

THEORIA



THEORIA

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Philosophy Department

Rev. Fr. Roque L. Reyes, Ph.D
Dr. Mark Joseph T. Calano
Dr. Christopher Alvin De Guzman
Advisors

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THEORIA, contemplative activity or study, is what Aristotle identifies as the highest operation of the human intellectual faculty which constitutes the highest form of life. *THEORIA* is the official journal of the San Carlos Seminary Philosophy Department which aims to gather articles from students, graduates, and professors to foster a greater love for wisdom and truth.

Please address all inquiries and communications to:

THEORIA
San Carlos Seminary
San Carlos Pastoral Formation Complex
MCPO Box 1414, 1254 Makati City

Tel. No. (02) 895-8855
Fax No. (02) 890-9563
Email: scsphilo.ifc@gmail.com
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EDITORIAL PREFACE

Philosophy plays a vital role in the formation of priests. In fact, “The study of philosophy leads to a deeper understanding and interpretation of the person, and of the person’s freedom and relationship with the world and God” (*Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, 158). San Carlos Seminary remains faithful to its mission of forming future priests for the Church equipping them with critical thinking skills that enable them to discern and contemplate the Truth and its relevance in our contemporary world.

It is with great joy and anticipation that we present *Theoria*, the official publication of the Philosophy department of San Carlos Seminary. This journal serves as a platform where the rich tradition of philosophical inquiry meets the challenges of contemporary thought. In every article, we aim to explore not only the enduring questions of existence and knowledge but also their relevance in our world today.

Three articles and one reflection paper have been devoted to the thoughts of Thomas Aquinas, marking his birth in 1224 and a fitting tribute to the birth of Thomism, a school of thought arising from his legacy that encompasses philosophy and theology based on natural reason and the light of faith. Two other articles on anti-terrorism and environmental issues present concrete realities of contemporary society, urging us to think critically and approach them responsibly according to the measure of Truth.

May this publication inspire its readers to ponder deeply, think critically, and live wisely, always in the light of the Gospel and for the greater glory of God.

Fr. Ryan Jamemar A. Belono-ac

Dean of Studies, Philosophy Department
San Carlos Seminary

The Orvieto Lecture of St. Thomas Aquinas for Pope Urban IV's Papal Court

Rev. Fr. Roque Reyes

roque.reyes@scs.edu.ph

Orvieto is one of the most beautiful, historical hill towns in central Italy. It is located between Florence and Rome, and is less than 90 minutes away from the Eternal City. It sits high above the valley floor on top of a huge volcanic stone. It overlooks the wheat and olive fields of the province of Umbria. Hills embellished by Italian cypress and winding roads give the area its famous beautiful Umbrian landscape.

During the Middle Ages, Orvieto, at the peak of its wealth, became one of the major cultural centers in the country. Pope Urban IV, widely acclaimed as a patron of learning but often at odds with the city government, stayed at Orvieto from 1262 to 1264¹. He established the papal residence here and coincided with St. Thomas Aquinas who was assigned to the Dominican priory at Orvieto. He lived and worked there during most of Urban IV's four-year pontificate.²

In the autumn of 1262, St. Albert the Great, resigned as the bishop of Regensburg and back to study and teaching, arrived in Orvieto. He stayed in the convent of the Dominicans until about the end of 1263. For a little over a year, he lived in the same convent where his brightest student, Thomas Aquinas, was staying.

Although he stayed in the Dominican convent in Orvieto, St. Albert

¹ Carroll, Warren H., *The Glory of Christendom*, vol. 3, Christendom Press (Virginia, 1993), p.275

² Weisheipl, James, A., *Friar Thomas d'Aquino: His Life, Thought and Work*, (New York, 1974), p. 147.

was appointed Magister Sacri Palatii by Pope Urban IV.³ His task was to give classes and conduct public disputations, a style of lecturing very much in vogue at that time. In a public disputation, the main topic is first enunciated, then the objections coming from the audience are heard and written down. The teacher begins his lecture citing arguments from authority, mainly from the Bible, from the Fathers of the Church, and from the Magisterium. Then he gives his main arguments. Afterwards, the objections are refuted either by the lecturer himself in a public disputation or by the students taking up their master's degree in university setting. The transcribed public disputations became *questiones disputatae*. The format of the disputed question *De immortalitate animae* follows the order of a public disputation.

St. Thomas' task as a lector of the Dominican priory did not include holding public disputations. He was simply a conventual lector of the priory as recommended by the general chapter held in Valencia in 1260 to provide for what one would call today a permanent formation. St. Thomas would thus have had to devote himself to regular teaching of the *fratres communes* who were the ones not able to study in the *studium generalia* or even the *provincialia* which was the case of nine out of ten friars to prepare them better for the two principal missions entrusted to the Dominicans by Pope Honorius III, preaching and hearing confession.⁴ The public disputations that St. Albert started when he arrived at the papal court continued until just before Christmas of 1262 to give way to the vacations. They continued after the holidays and it is highly probable that at this period, St. Albert could have invited St. Thomas to dispute instead of him the question *De immortalitate animae*. The biographers of St. Thomas were unanimous in affirming that "the proximity of the papal court led to many encounters there."⁵ Such an invitation could have been accepted easily by Aquinas for reasons of friendship and out of respect for his teacher. It is highly possible that the public dis-

³ Weisheipl, J.A., *Friar Thomas D'Aquino*, *ibid.*, p. 149

⁴ Torrell, Jean Pierre, *Saint Thomas Aquinas, The Person and His Work*, vol. 1, Catholic University Press (Washington DC, 1996), p. 118-119

⁵ Torrell, J.P., *ibid.*, p. 140; Cf. Walz, A, *L'Aquinate a Orvieto*, *Angelicum* 29(1952), pp.176-190

putation on the immortality of the soul could have been held in the papal curia in Orvieto in January of 1263, through the invitation of St. Albert. The disputed question *De immortalitate animae* was thus one of the "works of circumstance, undertakings meant to respond to a question that is more or less official, or from a friend."⁶

The original manuscript contains 14 pages of parchments from Germany. The ink used was also German. The handwriting belongs to the two secretaries of St. Thomas. They took turns in transcribing the words of the Angelic Doctor as he lectured on the immortality of the soul. St. Thomas later on corrected with his own handwriting such transcription. It can be concluded that the text of the disputed question *De immortalitate animae* is original in the sense that it had been transcribed during a public session by the secretary of St. Thomas.

The Latin text that follows is the critical edition of that disputed question. To make the works of the Angelic Doctor more accessible to many, especially now that there is a renewed interest for the opera of St. Thomas due to the three-year celebrations of the three anniversaries related to Aquinas and fueled by the addresses of Pope Francis, we share this author's English translation of the Latin critical edition. This English translation is the first and most probably the only one of the disputed question *De immortalitate animae*. The text is very rich, deeply insightful, highly philosophical, and can be considered as one of the works that represent the maturity of St. Thomas' thoughts. . ST.t

⁶ Torrell, J.P., *ibid.*, p. 122.

Vatican Library, Cod. Lat. 781, ff 47ra-48rb

[47ra] *Questio est de immortalitate anime. Et videtur quod non sit immortalis.*

1. *Differentia enim superioris generis divisiva uniformiter participatur ab omnibus inferioribus. Corruptibile autem est differentia divisiva entis; ens enim dividitur per corruptibile et incorruptibile. Ergo omnia corruptibilia uniformiter corruptibilia sunt. Sed lapis et planta et brutum sic corruptibilia sunt quod, eis corruptis, eorum corporum forme desinunt esse. Ergo, et homine corrupto, eius forma, scilicet anima humana, desinit esse. Ergo, etc.*

2. *Preterea. Esse formam essentialiter convenit anime; si enim per accidens homini inesset, homo non esset quid sed quale. Remoto autem eo quod est alicui essentialis, res illa esse non potest. Cum igitur, corrupto corpore, anima desinat esse forma, videtur quod, post corporis corruptionem, anima esse non possit. Ergo, etc.*

3. *Preterea. Primus defectus creature est esse de nihilo, et ex hoc a/ii consequuntur, ut mutabilitas, corruptibilitas, et huiusmodi. Sed anima est de nihilo cum sit creatura quedam. Ergo, etc.*

4. *Preterea. Anima secundum suam naturam non est superior angelo. Angelus autem secundum Augustinum est gratia, non natura, immortalitatem suscipiens¹. Ergo nee anima per suam naturam est immortalis.*

5. *Preterea. Ubi cumque est aliqua compositio, ibi est possibilitas ad dissolutionem. In anima est aliqua compositio, saltem ex quo est et quod est. Ergo est dissolubilis et non incorruptibilis*

The question is on the immortality of the soul. It seems that it is not immortal.

Objection 1: The divisive difference of superior genera is participated in the same manner by all those that fall under them. Corruptibility is a divisive difference of being because being is divided into corruptible and incorruptible. Therefore, all the corruptible are corrupted in the same manner. Stones, plants, and beasts are corruptible in this manner: when they are corrupted, their forms cease to be. Therefore, when man is corrupted, his form, the human soul, also ceases to be. Therefore, etc.

Objection 2: To be form pertains to the soul essentially because if it were to pertain to man in an accidental way, to be man would not be something substantial but only accidental. If something essential is removed from a thing, the thing ceases to be. Therefore, if the body is corrupted and the soul ceases to be form, it would seem that after the corruption of the body, the soul can no longer exist. Therefore, etc.

Objection 3: The first defect of creatures is to be created out of nothing, and from this, other defects like mutability, corruptibility, and others follow. But the soul is created out of nothing since it is only a creature. Therefore, etc.

Objection 4: According to its nature, the soul is not superior to the angel. According to St. Augustine, however, the angel receives immortality by grace and not by nature. Therefore, the soul is not immortal by nature.

Objection 5: Where there is some composition, there is a possibility between that which is and that by which something is. Therefore, it is dissoluble and not incorruptible.

¹ Elsewhere Aquinas attributes this to St. John Damascene, as in Aquinas's *Questio Disputata de Anima*, n. 14, obj. 3. It is found in Damascene's *De Fide Orthodoxa*, II, 3, in J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae ...series graeca* (Paris, 1857-1866), vol. 94, col. 868; tr. BURGUNDIO, ed. E.M. BUYTAERT, 1955, p. 69.

Latin

6. *Si dicitur quad ilia sola² compositorum dissolubilia sunt que ex contrariis componuntur, contra est quad dicit Plato in Tymeio quad corpora celestia natura sua sunt dissolubilia³ voluntate autem Dei indissolubilia⁴; et tamen corpora celestia⁵ non sunt ex contrariis composita. Non igitur sola ilia dissolubilia sunt que ex contrariis componuntur.*

7. *Preterea. Quad convenit alicui secundum se, per prius et magis dicitur de eo quam quad convenit ei per comparisonem ad aliud. Immortalitas autem anime humane convenit in quantum ad aliud comparatur, prout scilicet ordinatur ad beatitudinem; in se autem [47rb] considerata corruptibilis esse videtur per hoc quad est ex nihilo. Magis igitur dicendum est quad anima sit corruptibilis quam immortalis.*

8. *Preterea. Anima secundum fidem immortalis ponitur ut particeps eterne beatitudinis esse possit. Hoc autem passel accidere si, corrupto corpore, corrumpetur⁶, quia et corpus, licet corrumpatur, tamen per resurrectionem reparatur ad gloriam immortalitatis. Ergo nihil prohibet, ut videtur, dicere animam mortalem.*

9. *Preterea. Anima est sicut quoddam lumen quo corpus illuminatur a Dea. Sed nihil prohibet aliquid illuminatum a sole, postquam desiit illuminari, vel per eius corruptionem vel quocumque alio modo, iterato eodem lumine, illuminari. Ergo nihil prohibet si, corrupto corpore, anima esse desiit; iterum, corpore reparato, animam eandem redire in esse.*

10. *Sed dicitur quad non est simile de lumine et anima quia anima est hoc aliquid, non autem lumen. Sed contra, Philosophus in secundo De Anima dividit substantiam in tria: in materiam, formam, et hoc aliquid. Et ostendit quad anima neque est materia neque hoc aliquid sed forma dans esse corpori.⁷ Ergo, cum lumen sit etiam forma corporis illuminati, non erit quantum ad hoc differentia inter animam et lumen.*

² Sola corr. In solta (interl.).

