i.e., her teleology) are inherent to her; not something imposed from ‘the outside’. An extrinsic universal finality would be the overarching and tectonic principles which govern the universe. The emphasis on intrinsic finality isn’t to deny, of course, the existence of universal extrinsic teleology. Rather this is to distinguish between immediate, proximate, and distal sources of teleology. Thomas Gilby recognizes the implications of Aquinas general metaphysics as it relates to distinguishing what I have identified here as intrinsic finality from universal extrinsic finality. He writes, on “[Aquinas’] pluralist metaphysics...there are real beings distinct from the subsistent being of God, real secondary principal causes distinct from the First Cause, and real ends distinct from the ultimate ends.”

Where does all of this lead us with respect to the objection from Mercier, Pasnau, and others that the final causation necessary for the success of the EA presupposes God’s existence and thus entails that the EA begs the question? What the foregoing analysis of immanent form and thus immanent teleology provides is the possibility of recognizing a localized or particularized teleology inherent to particular substances apart from assuming a comprehensive and theologically grounded teleology at the outset. If forms are intrinsic to particular subjects, and since natural ends follow formal causes, then the natural ends are intrinsic to particular subjects. Now, if natural ends are intrinsic to particular subjects, then they are capable, *per hypothesi*, of being apprehended by the mind in its recognition of the particular subject itself; and these intrinsic ends are capable of apprehension apart from universal ultimate ends. If formal and final causality are

immanent to particular subjects, then we can recognize that, say, exercising our rational faculties for the sake of apprehending truth is a proper end given our human nature; and we can do so without needing recourse to an overarching theological framework. At the outset of his *From Aristotle to Darwin and Back Again*, a defense of final causality in a post-Enlightenment and Scientific Revolution milieu, Étienne Gilson relies on this very division between finality and theology. He explains,

The notion of final causality has not been treated kindly. One of the principal reasons for the hostility toward it is its long association with the notions of a creator God and providence. ... The object of the present essay is not to make of final causality a scientific notion, which it is not, but to show that it is a philosophical inevitability and, consequently, a constant of biophilosophy, or philosophy of life. It is not, then, a question of theology. If there is teleology in nature, the theologian has a right to rely on this fact in order to draw from it the consequences which, in his eyes, proceed from it concerning the existence of God. But the existence of teleology in the universe is the object of a properly philosophical reflection, which has no other goal than to confirm or invalidate the reality of it.<sup>136</sup>

Gilson's project in this work relies solely on philosophical reflection in his attempt to recover the embedded purposiveness of things in the world.

What would preclude recognition of immanent teleology? Edward Feser, concurring with Gilson's analysis, claims that it was the advent of mechanism and scientism which sought to displace formal and final causality while retaining truncated accounts of efficient and material causality.<sup>137</sup> What this resulted in was a surprising concurrence between many theists and naturalists regarding the basic conception of the physical world. As Feser explains,

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<sup>136</sup> Gilson, *From Aristotle to Darwin & Back Again*, 1.

<sup>137</sup> Feser, *Aquinas*, 39–43; Gilson, *From Aristotle to Darwin & Back Again*, chap. 2; cf. David L. Hull, "Mechanistic Explanation," ed. Robert Audi, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (Cambridge, U.K.; New York N.Y.: Cambridge University Press, September 28, 1999).

Modern philosophers have almost universally embraced this [mechanistic] conception of scientific explanation. They have disagreed about whether an appeal to irreducible teleology conceived of as something extrinsic to the material world ought to supplement the mechanistic explanations of empirical science. Contemporary naturalists deny that any such appeal can be justified. By contrast, early modern thinkers like Boyle and Newton regarded an appeal to extrinsic teleology—in particular, to God’s intentions and activity as artificer of the natural world—as an essential capstone to the edifice of science. William Paley’s design argument gave this line of thought its most fully developed and influential articulation. ...the arguments of contemporary ID theorists like William Dembski, though differing from the arguments of Boyle, Newton, and Paley in various particulars, carry on their appeal to teleology as something extrinsic to the material world, and allow that at least much of the natural order is in principle nonteleological. Where these thinkers all agree with each other and with their naturalistic opponents is in rejecting the Aristotelian-Scholastic conception of final causes as inherent in material substances.<sup>138</sup>

Sharing the mechanistic assumptions, many design models, following in the tradition of William Paley, make appeal to a “teleology manifest in nature [as] extrinsic, entirely derivative from an outside source.”<sup>139</sup> These arguments take the mechanical conception of nature for granted and require direct divine activity as the source of explanation for teleological features of the universe. The point here is not to adjudicate this dispute, nor is it to defend immanent final causality. Rather, this characterization of the shift towards mechanism could explain why some would deny the recognition of teleology apart from explicit theological resources. Instead, the traditional scholastic affirmation of immanent forms and thus immanent teleology provides the ontology needed for a more direct recognition of final causality as present within the individual substance. If this realist construal of the basic contours of the world is even possible, then so, by extension, is the recognition of final causality apart from assuming God’s existence at the outset;

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<sup>138</sup> Feser, “Teleology,” 144.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

rendering the objection here under consideration either mute, or in need of further defense.

### **3. Conclusions**

The Eudaimonological Argument, which initially emerges in Augustine, develops in Aquinas, and comes to full expression in Garrigou, seeks to provide justification for affirming God's existence through an appeal to distinctively human appetites and capacities centered in the quest for happiness arriving at an ultimate terminus and perfect Good. As Garrigou has developed it, two versions of the EA connected with Aquinas' *Via Quarta* come to the fore: the 'Strict 4th Way EA' and the 'Expanded 4th Way EA', with the latter representing Garrigou's standard and most developed version of the argument. Initial investigation into both versions in the previous chapter made its operative assumptions evident; specifically, its critical dependence on formal and final causation. In this chapter, two types of potential defeaters were identified in connection with these two types of causation.

Regarding formal causality, in the first section of this chapter a specific objection was posed to the EA from standard construals of moderate realism. Both versions of the EA were shown to be dependent on the movement from multiple and imperfect goods to a single, perfect good, and that such a movement is achieved by appealing both to formal natures (e.g., of particular goods) as well as their relation to a universal (e.g., Goodness). But the problem this raised comes from the apparent commitments of Garrigou and those of the broader Thomistic and Neoscholastic tradition concerning universals. Aquinas and the ensuing tradition is supposed to be committed to a moderate realism, which holds that

universals are located only in particulars and the minds that abstract them from those particulars; undercutting the inference from particular goods to an actual, mind-independent universal Good.

In response to this objection, it was argued that the form of realism that Aquinas affirms does not coincide with either a Platonic or Aristotelian Realism. Instead, his view was best characterized as the *tertium quid* of Thomistic Realism, defined as the view that forms exist in particulars and as universals in minds that abstract them, as well as independent of minds that abstract them, but denies that they subsist individually and separately. To demonstrate this, first, the various textual arguments for an Aristotelian Realist reading were addressed and offered plausible reinterpretations. Although he clearly follows Aristotle in holding to an epistemology of abstraction and in the denial of *subsistent* forms, neither of these considerations nor their attending textual grounds gave conclusive reasons to relegate the existence of forms solely to particulars and human minds. Second, to make the positive case for Thomistic Realism, it was argued that it can be demonstrated that Aquinas affirms that universals exist independent of particular subjects and the minds that abstract them. This is established by considering both his arguments for universals and his doctrine of divine ideas. The first argument for Universals which Aquinas affirms is the traditional ‘One Over Many’ argument which affirms that where multiple individuals exhibit a common feature or admit of common predication, then this is accounted for by reference to some underlying form or essence which the multiples exhibit or instantiate. The second argument for Universals which Aquinas affirms is found in his analysis of degressed perfections. When considering the existence of varying degrees of any positive perfection, Aquinas concludes that this



variance entails the existence of the full perfection. Both of these arguments provide part of the rationale for affirming that universals exist independent of particulars and minds that abstract them, as *universalia ante rem* in the mind of God. Therefore, since Aquinas affirms *universalia ante rem*, and argues from multiple, imperfect particulars to those universals, Garrigou's inference from goods to the Good falls squarely in line with Aquinas' thought and is not undermined by Aristotelian characterizations of moderate realism.

In the second section of this chapter a number of objections to the Eudaimonological Argument emerging from the doctrine of final causality were considered. The first problem arising from final causality as applied to the EA is aimed at the inference to a single, ultimate end for human beings. Focused on Aristotle, this objection maintained that this inference involves an illicit quantifier shift that renders it invalid. However, two alternative readings of this move in Aristotle provided ways to avoid charging Aristotle with this fallacy. Even further, however, it was argued that Aquinas does not make the simple inference from a good sought as an end in itself to a single good that all seek. Instead, Aquinas develops three independent arguments which seek to establish that there is a single, ultimate end for all human beings: (i) the argument from natural perfection; (ii) the analogical argument from rational first principles; and (iii) and argument from the common genus of human action. Whatever assessment one might have of these arguments, they make evident that Aquinas has attempted to move from particular ends to an ultimate end by a variety of considerations and principles rather than a simple and illicit shift in quantifying some goods to one ultimate good.

Further development of this objection came from the work of New Natural Law Theorists which advance an incommensurability thesis about various human goods. The inference to an ultimate end and final good is subject to the objection from the incommensurability of human goods; namely, that since natural human goods cannot be arranged hierarchically, there can be no extrapolation to a single, highest good. However, two considerations were brought to bear on this contention. First, it was argued that the rational ordering of goods is a standard and necessary part of traditional Natural Law Theory as articulated by Aquinas and the ensuing tradition. Second, and more importantly, the Thomistic-Garrigou formulation of the EA can allow for a plenary distribution of basic goods. The standard EA is compatible with this incommensurability thesis, for as long as human nature desires a universal, infinite good, final causality suggests that such a desire has a corresponding referent, irrespective of how or if it may be ranked against other goods.

The final and most important objection to the Eudaimonological Argument maintains, in essence, that appeals to such teleology are untenable apart from presupposing God's existence and subsequent design of the world. The teleological view of human nature required for the standard Eudaimonological Argument to get off the ground, the objection insists, is intelligible only within explicit theological presuppositions. The result for the standard Eudaimonological Argument is that it constitutes an extended exercise in *petitio principia*, by assuming in the very thing it purports to demonstrate. There were a number of responses aimed at addressing this objection.

First, to require theological knowledge before recognizing teleology is directly at odds with the method Aquinas uses in the *Via Quinta*, so it can hardly be said to represent the traditional Thomist or broader Scholastic position. Second, prominent examples of scholars who recognized and affirmed teleology while holding to philosophical naturalism or at least holding that teleology didn't have theistic presuppositions or implications were identified as counterexamples to the claim that recognizing teleology presupposes theism. Third, Garrigou offers a series of arguments independent of theism in support of final causality. His primary consideration in support of the principle of finality, developed from an argument by Aquinas, seeks to metaphysically link efficient and final causality, where final causality is taken to be the overarching explanation for the totality of causal analysis.

The fourth response aimed at addressing the objection that appeals to such teleology are untenable apart from presupposing God's existence, depended on establishing the distinction between intrinsic vs. extrinsic teleology. In order to make this distinction clear, appeal was made to the implications of Thomistic Realism noted in the first section on formal causality. On Thomistic Realism, forms are both extrinsic (as universals in the minds of God) and intrinsic (as the immanent principles informing matter) to particular subjects. Given that final causality follows upon formal causality, it was recognized that finality could also be immanent to particulars. What this analysis of immanent form and thus immanent teleology provides is the possibility of recognizing a localized and embedded teleology inherent to particular substances apart from assuming a comprehensive and theologically grounded teleology at the outset. In contrast, it is the mechanism and scientism which sought to displace formal and final causality which

denies this possibility and when taken for granted results in Paley-style teleological arguments which must make explicit and immediate appeal to theological grounds.

The Eudaimonological Argument, then, can be seen to critically rely on detailed metaphysical assumptions concerning formal causality (including immanent forms and universals *ante rem*) and final causality (including immanently directed ends and corresponding goods). The various objections which targeted these two metaphysical assumptions helped to develop their details and demonstrated that the Eudaimonological Argument's dependence on them can sustain the scrutiny from within the Thomist and Neoscholastic tradition. Thus, this further establishes the thesis of this dissertation: that Garrigou's EA represents a viable project in natural theology when properly understood in light of its underlying metaphysical principles, specifically the metaphysics of formal and final causality.

While Augustine provided the initial impetus for considering a Eudaimonological Argument, Garrigou following Aquinas brought it to full formulation. However, the Copernican revolution in philosophy ushered in by Immanuel Kant was to have an effect on this argument. Both Kant and certain Transcendental Thomists (those seeking to syncretize Aquinas with Kantian philosophy) continued the tradition of offering natural theological arguments that can be broadly identified with the Eudaimonological Argument explicated in this dissertation thus far. However, in the hands of Kant's critical philosophy, the contours of the argument come to be significantly altered. What remains to be done is to consider the Kantian EA and whether or not it represents a genuine advance or an actual regression.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE KANTIAN EUDAIMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Immanuel Kant offers the provocative and somewhat surprising claim, for those with a superficial handle on his work, that “morality ... inevitably leads to religion” (6:6). Kant’s explication of this relationship has traditionally been described as his moral argument for postulating the existence of God. Although such moral arguments have interspersed the history of philosophy through to the present day, Kant’s particular version centers on the notion of the *summum bonum* (the highest good). Throughout and after the critical period Kant addressed this notion and did so in a way that connected it with his moral philosophy and saw in it grounds for rising to the idea of God. In so doing, Kant was not exhibiting an innovative trajectory but flowing within a long-running stream of ancient and medieval philosophers. Beginning with Plato and the “ladder of love” in the *Symposium*, moving through Augustine’s *De Beata Vita* and Aquinas *Summa Theologiae*, each of these writers attempted to chart a course from the quest for happiness in the various forms of lower goods and ascending through higher goods to a transcendent terminus.<sup>1</sup> In the hands of Kant’s critical philosophy, however, this course takes a unique route and is intimately connected with a range of key Kantian doctrines and positions. It is the purpose of this chapter, in the first part, to examine Kant’s

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<sup>1</sup> M. C. Howatson and F. C. C. Sheffield (eds.), *Plato: The Symposium* (Cambridge University Press 2008), 210a-212b; Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, P. G. Walsh (trans.), (Oxford University Press, 2008), Books 1-3; Augustine, *The Happy Life; Answer to Sceptics; Divine Providence and the Problem of Evil, Soliloquies*, in L. Schopp (trans.), (Catholic University of America Press, 1948), Day 1-3; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Fathers of the English Dominican Province (trans.), (Christian Classics, 1981), *prima secundae*, I-II, q. 1-5.

Eudaimonological Argument from the highest good, with the aim of highlighting a particular difficulty with its key premise.<sup>2</sup> Next, I will use this difficulty as grounds for exploring Kant's metaethical views; here I will argue that a consideration of Kant's metaethics leads to a systemic dilemma for the critical philosophy. Subsequently, I will tie this key premise to a new practical antinomy which emerges from a consideration of his views expressed in *Religion*. In the end, I conclude that any Kantian Eudaimonological Argument must either utilize formal and final causality and forego the critical strictures, or if it abides by those strictures it fails to establish its conclusion. In the second section, I turn to the school of Transcendental Thomism, which attempts to adapt Aquinas' thought with Kant's critical philosophy. In particular, I examine two Transcendental Thomists, Joseph F. Donceel and W. Norris Clarke, and their respective attempts to formulate a Eudaimonological Argument within this tradition. However, I contend that both authors either abandon the critical philosophy at certain points, or when they remain within its confines are unable to construct a viable Eudaimonological Argument. What this chapter seeks to defend, by a *via negativa* of sorts, is the indispensability of the traditional realist principles of formal and final causality to the Eudaimonological Argument by illustrating how the argument becomes unsustainable when these are abandoned.

## **1. Kant's Eudaimonological Argument**

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<sup>2</sup> This argument is standardly referred to as his 'moral argument'. But this is an incomplete description as it critically relies on his notion of happiness as well. Thus, and consistent with the terminology of this dissertation, I will identify Kant's moral argument as his version of the Eudaimonological Argument.