³ sunt add.

⁴ PLATO, *Timaeus*, 4lab; cf. tr. CALCIDIUS, ed. H. H. WASZINK, 1962, p. 35.

⁵ celestia]**]lestia

⁶ corrumpetur] rupert.

⁷ ARISTOTLE, *De Anima*, II, 1; 412a6-2 l. Aristotle's *De Anima* has not been published yet in *Aristoteles Latinus*.

English Translation

Objection 6: It is said that only those composed of contraries are dissoluble; against this, Plato said in *Timaeus* that celestial bodies by nature are dissoluble, but by divine will are indissoluble, even though celestial bodies are not composed of contraries. Therefore, not only those composed of contraries are dissoluble.

Objection 7: Whatever pertains to something according to its nature, is predicated to it before and better than what pertains to it when compared to another. Immortality pertains to the soul according to its comparison to another, that is, insofar as it is ordained towards happiness. Considered according to its nature, it seems that it is corruptible because it is created out of nothing. Therefore, it is better to say that the soul is corruptible than immortal.

Objection 8: According to the faith, the soul is made immortal so that it can participate in the eternal happiness. This could happen if it corrupts together with the body because the body, even though it is corrupted, is brought to the glory of immortality by means of the resurrection. Therefore, there is no inconvenience in saying that the soul of man is mortal.

Objection 9: The soul is like a light by which God illumines the body. There is nothing inconvenient in maintaining that something once illumined by the sun, after not having been illumined because of its own corruption or for some other reason, is once again illumined when the same light returns. Therefore, there is nothing inconvenient in saying that when the body is corrupted and the soul will cease to exist, the soul will exist again when the body is restored.

Objection 10: It is said that light is not similar to the soul because the soul is a substance, a definite thing, while light is not. On the contrary, the Philosopher in *II De anima* distinguished in the substance the following: matter, form and a definite thing. But it is evident that the soul is neither material nor a definite thing since it is a form that gives being to the body. Therefore, since light is the form of the illumined body, there would be no difference as regards this between the soul and light.

Latin

11. *Preterea. Sicut dicit Philosophus in primo De Anima, si nu/la operatione anime potest esse sine corpore, impossibile est animam a corpore separari.⁸Sed nulla operationem anime videtur⁹ sine corpore esse posse. Quad de operationibus nutritive et sensitive partis planum est. Cum autem intelligere non contingat sine fantasmate, fantasmata autem esse non possint sine corporeis instrumentis, anima non palest a corpore separari. Et sic deficit, corpore corrupto. Ergo, etc.*

12. *Preterea. Posito possibili, non sequitur aliquid impossibile. Possibile autem est mundum semper fuisse; nam et hoc plures posuerunt. Si autem mundus Ju.it semper et anima est immortalis, necessario sequitur quad sint infinita actu. Si enim fuit mundus semper, infiniti homines sunt mortui, quorum anime permanent, si est anima immortalis. Esse autem infinitum actu est impossibile. Ergo, cum non sit impossibile semper mundum fuisse, ut dictum est, relinquitur esse impossibile quad anima sit immortalis.*

13. *Preterea. Sicut probat Philosophus in primo De ¹⁰Celo et Mundo, esse quad incipit esse in tempore in tempore etiam esse desinit.¹¹ Sed anima humana esse ex tempore incepit; non enim ju.it semper. Ergo desinit esse. Ergo, etc.*

14. *Preterea. Apostolus dicit, I Tim., VI, de Dea, quad solus habet immortalitatem.¹²Non igitur anima humana est immortalis*

15. *Sed dicitur quad immortalitatem, quam Deus habet de se, aliis communicat, ut Glossa ibidem dicit.¹³ Sed contra, quorum est esse contrarium, contrarius est et existendi modus. Sed esse anime contrariatur divino esse, sicut creatum increato. Ergo cum modus divini esse sit quad Deus est immortalis, modus anime est quad sit mortalis.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 1; 403a10-11.

⁹ esse add.

¹⁰ De om.

¹¹ ARISTOTLE, *De Caelo*, I, 12. Aristotle's *De Caelo* has not been published yet in *Aristoteles Latinus*.

¹² *I Timothy*, VI, 16.

¹³ *Glossa Ordinaria* [Paris, 7 vol., 1590] at I Tim, VI, 16 (vol. VI, col.725).

English Translation

Objection 11: As the Philosopher said in I De anima, if no operation of the soul can be carried without the body, it is impossible that the soul can be separated from the body. It is clear that no operation of the soul can take place without the body, as obvious in its vegetative and sensitive operations. Since the act of knowing cannot be carried out without the phantasms that cannot be produced without the senses, it follows that the soul cannot be separated from the body. Therefore, it corrupts when the body is corrupted.

Objection 12: Impossibility does not follow from possibility. Nevertheless, it is possible that the world has always existed since many think this way. If the world has always existed and the soul is immortal, then it necessarily follows that there would be infinity in act because there would be an infinite number of dead men whose souls remain if they are immortal. But the infinity in act is impossible. Therefore, since it is not impossible that the world is eternal as mentioned, it is impossible that the soul be immortal.

Objection 13: As the Philosopher proved in I De caelo et mundo, everything that begins existing in time also stops existing in time. The human soul began to exist in time because it was not eternal. Therefore, it would cease to be.

Objection 14: The Apostle said in I Tim 6:16, that only God is immortal. The human soul, therefore, is not immortal

Objection 15: It is said that the immortality that God has in Himself He communicates to others, as the Glossa said. But this is not so, because those realities whose being is contrary, also have a contrary manner of being. Being a soul is contrary to being divine, as the created is contrary to the uncreated. Therefore, since the divine manner is that God be immortal, the manner of the soul is to be mortal.

Latin

16. *Preterea. Infirmitas corporis impedit intellectum nostrum etiam quantum ad superiorem partem qua contemplatur divina, ne libere in actum procedat, sicut patet in freneticis et huiusmodi. Mors ergo corporis totaliter animam ad non esse deducit.*

17. *Preterea. Difinitio anime in communi est quad sit forma corporis physici organici, potentia vitam habentis,¹⁴ et sic oportet quad hec difinitio uniformiter cuilibet anime conveniat. Sed anima vegetabilis est hoc modo forma corporis quad, corrupto corpore, ipsa corrumpitur. Ergo et anima humana corrumpitur, corrupto corpore.*

18. *Preterea. In Libro De Causis dicitur quad omnis substantia que est ex contrariis, vel super contraria delata, est corruptibilis.¹⁵ Anima autem humana, quamvis non sit ex contrariis composita, est tamen super contraria delata; est enim forma corporis compositi ex contrariis. Ergo est corruptibilis.*

19. *Preterea. In homine est idem secundum substantiam anima sensibilis et rationalis. Si igitur anima rationalis erit incorruptibilis, et anima sensibilis erit incorruptibilis. Anima autem equi corruptibilis est. Cum igitur corruptibile et incorruptibile non unius generis sint, ut dicit Philosophus X Metaphysice,¹⁶ sequitur quad anima sensibilis in homine et equo non¹⁷ sunt unius generis. Ergo homo et equus non conveniunt in genere animalis, cum unumquodque ponatur¹⁸ in genere vel specie per suam formam. Hoc autem est manifeste falsum. Non igitur anima rationalis est incorruptibilis*

20. *Preterea. Augustinus dicit X De Civitate Dei quad Deus sic res quas condidit administrat ut proprios motus eas agere sinat.¹⁹ Proprius autem motus est anime et cuiuslibet creature tendere in nihil. Omnis autem creatura, quantum de se est, tendit in nihil. Ergo per divinam administrationem non prohibetur anima quin tendat²⁰ in nihilo (Non igitur est immortalis.*

¹⁴ ARISTOTLE, *De Anima*, II, 1; 412a29-30.

¹⁵ *Liber de Causis*, prop. 27.

¹⁶ ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, X, 10; 1058b26-29, in *Aristoteles Latinus*, XXV 2 (ed. G. VUILLEMIN- DIEM, Leyden, 1976) pp. 202-203.

¹⁷ non om.

¹⁸ ponatur} p'natur

¹⁹ *De Civitate Dei*, VII, c.30.

²⁰ tendat}****at.

English Translation

Objection 16: The sickness of the body hinders our intellect, including its superior part that contemplates the divine, to freely proceed to act as seen in crazy people. Therefore, the death of the body totally reduces the soul to nothing.

Objection 17: The general definition of the soul is: form of the physical organic body that has life in potency. It is convenient that this definition is applied in the same manner to any soul. But the vegetative soul is the form of a body such that when the body is corrupted, the soul likewise is corrupted. Therefore, the human soul must be corrupted also when the body is corrupted.

Objection 18: In *Liber de Causis*, it is said that all substances composed of contraries or subsisting in contraries are corruptible. The human soul, though not composed of contraries, subsists in contraries because it is the form of a body composed of contraries. Therefore, it is corruptible.

Objection 19: According to its nature, the sensitive soul and the rational soul are the same one in man. If the rational soul is incorruptible, then the sensitive soul must also be incorruptible. Since the soul of a horse is corruptible, and both the corruptible and the incorruptible do not belong to the same genus, as Aristotle said in X *Metaphysics*, it follows that the sensitive soul of man and that of the horse do not belong to the same genus. Therefore, man and horse do not belong to the genus animal, since each one is placed in a genus or in a species according to its form. But this, however, is obviously false. Therefore, the rational soul is not incorruptible.

Objection 20: St. Augustine said in *De Civitate Dei* that God takes care of things He created by allowing them to move on their own. What is proper to the soul and to any other creature is to move towards nothingness. That is why, by means of divine administration, there is no inconvenience in saying that the soul moves towards nothingness. That is why it is not immortal.

Latin

21. *Preterea. Cum anima sit principium operationum vite, oportet quad ex eius opere modus sue substantie demonstraretur. Non autem invenitur inter opera anime humane aliqua operatione substantie separate, quia etiam quantum ad ipsum intelligere magna apparet differentia inter animam et substantiam separatam, cum angelus multo aliter intelligat quam anima humana. Ergo anima non est substantia separabilis a corpore, deficit igitur deficiente corpore.*

22. *Preterea. Anima vitam a Deo recipit, sicut luna recipit lumen a sole. Sed, posito obstaculo inter lunam et solem, luna lumen suum amittit,²¹ ut patet in eclipsi lune, que fit per terre interpositionem. Cum igitur peccatum sit quoddam obstaculum quad ponitur inter animam et Deum, secundum illud Ysaie LIX: <Peccata vestra diviserunt inter vos et Deum vestrum >, ²²videtur quad anima per peccatum vita privetur et ita non sit immortalis.*

1. *Sed contra est quad dicit Philosophus in secundo De Anima, quad intellectus separatur ab aliis partibus anime sicut perpetuum a corruptibili²³*

2. *Preterea. Super illud Psalmi <Verumtamen in ymagine pertransit homo,>²⁴ dicit Cassiodorus quad anima non esset ymago Dei si mortis termino clauderetur.²⁵Est autem anima per suam naturam ymago Dei, quia naturaliter habet memoriam, intellegentiam, et voluntatem, secundum que in ipsa ymago Dei attenditur. Ergo naturaliter est immortalis.*

3. *Preterea. Cognoscentis et cogniti debet esse aliqua proportio. Sed anima humana cognoscit veritatem que est perpetua et incorruptibilis. Ergo et anima humana est incorruptibilis.*

²¹ amittit] ummittit.