Before exploring Kant's Eudaimonological Argument, it is important to briefly relay the implications of his critical philosophy for metaphysics. Although he began his philosophical work in the tradition of the Wolf-Leibnizian rationalism he had inherited, he attempted an entire reworking of metaphysics and epistemology beginning with his *Critique of Pure Reason*.<sup>3</sup> In this and the ensuing works comprising the critical project, Kant takes aim at (at least) three schools of thought.<sup>4</sup> First, he seeks to undo the traditional metaphysics represented by figures such as Christian Wolf and Alexander Baumgarten by circumscribing its realist and 'dogmatic' reach. Second, he responds to the Empiricism which sought to ground knowledge solely on experience of the world and undermine universal and necessary *a priori* knowledge. Third, he attempts to address the skepticism emerging from David Hume's analysis of the Empiricist tradition, which brought the most basic notions such as causation into question. In responding to each of these schools of thought, his purpose is to allow for the possibility of human freedom and autonomy and the certainty of modern science while still retaining traditional beliefs in God and immortality by revolutionizing both metaphysics and epistemology.

The Empiricists had characterized the mind's role in knowledge acquisition in a passive function of receiving impressions from the world of sense. Kant conceded Hume's empiricist critique of *a priori* judgments; that, for example, the mere mental association of an effect with a cause produced from subjective representations could

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<sup>3</sup> Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, "Introduction to the Critique of Pure Reason," in *Critique of Pure Reason* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 2–3.

never establish the universal and necessary character of the principle of causation.<sup>5</sup> But Kant would not grant the Rationalist's notion that this *a priori* knowledge could be obtained independently of sense experience through the mind's intuition of principles and features of the world. With the first part of the *Critique* in the section on the 'Transcendental Analytic', he attempts to dismantle all projects aimed at acquiring knowledge of the features of the world through the use of formal concepts and the principles of understanding.<sup>6</sup> Instead, his transcendental method would not deal directly with the objects of empirical investigation but inquire into the necessary conditions for the possibility of experience through a reexamination of the mental faculties required for such knowledge.<sup>7</sup> Both the Empiricists and Rationalists operated on the common assumption that the mind in acquiring knowledge actually conforms to reality. It was this assumption that Kant's critique was to take up and reverse. He writes,

Up to now it has been assumed that all our cognition must conform to the objects; but all attempts to find out something about them *a priori* through concepts that would extend our cognition have, on this presupposition, come to nothing. Hence let us once try whether we do not get farther with the problems of metaphysics by assuming that the objects must conform to our cognition, which would agree better with the requested possibility of an *a priori* cognition of them, which is to establish something about objects before they are given to us. ...If intuition has to conform to the constitution of objects, then I do not see how we can know anything of them *a priori*; but if the object...conforms to the constitution of our faculty of intuition, then I can very well represent this possibility to myself.<sup>8</sup>

The categories of the mind imposed on the phenomena are what, according to Kant, allow us to account for universal and necessary knowledge of synthetic *a priori* judgments.

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<sup>5</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 138.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 201–266.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 149–152.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.



However, instead of starting with the assumption that the mind begins with the world and conforms itself to it, Kant reverses the order and posits that the world is constituted by those *a priori* structures of the mind. Thus, we must assume “that that our representation of things as they are given to us does not conform to these things as they are in themselves but rather that these objects as appearances conform to our way of representing.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, our cognition is only able to achieve awareness of the appearances (*phenomena*), leaving things in themselves (*noumena*) unrecognized.<sup>10</sup>

Where does this leave the principles of formal and final causality, which has figured so prominently in the preceding chapter’s analysis of the Eudaimonological Argument? At first glance, it might seem that both formal and final causation continue to integrally function in Kant’s system. For example, Konstantin Pollok notes that

The distinction between matter, or the determinable, and form, or the determination, is so ubiquitous in Kant’s critical philosophy that many Kant scholars of otherwise rather divergent views on Kant implicitly or even explicitly agree that some kind of hylomorphism underlies many of his investigations.<sup>11</sup>

But this would be to misconstrue the strictures on metaphysics placed by the critical philosophy. Although many areas of Kant’s thought utilize and can be accounted for along the lines of formal and final causality, as for example in his account of beauty and the aesthetic judgment, in the end because of the strictures on metaphysics, his tenets cannot coincide with the realist assumptions of the Aristotelian-Thomistic framework.<sup>12</sup>

As Graham Bird notes, “Kant’s quest for a new metaphysics was revolutionary insofar as

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 112 cf. 426.

<sup>11</sup> Konstantin Pollok, *Kant’s Theory of Normativity: Exploring the Space of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 130.

<sup>12</sup> Mary A. McCloskey, *Kant’s Aesthetic* (New York: SUNY Press, 1987), 78–79.

he criticized the deductive procedure of the scholastic ontology... Kant abandoned substantial forms and obliterated the whole doctrine of essences.”<sup>13</sup> Even further, Kant entirely rejects any realist notion of universals.<sup>14</sup> The reason for rejecting any Kantian affirmation of substantial forms and the other elements of formal causation is his denial that the mind apprehends real features of the world. A pseudo-formal causality may persist but this is one that only reflects the structural functions of the human intellect as it molds the material of sense impressions; the form is only a mental construct.

But is there still a place for a realist construal of final causality and teleology in Kant’s thought? Teleology appears to play a prominent role in Kant’s analysis of pure and practical reason. For example, regarding the study of biological organisms, he writes,

Organized beings are thus the only ones in nature which, even if considered in themselves without relation to other things, must nevertheless be thought of as possible only as its ends, and which thus first provide objective reality for the concept of an end that is not a practical end but an end of nature, and thereby provide natural science with the basis for a teleology...<sup>15</sup>

Even further, teleology is what unifies both the theoretical and practical parts of Kant’s philosophy into a single system.<sup>16</sup> However, to characterize this teleology as constituting the actual structure of reality is to, once again, run at odds with the critical strictures. As Kant makes clear,

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<sup>13</sup> Graham Bird, *A Companion to Kant* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 86.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Oberst, “Kant on Universals,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (2015): 335–352.

<sup>15</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, 1st ed. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 247.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 81–83; Michael Rohlf, “Immanuel Kant,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Spring 2016. (Stanford, CA: Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2016), accessed February 16, 2016, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/kant/>.

it is merely a consequence of the particular constitution of our understanding that we represent products of nature as possible only in accordance with another kind of causality than that of the natural laws of matter, namely only in accordance with that of ends and final causes, and that this principle does not pertain to the possibility of such things themselves (even considered as phenomena)...but pertains only to the judging of them that is possible for our understanding.<sup>17</sup>

Even the evidence from the putative exhibition of final causality in biological organisms, cited above, can at best only be relegated to a functional principle guiding investigation.

As Eric Watkins makes clear, on Kant's view "since we have neither empirical evidence nor theoretical proof of the existence of ...an author of nature...we can only use the notion of an organism as the product of design as a regulative principle for heuristic purposes."<sup>18</sup> Therefore, though formal and final causality continue to function in various iterations in Kant's work, given the Kantian reworking of traditional metaphysics and epistemology, they are only a semblance of the metaphysical principles operative in the Augustine-Aquinas-Garrigou formulation of the Eudaimonological Argument.

Kant presents his notion of the highest good and his version of the Eudaimonological Argument principally in *The Critique of Pure Reason* (B834-B847), *The Critique of Practical Reason* (5:107-141), *The Critique of Judgment* (5:429-453), and *Religion* (6:3-6:6).<sup>19</sup> Although the argument has been construed in various ways, a common and summary presentation often proceeds along these lines. Practical reason

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<sup>17</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 277.

<sup>18</sup> Eric Watkins, *Kant and the Sciences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 266.

<sup>19</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 677–684; Immanuel Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, ed. Mary J. Gregor, 1st ed. (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 226–254; Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 296–318; Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: And Other Writings*, trans. Allen Wood and George Di Giovanni (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 33–37. Other important references are found in *On the Common Saying* 64–68, 277–84, 87–9, 307–314; *What is Orientation in Thinking* 298–99, 139–140; *Perpetual Peace* 108–124, 361–80; and *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View*, propositions 6–9.

designates that the ultimate end of rational finite beings is found in the highest good. This highest good is to be understood as a synthesis of two distinct elements in a particular relation, happiness proportioned to virtue. Since we are required to pursue or promote the highest good, it must be regarded as capable of realization. However, our awareness of the sensible world makes evident that this end is not achieved therein. Thus, in order to provide for the realizability of the highest good, two critical conditions must be maintained: to wit, God and immortality. Therefore, we are led to affirm these two indispensable commitments. This simple and straightforward argument masks a sea of complexity in interpretation, analysis, and assessment. In order to address some of this complexity, consider the following formalization of the argument:

1. We are required to pursue the highest good (HG).
2. If we are required to pursue the HG, then the HG must be possible.
- Therefore (from 1&2), 3. The HG is possible.
4. For the HG to be possible, we need to postulate (i) God and (ii) immortality.
- Therefore (from 3&4), 5. we need to postulate (i) God and (ii) immortality.

Whereas the argument has been cast in ways different from the above, most accounts will include something along the lines of premises 1, 2, and 4. Those that focus on the regulative function of the postulates, and see the argument as a mere heuristic or practical *reductio*, focus on the nature of postulation in premise 4.<sup>20</sup>

Setting aside for the moment the nature of Kantian postulation and transcendental argumentation, the appeal to God in premise 4 is worthy of note in comparing the argument with the standard EA as provided by Garrigou. The problem Kant is attempting to solve regards the ideal relation between happiness and virtue. The operative

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<sup>20</sup> For an example of this type of characterization of the arguments see A. W. Wood, *Kant's Moral Religion* (Cornell University Press, 1970).

assumption is that the quality of an individual's happiness (or lack thereof) should coincide with and be proportioned to their moral quality in an ultimate distribution of rewards and punishments.<sup>21</sup> This state of affairs, however, even if sometimes realized in this world, can only be contingently and not essentially and necessarily achieved. Like the principle of causation, Kant seeks to provide the conditions to account for not only the harmony between happiness and virtue, but also the necessity of their ultimate relation. This is one critical point of difference between Kant and the preceding tradition. Taking happiness and virtue as entirely distinct elements, he is in search of a way to establish a necessary connection between them. Whereas, as Linda Zagzebski notes,

[The Greeks and medieval philosophers] believed that the ultimate goal or end of the moral life is a unitary good in which happiness and virtue are integrated and virtually inseparable. Kant denied that. Virtue and happiness are neither conceptually nor probabilistically connected... They are two different ends.<sup>22</sup>

This in part is why Kant faces the particular problem of uniting them. Therefore, on Kant's account, the only adequate cause to ensure such a state of affairs is God. God's role is cast exclusively in terms of efficient causality.<sup>23</sup> God is the only plausible causal explanation for the just distribution of happiness in the perfect ethical community.<sup>24</sup> In chapter 2 of this dissertation, versions of the Eudaimonological Argument built on efficient causality as formulated by Garrigou were considered in conjunction with

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<sup>21</sup> Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 316.

<sup>22</sup> William Wainwright and Linda Zagzebski, eds., "Morality and Religion," in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Religion*, 1st ed. (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 349.

<sup>23</sup> We can leave aside here the role of immortality in the argument to focus the discussion. It would, of course, not play an efficient causal role but a necessary precondition, on Kant's argument.

<sup>24</sup> Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: And Other Writings*, 111. The specific reasons why God is required are multiple and varied, but include, for example, the need for a "supreme lawgiver...who knows the heart" and can "penetrate to the most intimate parts of the disposition" *Religion* p. 109-110.

Aquinas' *Via Prima*.<sup>25</sup> However, in this version the *explanandum* was the movement of the will, and the feature of efficient causality was the requirement of a first cause in essentially ordered series. In Kant's version, neither this *explanandum* nor the termination of *a se* causal series plays a role in the argument.

Although the argument has garnered considerable attention from the beginning, it has generally not fared well, from initial objections during Kant's time, such as Thomas Wizenmann's charge of wishful thinking, to prominent historical reactions such as Schopenhauer's *petitio principii* allegation, to contemporary philosophers, such as Peter Byrne who sees the argument falter at every step.<sup>26</sup> Byrne reflects this negative reception, concluding that the argument "has very little cogency. Problems abound with it at every turn and many of these problems arise out of its author's own reflections on the key elements in it."<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, there are some that appear to assess it in an affirmative way, though it isn't always clear if authors in this vein are just rebutting particular defeaters or confining themselves to defending an interpretation of Kant without committing to the argument itself.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, there are examples of contemporary Kant-

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<sup>25</sup> See chapter 2, pp. 36-37.

<sup>26</sup> For Wizenmann's response, see "An den Herrn Professor Kant von dem Verfasser der Resultate Jacobi'scher und Mendelssohn'scher Philosophie," *Deutsches Museum* I (1787):116-156. Although Kant was quite impatient with some of the criticisms against his project he gave credence to Wizenmann's response, and addressed his concerns in the second *Critique* (5:143n). For Arthur Schopenhauer's criticism, see *On the Basis of Morality* (Hackett Publishing, 1995). P. Byrne, *Kant on God* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007).

<sup>27</sup> Byrne, *Kant on God*, p. 120.

<sup>28</sup> Wood, *Kant's Moral Religion*. J. Aufderheide and R. M. Bader (eds.), *The Highest Good in Aristotle and Kant* (Oxford University Press, 2015). J. Mariña, "Making Sense of Kant's Highest Good," *Kant-Studien*, 91 (2000), 329-55. L. R. Pasternack, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant on Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (Routledge, 2013).

inspired moral arguments, as seen in the works of Linda Zagzebski, Robert Adams, George Mavrodes, and C. Stephen Evans.<sup>29</sup>

Surveying the representative criticisms of the argument highlights the range of questions that it generates. *One* set of objections target Kant's characterization of the highest good. Some have contested, as noted above, that his notion is idiosyncratic and otherwise deficient when compared with the preferable ancient and medieval account(s) of eudaimonism, which provided a more seamless and coherent view of ultimate human flourishing.<sup>30</sup> Along these lines, others have worried that Kant's account of happiness is hedonic in nature, which proves to be a liability to his case.<sup>31</sup> Even further, some critics have maintained that his account of happiness (and thus the highest good) is necessarily tied to empirical conditions within the natural world, and as such is at odds with his conclusions about immortality.<sup>32</sup> Another set of objections have targeted the purported need to postulate God and/or immortality (premise 4 above).<sup>33</sup> Either the respective

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<sup>29</sup> L. Zagzebski, "Does Ethics Need God," *Faith and Philosophy*, 4 (1987), 294-303. R. M. Adams, "Moral Arguments for Theistic Belief," in *The Virtue of Faith and Other Essays in Philosophical Theology* (Oxford University Press 1987). G. Mavrodes, "Religion and the Queerness of Morality," in W. Wainwright and R. Audi (eds.), *Rationality, Religious Belief, and Moral Commitment* (Cornell University Press 1987), 213-26. C. S. Evans, "Moral Arguments" in C. Taliaferro, P. Draper, and P. L. Quinn (eds.), *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion* (Wiley-Blackwell 2010), ch. 44.

<sup>30</sup> For criticisms along these lines, see Linda Zagzebski's "Morality and Religion" in W. Wainwright (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Religion* (Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 348; T. Irwin, *The Development of Ethics, Volume 3: From Kant to Rawls* (Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. ##.

<sup>31</sup> Irwin, *The Development of Ethics, Volume 3: From Kant to Rawls*, pp. 133-35. Wood, however, sides with Kant's view of the summum bonum over classical forms of eudaimonism. Wood, A. "Kant vs. Eudaimonism," in Predrag Cicovacki (ed.), *Kant's Legacy: Essays Dedicated to Lewis White Beck* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2001).

<sup>32</sup> A. Reath, "Two Conceptions of the Highest Good in Kant," *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 26 (1988), 593-619. J. Mariña, "Making Sense," pp. 329-55.

<sup>33</sup> Byrne, *Kant on God*, p. 93-94. Irwin, *The Development of Ethics, Volume 3: From Kant to Rawls*, p. 143ff

postulate fails to accomplish the required work or it raises further difficulties. For an example of the former, some contend that a state where complete happiness is achieved is impossible even with the postulation of God because of the inherent nature of finite rational beings.<sup>34</sup> A concomitant of our finitude is perpetual need, which precludes the state of complete desire-satisfaction that is needed for the attainment of happiness, and appeals divine power are not able to rectify this paradox. We will examine an example of the latter type of problem with premise 4 in the last section of this paper. The *last* set of objections has targeted the conditional claim that in order for something to be obligatory, then it must be possible (premise 2 above).<sup>35</sup> We need not linger here on these criticisms nor enter the further discussion that each catalyzes. Instead, for our purposes in this section, the important and pivotal premise is the first one. Every formulation of the argument invokes this premise (in one form or another), and it is the premise most intimately connected with the whole of the critical project.

How should we understand the proposition that we are required to pursue the highest good (premise 1, above)? There are two primary candidates here, each of which have significant implications and involve their own distinctive problems. The first interpretation of premise 1 we shall call the *Duty-reading*. On this view, what Kant is suggesting is that we have a moral obligation to bring about the highest good, the state of affairs where happiness is proportioned to virtue. For example, Courtney Fugate writes, “Kant bases his proof or proofs of God’s existence on the premise that the moral law is

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<sup>34</sup> Byrne, *Kant on God*, p. 104-105.

<sup>35</sup> Irwin, *The Development of Ethics, Volume 3: From Kant to Rawls*, pp. 138-39



the foundation of a duty to promote the highest good.”<sup>36</sup> The second interpretation of premise 1 we shall call the *Practical Requirement-reading*.<sup>37</sup> This rendering of the premise takes Kant to hold that practical reason has two essential yet distinct aims, happiness and virtue. It is virtue that exhausts our duties, while happiness only represents that essential directionality of reason in its quest for non-obligatory ends. We are obligated to pursue virtue and conform to the moral law, but we are not morally obligated to seek out the end of happiness. Given the distinction of these ends, there can be no moral duty directed at the highest good, simpliciter.<sup>38</sup> We have only a moral duty to adopt our maxims in accord with the moral law and a practical necessity to pursue our own happiness.

Now, these competing interpretations of premise 1 each lead to independent problems, but it is the *Duty-reading* of premise 1 that carries the brunt of the criticisms. Let us here focus on two specific difficulties it faces. The first problem for Kant’s Eudaimonological Argument, given the *Duty-reading*, is that he has run counter to his own view, from at least the *Groundwork* onwards, that duty is sufficient for incentivization and excludes all other motives.<sup>39</sup> However, if we have a moral duty to promote the highest good, which includes happiness, then we seek (in part) our own happiness in obeying the moral law. But if happiness can be an end we are obligated to

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<sup>36</sup> C. Fugate, “The Highest Good and Kant’s Proof(s) of God’s Existence,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 31 (2014), 137.

<sup>37</sup> For an example of this interpretation see Bader’s chapter ‘Kant’s Theory of the Highest Good,’ in Aufderheide and Bader (eds.), *The Highest Good in Aristotle and Kant*, ch. 8.

<sup>38</sup> Although it may be the case that we can loosely refer to a duty towards the highest good, but only insofar as we are addressing virtue, with happiness simply implied as a necessary and synthetic correlate of the highest good.

<sup>39</sup> Wood, *Kant’s Moral Religion*, p. 18ff.

follow, then we are no longer simply incentivized by the claims of the moral law over us. The second problem with the *Duty-reading* is that it entails that we have a duty to promote something that exceeds our capacities and thus violates the ought-implies-can conditional affirmed (implicitly) in premise 2.<sup>40</sup> Pasternack draws out the force of this problem by distinguishing between the highest good as an ideal and the highest good as a duty.<sup>41</sup> Kant, he suggests, illicitly slides from the *ought* of HG (duty) to the *can* of HG (ideal). The argument is thus guilty of equivocating the key terms. If we grant this distinction, we must recognize that the *ought* of the HG (duty) does not depend on the *possibility* of the HG (ideal). Pasternack suggests that the highest good as duty should be supplanted with an obligation solely to become virtuous. If we do make this change, Kant avoids an internal incoherence with his *ought-implies-can* conditional. For, to be obligated to pursue or promote virtue only requires that one is so able to pursue or promote virtue. Following Pasternack's suggestion, the need to postulate immortality might still persist (assuming, more specifically, that the duty is to become completely virtuous). But this undercuts the argument for postulating God, leaving Kant's Eudaimonological Argument for postulating God defeated.

Suppose, then, we abandon the *Duty-reading* of premise 1 and take up the *Practical Requirement-reading*.<sup>42</sup> On this view, again, we have a duty to promote the moral law and a practical need (of reason) to pursue happiness. When so understood, the

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<sup>40</sup> Pasternack, *Routledge Philosophy*, p. 42ff.

<sup>41</sup> Pasternack, *Routledge Philosophy*, p. 36ff.

<sup>42</sup> Both Pasternack and Bader provide rigorous textual defenses of this reading, though Pasternack sees it as emerging after the first *Critique* and something on which Kant vacillates. See Pasternack, *Routledge Philosophy*, pp. 41-71; Aufderheide and Bader (eds.), *The Highest Good in Aristotle and Kant*, ch. 8.

first premise becomes immune to the criticisms leveled at the *Duty-reading*. In the moral argument formulated above, premise 1 was stated so as to permit and advance this understanding of Kant's claim. So, what is the problem with reading Kant's first premise of the EA in this way? The problem is that this reading either leaves the initial premise as a wildly implausible instance of wishful thinking or as a grand exercise in *petitio principii*. To see why, consider again Thomas Wizenmann's objection that simply because we recognize in ourselves a need for, say, a lover of great beauty, we should hardly conclude that such a beauty exists for us (5:143n).<sup>43</sup> To this Kant replies that this need is not a mere "inclination" but a "need of reason." But this merely shifts the question one step further. We may still ask, why should we think that the essential structure of reason in its practical aims needs to conform with reality? To assume that it should, on Kant's own system, is to resort to the very wishful thinking with which Kant has been charged.<sup>44</sup> What Kant requires here is an analysis of reason in terms of a realist construal of formal and final causality. If the nature or essence of rational faculties (formal cause) is inherently directed towards apprehending goodness (final cause), then Kant has the resources to ground the practical needs of reason as aiming at true goods. However, as we saw at the outset of this chapter, Kant has abandoned these traditional metaphysical resources. He cannot appeal to a physico-theology to explain the ordering of practical reason to reality for in so doing he would beg the question and violate the strictures on pure reason. Thus, Kant is left to the obvious rejoinder that things need not harmonize with the needs of our reason. Since Kant does not permit a realist model of

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<sup>43</sup> Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, 254–255.

<sup>44</sup> Byrne, *Kant on God*, p. 87-88.

formal and final causality, the *Practical Requirement-reading* is left susceptible to this ‘wishful thinking’ critique. Does Kant’s philosophy have the resources to address this criticism? To answer this we must turn to his account of the moral law.

### 1.1 Kant and the Moral Realist-Constructivist Divide

Both interpretations of the first premise involve obligation; that Kant makes duty a *necessary* component cannot be denied, and further this obligation requires and presumes knowledge of the moral law. This makes awareness of the moral law the foundational, even if only implicit, assumption to Kant’s argument from the highest good. To see this, consider how he sets the table for his argument from the highest good in the first *Critique*. Kant writes, “I *assume* that there are really pure moral laws, which determine completely *a priori* ... the use of freedom of a rational being in general” (A807/B835, emphasis added).<sup>45</sup> These pure moral laws, he tells us, are absolute and necessary (A807/B835).<sup>46</sup> Kant here appears to anticipate the reader’s objection to his assumption and gestures to the form of justification that he would offer if he were pressed to do so. Kant writes, “I can legitimately presuppose this proposition by appealing not only to the proofs of the most enlightened moralists but also to the moral judgment of every human being, if he will distinctly think such a law” (A807/B835).<sup>47</sup> Further, as commonly recognized, awareness of the moral law is the sole basis for freedom (5:30).<sup>48</sup> For example, he says that “among all the ideas of speculative reason freedom is the only

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<sup>45</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 678.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, 163.

one the possibility of which we know a priori, though without having any insight into it, because it is the condition of the moral law, which we do know” (5:4).<sup>49</sup> Kant’s thrust here is that practical knowledge of freedom is secure because of speculative knowledge of the moral order.

The ubiquitous presence and instrumentality of the moral law to Kant’s project cannot be overlooked. The nature and justification concerning the moral law comes to the fore with his description of it as a *factum*, or “fact of reason” (5:31; cf. 5:6, 32, 42-43, 46-48, 55, 91, 104).<sup>50</sup> We are told that “Consciousness of this fundamental law may be called a fact of reason because one cannot reason it out from antecedent data of reason” (5:31).<sup>51</sup> In line with the passage in the first *Critique* cited above, here we are told that moral awareness comes *a priori* (5:47) and that belief in the moral law does not need to find warrant or be “proved by any deduction” (5:47).<sup>52</sup> We are told, moreover, that the moral law is “universal” (5:31), “undeniable” (5:32) and “unavoidable” (5:55).<sup>53</sup> This view of the moral law as universal, undeniable, and unavoidable is captured in Kant’s famous statement in the second *Critique*,

Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and steadily we reflect upon them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me. I do not seek or conjecture either of them as if they were veiled obscurities or extravagances beyond the horizon of my vision; I see them

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 139–140.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 141–223.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 164.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 177–178. Given that in the first *Critique* (A807/B835) he references “proofs of the most enlightened moralists” for the moral law yet in the second *Critique* (5:47) he suggests that it does not need any proof, we may view Kant as holding that demonstrations of the moral law are not necessary but may be sufficient to secure its justification.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 164–184.

before me and connect them immediately with the consciousness of my existence (5:161-2).<sup>54</sup>

The importance of the moral law to the entire critical philosophy must be fully appreciated. It is the focal point on which the entire superstructure rests, including practical reason, freedom, God, and immortality. On the moral law, Kant seeks to rebuild what the first Critique demolished of pure reason in its speculative mode.

Given the indispensable importance of the moral law to the critical philosophy, we can now broach questions about Kant's moral ontology. In so doing, we raise questions about the tenability of his Eudaimonological Argument, his moral philosophy, and his account of practical reason. Although providing a detailed map of the various metaethical positions would take us too far afield, we can roughly characterize the terrain in this way.<sup>55</sup> Let us distinguish moral realism as the view that our moral concepts and judgments can hold independent of, and are not derivative or reducible to, features of our psychology (e.g., beliefs, affections, or values); they correspond to features of reality that are in some way independent of the moral beliefs of the agent. Moral realism can be further divided into naturalists who maintain that moral judgments are rendered true or false by their correspondence with natural states of affairs or properties (of the empirical world), whereas non-naturalists maintain that moral properties are not identical nor reducible to natural properties. Moral non-realism, for our purposes, will deny the moral realist thesis, but the way this is done (and the alternative account provided) may take many forms. We will here draw attention to constructivism as a particular form of non-

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 269.

<sup>55</sup> For an overview and recent taxonomy of the debate see, A. Miller, *An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003).

realism, which holds that there are moral truths but that these truths are constituted by and/or entirely dependent upon some element of our psychology. With these in order, we can ask, what relationship does moral realism have to Kant's Eudaimonological Argument and, more generally, his critical philosophy?

The primary divide in the scholarship on this topic is between those who view Kant as a moral realist (and I would add, a non-naturalist) and those who understand his views along constructivist lines. Recent and prominent examples of the constructivist reading come from John Rawls and Christine Korsgaard.<sup>56</sup> Notable Kantian scholars, such as Allen Wood and Karl Ameriks, have given force to moral realist construals of the critical philosophy.<sup>57</sup> And this divide continues into very recent publications in which some continue the effort to retrench Kant in constructivism, while others provide rebuttals in favor of a moral realist understanding.<sup>58</sup> Justification for constructivist accounts have centered on a few reasons. First, they claim that it follows as a product of Kant's transcendental idealism on which moral judgments merely characterize the view of practical reason in our subjective constitution. Second, and chiefly, constructivists appeal to Kant's doctrine of the autonomy of the will. The self-legislative nature of the

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<sup>56</sup> For John Rawls, see *Political Liberalism*, p. 99ff. *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy*, p. 240ff. "Themes in Kant's Moral Philosophy," in S. Freeman (ed.), *Collected Papers* (Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 497-528. For C. M. Korsgaard see, *The Sources of Normativity*, O. O'Neill (ed.), (Cambridge University Press, 1996) and *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), and *The Constitution of Agency* (Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 302-26.

<sup>57</sup> A. Wood, *Kant's Ethical Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), *Kant's Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 2008). K. Ameriks, "On Two Non-Realist Interpretations of Kant's Ethics," in *Interpreting Kant's Critiques* (Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 263-82. K. Ameriks, "On Schneewind and Kant's Method in Ethics," *Ideas y Valores*, 102 (1996), 28-53.

<sup>58</sup> P. Formosa, "Is Kant a Moral Constructivist or a Moral Realist?," *European Journal of Philosophy*, 21 (2013), 170-96 and C. Bagnoli, "Moral Objectivity: A Kantian Illusion?," *Journal of Value Inquiry*, 49 (2015), 31-45. I. Terence, *Development of Ethics: Vol III*, pp. 147-72 and J. Wuerth, "Kant's Moral Realism and Korsgaard's Constructivism," in *Kant on Mind, Action, and Ethics* (Oxford University Press, 2014), ch. 9.

will suggests its power to create its own law. To recognize an “external” law given from without would be to introduce a heteronomy and circumvent the will’s absolute autonomy. In contrast, moral realist interpreters of Kant, in addition to responding to the constructivist case, have offered two main types of considerations to bolster their reading of the critical philosophy. First, they make appeals to the important exegetical strand of the “fact of reason,” noted above. These passages, it is argued, are best read, if not exclusively understood, on realist terms. Second, moral realist readings of Kant have cited the Kantian doctrine of the inherent value of humanity and its nature as an ultimate end and good as only intelligible on moral realism. Although one can appreciate the temptation to see Kant as a non-realist, I believe the best reading of Kant is as a moral realist, holding a type of non-naturalism about moral properties.<sup>59</sup> He is aware of a type of moral fictionalism but rejects this. After registering his assumption of, and potential route of demonstration for, pure moral laws, he considers a disjunctive between the either the entailments of morality “or else to regard the moral laws as empty figments of the brain” (A811/B839).<sup>60</sup> In the broader context, the latter option is taken by Kant as leading to a *reductio ad absurdum* not worth considering any further (A809/B837-A814/B842).<sup>61</sup>

While a defense of a realist reading of Kant’s metaethics is beyond the scope of this paper, what is germane is its relevance to the objection that emerged from the

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<sup>59</sup> Part of the confusion, no doubt, surrounding Kant’s views on this matter involve not only interpretive disputes that stem from strategies which begin with or emphasize different parts of the Kantian corpus or build on different doctrines of the critical philosophy, but also from differing metaethical taxonomies and the unintended equivocity of key terms in the discussion. For an example of how this plays out, see Wood vs Korsgaard on Kantian moral realism, cf. Wood, *Kant’s Ethical Thought* and Korsgaard, *Sources of Normativity*.

<sup>60</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 680.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 679–682.



*Practical Requirement-reading* of premise 1 in the previous section. The moral realist understanding of Kant addresses the *wishful thinking* objection: that the needs of reason do not indicate anything about the way the world is. Or, alternatively, the only way of demonstrating that the direction and requirements of reason have purchase on reality would be to utilize traditional formal and final causality or beg the question by invoking an ultimate source of practical teleology (i.e., God). The proponents of the *wishful thinking* objection counter that it is entirely possible that practical reason terminates in absurdity by striving after ends which are not available; and that, moreover, Kant has no resources to suggest otherwise. However, this is where a moral realist reading of Kant is poised to address this objection. Kant may concede that practical reason's need of  $x$  does not entail that  $x$  obtains. Instead, Kant's response will depend on the claim that if one knows  $x$  to be the case, then in order to account for this,  $y$  must obtain. So, what is it that Kant must claim we know to be the case? The answer is the moral law. Since we know the moral law, practical reason must be properly constituted and successful in its reach. The success of practical reason must obtain in order to account for our moral knowledge.