²² Isaiah, LIX, 2.

²³ ARISTOTLE, *De Anima*, II, 2; 413b24-26.

²⁴ *Psalms*, XXXVIII, 7.

²⁵ Cf. CASSIODORUS, In Ps. XXXVIII, ed. M. ADRIAEN, C.C. Ser. Lat. 97, 1958, p. 357-358; but probably, CASSIODORUS, *De Anima*, cap. 4; ed. J.W. HALPORN, C.C. Ser. Lat 96, 1973, p. 542, or PL (Paris, 1844-1882) vol. 70, col. 1285 D.

English Translation

Objection 21: Since the soul is the principle of the operations of life, it is convenient that, starting from its action, its substance is demonstrated. But among the operations of the human soul there is nothing like those of the separate substances because even in the act of understanding there is a big difference between the soul and the separate substances, considering that the angels understand better than man. Therefore, the soul is not a substance separate from the body, and dies when the body dies

Objection 22: The soul receives life from God, as the moon receives light from the sun. By putting an obstacle between the moon and the sun, the moon loses its light, as shown during the eclipse of the moon that happens when the earth gets in between the moon and the sun. Therefore, given that sin is like an obstacle between the soul and God as said in Isaiah 59:2, Your sins are a separation between you and God, it seems that because of sin, the soul is deprived of life, and so it is not immortal.

On the contrary, the Philosopher said in 11 De anima that the intellect is separated from all the other parts of the soul as the incorruptible is separated from the corruptible

Besides, commenting on the Psalms that said ‘nevertheless, man can pass as image’, Cassiodorus affirmed that the soul would not be the image of God if at the moment of death it would cease to be. The soul by nature is an image of God because it has memory, intelligence and will, and in these, the image of God shines. That is why the soul is immortal by nature.

Moreover, the knower and the thing known must have a certain proportion between them. The human soul knows the truth as perpetual and incorruptible. That is why, the human soul is incorruptible.

Latin

Iuxta hec autem querebatur utrum aliqua creatura possit vel ad momentum subsistere si a Deo non conservaretur in esse. Et utrum Deus hoc alicui creature conferre possit, quod per principia quibus in esse constituitur conservetur in esse, subtracta Dei operatione. Et videtur quod sic quia artifex creatus, qui est minoris virtutis, potest hoc conferre suo artificiatio ut, sua operatione cessante, artificiatio illud permaneat, sicut cessante operatione edificatoris permanet domus. Multo igitur magis videtur quod Deus sue creature hoc possit conferre.

[47va] Solutia. Dicendum²⁶ quod in rerum ordine invenitur anima media intercorruptibiles et incorruptibiles creaturas; unde non irrationabiliter²⁷ de immortalitate ipsius dubitatur, ut enim dicitur in secundo Ethicorum, «Extremi litigant de media regione. »²⁸ Convenit enim cum substantiis incorruptibilibus in hoc quod est intelligens; et ex hoc videtur incorruptibilis esse. Convenit cum substantiis corruptibilibus ex hoc quod est corruptibilis corporis forma; ex quo videtur et ipsa corruptibilis esse.

Sciendum tamen quod, ad immortalitatem anima hostendendam, et si per quedam immortalitatis ipsius signa procedatur quasi quibusdam viis, una est tamen via demonstrans²⁹ immortalitatem ipsius, et propter quid immortalis sit hostendens.

Hostendit siquidem Plato animam esse immortalem ex hoc quod est movens seipsam. Cum enim in hoc videantur viventia a non viventibus differre, quod viventia movent seipsa, ut animalia, non viventia vero non moventur nisi ab aliis mota, in huiusmodi moveri vitam viventium constituerunt. Unde corpus, quod movetur ab anima, per hoc moritur quod ab anima separatur, que ipsum movet. Cum igitur anima sit primum movens seipsum, non potest a suo motore separari, cum nihil a seipso separetur. Unde ne[c] in ipsa potest motus vite deficere. Et ex hoc concludebat Plato animam esse³⁰ immortalem.—

²⁶ Solutia. Dicendum repetitur.

²⁷ irrationabiliter/irrationabiliter.

²⁸ ARISTOTLE, *Ethics*, II, 7; I 107b32, in *Aristoteles Latinus*, XXVI, 1-3; ed. R.A. GAUTHIER, Leyden-Brussels, 1973, fasciculus 4, p. 406.

²⁹ demonstrans/demonstrans

³⁰ MACROBIUS, *In Somnium Scipionis*, II, 13, 10; ed. I. WILLIS, Leipzig, 1963, II, 134.

English Translation

Along with these arguments, it is asked whether a creature could subsist for a moment if God would not conserve it in being, and whether God could give a creature this power: that because of its constitutive principles, it could maintain itself in being without the intervention of God. It seems that it is possible because an artisan who is of lesser power than God could work in such a way that even after his work the artifact remains, as when a house remains even when its construction is over. With more reason therefore, God could give this power to His creature.

Solution. In the order of things, the soul is found among the corruptible and the incorruptible creatures; that is why, it is not unreasonable to doubt about its immortality as mentioned in II Ethicorum: ‘the extremes dispute about the middle region’. It is like the incorruptible substances because it understands, and because of this, it would seem that it is incorruptible. It is like the corruptible substances insofar as it is the form of a corruptible body, and because of this, it would seem that it is also corruptible itself

However, for the demonstration of the immortality of the soul, even though there are some signs of its immortality that seem like ways, there is only one path that demonstrates its immortality and explains why it is immortal.

Plato demonstrated the immortality of soul starting from the fact that the soul moves itself. It is evident that living things are distinguished from non-living things because they move themselves, as for example, the animals, while the non-living do not move unless something moves them; because of this, it is said that the life of the living consists in self motion. The body, moved by the soul which moves itself, dies when it is separated from the soul. As the soul is its own prime mover, it cannot be separated from its own motor, as nothing could be separated from itself. That is why, it cannot in itself lack the vital motion. From this, Plato concluded that the soul is immortal.—

Latin

Sed cum movere seipsam, secundum Platonem, non tantum anime humane conveniat sed et brutorum, que localiter moventur ab anima, ex eadem ratione sequitur quod, sicut anime hominis, ita et brutorum sint immortales. Et hoc ipsum Plato ponebat. ³¹Quod quidem et fidei repugnat, ut patet in libro De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus, ³²et rationi contrariatur, cum nulla operatio in brutis appareat nisi que per corpus exercetur. Ratio etiam positionis, scilicet quod anima sit movens seipsam, ostenditur esse falsa ab Aristotele in primo De Anima.³³ Cum ergo immortalitas sit propria anime humane, oportet quod rationes immortalitatis sumantur ex eo quod est proprium anime humane inter ceteras animas, quod est intelligere.

1. *Ex hoc enim ipso quod anima humana intelligit necessaria et perpetua, sicut veritatem ipsam, et universalia et principia, et conclusiones scientiarum, manifeste apparet quod incorruptibilis sit. Intellectum enim est perfectio intelligentis. Oportet autem et perfectionem et perfectibile sub uno genere contineri. Unde si ea que sunt intellecta ab humana anima sunt incorruptibilia in quantum huiusmodi, oportet humanam animam in genere incorruptibilium esse. Nee est instantia quod oculus corruptibilis incorruptibile corpus solis aut lune potest videre. Non enim oculus cognoscit rem incorruptibilem secundum id quod incorruptibilis est, sed secundum aliquid quod est commune incorruptibilibus et corruptibilibus, scilicet secundum lumen. Anima autem humana intelligit incorruptibilia secundum id quod incorruptibilia sunt, in tantum quod etiam res corruptibiles non intelligit nisi secundum quod incorruptibiles sunt, dum universalia eorum intelligit. Ex quo evidenter apparet quod anima humana nata est perfici incorruptibilibus sicut propriis³⁴ perfectionibus; quod non esset, nisi ipsa incorruptibilis esset.*

English Translation

To move oneself, according to Plato, does not only pertain to the human soul but also to the animals because they are moved locally by their souls. Just like the human soul, the souls of the animals are also immortal. Plato sustained this. But this certainly is against the faith, as shown to us in the book De ecclesiasticis dogmatibus, and it contradicts reason since no operation is carried out by animals without the body. Aristotle, in the first book of De anima, demonstrated that the foundation of this argument is false, and that the soul moves itself. Since the immortality of the soul is proper to the human soul, it is necessary that the arguments to demonstrate its immortality be taken from that which is proper to the human soul among other souls, and this is its intellectual act.

Beginning from the fact that the soul knows the necessary and perpetual, like truth itself, the universals, the principles and conclusions of the sciences, it is obvious that it is incorruptible. As the known is the perfection of the knower, it is necessary that the perfection and the perfectible be found in the same genus. If the human soul knows the incorruptible as such, the soul should also be in the genus of the incorruptible. Even though the corruptible eye can see the sun and the moon that are incorruptible, yet the eye does not know these incorruptibles according to their incorruptibility, but rather according to what is common to both incorruptible and corruptible, which is light. The human soul, however, knows incorruptible realities insofar as they are incorruptible, just as it knows the corruptible realities insofar as they are incorruptible by understanding their universal aspects. From these it is evident that it is natural to the human soul to be perfected by the incorruptible as its proper perfection. Such would not happen if the soul were corruptible.

³¹ NEMESIUS, *De Natura Hominis*, 2, in the translation by Burgundio of Pisa; ed. G.

³² VERBEKE and J.R. MONCHO, Leyden, 1975, p. 45, line 92, top. 46, line 15. GENNADIUS, *Liber de Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus*, cap. 16-17, in P.L. , 58, col.984-985.

³³ ARISTOTLE, *De Anima*, I, 3; 405b3 1-407b25.

³⁴ propriis] propriiis

Latin

2. *Item. Ex hoc ipso quod anima humana est intelligens ostenditur quodammodo esse infinite virtutis, prout intelligit universale, quod est virtualiter infinitum, utpote sub quo infinita particularia considerari possunt. Virtus autem infinita non potest esse in substantia corruptibili, eo quod virtus substantie proportionatur et super principia eius fundatur. Unde relinquitur quod substantia anime intellective non possit esse corruptibilis.*

3. *Item. Unumquodque naturaliter esse desiderat et permanere in suo esse. Hoc autem desiderium non similiter omnibus convenit. Nam ea que cognitione carent desiderant esse et bonum non quasi ex seipsis, sed quasi ab alio inclinationem habentia in finem naturaliter desideratum. In hiis vero que cognitionem habent, desiderium sive appetitus consequitur cognitionem, sicut dirigentem. Unde oportet quod secundum modum cognitionis sit et desiderii modus. Animalia autem bruta, que tantum cognitionem sensitivam habent, non cognoscunt esse et bonum nisi ut hie et nunc. Unde nee aliter fertur eorum desiderium ad esse et bonum nisi ut hie et nunc. Anima vero humana intelligit esse et bonum absolute. Desiderium igitur eius naturale est ad esse et bonum, non ut hie vel nunc, sed ut simpliciter et per omne tempus. Cum igitur naturale desiderium inane³⁵ esse non possit, necessarium est quod anima humana immortalis sit.*

4. *Item. Ultimus finis anime humane esse videtur ut primam rerum causam cognoscat; quod patet ex hoc quod homines videntes effectus et ignorant³⁶ causas admirantur, et ipsa admiratio est movens ad inquirendum cause cognitionem, ut dicitur in principio Metaphysice.³⁷ Et sic non quiescit naturale desiderium quousque invenitur aliquis effectus habens causam. Cum igitur ultimus finis sit in quo totaliter naturale desiderium quietatur, manifestum est quod in cognitione prime cause est ultimus anime humane finis. Unde Joannes XVII: Hee est vita eterna etc.³⁸ Ad hunc autem finem anima humana non pervenit dum est corpori coniuncta, ut alibi probatum est.³⁹ Oportet ergo quod ipsa post corpus remaneat; aliter in vanum esse quasi non potens ad finem proprium pervenire.*

³⁵ inane] innane

³⁶ ignorant³⁶] ingnorantes

³⁷ ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, I, 2; 982bl 1-22, in *Aristoteles Latinus*, XXV, 1-1a; ed. G. VUILLEMIN-DIEM, Leyden, 1970, p.8.

³⁸ *John*, XVII, 3.

³⁹ For example, *De Veritate*, X, II; *Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, 47.

English Translation

From the human intellection itself, it is shown that the soul possesses an infinite capacity because it understands the universals that are of infinite capacity since infinite particulars can be considered under them. An infinite capacity cannot be given to a corruptible substance because the potencies of a substance are proportionate to its principles and are founded on them. That is why, the substance of an intellectual soul cannot be corruptible.

Each being naturally desires to be and to remain in existence. This desire, however, is not the same for all because those who lack knowledge desire their being and the good with a desire not as coming from within them but as received from another the inclination to the end naturally desired. In intelligent beings, the desire or appetite depends on knowledge that acts like a guide. It is necessary that the manner of desiring be in accordance to the manner of knowing. Since animals only have sensible knowledge, they know being and good limited by place and time. Their desire is directed only to the particular being and the particular good. The human soul, on the other hand, knows being and good in an absolute way and its natural desire, therefore, is directed to being and good not limited by place and time but absolutely, without temporal limitations. Therefore, since the natural desire is not in vain, it is necessary that the human soul be immortal.

Accordingly, the ultimate end of the human soul is to know the primary cause of reality. This is shown when men see effects and, not knowing the causes, wonder about them, and this leads them to look for the causes as mentioned in the beginning of *Metaphysics*. The natural desire does not rest so long as there is some effect having a cause. Since the ultimate end is that where the natural desire is quenched, it is manifest that the ultimate end of the human soul consists in knowing the first cause. That is why it is read in St. John chapter 17: ‘This is eternal life ...’. But the soul does not arrive at this end while it is united to the body as was proven in another place. It is therefore necessary that the soul itself remains after death because if not, the desire is in vain if the soul cannot achieve its own end.

Latin

Hec igitur rationes et his similes ex quibusdam immortalitatis signis sumuntur.

5. *Sed ratio ostendens propter quid anima sit immortalis oportet quod sumatur ex modo substantie ipsius. Substantia autem anime non cognoscitur nisi ex eius operatione. Inter operationes autem anime (remotis operationibus anime vegetabilis, ex quibus incorruptionis ratio sumi non potest) prima operatione et radix [47vb] aliarum est cognitio. Patet enim quod cognitionem sequitur appetitus, appetitum autem consequitur motus localis. Unde ex ratione cognitionis oportet investigare qua/is sit substantia anime.*

Est autem communis omnium conceptio quod cognitio fit per quandam similitudinem cognoscentis ad cognitum. Extimaverunt igitur antiqui naturales quod oporteret in anima cognoscente esse res cognititas secundum eundem modum existendi. Sed quia, cum anima cognoscat omnia, ex hoc sequi videbatur, quod oporteret animam ex omnibus esse compositam, quod videbatur absurdum, elegerunt hanc viam, ut dicerent animam compositam esse ex principiis omnium, ut sic⁴⁰ anima, per hoc quod est ex principiis, his que sunt ex principiis similis inveniretur.⁴¹ Et ideo, qua/em unusquisque eorum opinionem⁴² habuit de rerum principiis, talem et de anima sortitus est. Qui enim posuerunt ignem esse omnium rerum principium dixerunt animam esse ignem. Et similiter qui dixerunt aerem aut aquam vel etiam quatuor elementa, et cum his amicitiam et litem, similem opinionem de anima conceperunt.

Que quidem positio non fuit sufficiens, quia in principiis communibus materialibus non sunt omnia nisi in potentia. Per hoc ergo anima, ex huiusmodi principiis composita, non haberet similitudinem cum omnibus nisi in potentia. Unumquodque autem cognoscitur per hoc quod est actu, non per hoc quod est potentia, ut ostenditur in IX Methaphysice.⁴³ Unde talis modus similitudinis ad cognitionem non sufficit.

⁴⁰ sic] sit

⁴¹ ARISTOTLE, *De Anima*, I, 5; 409b23-410a2.

⁴² opinionem] oppinionem

⁴³ ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, IX, 9; 1051a29-30, in *Aristoteles Latinus*, XXV 2; ed. G. VUILLEMIN-DIEM, 1976, p. 181.

English Translation

These arguments therefore and similar others are considered as signs of immortality.

The argument to demonstrate the immortality of the soul must be taken from the nature of its own substance which can only be known through its operation. Among the operations of the soul, excluding the operations of the vegetative potency because incorruptibility cannot be demonstrated starting from them, the act of knowing is the first operation and root of all the rest, because appetite follows knowledge and local motion follows appetite. Therefore, it is right to investigate the substance of the soul starting from the act of knowing.

It is the common opinion of all that the act of knowing is carried out through a likeness between the knower and the object of knowledge. The ancient naturalists maintained that the object known is present in knowledge according to its natural way of existing. But since the soul knows all things, it follows that the soul is composed of all of them; and since this is absurd, they took the position saying that the soul is composed of the principles of things. Since the soul is composed of these principles, it would be similar to the realities that rise up from them. Hence, according to the opinion each one had about the principles, so would be the luck of the soul. Those who believed that fire is the principle of all things said that the soul was fire. In the same way, those who opined that the principle was air or water, or those who believed that it was the four elements including friendship and discord, thought that the soul was these things.

But this position is not sufficient because things are not in common material principles except in potency. For this reason, if the soul were composed of these principles, it would not have the likeness of things except only potentially. But a thing is known insofar as it is in act and not insofar as it is in potency, as demonstrated in *Metaphysics*. Therefore, this mode of likeness is not sufficient to explain the act of knowing.

Latin

Et, preterea, unumquodque cognoscitur magis per suam formam quam per materiam. Premissa autem similitudo erat secundum materiam tantum. Unde forma, potissimum ens in re, ignota⁴⁴ remaneret secundum hoc.

Et iterum, si hoc sufficeret anime ad habendam cognitionem de rebus, quod ex principiis rerum esset composita, non esset in potentia cognoscens res sed actu, cum cognitio conveniret ei ex compositione sue substantie. Hoc autem videmus esse falsum. Fit enim anima de potentia cognoscente actu cognoscens tam secundum sensum quam intellectum. Unde ostenditur quod magis anima sit cognitiva rerum ex eo quod sit in potentia ad omnia quam ex eo quod sit actu composita ex omnibus.

Non autem invenitur anima cognoscens⁴⁵ res ex quod sit in potentia ad cognita per illum modum quo materia corporalis est in potentia ad formas. Nam materia corporalis de potentia educitur in actum cum transmutatione et passione, secundum quod una potentia abicitur et alia introducitur. Hoc autem non apparet in anima, cum sit actu cognoscens; non enim aliquid ab ea abicitur, sed cognitionem tantum rei acquirit, et simul utriusque contrariorum, nam per unum aliud cognoscitur.

Unde relinquitur quod vis cognoscitiva sit contra omnem virtutem corpoream. Unde non sequitur ex compositione vel commixtione aliquorum eorum vel ex quacumque proprietate alicuius eorum, sed ab altiori principio dependet. Et licet nulla vis cognoscitiva proprietatem alicuius corporis consequatur, originaliter est tamen earum aliqua vis cognoscitiva in hoc quodammodo corporalis, quia corporeo utitur instrumento eo quod est actus corporei instrumenti, scilicet vis sensitiva, eo quod cognitio sensitiva est singularium que sunt hic et nunc. Et ideo receptio formarum huic cognitioni competentium potest fieri in corporeo instrumento, quod quidem per virtutem sensitivam sicut per suam formam cognoscere potest ea quorum suscipit formas. —

⁴⁴ ignota/ ingnota

⁴⁵ cognoscens/ congno-scens

English Translation

Moreover, whatever is known is known more by its form than by its matter, but that likeness is according to matter. Therefore, the form, which is the most perfect in things, could not be known according to this position.

However, if these material principles that compose the soul were enough for the soul to acquire the knowledge of things, the soul would not be in potency of knowing but in act, since knowledge would be made possible by the very composition of its substance. But we see that this is false. The soul passes from being a knower in potency to a knower in act, according to both the senses and the intellect. It is evident therefore that the soul is more capable of knowing things if it is in potency with respect to them than for being actually composed of them all.

The soul knows things not because it is in potency with respect to the object known in the same way that matter is in potency with respect to the form, considering that matter is moved from potency to act by means of change and passivity as when a form is expelled to give way to another. This does not take place in the soul when it is in the act of knowing, since the soul does not lose anything but rather acquires knowledge of a thing, and at the same time knows its contrary because one is known through the other.

It is clear that the cognitive potency is distinguished from the corporeal potency because the former does not proceed from the composition or mixture of some material principles or of any property of some of them but depends on another and higher principle. And even if no cognitive potency proceeds from some properties of the body, in its origin some cognitive potency is in some way corporeal insofar as it uses a corporeal instrument because it is the act of such an instrument. This is the sensitive knowing potency because sensitive knowledge considers singular things determined in space and time. For this reason, the reception of the forms proper to this knowledge can be done through a corporeal instrument, and thanks to the sensitive knowing potency which is its form, it can know the things whose forms it receives.—

Latin

Oportet autem, ex quo cognitio sensitiva fit per receptionem formarum absque aliarum abiectioe, ut organum quod recipit formas sensibilibus alicuius generis careat, in sui natura consideratum, omni forma illius generis ut omnes recipere possit, sicut pupilla caret omni colore; et sic de aliis sensuum instrumentis. Si igitur per intellectum sumus in potentia ad cognoscendas naturas omnium sensibilibus rerum, necessarium est id per quod completur intellectiva cognitio in nobis denudatum esse ab omni natura sensibilibus rerum. Nullum autem corpus est huiusmodi. Impossibile est igitur quod per aliquod organum corporeum intellectiva cognitio fiat in nobis.

Intellectus igitur est aliquid per se operans, id est, habens operationem que ab ipso tantum egreditur, non per aliquod organum corporale, sicut est in sensu. Nam visio non est operatio visus tantum, egrediens a visu tantum, sed ab oculo, qui componitur ex visu et pupilla. Unumquodque autem invenitur eo modo agere quo modo est. Intellectus igitur est aliquid per se subsistens, sicut est per se agens, quod non invenitur in corporalibus formis, que quidem per se non subsistunt, sed composita subsistunt et habent esse per formas. Quod autem est per se subsistens et incorporeum, de necessitate est incorruptibile. Non enim potest corrumpi per se, cum per se non moveatur. Nihil enim movetur nisi corpus, nec aliquid per se corrumpitur nisi moveatur, cum corruptio sit terminus motus. Quod autem est subsistens non corrumpitur per accidens. Relinquitur ergo, id quo homo intelligit omnino incorruptibile esse.