To see why knowledge of the moral law stabilizes and secures practical reason, we need to return to the Kantian view of the nature of practical reason. Practical reason is essentially, though synthetically, structured such that it aims at moral duties and happiness. But, so a Kantian moral realist view claims, practical reason knows truths concerning the moral law. Without this knowledge, practical reason is entirely internally incongruent and unsuccessfully directed. Practical reason requires a necessary and unified system of the good, which includes awareness of both the moral law and the subsequent proportioned happiness (cf. the "needs of reason" of which Kant referred

when addressing Wizenmann (5:143n)).<sup>62</sup> But if the later part of this is aimed at an empty or illusory end, then practical reason is fractured and its deliverances are undone.

However, the consequent of this conditional is obviously false – the deliverances of practical reason are secured in moral knowledge – as practical reason has properly and rightly apprehended the supersensible, universal moral law (or so a Kantian moral realist view claims). If however, practical reason is deluded in its directedness towards proportional happiness, then it is itself essentially incongruous and unauthorized in its reach. Yet, if this were the case, then it could not know the moral law either. Therefore, since practical reason does apprehend the moral law, it remains integral and veracious in both its ends, and hence also rightly enjoins that we are required to pursue the highest good (premise 1).

Suppose then that a *Practical Requirement-reading* reading successfully counters typical objections to the first premise, and suppose further that a moral realist reading of Kant successfully rebuts the wishful thinking objection. Have we cleared the way for consideration of the subsequent premises of the moral argument? It is here that a deeper and more systemic problem emerges for the Kantian project. And, moreover, this problem cannot be resolved by recourse to a constructivist reading of Kant. There are the problematic implications for Kant given *either side* of the realist-constructivist divide. That is to say, if we consider Kant either as a moral realist or a constructivist, the respective philosophical entailments of each poses problems for the critical philosophy.

To see the problems raised by the options in Kantian metaethics, let us think of how Kant might attempt to locate the moral law. It seems he has to choose from one of

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<sup>62</sup> Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, 254–255.

three possible locales: (i) the empirical, sensible world, (ii) the mind, or (iii) the supersensible world. The moral realist interprets Kant as committed to (iii), and the constructivist reads Kant as committed to (ii). All agree that, in Kant's view, the moral law is clearly not located in (i), and so he cannot be a naturalist about moral properties. For example, in the first *Critique* (A808/B836), we have described a moral world that is one where rational beings exhibit a thoroughgoing cohesive unity under the moral laws. Although this is an intelligible abstraction, it is one that is abstracted from all sensible conditions and is given in contrast to the empirical world; the reason being, in part, because moral laws are not to be found therein.<sup>63</sup> In the second *Critique* (5:115), morality is only accidentally connected with (and thereby set apart from) the empirical world via a rational being's causal agency through use of the will bringing about changes in the sensible realm.<sup>64</sup> In other words, the moral law is not present in the empirical world except as a remote cause operative through volitional agency acting in the world. So, in order to locate the moral law we must look to either (ii) the mind or (iii) the supersensible world.

If we read Kant as a moral realist, and thus committed to locating the moral law in (iii) the supersensible world, then we have come in conflict with the boundaries of speculative reason. For the critical philosophy does not admit knowledge of the supersensible, yet Kant holds that the moral law is universal, necessary, and

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<sup>63</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 678–679. As an aside, this passage gives credence to seeing the moral *world* as a mental construction (and might at first seem to provide fodder for constructivist views). Yet, the abstraction of the world is done on the basis of applying the moral law. That is, without first invoking the moral law, one is left without a ground to construct the intelligible model of the moral world. A constructivist account of Kantian metaethics would have to see the moral world as a construct built upon a construct, which dissolves the distinction between the two.

<sup>64</sup> Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, 232–233.

supersensible (as seen above). We are informed by Kant's critique of pure reason that the mind cannot emigrate beyond the borders of reason to gain knowledge of the noumenal realm. Yet, on the moral realist reading, Kant would have to hold that we do have speculative knowledge of the moral law (as a "fact of reason"). Speculative knowledge of the moral order requires traveling beyond the confines set up by the critical philosophy to arrive at awareness of the universal and absolute moral law, and to do so via either the proofs that are offered by the 'most enlightened moralists' or the 'moral judgment of every human being' (A807/B835).<sup>65</sup>

However, what if the moral law is not properly construed in terms of moral realism and should be understood as a type of moral constructivism? This would solve the problem of reason emigrating to the supersensible, since our knowledge of the moral law is really just knowledge of some (necessary) feature of our psychology. However, what keeps this purported knowledge from devolving into a mere illusion or imaginative fiction? One Kantian response is to appeal to the operational necessity of practical reason; recognition of the moral law, though only a construct of the mind, is a necessary construct. But this argument from rational inescapability doesn't get one very far. Perhaps our moral faculties are necessarily *misdirected*. Consider an optical illusion in which our faculties always convey misinformation. For example, on hot days, heat radiating from blacktop in the distance makes the blacktop look wet. Through repeated experience, we know this optical illusion is caused by heat, and the blacktop is not wet but hot. Yet, citing the inevitability of this perceptual misfire does nothing to eliminate the illusion. Instead, we simply come to know the operations of our faculties well enough

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<sup>65</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 678.

to disregard the appearance of wetness and interpret it instead as heat. If we embrace a constructivist reading of Kant, what is to prevent us from doing the same with the moral law? That is, our apprehension of the moral law, with all of the apparent entailments concerning God and immortality, is a rational misfire that cannot be shaken. By recognizing this, we are able to reject the conclusions, even though we may not shake the sense that the moral law is pressing in on us with certain supersensible entailments.

So, in light of this we are led to ask, are the Kantian postulates untethered? Kant's attempt at securing the postulates (freedom, immortality, and God) is dependent on the universal moral law (as a fact of reason). However, as we have seen, this leads to a dilemma. Either the moral law is ultimately grounded in speculative or practical reason. If it is grounded in speculative reason, then this undermines the critical project. For, the critical philosophy does not admit knowledge of the supersensible; yet, the moral law is universal, and supersensible. However, if the moral law is grounded in practical reason, then practical reason loses its foundation and becomes untethered from reality. One cannot even reasonably believe or hope for the postulates of practical reason. Thus, even if we were to find Kant's Eudaimonological Argument valid, it will ultimately have to be deemed unsound. So, either we admit the moral law and its postulates or admit the critical philosophy and its constraints, but not both. Kant's practical reason is an inverted pyramid built upon the fact of reason apprehending the moral law. If that block is removed, the entire structure falls. If it remains, it overcomes the strictures on speculative reason.

## **1.2 Is Kantian Radical Evil a New Practical Antinomy?**

The preceding sections looked at formulating Kant's Eudaimonological Argument, taking note of the various interpretive and conceptual challenges that it creates. What may go unnoticed, however, is that Kant creates a new problem for his Eudaimonological Argument in *Religion*. This final section will briefly examine the relevance of some of his positions in *Religion* as they bear upon the Eudaimonological Argument, and in doing so, will connect the purported deliverances of *Religion* to Kant's critical philosophy. What this connection will surface is another tension between his Eudaimonological Argument and his critical philosophy.

In order to introduce the argument for the postulates in the second *Critique*, Kant presented a practical antinomy that, though similar with the speculative antinomies, differed in that it admitted of resolution. Yet, Allen Wood notes, "In the *Religion*, Kant reopens the whole question of man's moral perfectibility, and attempts to give a more complete answer to this question than he did in any of his earlier works."<sup>66</sup> In particular, Kant offers a more careful analysis of "moral self-identity," to use John Silber's term.<sup>67</sup> The feature of this analysis that is relevant to the topic at hand is Kant's look at humanity's moral disposition (*gesinnung*) in Book 1, which leads him to introduce the doctrine of radical evil into his anthropology. In so doing, Kant creates a new but unrecognized antinomy for his system that challenges his account of the *summum bonum* and thus proves detrimental for his Eudaimonological Argument.

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<sup>66</sup> A. W. Wood, *Kant's Moral Religion* (Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 209.

<sup>67</sup> J. R. Silber, "The Ethical Significance of Kant's *Religion*," in T. M. Green and H. H. Hudson (trans.) *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. cxvii.

Kant's development of the doctrine of radical evil can be characterized as the result of considering the fact that humanity is an essentially *moral* in kind. Chris Firestone and Nathan Jacobs summarize the matter as follows:

In Book One of *Religion*, Kant offers an account of humanity's moral nature that seeks to remain true to both the concept of *nature* and the transcendental implications of the predicate *moral* ... [T]his drives Kant to cognize the disposition as *innate* (per the concept of *nature*) and freely chosen (per the predicate *moral*). Moreover, insofar as the question of a *moral nature* concerns our overall posture toward the moral law, Kant is driven to cognize our moral nature as having a maxim or rule that establishes our posture toward the moral law as supreme incentive. Hence, the disposition must constitute *a deed of freedom that chooses a moral maxim, which serves as a rule for the entire exercise of freedom in time*. This supreme maxim constitutes our moral being, which Kant distinguishes from our particular moral acts in time.<sup>68</sup>

In short, because Kant's moral philosophy connects morality with freely chosen moral maxims, Kant's investigation into our moral nature inevitably points to a governing maxim concerning the moral law generally. Kant writes, "let it be noted that by 'the nature of a human being' we only understand here the subjective ground ... of the exercise of the human being's freedom in general (under objective moral laws) antecedent to every deed that falls within the scope of the senses" (6:20).<sup>69</sup> Kant's emphasis on a maxim is meant to protect us from slipping into the conclusion that, if we are deemed evil, such evil is a necessary byproduct of other determining factors. To the contrary, in identifying our moral nature with a maxim, Kant ensures that whatever our moral nature may be, it is a product of freedom, which is crucial to moral culpability. Kant reminds the reader of this when his investigation leads him to conclude that humanity is bound by radical evil: "Hence the ground of evil cannot lie in any object

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<sup>68</sup> C. L. Firestone and N. Jacobs, *In Defense of Kant's Religion* (Indiana University Press, 2008), p. 126.

<sup>69</sup> Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: And Other Writings*, 46.

*determining* the power of choice through inclination ... but only in a rule that the power of choice itself produces for the exercise of its freedom, i.e., in a maxim” (6:21).<sup>70</sup> So, how does Kant’s investigation lead to the conclusion that humanity is universally bound by radical evil?

Briefly summarized, Kant’s doctrine of radical evil unfolds in this way. Kant considers four possible characterizations of our moral nature: (i) it is morally good; (ii) it is morally evil; (iii) it is morally neutral; or (iv) it is partly good and partly evil (6:20; and 23).<sup>71</sup> If (i) is deemed false, options (iii) and (iv) are the least problematic for the prospect of moral perfectibility. If our moral nature is neutral, per option (iii), it falls to each individual to choose the moral law moment to moment, and moral perfection simply requires the free formation of a habit of choosing the moral law over competing ends. A morally mixed nature is a more precarious conclusion, but it still leaves within human power the prospect of habitually choosing the good within us over the evil within us. Yet, the very thing that Kant intends to protect our moral culpability – namely his turn toward a governing maxim – is the very thing that makes options (iii) and (iv) untenable. In order for Kant to advocate a morally neutral or morally mixed nature, it must be possible to produce a morally neutral or morally mixed maxim. Yet, Kant can conceive of no such maxim. Any maxim that is neutral toward the moral law or mixed toward the moral law is a corrupt maxim, since the law rightly lays claim to being our supreme incentive, as seen earlier in this chapter. Hence, Kant concludes, “the lack of agreement of the power of choice with [the moral law] ... is possible only as a consequence of a real and opposite

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 46–47.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 45–49.



determination of the power of choice, i.e. of a *resistance* on its part” (6:23).<sup>72</sup> If, then, options (iii) and (iv) are not viable, Kant is left with only (i) and (ii): humanity’s moral disposition is either good or evil (6:25-26).<sup>73</sup> Keeping in mind that option (i) requires that humanity treats the moral law as its supreme incentive in every exercise of freedom, one need only glance at human history to determine which is more plausibly the ground from which our operations of freedom proceed. As Philip Quinn puts it, “Kant takes himself to have good inductive support for attributing a morally evil propensity ... to mankind universally.”<sup>74</sup> Thus, Kant’s comes to the resulting doctrine of radical evil.<sup>75</sup>

The difficulty this doctrine creates is that Kant identifies the governing maxim as the ground from which every other moral act springs. As Kant puts it, “Whenever we therefore say, ‘The human being is by nature good’, or ‘He is by nature evil’, this only means that he holds within himself a first ground ... for the adoption of good or evil ... maxims, and that he holds this ground *qua* human, universally” (6:21).<sup>76</sup> Now, what precisely Kant means by this is a point of controversy in Kant studies. Many take Kant to be offering an over-generalization of how humans tend to act,<sup>77</sup> while others insist that Kant’s argument is meant to offer a universal judgment concerning our species *qua*

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 48–49.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 49–51.

<sup>74</sup> P. L. Quinn, “Original Sin, Radical Evil and Moral Identity,” *Faith and Philosophy*, 1 (1984), 194.

<sup>75</sup> For a more detailed treatment of this argument, see C. L. Firestone and N. A. Jacobs, *In Defense of Kant’s Religion*, pp. 127-34.

<sup>76</sup> Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: And Other Writings*, 46–47.

<sup>77</sup> L. R. Pasternack, *Kant on Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (Routledge, 2014), p. 104; P. R. Frierson, *Freedom and Anthropology in Kant’s Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 31-47; G. E. Michalson, Jr., *Fallen Freedom: Kant on Radical Evil and Moral Regeneration* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 67; Quinn, “Original Sin, Radical Evil and Moral Identity,” p. 194.

human.<sup>78</sup> It is beyond the scope of this paper to take up this debate, so let it suffice that I believe the textual evidence favors interpreters in the latter camp.

Less critical here, but still relevant, is the question of divine forgiveness. That is, should we succeed in turning from evil to good, we cannot wipe out former ills nor can we make up for them with extreme acts of virtue, since an agent's "duty at each instant is to do all the good in his power" (6:72).<sup>79</sup> And since Kant rejects the notion that one can transfer guilt to another atoning subject (6:72), it seems we must expect to find ourselves condemned before the divine judge.<sup>80</sup> The more formidable problem, however, is that radical evil leaves us incapable of turning from evil to the good. Having located within every person an innate governing maxim that is corrupt, every particular act is merely a manifestation of this corrupt ground. Thus, even when our deeds coincide with the moral law, these deeds are tainted, for they proceed from the mixed motives of a corrupt foundation. This all-pervading stain is the very thing that makes evil *radical*. As Kant puts it,

This evil is *radical*, since it corrupts the ground of all maxims; as a natural propensity, it is also not to be *extirpated* through human forces, for this could only happen through good maxims – something that cannot take place if the subjective supreme ground of all maxims is presupposed to be corrupted (6:31).<sup>81</sup>

Radical evil, it seems, undermines any hope of attaining virtue. For if every exercise of freedom in time is the product of a governing maxim, not vice versa, then temporal acts

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<sup>78</sup> Firestone and Jacobs, *In Defense of Kant's Religion*, ch. 5; S. Anderson-Gold, *Unnecessary Evil: History and Moral Progress in the Philosophy of Immanuel Kant* (State University of New York Press, 2001), p. 42; G. Banham, *Kant's Practical Philosophy: From Critique to Doctrine* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), p. 124.

<sup>79</sup> Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: And Other Writings*, 88–89.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 54–55.

cannot modify our moral disposition; they can only express it. Repentance, as a temporal free act, can thus never undo the corruption within human nature, since this deed, like every use of freedom in time, proceeds from an innate disposition, not vice versa.