Sed, hoc supposito, dicunt quidam quod id, quo intelligit et est in potentia omnia, et dicitur possibilis intellectus, est quedam substantia separata, nec est aliquid anime que est forma corporis nostri.⁴⁶

English Translation

Since sensitive knowledge is achieved through the reception of the forms without the loss of any, it is necessary that the organ that receives the sensible forms of a genus according to its own nature should lack any form of this genus so that it can receive all, just like the pupils of the eyes that lack color, and the same happens with the other instruments of the senses. Therefore, if it is through the intellect that we are in potency to know the nature of all sensible things, it is necessary that, that by which intellectual knowledge is carried out in us, lacks all nature of sensible things. Since no body can be like this, it is impossible that intellectual knowledge takes place in us through a corporeal organ.

Therefore, the intellect is something that acts by itself and has its own operations that proceed from itself alone and not through some corporeal organ like in sensation. The act of seeing is not the operation by a single visual potency alone, but also by the eye, constituted by both the visual potency and the pupil. Since each one acts according to its nature, the intellect is in itself subsistent because it carries out its own operation. This does not happen to the material forms that by themselves do not subsist because what subsist is the composite that has being because of the form. Whatever is subsistent by itself and incorporeal is necessarily incorruptible because it cannot be corrupted in itself since in itself it does not move. In effect, nothing moves unless it is corporeal, and if there is no movement there is no corruption because corruption is the end of movement. Besides, whatever is subsistent is not corrupted by the corruption of another substance. Therefore, it is established that that through which man understands is totally incorruptible.

Considering all these, some say that that by means of which one knows and is in potency with respect to all things called the possible intellect is a separate substance and is not a part of the soul which is the substantial form of the body.

⁴⁶ AVERROES, *Commentarium Magnum in Aristotelis de Anima Libras*, III, 5 (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), lines 556-563.

Latin

Quod quidem esse non potest. Constat enim quod ipse homo est intelligens; non enim loqueremur de intellectu nisi per hoc quod percipimus nos intelligere. Impossibile est autem quod aliquid formaliter operetur aliquo quod est diversum ab eo in substantia. Oportet enim id quo aliquid operatur esse actu formam ipsius per quam est in actu, cum nihil agat nisi secundum quod est actu. Si igitur homo est intelligens, impossibile est quod id quo formaliter intelligit sit substantia separatim ab ipso existens. Nee sufficit ille modus continuationis quern quidam⁴⁷ adinvenierunt, dicentes fantasmata que sunt in nobis esse obiecta intellectus possibilis separati et per ea intellectus possibilis continuatur nobiscum.⁴⁸ Per hoc enim, quod obiectum alicuius potentie cognitive est in aliqua re, fit res illa cognoscibilis, non autem cognoscens; sicut paries non est videns, sed visus, ex hoc quod in⁴⁹ ipso est color. Si igitur fantasmata obiecta intellectus sunt, ut Philosophus dicit⁵⁰ ex hoc [48ra] quod fantasmata in nobis sint, intellectus non continuatur nobis sicut intelligentibus, sed sicut intellectis; quod est manifeste falsum. Relinquitur igitur quod id quo intelligitur, scilicet intellectus possibilis, sit aliquid anime vel nature nostre. Unde et Aristoteles, incipiens tractare de intellectu possibili, sic dicit: <De parte autem anime, qua cognoscit anima et sapit, etc.>⁵¹ Et post: <Dico autem intellectum, quo intelligit anima. >⁵² Unde patet quod intellectum possibilem dicit esse separatim per hoc quod habet operationem separatim a corpore, non propter hoc quod sit substantia quedam separata ab homine. Relinquitur igitur quod, si intellectus possibilis est incorruptibilis, ut dictum et ostensum est, quod anima humana sit omnino incorruptibilis.

⁴⁷ Ibid., lines 513-520.

⁴⁸ nobiscum] nobisscum

⁴⁹ in om.

⁵⁰ ARISTOTLE, *De Anima*, III, 7; 431a14-16.

⁵¹ ARISTOTLE, *De Anima*, III, 4; 429a10.

⁵² Ibid., 429 123-24

English Translation

But this cannot be. It is evident that it is man who understands because we do not talk about the intellect unless that through which we are conscious that we know. It is impossible that the operation of something is carried out formally through a means that is not part of its own substance. because it is necessary that, that through which someone carries out its operation be in act its own form that actualizes it, because nothing acts unless it is in act. Therefore, if it is man who knows, it is impossible that that by which he understands formally be a substance that exists separated from him. Aside from this, the connection that some have thought about is not enough because they said that the phantasms within us are the objects of the separate intellect and it is through them that this intellect is united to us. By the fact that the object of a knowing potency is in a thing, this thing becomes intelligible but not intelligent. For example, the fence does not see but rather is seen because it has color. Therefore, if the phantasms are the objects of the intellect, as the Philosopher said, by the fact that the phantasms are in us, the intellect is not united to us to make us understand but to be understood, and this is obviously false. There remains hence that that by which we know, the possible intellect, is something of the soul or of our nature. Aristotle, upon starting the treatise about the possible intellect, said: ‘Concerning the part of the soul by which we know, ‘ etc., and afterwards ‘I speak about the intellect by which the soul knows. ‘ From these two texts, it is obvious that Aristotle said that the possible intellect is separated because it carries out its operation independently from the body and not because it is a substance separated from man. It remains therefore that if the possible intellect is incorruptible as demonstrated before, the soul also is absolutely incorruptible.

Latin

1. *Ad primum igitur dicendum quod id quod per se generatur et corrumpitur est compositum. Forma autem non generatur neque corrumpitur nisi per accidens. Ex his autem que sunt per accidens, non variatur ratio rei. Unde non variatur ratio corruptibilis ex hoc quod forma per accidens corrumpatur vel est omnino incorruptibilis. Et tamen sciendum quod ens, et ea que sunt entis, non univoce sed analogice predicantur de rebus; et ideo in huiusmodi non oportet querere rationem omnino eandem.*

2. *Ad secundum dicendum quod anima per suam essentiam est forma hominis. Corrupto autem corpore, forma, ut formans in actu si non remaneat, remanet tamen forma ut formativam virtutem habens. Non enim corruptio hominis est nisi ex defectu corporis, quod fit indispositum ad hoc quod recipiat esse ab anima.*

3. *Ad tertium dicendum quod hoc, quod est esse ex nihilo, non est causa aliorum defectuum ut ex qua necessario consequantur, sed ex hoc quod est ex nihilo creatura apta est aliis defectibus, unaqueque tamen secundum modum sui generis et speciei. Per hoc autem quod creatura est ex nihilo et dicitur vertibilis in nihil si sibi relinquatur, non designatur potentia aliqua in creatura sed in creatore, cuius potentia creatura in esse producta est et conservatur in esse; et cuius potestati subest subtrahere operationem suam qua rem in esse conservat, cum hoc agat voluntarie. Corruptibile autem non dicitur aliquid, vel mutabile, nisi propter potentiam que in ipso est. Unde, cum in anima non sit potentia ad corruptionem, non potest dici corruptibilis ratione predicta.*

4. *Ad IIII dicendum quod, secundum Augustinum, in qualibet mutatione est aliqua mors et corruptio, cum aliquid abiciatur, sicut, cum mutatur ex albo in nigrum, corrumpitur album. Et ideo vera immortalitas est vera immutabilitas,⁵³ quam nulla creatura habet nisi per gratiam. Nam angelus et anime, que secundum substantiam incorruptibiles sunt ex natura sua, sunt secundum electionem vertibiles. Et, si immobiliter fundentur in bono, hoc non nisi per gratie donum.*

English Translation

Reply to objection 1: What is properly generated and corrupted is the composition. The form, however, is generated or corrupted accidentally. The essence of a thing is not changed by what is accidental. Hence, the nature of a corruptible thing does not vary by the fact that the form is corrupted accidentally or that it is totally incorruptible. Besides, being and what pertains to being are predicated to things not univocally but by analogy. In these cases, therefore, it is not right to look for a totally univocal reason.

Reply to objection 2: The soul by essence is the form of man. When the body is corrupted, even if the form does not continue informing in act, it continues to be a form having the capacity to inform. This is due to the fact that the corruption of man proceeds from the defect of the body that becomes indisposed to receive being from the soul.

Reply to objection 3: To proceed from nothing is not the cause by which defects come by but rather, by proceeding from nothing, creatures are apt to receive other defects, but each one receives them according to their generic and specific nature. Even if a creature proceeds from nothing and to nothing it will return if God abandons it, this does not point to any power in the creature but in God whose power produces the creature in being and conserves it in being; besides, God can remove His conserving action towards creatures because He does this voluntarily. But something is said to be corruptible or mutable according to the potencies that are in it; and therefore, since in the soul there is no potency to corruption, it cannot be called corruptible due to the reason mentioned above.

Reply to objection 4: According to St. Augustine, in any change there is somehow death and corruption. When something is lost, as when something white becomes black, the white is corrupted. True immortality is true immutability which no creatures possess unless by grace. The angel and the soul, though they are incorruptible substances by nature, they can be mutable by choice. And if such substances rest immutably in the good, this is so by the gift of grace.

⁵³ For example, St. Augustine, *Sermon* 212.

Latin

5. *Ad V dicendum quod compositio que est in anima non potest esse ratio corruptibilitatis. Non enim est composita ex materia et forma, sed ex quo est et quod est, sive ex esse et quod est, quod idem est, nam ipsum esse est quo unumquodque est. Hanc autem compositionem inveniri oportet in omnibus prefer Deum, in quo solo idem est sua substantia et suum esse. In substantiis autem immaterialibus sed creatis, aliud est esse et substantia rei. Sed substantia subsistens in esse est ipsa forma. In materialibus autem substantiis est compositum ex materia et forma; esse autem est per se consequens formam. Unde substantia materialis non amittit⁵⁴ esse nisi per hoc quod materia separatur a forma. Que quidem separatio nee intelligi potest in substantia que est forma tantum. Nihil enim potest a seipso separari. Unde impossibile est quod substantia que est forma tantum sit corruptibilis.*

6. *Ad VI dicendum quod, ubi non est contrarietas, non potest esse corruptio. Cum enim corruptio non sit nisi per separationem forme a materia, ut dictum est (separans autem formam a materia non potest esse nisi aliquid inducens formam; nihil enim agit intendens ad non esse sed ad aliquod esse et bonum),⁵⁵ sic relinquatur quod corruptio non fiat nisi per hoc quod, inducta una forma, excluditur alia, quod non esset si inter formas contrarietas non esset, nam ea que contrarietate carent se invicem non expellunt. Et ideo sola compositio que est contrariis causa est corruptibilitatis. Ratio autem in oppositum ex contrariis opinionibus procedebat. Nam Plato, qui dixit quod corpora celestia erant secundum naturam suam corruptibilia, ponit ea ex contrariis componi;⁵⁶ Aristoteles vero, qui ponit quod non sunt ex contrariis,⁵⁷ ex hoc ipso ostendit quod secundum suam naturam incorruptibilia sunt⁵⁸.*

⁵⁴ amittit] amittit.

⁵⁵ et add.

⁵⁶ *Timaeus*, 41AB; cf. *Timaeus a Calcidio translatus*; ed. J.H. WASZINK, 1962, 35.