Bringing radical evil to bear on the postulate of immortality, then, the doctrine undermines the very purpose of this postulate. If one cannot ‘extirpate’ radical evil but only ever express it, then a future life does no good in getting one closer to virtue. A future life – even of indefinite length – only supplies future opportunity to express the radical evil within human nature. Therefore, radical evil throws a very large wrench into the gears of at least one of the required postulates of the moral philosophy.

Returning, then, to the argument of the first section, we have seen that the possibility of the highest good is the requisite condition for the proper functioning of practical reason. In light of Kant’s anthropology, the formulation of the argument from the previous section now continues in this way:

6. The human condition is beset by radical evil.
7. If (iii) radical evil, then the HG is impossible even with postulating (i) immortality and (ii) God.
8. But the HG is possible (because of 1 and 2 above). Therefore,
9. Either 7 or 8 are false, or there is a way to overcome radical evil.

Since 8 is a clearly established position in Kant’s thought and 7 has been addressed above, we must ask, does Kant have a way of overcoming radical evil? Indeed, he does have such a proposal. But this proposal requires a new element to his “mere theology,” namely the prototype of Book 2 of *Religion*. In Book 2, Kant discusses a Christ figure he names the prototype (*Urbild*) (6:60), who is the exemplar for all moral pilgrims.<sup>82</sup> Kant suggests that to overcome radical evil, the moral pilgrim must undertake a radical

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 79–80.

conversion, casting off his corrupt disposition and appropriating in its place the moral disposition displayed in the prototype (6:60-62).<sup>83</sup> Assuming the conversion is successful, a new moral identity emerges. The convert's former self is put to death and the new self bears a disposition pleasing to God (6:61-62; 6:67; 6:74).<sup>84</sup> Conversion and the moral journey to follow is an atoning journey in which one pleasing to God (the new moral identity) bears the culpability of one who offended God (the former moral identity) (6:73-74).<sup>85</sup>

These basic contours of Book 2 are generally agreed upon by Kant scholars, but there is disagreement about how best to interpret these claims. Most interpreters understand Kant's prototype to be a mere symbol of the moral ideal that each of us must strive to become. To overcome radical evil, the moral pilgrim must attempt a conversion in an effort to cast off his corrupt disposition and enact a disposition like the one displayed in the symbol of the prototype (6:74-75).<sup>86</sup> The difficulty with this reading, however, is the very problem noted above. For Kant, particular deeds in time, such as repentance, proceed from the disposition, not vice versa. Hence, as Kant himself says, radical evil "is ... not to be *extirpated* through human forces, for this could only happen

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 79–81.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 80-81-85-91.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 89–91.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 90–91. V. A. McCarthy, *Quest for a Philosophical Jesus: Christianity and Philosophy in Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, and Schelling* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986), pp. 77-81; K. Ward, *Kant's View of Ethics* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1972), pp. 147-49; A. Davidovich, "How to Read *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*," *Kant-Studien*, 85 (1994), pp. 3-4; J. E. Hare, "Augustine, Kant, and the Moral Gap," in G. B. Matthews (ed.), *The Augustinian Tradition* (University of California Press, 1999), p. 257; B. M. G. Reardon, *Kant as Philosophical Theologian* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble Books, 1988), p. 103; Michalson, *Fallen Freedom*, 85-92.

through good maxims – something that cannot take place if the subjective supreme ground of all maxims is presupposed to be corrupted” (6:31).<sup>87</sup>

Not all agree that Kant has resources to solve this problem. Philip Quinn, Nicholas Wolterstorff, and others suggest that Kant has created a conundrum here that his philosophy cannot solve.<sup>88</sup> Others see Kant as having no alternative than to look to divine assistance (or grace) to resolve the problem. How “grace” is understood amongst Kant interpreters varies. Some understand Kant to grant that divine assistance in the sense of aiding moral empowerment is necessary for conversion.<sup>89</sup> Others take a less mysterious reading of Kantian grace, suggesting that religious symbols, such as the prototype, serve as instrumental means by which to spur moral converts on toward virtue.<sup>90</sup> Regardless of which one chooses, however, the road itself is riddled with problems.

Kant cannot abide the suggestion that God would favor an individual prior to him doing anything to earn such favor (6:116-117; 6:170-171).<sup>91</sup> The problem that emerges as a result is summarized well by Quinn:

[A] regress appears to be in the offing. It would seem that bringing about such a revolution is no easier than becoming a better person if one has brought upon

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<sup>87</sup> Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: And Other Writings*, 54–55.

<sup>88</sup> N. P. Wolterstorff, “Conundrums in Kant’s Rational Religion,” in P. J. Rossi and M. Wreen (eds.), *Kant’s Philosophy of Religion Reconsidered* (Indiana University Press, 1991), pp. 46-49; P. L. Quinn, “Saving Faith from Kant’s Remarkable Antinomy,” *Faith and Philosophy*, 7 (1990), p. 422; Michalson, *Fallen Freedom*, pp. 94-95. Firestone and Jacobs also side with this assessment, granting the readings of Kant’s *Religion* advocated by such interpreters, which is the very thing that prompts them to pursue an alternative reading of *Religion*. See Firestone and Jacobs, *In Defense of Kant’s Religion*, ch. 3.

<sup>89</sup> Reardon, *Kant as Philosophical Theologian*, p. 106; J. E. Hare, “Augustine, Kant, and the Moral Gap,” 254-56; Michalson, *Fallen Freedom*, 97.

<sup>90</sup> Michalson, *Fallen Freedom*, p. 109; McCarthy, *Quest for a Philosophical Jesus*, passim; Davidovich, “How to Read *Religion*,” p. 5; Ward, *The Development of Kant’s View of Ethics*, pp. 62-63, 149-51.

<sup>91</sup> Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: And Other Writings*, 122-124-167.

oneself an evil propensity that corrupts the very ground of one's maxims, and so the former task would seem to require divine assistance if the latter does. But then, on Kantian assumptions, it appears that divine aid with carrying out a revolution in disposition will be forthcoming only if one first does something else on one's own to make oneself worthy of receiving such aid. No matter how this other deed that must be done is specified, the question of how it is possible for an agent in whom the ground of maxims is corrupt to perform it will arise. If this deed in turn is only possible for such an agent with divine assistance, then yet another deed must first be performed to render the agent worthy of that assistance.<sup>92</sup>

Were this difficulty not enough, Kant insists that one cannot make maxims for moral conduct based on what someone else *might* do (e.g., 6:101).<sup>93</sup> Hence, the moral pilgrim cannot resolve to convert with the help of divine grace, since whether God supplies such grace is outside of the pilgrim's control. Such difficulties are amongst the numerous reasons that Quinn *et al.* conclude that Kant's philosophy of religion, while requiring a turn to divine assistance, cannot do so in a manner consistent with the moral philosophy.

If we grant this common reading of *Religion*, then this is what follows. Kant, it would seem, has created for himself an inescapable dilemma. Radical evil creates a relationship between the supreme maxim and particular exercises of freedom in time that undermines our ability to correct our underlying corruption. This corruption thus requires assistance to come from without; but Kant's own moral principles prevent any such assistance from being given unless first merited from within. Yet, no such merit can come from within apart from the assistance from without. If this is all that Kant's philosophy can offer us, then, it would seem that the highest good and the moral philosophy generally is definitively undermined by the doctrine of radical evil, as per premise 7 above.

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<sup>92</sup> Quinn, "Saving Faith," p. 422.

<sup>93</sup> Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason: And Other Writings*, 111–112.

There is, however, an alternative reading of Kant's solution in Book 2. In response to such conundrums in *Religion*, Firestone and Jacobs attempt an alternative interpretation of Kant's *Religion* in this regard. On their interpretation, Kant's prototype is not a mere symbol; rather, the prototype is an Idea in the Platonic sense, namely God's Idea of morally perfect humanity (6:66; cf. 6:60 with 28:1058-59).<sup>94</sup> The prototype is thus an ideal substance – essentially a Platonic Form – that is generated by God from all eternity and bears within his person a disposition, or governing maxim, that does indeed exalt the moral law as supreme incentive. As such, the prototype bears the very disposition God intends for humanity, and it is this disposition that should have been emulated in the free self-determination by our created species but was not.<sup>95</sup>

According to Firestone and Jacobs, Kant's talk of converts appropriating the disposition of the prototype is not a description of converts merely emulating a symbol but of converts mystically participating in a moral disposition that resides outside of themselves in God's own Idea of morally perfect humanity. In other words, if two distinct moral dispositions exist, one corrupt and another incorrupt, and if human persons not only participate in one innately (viz., the corrupt) but can also participate in the other mystically (viz., the incorrupt), then it is possible for moral converts to escape radical evil by casting off their current disposition in favor of another.<sup>96</sup> On this reading, moral conversion is not an attempt to modify our corrupt disposition by an expression of that disposition. Rather, conversion is an attempt to break ties with our disposition by

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 83-84-80.

<sup>95</sup> Firestone and Jacobs, *In Defense of Kant's Religion*, pp. 155-172.

<sup>96</sup> Firestone and Jacobs, *In Defense of Kant's Religion*, pp. 170-80.

grabbing hold of another disposition outside of ourselves within God, namely that of our divinely generated prototype.

As Nicholas Wolterstorff has pointed out, the solution is strange given Kant's thought, but it is not without textual merit.<sup>97</sup> However, the concern here is not with the textual merit of the proposal but with its contextual merit. The solution does in fact escape the conundrum noted above. The solution does not claim that a moral act proceeding from a corrupt disposition changes the disposition that produced it. To the contrary, the corrupt disposition remains corrupt, on this reading. For the same reason, no appeal to divine grace prior to earning such grace is needed either. For no miraculous empowerment is required to produce repentance that might modify the disposition from which the repentance emerged. Grace in this solution takes on a more dynamic sense of God supplying us with another disposition that we may freely embrace in moral conversion and the various deliverances that follow from this embrace, if freely chosen.<sup>98</sup> If there is a criticism of this solution to be leveled – aside from noting its oddity within Kantian thought – it concerns whether it is possible to mystically participate in divine Ideas, as the solution suggests.<sup>99</sup> However, if such participation is the only solution to radical evil – and unless the problem of radical evil is solved, the highest good collapses and with it practical reason and the moral philosophy – then we may well conclude that

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<sup>97</sup> N. Wolterstorff, "Foreword," in C. L. Firestone and N. A. Jacobs (eds.), *In Defense of Kant's Religion* (Indiana University Press, 2008), p. xii.

<sup>98</sup> For details, see Firestone and Jacobs, *In Defense of Kant's Religion*, pp. 172-80.

<sup>99</sup> As peculiar as it may sound to participate in Ideas or Forms, Kant does discuss the belief amongst some Platonists that such mystical participation is possible (28:1058-59).



the prototype (as read by Firestone and Jacobs) is one final postulate required by Kant's moral philosophy. This leads us to further our formulation in this way:

10. We can overcome radical evil via the prototype. Therefore,
11. For the HG to be possible, we must postulate (i) immortality, (ii) God, and (iii) the prototype. Therefore (from 11 and 8),
12. We must postulate (i) immortality, (ii) God, and (iii) the prototype

Thus, in considering Kant's moral argument in conjunction with his anthropology in *Religion*, we come to see that his reflections of the highest good actually bring us to a new postulate. However, what this postulate requires is something akin to the doctrine of divine ideas and the form of humanity existing as part of the *universalia ante rem* (as seen in the previous chapter of this dissertation). Of course, returning to the notion of Kantian postulation, this might be understood as a merely regulative idea of practical reason that has no purchase on reality. Unfortunately, a practical postulate in this manner is not something that can be participated in mystically. The mystical participation required to solve the dilemma posed by Kant's doctrine of radical evil precludes the prototype as a mere regulative principle. Kant must have an actual universal form of perfect humanity in which certain humans participate and instantiate. But to allow for this is to admit (albeit in only this instance) the classical metaphysics which his critical philosophy was to supplant. Thus, in the end, Kant's account of the highest good, moral realism, and anthropology in *Religion* all entail the realist metaphysical doctrines of formal and final causality which he denied and erected the strictures to preclude. Kant may have a viable Eudaimonological Argument, but not one without formal and final causality.

## **2. The Transcendental Thomists' Eudaimonological Argument**

Transcendental Thomism was movement within late 19th and 20th century Catholic theology and philosophy, coming to prominence after the Second Vatican Council.<sup>100</sup> Its reach was broad and concerned areas as diverse as Christology, dogmatic theology, revelation, and nature-grace distinctions; this section however will focus on its underlying philosophical grounds. Transcendental Thomism became prominent as a distinct movement in the work of authors such as Joseph Maréchal (1878-1944), Karl Rahner (1904-84), and Bernard Lonergan (1904-84), which sought to integrate the thought of Thomas Aquinas with a subjective Cartesian approach to knowledge, and with the Kantian epistemic strictures on metaphysics.<sup>101</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre critically notes this integration: “when in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century some Thomists first accepted too easily a Kantian definition of the problems of epistemology and then proposed solution to those problems that were in act Kantian rather than Thomistic, generating in the course of so doing that unfortunate hybrid, transcendental Thomism.”<sup>102</sup> Romanus Cessario further characterizes the movement as proceeding

on the assumption that the critical turn introduced into Western thought by Immanuel Kant has rendered obsolete the theory of knowledge that Aquinas took from Aristotle, and so argues that the only way to gain a hearing in the world of contemporary philosophy is to follow the path blazed by thinkers such as the

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<sup>100</sup> Romanus Cessario, *A Short History of Thomism* (Washington, D. C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 88; Christopher Upham, “The Influence of Aquinas,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas*, ed. Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump, Reprint edition. (Oxford; New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2014), 524–525.

<sup>101</sup> Gerald A. McCool, “Thomism, Modern,” in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, ed. Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Hugh Pyper, 1st ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 704; W. Norris Clarke, *Explorations in Metaphysics: Being-God-Person*, 1st ed. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), xii–xiii.

<sup>102</sup> Advice to Thomists, “Thomism and Philosophical Debate,” in *The Maritain Notebook 3.2* (1995), 1–2. cf. Cessario, *A Short History of Thomism*, 18.

Belgian Jesuit Joseph Maréchal and continued...by the Canadian Jesuit Bernard J. F. Lonergan.<sup>103</sup>

The roots of Transcendental Thomism can be traced back further to work of two French philosophers with whom Garrigou was familiar: Henri Bergson (1859–1941) and Maurice Blondel (1861-1949), and ‘the method of immanence.’<sup>104</sup> Garrigou describes Bergson as holding “to the principle of Idealism (that there is no such thing as a reality corresponding to thought), substituting for objective reality ...the ‘direct perception of the essence of life, the flux of experienced duration’”<sup>105</sup> This, says Garrigou, is an ‘Immanentist philosophy of becoming’.<sup>106</sup> It was this immanent philosophy of becoming that Blondel was to adopt as a methodology that ‘denies the validity of the proofs for the existence of God as given by the schools... [and] accepts the Kantian and Positivist thesis of the inability of speculative reason to know God.’<sup>107</sup> Transcendental Thomism developed the direction provided by Blondel and emerged in part as a reaction to the Neoscholasticism which prevailed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>108</sup> This reaction accused Neoscholasticism as being subject to many of the elements of modernity and the Enlightenment that it sought to combat. The influence of Transcendental Thomism came through Catholic theologians such as Pierre Rousselot (1878-1915) and Joseph Maréchal. As Gerald McCool explains, “In place of the

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 87–88.

<sup>104</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:47; James C. Livingston et al., *Modern Christian Thought, Volume II: The Twentieth Century*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 201.

<sup>105</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:37.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 1:38.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 1:40.