⁵⁷ ARISTOTLE, *De Caelo*, I, 3; 270a13-23.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

English Translation

Reply to objection 5: The composition in the soul cannot be the reason for its corruptibility. The soul is not composed of matter and form but of what is and that by which something is, or of that which is and the act of being because it is the same act of being that makes each thing exist. It is necessary to find this composition in all beings except in God who is the only one whose substance and being are the same. In immaterial but created substances, one thing is the being and another thing is the substance. But the substance subsistent in being is its own form. In material substances, the composition is that of matter and form; being, however, follows after form. Therefore, the material substance does not lose being unless by the separation of matter and form. This separation cannot be applied to the substance which is only form because no one can be separated from itself. Hence, it is impossible that the substance which is only form be corruptible.

Reply to objection 6: Where there are no contraries, there could be no corruption, because there is no corruption unless it is by the separation of matter and form, as was already mentioned (that which separates the form from matter induces the other form, since nothing moves towards nothingness but towards being and the good). Corruption is this: once a form is introduced, the former is expelled, and this would not happen if the forms were not contrary forms because things that do not have contraries do not exclude each other mutually. Therefore, the cause of corruptibility is the composition of contraries. The contrary arguments came from different opinions. Plato, who said that the celestial bodies were corruptible according to their nature, affirmed that they were composed of contraries; but Aristotle, who affirmed that they were not composed of contraries, demonstrated that precisely for not being composed of contraries, they are incorruptible according to their nature.

Latin

7. *Ad VII dicendum quod, in his que sun! propter finem, oportet quod modus substantie sit secundum quod competit tali fini, sicut serra habet dentes ferreos et acutos ut secat, et non e converso. Unde, cum anima intellectiva facta sit propter beatitudinem, oportet quod sit talis in sua natura que possit beatitudinem adipisci. Hoc autem est incorruptibilem esse. Non igitur verum est quod secundum suam naturam sit corruptibilis et per relationem ad beatitudinem incorruptibilis.*

8. *Ad VIII dicendum quod in ultima mundi reformatione nihil incorruptibilitatem consequitur quod non habeat aliquem ordinem ad incorruptionem, propter quod in illo statu, in quo cessabit omnis corruptio, non remanebunt animalia neque plante neque mineralia corpora. Elementa vero manebunt quia sun! incorruptibilia secundum totum, etsi secundum partem corrumpantur.⁵⁹ Unde propter hoc homo lotus incorruptionem adipisci poterit, quia aliquid eius est incorruptibile per naturam, scilicet anima. Si autem anima esset corruptibilis, non remaneret aliquis ordo in humano corpore ad incorruptionem consequendam.*

9. *Ad IX dicendum quod, [48rb] si fiat intermissio illuminationis, non videtur esse idem lumen numero quod secundo est et quod primo fuit, sicut nee, in aliis formis, est eadem sanitas numero que recuperatur post convalescentiam et que habebatur ante infirmitatem, cum non sit unus numero motus qui ad utrumque terminatur, et eadem ratio sit numerationis⁶⁰ motus et terminationis⁶¹ motus. Si tamen detur quod idem sit numero lumen, non est eadem ratio de lumine et anima intellectiva, nam lumen non est aliquid subsistens ut est anima intellectiva, ut ostensum est⁶².*

English Translation

Reply to objection 7: In things made for a purpose, it is necessary that the manner of their substances corresponds to such a purpose, as for example: the saw has sharp teeth and is made of steel so that it can cut, and not the other way around. That is why, since the intellectual soul is created for happiness, it is convenient that it be, in its nature, of such manner that it can achieve happiness. This manner however is to be incorruptible. Therefore, it is not true that according to its nature it is corruptible and according to its relation with happiness, it is incorruptible.

Reply to objection 8: At the end of the world, what will only achieve incorruptibility is that which has some ordination towards incorruptibility because in the state whereby all corruption ceases, no animals, plants nor minerals remain. But the elements will remain because they are incorruptible according to the whole, even though they are corruptible according to the part. That is why, the whole man can achieve incorruptibility because something in him is, by nature, incorruptible, and this is the soul. If the soul were corruptible, there would be nothing in the human body ordained for the achievement of immortality.

Reply to objection 9: If the illumination is interrupted, it does not seem that the light would be the same one numerically before and after illumination. The same thing happens with the other forms. Numerically, it is not the same health that one has before getting sick and the one has after recovering from the sickness, because the movement that ends in one and the other is not the same numerically. This is the same reason for the numbering of motion and the end of motion since motion is numbered according to their end. Even if it is granted that it is the same light numerically, the notions of light and that of the intellectual soul do not coincide, since light is not something subsistent in itself unlike the intellectual soul as has just been demonstrated.

⁵⁹ ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Quaestio Disputata de Potentia*, V, 9, esp. ad

9.

⁶⁰ numerationis/numerationi.

⁶¹ terminationis/terminationes.

⁶² Obj 10.

Latin

10. *Ad X dicendum quod, si per hoc aliquid intelligatur individuum completum in aliqua specie, anima non est hoc aliquid, sicut nee perfecta, secundum ponentes naturam speciei humane non esse animam tantum, sed aliquid ex anima et corpore compositum. Secus autem esset secundum opinionem Platonis, qui posuit quod homo est anima utens corpore et non aliquid ex anima et corpore compositum.*⁶³ *Si autem per hoc aliquid intelligatur quodcumque subsistens, sic nihil prohibet animam intellectivam hoc aliquid dici.*

11. *Ad XI dicendum quod dupliciter aliqua vis cognoscitiva indiget corpore: uno modo sicut instrumento, ut visus indiget pupilla; alio modo sicut obiecto representante obiectum, sicut visus indiget lapide vel speculo. Primo modo, intellectus non indiget corpore, ut ostensum est,*⁶⁴ *et ex hoc habitum est quod sit per se agens et subsistens et incorruptibilis. Secundo autem modo, indiget corpore, nam fantasmata que sunt intellectus obiecta in organis corporeis sunt, et hoc non repugnat incorruptioni anime.*

12. *Ad XII dicendum quod ponentes eternitatem mundi et incorruptibilem anime tripliciter obiectionem hanc evaserunt, quidam dicentes quod id quod est perfectum et incorruptibile, de pertinentibus ad animam, est unum tantum*⁶⁵ *omnium hominum, scilicet intellectus possibilis vel agens.*⁶⁶ *Quidam vero, ponentes multitudinem incorruptibilium animarum cum eternitate mundi, ne cogerentur ponere infinitum in actu, posuerunt revolutiones animarum ita quod anime, que prius fuerant a corporibus absolute, post aliqua secula iterum redirent ad corrora. Et hec fuit positio Platoniorum.*⁶⁷ —

English Translation

Reply to objection 10: If by substance is understood the complete individual in its species, the soul is not a substance, neither is it perfect, according to the defenders of the doctrine that the nature of the human species is not the soul alone but rather the composition of both body and soul. If it were not for this, it would fall into the opinion of Plato who affirmed that man is a soul using a body and not something composed of body and soul. Nevertheless, if by substance is meant that which is subsistent, there is no inconvenience in affirming that the intellectual soul is a definite thing.

Reply to objection 11: The intellectual faculty can require the body in two ways: one, as an instrument, just like the sense of sight that uses the pupils of the eyes; two, as an object that represents the object, just like when the sense of sight uses a stone or a mirror. Insofar as the first way is concerned, the intellect does not need the body as was already demonstrated and proven: the intellect acts on its own, it is subsistent and incorruptible. Insofar as the second way is concerned, it needs the body because the phantasms are the objects of the intellect and are in corporeal organs, but this does not go against the incorruptibility of the soul.

Reply to objection 12: The authors of the eternity of the world and the incorruptibility of the soul avoided the dilemma in three ways. Some said that the perpetual and incorruptible in the soul is only one for all men, and this is the possible or the agent intellect. Others put a multitude of incorruptible souls and an eternal world, and so that they would not be obliged to defend the infinite in act, they defended the reincarnation of souls, that is, after several centuries of having been separated from the body, the souls would return. This was the opinion of the Platonists. —

⁶³ NEMESIUS, *De Natura Hominis*, I, ed.cit., p. 5, lines 25-32; 3, p. 51, lines 32 to 52, line 1

⁶⁴ In solutione.

⁶⁵ unum add.

⁶⁶ AVERROES, *Commentarium Magnum in Aristotelis de Anima Libras*, III, 20 (Cambridge, Mass., 1953) lines 213-219.

⁶⁷ NEMESIUS, *De Natura Hominis*, 2, in the translation by Burgundio of Pisa; ed.cit., p. 45, line 92 top. 46, line 15. Also St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, X, 30.

Latin

Alii vero ut Avicenna et Algazel⁶⁸ dixerunt quad non est inconveniens ponere infinitum in actu, non per se sed per accidens. Dicitur enim esse per se infinitum in illis quorum multitudo est secundum aliquem ordinem unius ab altero dependentis (sicut cum manus movet baculum, baculus lapidem), quad non potest in infinitum procedere, neque in sursum neque in deorsum, quia oporteret quod aliquid dependeret ab infinitis et numquam eius generatio compleretur. Per accidens autem infinitum est in illis quorum multitudo ad invicem ordinem non habet, sicut quod unus faber. Non enim differt per quot taliter operetur, et utrum per finitos vel infinitos, si infinito tempore duraret, cum unus martellus ab altero non dependeat⁶⁹. Et ita dicunt quod, cum una anima non dependeant ab altera, quod nihil prohibet ponere animas infinitas in actu.⁷⁰ Fides autem catholica, que mundum non ponit eternum, ab his angustiis liberatur.

13. *Ad XIII dicendum quad Philosophus probat, in primo De⁷¹ Celo et Mundo, id quod est incorruptibile esse etiam ingenitum per hoc quad id est incorruptibile habet virtutem ut sit tempore infinito, et sic non potest finiri tempus ei ex parte principii, ut ante non fuerit.⁷² Ex quo datur intelligi quod id quod est incorruptibile non habet propter defectum sue virtutis quad fuerit ab hoc tempore et non ante. Unde anime, que sunt incorruptibiles, quad non fuerit semper accidit eis quia non semper acceperunt virtutem qua esset. Hae virtute accepta, semper sunt; nee in eis virtus huiusmodi diminuitur per temporis diurnitatem.*

14. *Ad XIII dicendum quod immortalitas que soli Dea competit est omnimoda immutabilitas, que quidem Deo ex seipso competit, aliis autem divino munere.*

⁶⁸ Algazel]Algagzel.

⁶⁹ AVICENNA, *Metaphysics*, Part I, tract. I, div. 6; ed. J.T. Muckle, Toronto, 1933, 40-41.

⁷⁰ ALGAZEL, *ibid.* I have not been able to find this teaching in any of Avicenna's work available to Aquinas.

⁷¹ De om.

⁷² ARISTOTLE, *De Caelo*, I, 12; 28367-22.

English Translation

Others, like Avicenna and Algazel, said that there is no inconvenience in the existence of an infinite in act, even though not per se but per accidens. It is said that the infinite in act per se are those things that keep a mutual ordination of dependence, like when a hand moves the staff and the staff moves the stone, a dependence that cannot proceed infinitely neither in the descending order nor in the ascending order because it would be necessary that something would depend on infinite things, and therefore its generation would never end. It is said that there is an infinite per accidens in those things that do not have a mutual ordination, like when an artisan works with many hammers and he changes them when one is broken. His work would not vary according to the number of hammers, be it finite or infinite, if he works for an infinite time, because one hammer does not depend on another. And since the soul does not depend on another, there is no problem in affirming that there are infinite souls in act. However, the Catholic Faith maintains that the world is not eternal, and thanks to this, all the problems end.