<sup>108</sup> Livingston et al., *Modern Christian Thought*, 107–199.

abstracted notion of being, Rousselot and Joseph Maréchal chose to ground metaphysics on the finite mind's dynamic drive to God's infinite intelligibility, and, for that reason...argued that [one] could employ the Kantian subjective starting-point and transcendental method and still arrive at the real world of being."<sup>109</sup> James Livingston describes Maréchal's work as the attempt "to bring together two philosophical positions: Kant's critique of speculative metaphysics...and Maurice Blondel's emphasis on the dynamism of the human intellect."<sup>110</sup>

This section will focus on the Transcendental Thomist use of Kant in developing the Eudaimonological Argument. Although historical precursors such as Blondel or foundational figures as Maréchal or prominent representatives such as Rahner and Lonergan could serve as subjects of study, W. Norris Clarke and Joseph Donceel will be the focus since they each explicitly attempted to take the Transcendental Thomist assumptions and directly utilize them to develop a Eudaimonological Argument. Clarke and Donceel followed the work of Maréchal, Rahner, and Lonergan, and adapted a form of the Eudaimonological Argument so that it was integrated with Kantian epistemology and methodology. Clarke aptly summarizes the project:

By this turn to the inner way the contemporary Transcendental Thomists, stimulated by the challenge of Kantian agnosticism to a realistic epistemology, metaphysics, and philosophy of God, have brought to light a hitherto largely undeveloped dimension of the authentic thought of St. Thomas. In so doing they have significantly corrected and enriched the apparent one-sidedness of the exclusively cosmic and 'exterior' approach to God characteristic of the original Thomistic Five Ways and their traditional elaboration in the classical Thomist school. And in so doing, these contemporary Thomists have also, through the

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<sup>109</sup> Gerald A. McCool, "Thomism, Modern," in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, ed. Adrian Hastings, Alistair Mason, and Hugh Pyper, 1st ed. (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 704.

<sup>110</sup> Livingston et al., *Modern Christian Thought*, 201.

unlikely intermediary of Kant rejoined in their own way the ancient Platonic path through the *eros* of the soul, which gives it wings to ascend to Absolute Unity, Goodness, and Beauty – a path which was so creatively assimilated into Christian thought in the West by the Augustinian tradition and worked so powerfully within it for a thousand years before St. Thomas and the rise of Aristotelian-inspired scholasticism.<sup>111</sup>

In order to address this perceived neglect of the ‘inner way’, Donceel and Clark each begin with the ‘dynamism of the will’ and the structure of human thought as oriented toward Infinite Being, and attempt to argue either that this establishes the ontological possibility of such a Being, or that it serves as the necessary *a priori* condition for all thought.

Joseph F. Donceel was a Belgian Jesuit who studied under Maréchal and provided a wide exposure to the ideas of Maréchal and Rahner in the United States in the latter half of the twentieth century.<sup>112</sup> He presented his own version of the Eudaimonological Argument principally in two works: *Natural Theology* (1962) and *The Searching Mind* (1979).<sup>113</sup> Since a notable shift on the EA occurs between the two works, I will briefly exposit each in turn. In his *Natural Theology*, Donceel states that “the philosophy on which this textbook is based is that of St. Thomas Aquinas, as interpreted by Maréchal and his school” because it keeps Thomism wide open for continued growth under the

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<sup>111</sup> Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*, 29–30. Incidentally, Clarke here makes a case for the recovery of Garrigou-Lagrange (and the work of this dissertation) in that Garrigou represented the attention to the ‘inner way’, but did so within the Aristotelian-Thomistic and Scholastic tradition where Clarke has alleged its absence.

<sup>112</sup> Christopher Cullen, “Transcendental Thomism: Realism Rejected,” in *The Failure of Modernism: The Cartesian Legacy and Contemporary Pluralism* (Catholic University of America Press, 1999), 73, <http://maritain.nd.edu/ama/Sweetman/index.html>.

<sup>113</sup> Joseph F. Donceel, *Natural Theology* (New York, NY: Sheed and Ward, 1962); Joseph F. Donceel, *The Searching Mind: An Introduction to a Philosophy of God* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979).

stimulation of modern and contemporary thinking.<sup>114</sup> Donceel begins with a survey of the traditional Thomistic proofs, seeking to highlight their critical reliance and the principle of causation.<sup>115</sup> Having established the indispensability of this principle, where Donceel seeks to integrate the work of Maréchal (and by extension Kant) is through his distinctive vindication of this principle. It is in the justification of the principle of causality that Donceel purports to uncover the Transcendental Thomist demonstration of God's existence from an intellectual intuition of our own intellectual dynamism (by which he means the mind's striving after the infinite).<sup>116</sup> He writes, "we shall try to show that our intellect strives naturally towards the unlimited being. But a natural striving cannot be directed towards the impossible; therefore, the unlimited being must be possible, which implies that it exists. It is in that general direction that we shall try to vindicate the value of the principle of metaphysical causality."<sup>117</sup>

The demonstration which Donceel offers can be represented in a series of steps in the follow way:<sup>118</sup>

1. I know something.
2. To know something is a good for my intellect.
3. Therefore, my intellect strives towards an end.
4. Every known object is implicitly referred to the end of my intellectual dynamism.
5. The end of my intellectual dynamism is the unlimited being.

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<sup>114</sup> Donceel, *Natural Theology*, xi–xii. A familiarity with Donceel's work makes evident that by the stimulation of modern thought, he did not mean merely that Thomism came to be refined in reaction to modern philosophical currents, but that it was improved and strengthened by its assimilation therewith.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 15–47.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 23–24.

<sup>118</sup> As he describes them, these are not the distinct and comprehensive premises but rather the broad outlines of the movement in the demonstration.

6. Therefore, every known object is implicitly referred to the unlimited being. I will not here provide an exhaustive account of his argument but highlight the features which will become important for evaluating it along the lines of consideration raised in this chapter. He takes premise 1 to be undeniable and self-evident. The critical role of this premise according to Donceel is that it provides the argument with a starting point of experience and not an abstract principle or concept.<sup>119</sup> His claim is that this feature of the argument allows him to escape the faults of the *a priori* demonstrations of both Anselm and Leibniz.<sup>120</sup> It is in premise 2 that Donceel uncovers the fundamental intuition which will drive his argument and that he claims is ‘essential to our demonstration’.<sup>121</sup> This intuition is of human intellectual life in which

The progress of knowledge is a real growth...Every new judgment which man affirms feeds an appetite deep in his intellect. Concepts and judgments do not succeed each other like pars on a string, they are really the successive stages of an inner development, of a process of growth; they are a passage from potency to act, a real movement in the metaphysical sense of the word.<sup>122</sup>

In premise 3, Donceel is confronting the same problem Aquinas addressed in *Summa Theologiae* I-II, question 1, article 4; namely, establishing that any series of actions must terminate in an ultimate end (though Donceel makes no reference to Aquinas concerning this).<sup>123</sup> However, Donceel’s defense of the ultimate termination of intellectual

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<sup>119</sup> Donceel, *Natural Theology*, 59–60.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 18–23; 60.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>123</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*. For my commentary on this question, see chapter 2 of this dissertation, 2-6. Aquinas distinguished between and argued separately for this proposition and the claim that the ultimate end of all actions must be the universal good; whereas Donceel combines/conflates the two.

movements is to argue that the mind's curiosity continues to probe beyond all finite objects and thus can only rest with an infinite object. He writes,

the real reason why our intellect is not satisfied with any of the objects it meets is the fact that each object is *finite, limited, not self-explaining*. When the intellect surges beyond the object given in the present, it is looking directly and primarily, not towards the next object, but towards the total explanation of the present one; it is pointing towards the unlimited reality, the non-finite being, the infinite.<sup>124</sup>

Premise 4 follows from the previous ones. Donceel is moving from the propensity of the intellect to a principle which links individual acts of knowing with the ultimate act of knowing. Donceel claims in premises 4 and 5 that since all cognitive activity is a movement towards the infinite reality, every object of knowledge is an implicit recognition and reference to knowledge of the infinite reality.<sup>125</sup> Thus, he concludes in 6, every known object is implicitly referred to that unlimited being.<sup>126</sup> It is this conclusion that serves to underscore the principle of causality which he sought out to demonstrate.

Donceel attempts to make this connection explicit:

We can affirm of everything we know that it *is*, because, by the very dynamism of our intellect, we add to the subject of our affirmation a complement of intelligibility which equates that subject with the unlimited predicate *is*. The complement of intelligibility is the principle of metaphysical causality, exercised by our intellect as it refers every object it knows to its unlimited end.<sup>127</sup>

The strength of Donceel's argument, both in *Natural Theology* and in *The Searching Mind*, comes from his analysis of premises 3 and 4; and this is where he gives most of his attention to developing the argument. His account of the mind's propensity towards the infinite provides a penetrating analysis of intellectual activity as it relates to the universal

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<sup>124</sup> Donceel, *Natural Theology*, 63–64.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 64–65.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 70–71.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.



and infinite end. In so far as Donceel (and Clarke) develop this aspect of their Eudaimonological Argument, their work serves to buttress the second premise of Garrigou's 'Expanded 4th Way EA', that the human will naturally desires a universal, perfect Good.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, in assessing Donceel's argument, we can leave aside questions concerning its overall soundness and prospects. What is germane to this study is its relationship to the traditional realist principles and the Kantian critical philosophy. In what ways does Donceel's EA in his *Natural Theology* reflect the tradition of Kant and the critical philosophy? What is Kantian about the argument is its emphasis on the contours, operations, and principles of the mind. Thus, in order to justify the principle of causality, Donceel turns inwards towards the subject and the operations of the mind, and therein discovers not only purported grounds for the principle but a putative demonstration of God's existence. Moreover, Donceel is concerned to keep the principle properly restricted so that "we do not assume it as a theoretical principle, supplied by our previous study of philosophy, but rather as a principle which translates into concepts what our intellect is actually *living*."<sup>129</sup> Here Donceel follows the Kantian distinction between speculative vs. practical (or regulative) principles, denying the former by only allowing them as instances of the latter.

Although Donceel remains in the Kantian tradition with his emphasis on the knowing subject, what becomes apparent is that he cannot successfully advance his Eudaimonological Argument without abandoning the critical philosophy. This is demonstrated by, first, affirming genuine knowledge of objective objects; and second,

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<sup>128</sup> See chapter 2 of this dissertation, 46ff.

<sup>129</sup> Donceel, *Natural Theology*, 66.

making recourse to both formal and final causality. As mentioned above, Donceel is eager to avoid the *a priori* character of demonstration he associates with Anselm and Leibniz. In order to avoid this he contends that his EA and vindication of the principle of causality

does not proceed in a merely subjective way, totally within the human mind, without the intervention of objective reality. It is in and because of my knowledge of *objects* that I become aware of the dynamism of my intellect, even as it is because of that dynamism that the object is known right away as limited or finite. ...Objects lead me to God only inasmuch as they are known, and my intellect actually moves towards him only when knowing reality.<sup>130</sup>

But here, Donceel demonstrates that he is beyond the Kantian strictures and insists upon objective knowledge of things-in-themselves and the *noumena* which Kant's critical philosophy cut off from epistemic access. Either Donceel must yield to the *a priori* nature of his Eudaimonological Argument, or allow for epistemic contact with reality. Since he denies it's a *a priori* nature, he abandons the Kantian confines and roots his argument in genuine knowledge of objects in reality.

The second way that Donceel cannot successfully advance his Eudaimonological Argument without abandoning the critical philosophy is evidenced by his use of formal causes. Donceel's appeal to formal causality isn't as explicit but emerges when considering a number of objections to his argument. The first objection asks, does the fact that my intellect strives towards an unlimited being imply that such a being exists? In order to address this concern, Donceel must appeal to a distinction between elicited and natural appetites, which only succeeds when referencing genuine formal causality.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 65–66.

<sup>131</sup> This distinction and its relationship to formal causality are addressed in chapter 2 of this dissertation, 55ff.

Donceel writes, “The striving of the intellect is not an elicited but a natural striving...it is an expression of the intellect’s intimate nature.” Further, in response to a second objection, that his argument assumes voluntarism, Donceel’s appeals to this same distinction.<sup>132</sup> The objection suggests that knowledge is not characterized as a movement of striving but as contemplative rest; striving belongs to the domain of the appetite which is distinct from knowledge. He writes, “it is true that all *elicited* immaterial appetite should be restricted to the will. But not so for natural appetite. Truth is the good of the intellect, and the intellect wants and strives for it.”<sup>133</sup> In both cases, Donceel must appeal to inherent human nature in order to isolate elicited desires from natural ones to side-step these objections. However, here he runs into a problem when trying to merge this with the critical philosophy. If Kant’s strictures hold, then natures are imposed on phenomena by the mind itself. And if these are only mental impositions, then the grounds for distinguishing the desires of actual beings has been dissolved, leaving Donceel without the resources to address these objections.

What about final causality? How does the use of proper ends surface in Donceel’s Eudaimonological Argument? Donceel makes both implicit and explicit appeals to final causation in his argument. His third premise expresses an embedded finality. Here he affirms that the “intellect strives towards an end.”<sup>134</sup> Perhaps one might read him as simply affirming a contingent propensity and not affirming a metaphysical principle. However, in explicating his second premise, *to know something is a good for my intellect*,

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<sup>132</sup> Donceel, *Natural Theology*, 76–77.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

Donceel makes this reading impossible and explicitly affirms that “the many successive acts which comprise my intellectual activity constitute a real movement, are carried along a real finality.”<sup>135</sup> Perhaps then one might read Donceel as simply suggesting that these are mere regulative principles characterizing the functioning of the mind, not principles of reality known by speculative reason, as he appeared to affirmed of the principle of causality. This at first seems to be what Donceel wants to affirm when he writes,

All finality and every activity which we discover around us is understood, ultimately, only in function of this, our fundamental finality and activity. These notions are metaphysical notions which we cannot acquire from mere sense experience, but which presuppose, at their vital center, some intellectual experience.<sup>136</sup>

Here he isn't clear on the nature of this 'intellectual experience', whether it is the mind's apprehension of objective metaphysical principles or is restricted to the subject's introspective experience of its own mental operations. While the latter interpretation is more plausible given the context of the intuition of intellectual dynamism he has been characterizing, he does not confine finality to the mind. Donceel continues with this comment and suggests that “once we have that basic experience” [of our intellectual finality], then “we are enabled to recognize finality and activity around us.”<sup>137</sup> Although he isn't clear in this context if he is restricting the emergence and our awareness of finality to the contributions of the mind's structure, he nevertheless suggests that the mind's finality allows us to apprehend genuine finality in the world around us. This

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

finality is not imposed or a mental structuring of reality, but is recognized to be present in things themselves.

However, despite Donceel's realist tendencies with final causation, elsewhere he appears to draw back from these implications; but in so doing, he actually concedes the soundness of his Eudaimonological Argument. He considers a version of the *petitio principii* objection addressed in the previous chapter of this dissertation.<sup>138</sup> As Donceel states the objection, his affirmation of God's existence

starts from the principle that 'nature cannot strive towards the impossible.' You take for granted the old Scholastic axiom that a 'natural desire cannot be frustrated'... But this supposes that nature is the product of an intelligent and wise cause, which can be none other than God. This is an obvious case of begging the question.<sup>139</sup>

Donceel's response is informative. First, he attempts to evade this principle by denying that he utilizes it, and instead states that he only appeals to the principle that "nature cannot strive towards the impossible".<sup>140</sup> However, he recognizes that this reformulation of the principle is subject to the same criticism. And here Donceel makes a surprising concession. He writes, "In a certain sense the objection is justified. It is true that reality makes sense if, and only if, God exists. Were this not true, we should be unable to demonstrate his existence." Now he contends that he can answer the objection because the interlocutor grants that reality makes sense by entering into a dialectic discussion to uncover the truth of things (and thus is engaged in a practical contradiction).<sup>141</sup> His response however falls short in two ways. First he confuses the order of being with the

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<sup>138</sup> Chapter 3, 39ff.

<sup>139</sup> Donceel, *Natural Theology*, 74.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

order of knowing in relating the role of intelligibility to God's existence. Because intelligibility (and thus finality) depend upon God as to their ultimate cause, it does not follow that one must first know the cause to know the effect. The second shortcoming of his response to this objection occurs when he attempts to ground his metaphysical principle of finality by citing the objector's use of the regulative principle. The objector could, of course, concede but press the problem as one internal to the view and argument that Donceel is advancing. In which case, Donceel has already acknowledged that it does, in fact, beg the question. So we might return to the question as to whether Donceel affirms a realist view of final causation. In answer, it appears that he isn't consistent on this score, demonstrating tendencies in both the affirmative and negative directions. However, what does follow is that if he affirms it, then he has left the Kantian strictures and critical philosophy; however, if he denies it, his Eudaimonological Argument begs the question, as he himself affirms, and therefore would have to be deemed unsuccessful.

Turning now towards his later work, *The Searching Mind*, a noticeable and significant shift has occurred in his presentation of the Eudaimonological Argument.<sup>142</sup> Although this work is an extended and focused treatment of the subject, we need not retrace its presentation as it predominantly follows the argument given above. What is significant about the Eudaimonological Argument as Donceel presents it in *The Searching Mind*, is what it omits and how the argument has shifted. First, in this work Donceel is no longer committed to attempting a demonstration, where that would require a proof in which the conclusion follows clearly from certain premises utilizing experience

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<sup>142</sup> Donceel, *The Searching Mind*. This work comes approximately 17 years after Donceel's first work on natural theology.

and philosophical principles.<sup>143</sup> Instead, Donceel proposes to offer a ‘vindication’ where denying God’s existence would result in only a practical contradiction between what is affirmed and the mental activity of the mind. Moreover, in *The Searching Mind*, Donceel moves from a traditional methodology in natural theology to an expressed commitment to a transcendental method, which he describes as a method of retortion whereby God’s existence is shown to be one of the necessary conditions for any act of intellectual knowledge.<sup>144</sup> Even further, Donceel has conceded that natural theology and “the philosophy of God of the kind which [he is] trying to present...is possible only within the attitude of faith.”<sup>145</sup>

What accounts for this explicit shift in methodology? Although the argument he presents in *The Searching Mind* continues his previous analysis of the dynamics of the intellect (with the same penetrating analysis of the inherent movements of intellectual activity), what is gone are any appeals to formal and final causality. He does attempt to apply the Principle of Intelligibility, which he identifies with the Principle of Sufficient Reason, but its application is limited to the movement of the intellect towards the infinite.<sup>146</sup> He again considers the objection that the mind’s striving for the infinite does not imply that such a being exists.<sup>147</sup> However, in this case, instead of appealing to formal causality to distinguish elicited from natural desires and final causality to establish a

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 7–15.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 24–25.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 61–63.

correspondence between the mind's proper end and reality, he concedes the objection!<sup>148</sup> Instead of attempting to rebut the objection with appeals to traditional realist principles as he did previously in *Natural Theology*, he now admits that the intellectual dynamism which reaches towards the infinite does not entail (even when supplemented with the principles of intelligibility or sufficient reason) that such a referent exists. Instead, having abandoned formal and final causality, he argues that the propensity of the intellect's reach towards the infinite can only entail that the object of striving is *possible*.<sup>149</sup> Let us leave aside the details of his argumentation for this specific proposition, since what is most noteworthy for the purposes of this dissertation is the complete shift in the nature of the argument being offered by Donceel. He summarizes the 'vindication' with the following syllogism:<sup>150</sup>

- 1b. If the infinitely perfect being is possible, it exists.
- 2b. But the infinitely perfect being is possible.
- 3b. Therefore, the infinitely perfect being exists.

Donceel claims that premise 1b is self-evident once one has understood its terms.

However, the argument does not collapse into the ontological argument, Donceel maintains, because premise 2 is based on the dynamism of the intellect. Although much could be said in way of critique of Donceel's argument, what is most important to note about it is that having abandoned any use of formal and final causality, his Eudaimonological Argument has now been reduced to justification not for God's existence, but for its mere modal possibility. Whether or not his argument from the

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 62–63.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 90.



dynamics of the intellect in its striving for the infinite does entail the possibility of God's existence,<sup>151</sup> the shift that has occurred is that the Eudaimonological Argument is no longer an (independent) project in natural theology. Having completely dispensed with the traditional principles of a realist metaphysic and conceded the Kantian strictures on knowledge, all Donceel can construct from the human desire for the infinite is the possibility of God's existence.

Turning to the work of W. Norris Clarke, the analysis can proceed more concisely as Clarke is much more explicit about his methodology and the limitations of constructing a Eudaimonological Argument within the Transcendental Thomist tradition. Clarke affirms the person as the best model for understanding being (and thus metaphysics) as he attempts to develop an approach that weds both the subjective turn with the objective basis by affirming that the proper "starting point [of metaphysics] is the privileged case of the 'we are' manifested in human interpersonal dialogue."<sup>152</sup> Despite the fact that Clarke expresses concerns with Kant's critical philosophy, he acknowledges that in developing his Eudaimonological Argument he is following in the Kantian method of transcendental analysis which rather than attempting to examine the objective, 'outward' features of the world turns inwards instead towards "the necessary *a priori* conditions of possibility of the inner life of the human spirit in its activities of

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<sup>151</sup> I would suggest that Donceel here conflates modalities. He confuses epistemic possibility with metaphysical possibility. At best, his argument would demonstrate that conception of God is possible, but not that the existence of God is actually possible. Analogously, because we can imagine time-travel, some conclude that time-travel is conceptually possible and coherent. It doesn't follow from this along, however, that time-travel is metaphysically possible. For more on this distinction see David J. Chalmers, "Does Conceivability Entail Possibility?," in *Conceivability and Possibility* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 145–200.

<sup>152</sup> W. Norris Clarke, *The One and the Many: A Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 39.

thinking and willing.”<sup>153</sup> And he further deliberately distinguishes his methodology from both the Augustinian and (traditional) Thomist approaches.<sup>154</sup> The Augustinians who thought of God as somehow immediately present to the intellect and the means through which we come to know all eternal truths, Clarke charges, conflated the ontological order (with God as the First Cause) with the epistemological or psychological order (with our discovery of God).<sup>155</sup> Clarke takes note (though with no references) of a traditional Thomistic method wherein “the process of bringing the implicit, lived awareness into explicit, reflectively self-conscious and rationally grounded affirmation ... may even take the form of a chain of Aristotelian syllogisms” though he demurs that he does “not think this method is appropriate to the subject matter.”<sup>156</sup> Clarke’s critique with the traditional Thomistic approach seems to be that it unnecessarily restricted the path of knowledge of God to the material world. Instead, describing his approach, he maintains that “the inner path of discovery of God through the transcendental analysis of the a priori conditions of possibility of the dynamism of the human spirit as knower and lover needs to be completed by the so-called outer path of cosmic ascent to God.”<sup>157</sup> Thus, his Eudaimonological Argument will attempt to follow the lines of his overall methodology of combining the subjective, inward turn with the objective, outward analysis.

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<sup>153</sup> Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*, 3–4; W. For more on his 'personalist' approach to metaphysics, see Norris Clarke, *Person and Being* (Milwaukee, Wis.: Marquette University Press, 1993).

<sup>154</sup> Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*, 32–35.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 32–33.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

What form then does Clarke's Eudaimonological Argument take? He presents the argument in various forms and with differing levels of attention in a series of works; although his most concentrated focus was provided in his last publication, *The Philosophical Approach to God*.<sup>158</sup> The bulk of development is given to explicating his account of the 'Dynamism of the Intellect', which in concert with Donceel is the systematic reflection on the nature of humanity's intellectual power and its propensity towards the horizon of infinity.<sup>159</sup> In this way, both Clarke and Donceel exhibit sophisticated, nuanced, and extensive analysis and defense. Clarke observes,

Our intellectual knowing power ...[has] an inexhaustible dynamism of inquiry, ever searching to lay hold more deeply and widely on the universe of reality. It is impossible to restrict its horizon of inquiry to any limited area of reality, to any goal short of all that there is to know about all that there is. For our experience of knowing reveals to us that the process of knowing continues indefinitely in ever-expanding and ever-deepening circles. ...The only adequate goal of our dynamism of knowing is the totality of all being. The only adequate formal object of the human mind is being itself. ...The mind has a dynamic a priori orientation, an aptitude or affinity, for all that is, for the totality of being – an aptitude that constitutes it precisely as a knowing nature in the intellectual and not merely sensitive order. This means that the mind has, from its first conscious movement from emptiness toward fulfillment, a kind of implicit, pre-conceptual, anticipatory grasp of foretaste of being as the encompassing horizon and goal of all its inquiries.<sup>160</sup>

Further deepening this analysis, and in a way distinct from Donceel and even Garrigou, Clarke gives additional and separate attention to the 'Dynamism of the Will'.<sup>161</sup> Whereas in most presentations of the Eudaimonological Argument the disposition and extension of

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<sup>158</sup> Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*; Clarke, *Person and Being*, 35-42-113; Clarke, *The One and the Many*, 10-29; W. Norris Clarke, *Explorations in Metaphysics: Being-God-Person*, 1st ed. (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 161-172.

<sup>159</sup> Clarke, *The One and the Many*, 14-16.

<sup>160</sup> Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*, 12-13.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-36.

the intellect is conflated with that of the will, or at least the two are not sharply distinguished. However Clarke does give separate attention to human volitional propensities. He writes,

Reflecting on the operation of my human will, I come to discover...the nature of this faculty...as an unrestricted drive toward the good, as presented by my intelligence. Our entire life of willing, desiring, loving, avoiding, is carried on within the horizon of the good, the formal object of the will as such. But the horizon of being as the good, like that of being as truth for the intellect, reveals itself to be also unlimited, unbounded. ...as soon as we discover its limits, our will spontaneously rebounds beyond, in prospective desire and longing for further fulfillment.<sup>162</sup>

Clarke not only effectively catalogues and analyzes human nature's intellectual and volitional dynamism, and its orientation towards the infinite, but considers and addresses a litany of objections and possible alternative construals.<sup>163</sup> In these ways, the work of Clarke (and Donceel) provides ample and notable development of this premise for any Eudaimonological Argument.

Given this analysis of the intellectual and volitional dynamism as a first premise, how does Clarke move the inference forward? Whereas Aquinas and Garrigou apply the traditional realist principles of formal and final causality, Clarke only brings the inference to a disjunction. He considers the possibility that this may entail that there exists an 'Actually Infinite Plenitude of Being', but also insists that it just as plausibly permits the possibility that it ends in frustration. He admits that this dynamism of intellect and will also permits this second interpretation:

Our restless, unquenchable search has no actually existing final goal. Our search trails off endlessly into ever-receding, always finite horizons. Our search reflects an inexhaustible abyss of longing and capacity that is always unfilled and

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid., 22–23.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., chaps. 1–3.

unfillable. This realization arouses a profound metaphysical restlessness and sadness within us; the dynamism of our mind turns out to be a strange existential absurdity and anomaly.<sup>164</sup>

What grounds can we have to decide between these two possible models of humanities dynamism? Clarke's conclusion is that there are no grounds to justify either interpretation. He writes, "here it seems to me that there is no logical argument by which one can be forced to choose one side of the option... The issue lies beyond the level of rational or logical argument."<sup>165</sup>

How then does Clarke propose to supplement the analysis provided thus far with the traditional objective approach to arrive at a more compelling conclusion? Clarke's brief survey the *Quinque Viae* comes to the conclusion that they are simple, introductory proofs subject to numerous valid criticisms.<sup>166</sup> Instead, Clarke develops two arguments that do not draw from the Aristotelian side of Aquinas' thought in the *Quinque Viae*, but from what he characterizes as the much richer and profounder resources of Aquinas' Neoplatonically inspired participation metaphysics; this, according to Clarke is the deepest and most original level of St. Thomas' metaphysics.<sup>167</sup> His first argument follows Aquinas' account of existence as the transcendental, pure perfection which begins with

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 15–16; Clarke, *The One and the Many*, 16–18. In fairness to Clarke, he briefly mentions that problem of a 'lived contradiction' along the lines offered by Donceel. See p. 26 in *The Philosophical Approach to God*. However, his commitment to this is even less than Donceel's and is subject to the same analysis provided above in this chapter.

<sup>165</sup> Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*, 20–21; Clarke, *The One and the Many*, 16–17.

<sup>166</sup> Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*, 45. Clarke ledges three general criticisms of the Aquinas' five ways: (i) they require too much adaptation; (ii) they do not represent the best of Aquinas' own truly original and most characteristic metaphysical structure of ascent to God as shown in the rest of his works; (iii) they are incomplete as they stand. See pp. 41–46.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 48.

particular existents and moves to the ultimate source of existence.<sup>168</sup> As Clarke presents the argument, it can be summarized thus:<sup>169</sup>

- 1d. Wherever there is a many sharing some real perfection, there must be a single common source for this perfection.
- 2d. Existence is the most universally shared of all perfections.
- 3d. Thus, there must be a single common ultimate Source of existence (from which all others participate in).

His second argument is from the more general Thomistic account of perfection, and can be summarized in this way:<sup>170</sup>

- 1e. Whenever we find a common perfection possessed by many beings in various finite or limited degrees, no finite possessor of this perfection can adequately explain its own being.
- 2e. It is impossible for there to be two actually existing absolute infinities of perfection, for there could be nothing to distinguish them. All duality implies negation (A is not B). But all negation implies limitation: it lacks something that the other has.
- 3e. There are many beings with a common perfection possessed in a finite way.
- 4e. Every finite possessor of these perfections points beyond itself to an Infinite Plenitude-Source, from which all finite possessors receive these perfections.
- 5e. Thus, there exists an Infinite Plenitude-Source of these perfections.

Both of these arguments closely parallel the way Garrigou develops Aquinas' *Via Quarta*, while Clarke's assessment is that the *Via Quarta* is inverted and defective, and that these are independent of it.<sup>171</sup> This disagreement need not detain us here.

Although much can be said by way of analysis and evaluation of both these arguments, and Clarke spends much time developing and defending them, two specific evaluations are germane to this chapter. First, what both arguments make readily apparent

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<sup>168</sup> See *De Potentia*, Q.3, A.5; see also *Summa Theologiae* I, Q.65, A.1; Q.44, A.1; *De Veritate*, Q.2, A.14; *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book II, ch. 15.

<sup>169</sup> Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*, 51–53.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 56–60.

<sup>171</sup> Garrigou-Lagrange, *God, His Existence and His Nature*, 1:302–345; Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*, 44–45.

is that Clarke has escaped the Kantian strictures. In the first argument (1d-3d), Clarke takes a realist understanding of existence, affirming an objective knowledge of real beings as they exist-in-themselves. In the second argument (1e-5e), Clarke also takes a realist understanding of the possession of various perfections that are authentically possessed by beings, and not simple constructions of the mind's categories. This is not an inconsistency within Clarke's project, for he has already stated that he would not remain fully committed to the critical philosophy (as mentioned above). However, in order for Clarke's overall demonstration to succeed Kant must be left behind, and with him the basic commitments and thrust of the Transcendental Thomist tradition.<sup>172</sup> The second evaluation of Clarke's project pertinent to the purpose of this chapter is that in both of the two arguments from participation metaphysics, all use of the dynamics of the intellect and will have been omitted. That is, both arguments proceed without any recourse to Clarke's analysis of human nature's propensity towards the infinite. Therefore, there are no grounds to characterize either argument 1d-3d or argument 1e-5e as eudaimonological. Clarke does not even attempt to utilize his penetrating analysis of intellectual and volitional dynamism as a justification for any premise in either of these arguments. Thus, we may conclude that where Clarke's Eudaimonological Argument fails to utilize formal and final causality it collapses into a mere disjunctive with no theological entailments; and where it utilizes them, it has moved away from anything representing a Eudaimonological Argument and instead provides a generic example of an argument from participation metaphysics. This assessment closely aligns with the project

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<sup>172</sup> Clarke himself expresses hesitations and intimation that he is not entirely committed to the tradition. See Clarke, *The Philosophical Approach to God*, 5–6; Clarke, *The One and the Many*, 12–14.

as attempted in Donceel. Both authors either abandon Kant's critical philosophy or propound a position that cannot establish any theological conclusions from human nature and its quest for happiness.