Reply to objection 13: The Philosopher proved in I De caelo et mundo that what is incorruptible and not begotten, precisely for being incorruptible, has the potency to exist forever. It is also not limited by time insofar as its beginning is concerned. It is as if it has never begun to exist. It is understood that for the incorruptible, the limitation in the time of origin is not due to the defect of its potency. Hence, the incorruptible souls have not always existed because they did not receive from all eternity the potency to exist; but the moment they received this potency, they would exist forever, without their potency getting diminished by the long period of time.

Reply to objection 14: The immortality that pertains only to God is absolute immutability. Such immutability certainly belongs to God by his nature while it may belong to others by divine gift.

Latin

15. *Ad XV dicendum quod effectus non contrariatur cause; unde esse creature non contrarietur divino esse. Oppositio autem creati et increati non est secundum contrarietatem, sed secundum affirmationem et negationem.*

16. *Ad XVI dicendum quod infirmitas corporis impendit operationem intellectus per accidens, in quantum impediuntur virtutes inferiores a quibus intellectus accipit, scilicet ymaginative, cogitativa, et memorativa. Corrupto autem totaliter corpore, iam anima accipit modum essendi quo sunt substantie separate. Et ideo ad eundem modum pertingunt intelligendi, scilicet ut intelligant per influxum superioris intellectus, scilicet divini, cuius signum est quod etiam dum est in corpore, quando alienatur a sensibus, percipit aliquid abundantius ex influenza superioris intellectus, ut possit futura providere.*

17. *Ad XVII dicendum quod, sicut supra dictum est,⁷³ forma non est corruptibilis nisi per accidens. Unde ex hoc quod anima vegetabilis est corruptibilis, non autem rationalis, non sequitur quod equivoce dicatur forma utraque. Nee tamen oportet quod omnino univoce, nam forma et actus et huiusmodi sunt de hiis que analogice predicantur de diversis.*

18. *Ad XVIII dicendum quod forma intelligitur super contraria delata que indiget corpore ex contrariis composito ad sustentationem sui esse. Unde per hoc ostenditur anima humana incorruptibilis, quia neque ex contrariis est composita, et sic non est corruptibilis per se; neque super contraria delata, et sic non est corruptibilis per accidens.*

19. *Ad XVIII dicendum quod forme et quecumque partes non sunt in specie vel in genere directe, sed per reductionem, sicut principia. Unde anima humana et anima equi neque sunt unius speciei aut generis, neque diversorum, sed homo et equus in uno genere sunt. Si autem anime humane deputaretur genus secundum se, esset in alio genere ab eo in quo esset anima equi*

⁷³ Ad primum.

English Translation

Reply to objection 15: The effect is not contrary to the cause. That is why, the being of the creature is not contrary to the divine being. Nevertheless, the created and the uncreated are opposed, but not insofar as they are contraries but rather according to affirmation and negation.

Reply to objection 16: The sickness of the body hinders the intellectual operations only accidentally insofar as it puts obstacles to the inferior powers that the intellect needs: the imagination, the cogitative sense and the memory. Nevertheless, the total corruption of the body makes the soul acquire the manner of being and the way of understanding of the separated substances, including the realization of the intellectual acts under the influence of the superior intellect, the Divine Intellect. A sign of this fact is what happens when a living person, without the help of his senses, perceives many things when influenced by the superior intellect, as for example, he can foresee the future.

Reply to objection 17: The form is not corruptible unless in an accidental manner. The fact that the vegetative soul is corruptible but not the rational soul does not mean that form is predicated to them equivocally or univocally, because form and act of being are predicated to different realities by analogy.

Reply to objection 18: By form subsisting in contraries is understood that which needs the body composed of contraries in order to subsist in being. From this it is obvious that the soul is incorruptible because it is not composed of contraries and, therefore, it is not corruptible in itself; neither does it subsist in contraries and, because of this, it is not corruptible by the corruption of another.

Reply to objection 19: Forms or any of the parts of species or genus do not belong directly to any species or genus except by reduction, just like the principles. Hence, the human soul and the soul of a horse neither belong to the same genus or species nor to different genus or species, but man and horse belong to the same genus. However, if the genus of the human soul per se is asked for, its genus and that of the horse 's would be different.

Latin

20. *Ad XX dicendum quod Deus non sic proprios motus creaturas agere sinit quod sua operatio excludatur: alias eas non regeret. Eius autem operatione res conservantur in esse, et ideo res non propter hoc ad non esse tendunt. Nee tamen dicendum est quod tendere in non esse sit motus proprius creature, cum omnis motus creature sit ad esse et ad bonum. Sed est quedam metaphorica locutio cum dicitur quod creatura de se tendit in non esse quia scilicet, si a Deo sibi desereretur, esse desineret.*

21. *Ad XXI dicendum quod anima habet aliquem actum secundum genus substantie separate, scilicet intelligere, licet non secundum eundem modum intelligat. Et ex hoc ostenditur quod est separabilis, sed non eodem modo est quo sunt substantie separate.*

22. *Ad XXII dicendum quod peccatum est obstaculum inter animam et Deum impediens influentiam gratie, non autem influentiam essentialem.*

Ad questiones ultimo propositas dicendum est quod, cum remota causa tollatur effectus, oportet quod remota operatione divina tollatur esse rerum quod ex ipsa causatur. Non enim operatio Dei est tantum causa quod res fiant, sicut hedificator est causa domus, sed est causa quod sint res. Et, quia Deus non potest alicui creature conferre ut non sit eius effectus, non potest ei conferre quod absque eius operatione conservetur in esse. Explicit.⁷⁴

English Translation

Reply to objection 20: God allows that creatures move on their own but without excluding them from His own divine operation because if not, He would not be governing them. The operation of God is to conserve things in their being and this is not because creatures move towards nothingness. Besides, it is not correct to say that to move towards nothingness is the movement proper to creatures, given the fact that all movements of creatures are towards being and the good. What is said about the tendency of creatures towards nothingness if God abandons them and therefore they would cease to exist, is only a metaphorical way of speaking.

Reply to objection 21: The soul has an act -the act of understanding- that coincides in general with those of the separate substances, even though it is different according to species. And from this act it is shown that it is separable, but not in the same way as the separate substances.

Reply to objection 22: Sin is an obstacle between the soul and God that impedes the influence of grace but not the influence of nature.

With respect to what was asked last, it is necessary to point out that just like when the cause is removed, the effect also is removed, the being of things ceases when the divine action which caused it ceases. The action of God is not so much the cause for things to be made, like an architect who constructs a building, but is rather the cause for things to exist. And since God cannot confer this act to any creature that is not his effect, so neither can He give it the power to conserve itself without His action. End.

⁷⁴ I would like to thank Professor Walter Principe, C.S.B., of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, for invaluable assistance with paleographical problems.

A Foucauldian Analysis of Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020: Toward Panoptic Country

Devin A. Calidayan

devcalidayan@gmail.com

Introduction

A collegiate dictionary defines ‘discipline’ as ‘punishment’¹. It is the employment of pain or uneasiness to correct misdeeds or non-observance to the law. Any act that defies the established rule is punishable thereby. Grave misconduct is punished according to the penal code of a state. A democratic state is empowered by its citizens to render the corresponding punishment to the criminals. Heinous crimes against the government, other people, institutions, etc. should be prevented at all costs to save lives and resources. One of the heinous crimes against humanity and the state is terrorism.

Terrorism is the deliberate use of violence to create an environment of fear in a society to achieve a specific political goal. It has been perpetrated by right-wing and left-wing political organizations, nationalistic and religious groups, revolutionaries, and even government agencies including militaries, intelligence services, and police.²

It has been a global problem that needs to be eradicated.

Under the tenure of Rodrigo Duterte, the fight against terrorism has been one of the government’s efforts to establish peace and order in the country. From the year 2000 to 2012, the Mindanao islands suffered 25 bombings and grenade attacks. The extremist groups namely, the Abu Sanyaf Group, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and Jemaah Islamiyah, claimed the bombings leaving at least 300 deaths and 779 wounded in 12 years. During Duterte’s term, 14 were killed while 60 were injured in the 2016 Davao night market bombing. In the

¹ “Discipline Definition & Meaning,” Merriam-Webster (Merriam-Webster), accessed March 16, 2022, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/discipline>.

² Cf. John Philip Jenkins. “Terrorism.” Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc., July 27, 2020. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/terrorism>.

city of Lamitan in Basilan, a foreign suicide bomber killed at least 10 people in 2018. On January 27, 2019, an Indonesian couple blasted the Cathedral of Our Lady of Mount Carmel killing at least 23 people and injuring more than 100 people.

On July 3, 2020, former president Duterte signed the controversial Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 to repeal the Human Security Act of 2007. The Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 (ATA 2020) puts vague definitions of what classifies terrorism. This has impelled human rights advocates and groups to challenge the constitutionality of the law, warning that it could be used by the government to silence its critics by tagging them as terrorists and/or communists. The ATA 2020 has been debated since it was posted as a bill. Human rights groups, both local and international, have been verbal about this issue. The overbroad power given to the government was put into question. This research will focus on sections 4, 16, and 32 of the ATA 2020 relevant to the study. The red tagging is included in this research. It is not included in ATA 2020 but is directly related thereto. The researcher finds this phenomenon a relevant topic in his study. This study will briefly explain the background thereof.

A French philosopher, Michel Foucault, published in 1978 a book that provides a genealogy of the development of the prison system in modern society. He lays down his analysis of the disciplinary power. It is a power that aims to manipulate the behavior of those subject to power through which the individual becomes the bearer of power. Foucault gives three technologies of power: (a) hierarchical observation, (b) normalizing judgment, and (c) examination. The disciplinary power yields a disciplinary institution or a panopticon.

The researcher, then, will present relevant news articles and experts’ statements on the matter to support his arguments. This research seeks to study the relevance of the critical analysis of Michel Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* to the current situation of the Philippines under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020. The author desires to view this societal issue through the lens of Michel Foucault’s socio-political philosophy with his masterpiece, *Discipline and Punish*.

This might be a great opportunity to apply philosophy to a real-life event. This study might also help the Filipino people understand deeply and/or have a different perspective concerning the said law.

Hierarchical Observation

In his book, *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault sees hierarchical observation as a technology of power that coerces through observation. It is “an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power, and in which, conversely, the means of coercion make those on whom they are applied clearly visible.”³

The architecture of disciplinary institutions, such as schools, hospitals, and monasteries, is designed to make observation effective and efficient. Foucault writes:

... an architecture that is no longer built simply to be seen (as with the ostentation of palaces), or to observe the external space (cf. the geometry of fortresses), but to permit an internal, articulated, and detailed control to render visible those who are inside it; in more general terms, an architecture that would operate to transform individuals: to act on those it shelters, to provide a hold on their conduct, to carry the effects of power right to them, to make it possible to know them, to alter them. Stones can make people docile and knowable.⁴

Foucault emphasizes that the perfect way of imposing discipline is through an apparatus that “would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly.”⁵ He further elaborates:

A central point would be both the source of light illuminating everything, and a locus of convergence for everything that must be known: a perfect eye that nothing would escape and a center towards which all gazes would be turned. This is what Ledoux had imagined when he built *Arc-et-Senans*; all the buildings were to be arranged in a circle, opening on the inside, at the center of which a high construction was to house the administrative functions of management, the policing functions of surveillance, the economic functions of control and checking, the religious functions of encouraging obedience and work; from here all orders would come, all activities would be recorded, all offenses perceived and judged, and this would be done immediately with no other aid than an exact geometry. Among all the reasons for the prestige that was accorded in the second half of the eighteenth century to circular architecture, one must not doubt include the fact that it expressed a certain political utopia.⁶

The disciplinary gaze does not only observe the process of manufacturing or the work. It does not focus only on the production or the manufacturing inside an institution. More importantly, the disciplinary gaze gives attention to the activity of the bodies, their competence, the way they act according to their tasks, their alertness, and present mindedness, their passion and perseverance, their attitude, etc. The workers would, most likely, do better in their jobs to gain more profit.