### 3. Conclusions

In the first part of this chapter, in considering Kant's view of the *summum bonum*, we saw how it provided a putative Eudaimonological Argument and the base from which to ascend to the postulates of practical reason, God and immortality. While the argument is subject to numerous objections, considerations of it lead to the question concerning the requirements of practical reason. Here we saw that if we take a *Duty-reading* of this requirement, then the first premise is subject to a number of defeaters. The alternative *Practical Requirement-reading* avoided the previous mentioned defeaters but was subject to an important objection of its own. Subsequently, we considered Kant's appeals to the moral law as a fact of reason in light of realist and constructivist explanations of his metaethics. As a moral realist, Kant has the resources to meet the objection to the first premise. Yet a moral realist understanding of Kant creates conceptual problems for his critical philosophy; and a constructivist understanding fares no better. Even further, Kant's reflection on human nature in *Religion* provided yet another obstacle for the realization of the highest good and thus the need for another postulate. This postulate of the prototype of perfect humanity could only be plausibly construed along a Platonic-realist model. Thus, Kant's Eudaimonological Argument either moved beyond the critical strictures, or found itself unable to establish its theological conclusions.



Similarly, in the second part of this chapter, versions of the Eudaimonological Argument in the Transcendental Thomist tradition were considered. Joseph Donceel provided two different versions which faced their own challenges. In his argument as presented in *Natural Theology*, what this chapter argued is that he could not successfully advance his Eudaimonological Argument without abandoning the critical philosophy. This was demonstrated by his affirmation of genuine knowledge of objective objects and his recourse to both formal and final causality. In his later work, *The Searching Mind*, a significant shift has occurred in that his Eudaimonological Argument is no longer an independent project in natural theology. Having abandoned the traditional principles of a realist metaphysic and fully conceded the Kantian strictures on knowledge, all Donceel can construct from the human desire for the infinite is the *possibility* of God's existence. W. Norris Clarke also took the Transcendental Thomist tradition's turn towards the subject in order to elucidate the dynamism of the intellect and will as both are oriented towards the infinite. Unfortunately, as this chapter demonstrated, without the principles of formal and final causality, Clarke was only able to arrive at two possibilities concerning this dynamism; either it could be understood as a drive towards an actually existing Infinite Source of Being or it could equally be understood as an empty drive with no theological entailments. When Clarke attempted to offer grounds for arriving at God's existence, his use of Thomistic participation metaphysics abandoned Kant's strictures and left no role for Clarke's analysis of human nature. Thus, Clarke was also unable to develop a successful Eudaimonological Argument apart from the traditional realist metaphysics that Garrigou utilized in constructing his argument.

## CONCLUSION

This work has given attention to a trajectory that attempted to chart a course from the quest for happiness that ultimately arrived at a transcendent, universal terminus or *summum bonum* as the natural end of this quest. This trajectory of ascent, traced back beginning with Plato in the ancient period, through figureheads such as Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas in the medieval period, and in Immanuel Kant in the modern period, has given rise to specific kind of project in natural theology; namely, the Eudaimonological Argument. This dissertation set out to defend the analysis and development of Aquinas' thought on this ascent by the 20<sup>th</sup> century Neoscholastic, Réginald Garrigou-Lagrance. The central thesis contended that Garrigou's Eudaimonological Argument represents a viable project in natural theology within the Thomist tradition when properly understood in light of its underlying metaphysical principles, specifically formal and final causality.

Chapter 1 argued that while Augustine's account of the ascent provided the initial groundwork for formulating a Eudaimonological Argument, it was judged to be ultimately incomplete in this regard. While he provides criteria which entails God as the terminus of this ascent, his religious epistemology expressed in his doctrine of divine illumination is most plausibly read as an experiential-perceptual ascent from lower goods to God as the *summum bonum*. Though Augustine's thought allows for the possibility of a natural theology, as demonstrated principally by his use of the argument from eternal truth in *De libero arbitrio*, he doesn't attempt such a demonstration using the desire for

happiness. Although he poignantly characterized the phenomenology of restlessness and highlighted the teleology of natural desires and our natural propensity towards the supreme good, he did not give any further inferential grounds to move from this dissatisfaction to inferring God's existence. While he affirmed both formal and final causality, neither was applied towards natural desires to arrive at a theological conclusion by way of demonstration.

In chapter 2, it was seen that Thomas Aquinas took the argument further, developing much of what was inchoate in Augustine's initial reflections and observations. However, although he provided an extended analysis of happiness and its relation to God, even Aquinas left much of the work for a natural theological project along these lines implicit and in need of further explication. Thus, it was in the work of Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange that the Eudaimonological Argument came to full expression. Yet, as was noted in the first section of chapter 2, not all interpreters have agreed that Aquinas' account of happiness and human appetitive nature can be characterized in terms of natural theology. In response, it was argued that Garrigou's development of the EA within the Thomistic tradition could be developed utilizing the principles, metaphysical categories, and methodology of Aquinas. In addition, given the general approach of Garrigou's Strict Observance Thomism, the EA would represent an authentic extension of Aquinas' work.

The second section of this chapter provided an exposition and analytic reconstruction of the argument within Garrigou's corpus, identifying its structure with particular reference to the *Quinque Viae*. Although possible formulations of the EA are in line with each of the five ways, it was concluded that the *Via Quarta* provides the general

schema and context for Garrigou's formulation of the argument. More specifically, it became apparent that two distinct versions of the EA could be found in Garrigou's work: the 'Strict 4th Way EA' and the 'Expanded 4th Way EA', with the latter representing the standard and central formulation of the Eudaimonological Argument offered by Garrigou. In this standard version, Garrigou maintains that (1) Natural desires correspond to real goods; and since (2) The human will naturally desires a universal, perfect Good, it should be concluded that (3) there exists a universal, perfect Good.

The third section of this chapter provided a further analysis of the standard version of the EA in order to identify its underlying metaphysics of formal and final causality, and set Garrigou's construal of the argument both in light of, and in comparison with, the Neoscholastic and broader Thomistic tradition which recognized it. What this analysis made evident was Garrigou's critical reliance on a realist metaphysical account of human nature and its correlative goods and more specifically the principles of formal and final causality. Thus, the main contention of chapter 2 was established. Namely, that Garrigou's development of the EA rightly falls within the Thomistic tradition, particularly by utilizing the metaphysical principles of Aquinas.

Chapter 3 took up problems confronting Garrigou's presentation of the Eudaimonological Argument and brought into further relief the role of formal and final causality. The first section took up a specific objection posed to the EA from standard accounts of moderate realism. Both versions of the EA were shown to be dependent on the movement from multiple and imperfect goods to a single, perfect good, and that such a movement is achieved by appealing both to formal natures (e.g., of particular goods) as well as their relation to a universal (e.g., Goodness). But the problem this raised comes

from the apparent commitments of Garrigou and those of the broader Thomistic and Neoscholastic tradition concerning universals. Aquinas and the ensuing tradition is characterized as being committed to a moderate realism, which holds that universals are located only in particulars and the minds that abstract them from those particulars; undercutting the inference from particular goods to an actual, mind-independent universal Good. In response to this objection, it was argued that the form of realism that Aquinas affirms does not coincide with either a Platonic or Aristotelian Realism. Instead, his view is best characterized as the *tertium quid* of Thomistic Realism, defined as the view that forms exist in particulars and as universals in minds that abstract them, as well as independent of minds that abstract them, but denies that they subsist individually and separately. To demonstrate this, first, the various textual arguments for an Aristotelian Realist reading were addressed and offered plausible reinterpretations. Although he clearly follows Aristotle in holding to an epistemology of abstraction and in the denial of *subsistent* forms, neither of these considerations nor their attending textual grounds gave conclusive reasons to relegate the existence of forms solely to particulars and human minds. Second, to make the positive case for Thomistic Realism, it was argued that Aquinas affirms that universals exist independent of particular subjects and the minds that abstract them. This was established by considering both his arguments for universals and his doctrine of divine ideas. These considerations provided part of the rationale for affirming that universals exist as *universalia ante rem* in the mind of God. Therefore, since Aquinas affirms *universalia ante rem*, and argues from multiple, imperfect particulars to those universals, Garrigou's inference from goods to the Good falls

squarely in line with Aquinas' thought and is not undermined by Aristotelian characterizations of moderate realism.

In the second section of chapter 3 several objections to the Eudaimonological Argument emerging from the doctrine of final causality were considered. The first problem arising from final causality as applied to the EA is aimed at the inference to a single, ultimate end for human beings. Focused on Aristotle, this objection maintained that this inference involves an illicit quantifier shift that renders it invalid. However, two alternative readings of this move in Aristotle provided ways to avoid charging Aristotle with this fallacy. Even further, however, it was argued that Aquinas does not make the simple inference from a good sought as an end in itself to a single good that all seek. Instead, Aquinas develops three independent arguments which seek to establish that there is a single, ultimate end for all human beings, which made evident that Aquinas has attempted to move from particular ends to an ultimate end by a variety of considerations and principles rather than a simple and illicit shift in quantifying goods to arrive at one ultimate good. Further development of this objection came from the work of New Natural Law Theorists which advance an incommensurability thesis about various human goods. The inference to an ultimate end and final good is subject to the objection from the incommensurability of human goods; namely, that since natural human goods cannot be arranged hierarchically, there can be no extrapolation to a single, highest good. The standard EA is compatible with this incommensurability thesis, for as long as human nature desires a universal, infinite good, final causality suggests that such a desire has a corresponding referent, irrespective of how or if it may be ranked against other goods. The most important objection to the Eudaimonological Argument maintained that appeals

to such teleology are untenable apart from presupposing God's existence and subsequent design of the world. A number of responses were offered to respond to this objection, which included taking note of the theologically independent arguments Garrigou offered in defense of finality. Further, this provided opportunity to explore the distinction between intrinsic vs. extrinsic teleology. Permitting immanent forms and thus intrinsic teleology provided the possibility of recognizing a localized and embedded teleology inherent to particular substances apart from assuming a comprehensive and theologically grounded teleology at the outset. Thus, the standard EA as developed by Garrigou can overcome these important objections. Moreover, in demonstrating how it does so also made evident of the EA critically relies on detailed metaphysical assumptions concerning formal causality (including immanent forms and universals *ante rem*) and final causality (including immanently directed ends and corresponding goods). The various objections which targeted these two metaphysical assumptions helped to develop their details and demonstrated that the Eudaimonological Argument's dependence on them can sustain the scrutiny from within the Thomist and Neoscholastic tradition.

Chapter 4 further exhibited the EA's dependence on formal and final causality by illustrating the failure of such arguments which have been attempted apart from these metaphysical foundations. Although Kant and the Transcendental Thomists offered their own version of the Eudaimonological Argument, it was found that in so doing the argument either moved beyond the critical philosophy or failed to establish its theological conclusions. The first part of this chapter, considering Kant's view of the *summum bonum*, detailed his putative Eudaimonological Argument as the base from which to ascend to the postulates of practical reason, God and immortality. While the argument is

subject to numerous objections, considerations of it lead to the question concerning the requirements of practical reason. Here we saw that if we take a *Duty-reading* of this requirement, then the first premise is subject to a number of defeaters. The alternative *Practical Requirement-reading* avoided the previous mentioned defeaters but was subject to an important objection of its own. Subsequently, we considered Kant's appeals to the moral law as a fact of reason given realist and constructivist explanations of his metaethics. As a moral realist, Kant has the resources to meet the objection to the first premise. Yet a moral realist understanding of Kant creates conceptual problems for his critical philosophy; and a constructivist understanding fares no better. Even further, Kant's reflection on human nature in *Religion* provided yet another obstacle for the realization of the highest good and thus the need for another postulate. On Kant's view, this postulate of the prototype of perfect humanity could only be plausibly construed along a Platonic-realist model. Thus, Kant's Eudaimonological Argument either moved beyond the critical strictures, or found itself unable to establish its theological conclusions.

In the second part of chapter 4, versions of the Eudaimonological Argument given in the Transcendental Thomist tradition were considered. Joseph Donceel provided two different versions which faced their own respective problems. In his argument as presented in *Natural Theology*, what this chapter argued was that, like Kant, he could not successfully advance his Eudaimonological Argument without abandoning the critical philosophy. This was demonstrated by his affirmation of genuine and objective knowledge of objects and his recourse to both formal and final causality. In his later work, *The Searching Mind*, a significant shift occurred in that his Eudaimonological



Argument is no longer an independent project in natural theology. Having abandoned the traditional principles of a realist metaphysic and fully conceded the Kantian strictures on knowledge, all Donceel can construct from the human desire for the infinite is the *possibility* of God's existence. W. Norris Clarke also took the Transcendental Thomist tradition's turn towards the subject to elucidate the dynamism of the intellect and will as oriented towards the infinite. Unfortunately, as chapter 4 demonstrated, without the principles of formal and final causality, Clarke was only able to arrive at two possibilities concerning this dynamism; either it could be understood as a drive towards an actually existing Infinite Source of Being or it could just as plausibly be understood as an empty drive with no theological entailments. When Clarke attempted to offer grounds for arriving at God's existence, his use of Thomistic participation metaphysics abandoned Kant's strictures and left no role for Clarke's analysis of human nature and its quest for fulfillment. Thus, Clarke was also unable to develop a successful Eudaimonological Argument apart from the traditional realist metaphysics that Garrigou utilized in constructing his argument.

Therefore this dissertation concludes that its central thesis can be rationally maintained: Garrigou's standard Eudaimonological Argument represents a viable project in natural theology in the Thomist tradition when properly understood in light of its underlying metaphysical principles, specifically the metaphysics of formal and final causality.

## APPENDIX

### THESES FOR PUBLIC DEFENSE

#### **Theses Pertaining to the Dissertation**

1. Although Augustine allows for projects in natural theology and has some of the preliminary resources in his thought to construct a Eudaimonological Argument, a theistic argument from happiness would not only represent an innovative and implausible interpretation, it would, at best, strain the resources of his thought.
2. Garrigou's statement of the Eudaimonological Argument within the Thomistic tradition is properly developed utilizing the principles, metaphysical categories, and methodology of Aquinas and his Strict Observance Thomism.
3. The objection from moderate realism to the Eudaimonological Argument is unsuccessful and Thomistic Realism most plausibly describes Aquinas' position on the metaphysical question of universals.
4. The traditional scholastic affirmation of immanent forms and thus immanent teleology provides the ontology needed for a more direct recognition of final causality as present within the individual substance. If this realist construal of the basic contours of the world is even possible, then so is the recognition of final causality apart from assuming God's existence at the outset; rendering the *petitio principii* objection unsuccessful.
5. The Eudaimonological Argument's dependence on formal and final causality is demonstrated by the failure of such arguments which have been attempted apart from these metaphysical foundations. Although Kant and the Transcendental Thomists offered

their own version of the argument, in so doing the argument either moved beyond the critical philosophy or failed to establish its theological conclusions.

### **Theses Pertaining to Coursework**

1. The logical and probabilistic problems of evil require different responses in order to be adequately addressed.
2. While David Bentley Hart's *Beauty of the Infinite* offers a sound rejection of the postmodern critique of metaphysics, his aesthetic argument as a rhetoric of peace either escapes the limitations of postmodern particularity or is subject to the same restrictions as rationality.
3. A proper approach to epistemology and knowledge formation takes seriously the dispositional traits and conditions of persons, specifically moral and intellectual virtues.
4. Due to their similar religious epistemology, Blaise Pascal and Alvin Plantinga both offer agent dysfunction explanations to the problem of divine hiddenness by identifying non-cognitive factors such as the affections, passions, and moral vices as epistemic impediments.
5. The Kalām cosmological argument provides both scientific and philosophical grounds which make the conclusion more plausible than its denial.

### **Theses of Personal Interest**

1. Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity offer contrasting and logically incompatible accounts of the nature of ultimate reality, the human condition, and its solution, thereby presenting prima facie evidence against philosophical religious pluralism.

2. Principlism provides a viable framework for contemporary bioethics but fails to provide a full-blown ethical system and therefore falters on the problem of moral dilemmas.

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