Through hierarchical observation, discipline paves the way to the operation of a relational power between the head and the individuals. The techniques of surveillance make it possible to control the body. The body will operate not through violence or force but by mere visibility.

Normalizing judgement

Normalizing judgment is a technology of power that brings five distinct operations. Foucault gives quite an elaboration and example for each operation. The first salient characteristic of normalizing judgment states that “at the heart of all disciplinary systems, functions

³ Michel Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. New York: Vintage Books, 1995. pp 170-171.

⁴ Ibid. p 172.

⁵ Ibid. p 173.

⁶ Ibid. pp 173-174.

a small penal mechanism.”⁷ A slight aberration from the established norm or deemed as correct behavior is subject to punishment.

The second operation is remarkably similar to the first. They both speak of punishment. The disparity between the first and the second is that the first refers to the minor offense, while the second to non-observance. Foucault states that the “whole indefinite domain of non-conforming is punishable.”⁸ Foucault did not explain the third operation as comprehensively as the other four. He puts it precisely as “disciplinary punishment ... must therefore be essentially corrective.”⁹ The third operation speaks of one necessary essence of disciplinary punishment. The fourth distinct operation is interrelated with the third. Foucault emphasizes punishment as a half element of a double system of gratification-punishment.

The last and most important operation of normalizing judgment is integral to the previous operations. It is the distribution of ranks. While it aims to fill the gaps and hierarchize qualities, skills, and aptitude, it also serves as punishment and reward. Discipline rewards those who excel in their tasks by elevating them to a higher rank or place but also punishes the otherwise by way of relegating them to a lower rank or place. “Rank is understood as the place occupied in this hierarchy is used as a form [of] punishment or reward.”¹⁰

The goal, therefore, of normalizing power is homogeneity. To be homogeneous is to be normal. Outside the range thereof is labeled as “abnormal”. “Discipline through imposing precise and detailed norms (normalization) is quite different from the older system of judicial punishment, which merely judges each action as allowed by the law or not allowed by the law”¹¹

⁷ Ibid. p 175.

⁸ Ibid. p 178.

⁹ Ibid. p 179.

¹⁰ Dianna Taylor, and Marcelo Hoffman. Essay in Michel Foucault: Key Concepts. London: Routledge, 2014. p 40.

¹¹ Gary Gutting and Johanna Oksala. “Michel Foucault.” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Stanford University, May 22, 2018. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/foucault/>.

Examination

Third and last Foucault’s technology of power is the combination of the previous techniques. The hierarchical gaze is coercion employing observation without using force. The subjects will behave accordingly only by the knowledge of being seen. The normalizing judgment, on the other hand, is the establishment of norms that one must follow. It is coercion employing the double system of gratification-punishment. It homogenizes or, in other words, normalizes. The third disciplinary power is the “examination”. Foucault simply defines it as a “normalizing gaze”. he is quite straightforward in explaining this in his book. He writes:

The examination combines the techniques of an observing hierarchy and those of a normalizing judgment. It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, classify, and punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them ... In it are combined the ceremony of power and the form of the experiment, the deployment of force, and the establishment of truth. At the heart of the procedures of discipline, it manifests the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected.¹²

Over time, power is normally seen from the one who exercises it. The ones upon whom this power is being exercised remain in the shade. In the examination, however, disciplinary power is deployed through its invisibility, while compulsory visibility is imposed on its subjects. The subjects are the ones who are seen.

Furthermore, the examination produces a thorough archive of the individual consisting of the actions and other important details thereof. This feature somehow reduces the individual into a corpus of knowledge. The data taken from the individual is piled in a written document. It constitutes “individuality through an administrative form of writing that leaves behind a dense layer of documents”¹³

¹² Foucault. Discipline and Punish. p 184.

¹³ Hoffman. Essay in Michel Foucault: Key Concepts. p 41.

Lastly, examination, “surrounded by all its documentary techniques, makes each individual a ‘case’: a case which at one and the same time constitutes an object for a branch of knowledge and a hold for a branch of power.”¹⁴ Foucault argues here that this technique of discipline, after the documentation of the subject, makes the individual - in his very individuality - describable and measurable case, and comparable with others and so, he has to be trained, corrected, rectified, normalized, classified, excluded, etc.¹⁵

Panopticism

Foucault “understands the Panopticon as an ideal or perfect model of the surveillance relations involved in modern technologies of penal power.”¹⁶ He argues:

Hence the major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers. To achieve this, it is at once too much and too little that the prisoner should be constantly observed by an inspector: too little, for what matters is that he knows himself to be observed; too much, because he has no need in fact of being so. Given this, Bentham laid down the principle that power should be visible and unverifiable. Visible: the inmate will constantly have before his eyes the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon. Unverifiable: the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at any one moment; but he must be sure that he may always be so. In order to make the presence or absence of the inspector unverifiable, so

¹⁴ Foucault. *Discipline and Punish*. p 190.

¹⁵ Cf. *Ibid*.

¹⁶ Nick Crossley. “The Politics of the Gaze: Between Foucault and Merleau-Ponty.” *Human Studies* 16, no. 4 (1993): <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf01323025>. p. 402.

that the prisoners, in their cells, cannot even see a shadow...¹⁷

In this sense, power functions as “visible yet unverifiable”. The prisoner experiences a feeling of constant surveillance. Panoptic power is the effect accomplished “through the [realization] that one is subjected to the gaze.”¹⁸ When panoptic power is achieved, it is important to stress that power functions automatically; the prisoners have become the vehicle of power relations. The panopticon intends to situate the prisoners as observable subjects and the bearers of the power effect by way of their awareness or knowledge of possible surveillance. Foucault argues that modern society is a “disciplinary society”¹⁹. The effect of power is embedded in the “most minute and apparently inconsequential aspects of social life ... The effects of disciplinary power are not exercised from a single vantage point, but are mobile, multivalent and internal to the very fabric of daily life.”²⁰ Foucault illustrates in the Panopticon chapter that power is intended to spread throughout society.

The Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020

The Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 (ATA 2020) is composed of 58 sections. It contains overbroad and contradicting provisions. A group of researchers writes:

... the new law allows law enforcement agents to arrest without a warrant and detain anyone suspected of engaging in terrorist activity for up to 14 days, and may be extended by a maximum of 10 days. Apart from increasing the number of days of arrest and detention without a judicial warrant, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 also imposes no liabilities for law enforcement agencies if the suspicion turns out to be false. The law also provides for contradicting provisions on extraordinary rendition—Section 3 allows it “without framing formal charges, trial or approval

¹⁷ Foucault. *Discipline and Punish*. p 201.

¹⁸ Crossley. “The Politics of the Gaze: Between Foucault and Merleau-Ponty.” p. 403.

¹⁹ Foucault. *Discipline and Punish*. p 217.

²⁰ Lisa Downing. “Works: Crime and Punishment.” *Essay in The Cambridge Introduction to Michel Foucault*, p 83. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

of the court”, but Section 48 prohibits it without providing for penalties for the violation thereof. More importantly, Section 4 of the law fails to state what terrorism is and who is guilty of terrorism in clear and precise terms. Instead, the law provides for an ambiguous and overbroad definition of what qualifies as terrorism, making it susceptible to various interpretations, and to governmental abuse of authority especially when safeguards are reduced. As retired Associate Justice Vicente V. Mendoza puts it, “a statute whose terms are so vague that persons of common understanding must necessarily guess at its meaning or differ as to its application offends due process. And a statute that sweeps unnecessarily broadly both prohibited and protected conduct is overbroad and likewise offends due process.”²¹

According to Phil Robertson, the deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch, the provisions of the overbroad definition of terrorism can subject mere suspects. He said, “The Anti-Terrorism Act is a human rights disaster in the making”. Robertson adds, “The law will open the door to arbitrary arrests and long prison sentences for people or representatives of organizations that have displeased the president.”²² It has also posed fear to the journalists for exercising their mandate to checks and balances.

²¹ Ronald U. Mendoza, Rommel Jude G. Ong, Dion Lorenz L. Romano, and Bernadette Chloe P. Torno. “Counterterrorism in the Philippines.” Terrorism Research Initiative, 2021, 15, no. 1 (February 2021).

²² Julie McCarthy. “Why Rights Groups Worry about the Philippines’ New Anti- Terrorism Law.” NPR. NPR, July 20, 2020. <https://www.npr.org/2020/07/21/893019057/whyrighs-groups-worry-about-the-philippines-new-anti-terrorism-law>.

Section 4 of ATA 2020

The fourth section of the ATA 2020 states:

Sec. 4. Terrorism - Subject to Section 49 of this Act, terrorism is committed by any person who, within or outside the Philippines, regardless of the state of execution:

- (a) Engages in acts intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to any person, or endangers a person’s life;
- (b) engage in acts intended to cause extensive damage or destruction to a government or public facility, public place, or private property;
- (c) engage in acts intended to cause extensive interference with, damage, or destruction to critical infrastructure;
- (d) develop, manufacture, possess, acquire, transport, supply, or use weapons explosives or of biological, nuclear, radiological or chemical weapons; and
- (e) release of dangerous substances, or causing fire, floods, or explosions.

When the purpose of such act, by its by nature and context, is to intimidate the general public or a segment thereof, create an atmosphere or spread a message of fear, to provoke or influence by intimidation the government or any international organization, or seriously destabilize or destroy the fundamental political, economic, or social structures of the country, or create a public emergency or seriously undermine public safety, shall be guilty of committing terrorism and shall suffer the penalty of life imprisonment without the benefit of parole and the benefits of Republic Act No. 10592, otherwise known as “An Act Amending Articles 29, 94, 97, 98 and 99 of Act No. 3815, as amended, otherwise known as the Revised Penal Code” ...²³

This section of the ATA 2020 defines the act of terrorism. It enumerates the five specific acts then followed by the vague nature and context of what falls under a terrorist act. The enumerated five are detailed and simple acts that can be taken as they are. Meaning, no other interpretation may be made because those provisions clearly state the

²³ Republic of the Philippines, Vicente Sotto, and Allan Peter Cayetano, Republic Act No. 11479 An act to prevent, prohibit and penalize terrorism, thereby repealing Republic Act No. 9372, otherwise know as the Human Security Act of 2007 § (2020).

acts. The caveat of the fourth section, however, categorizes as terrorists those who “intimidate the general public”, “create an atmosphere or spread a message of fear”, “provoke or influence by intimidation the government”, “destroy the fundamental structures of the country”, etc.

The Concerned Lawyers for Civil Liberties (CLCL) expresses in a statement, “The danger therein lies with how the government can construe legitimate acts of dissent or opposition within these definitions – it gives the government almost free rein in determining who are suspected terrorists. Even ordinary citizens’ grievances against the government on social media may fall within its ambit.”²⁴

The ATA 2020 expands the definition of terrorism compared to the repealed law, the Human Security Act of 2007. The new law “includes such broad offenses as ‘engaging in acts intended to endanger a person’s life,’ intended to ‘damage public property or ‘interfere with critical infrastructure,’ where the purpose is to intimidate the government.”²⁵ It removes the benefits of parole and good conduct time allowance.

Section 4, however, puts a safeguard to categorize the terrorist acts and simple acts of dissent, protest, and activism that are enshrined in the 1987 Constitution. It says:

Provided, that, terrorism as defined in the section shall not include advocacy, protest, dissent, stoppage of work, industrial or mass action, and other similar exercises of civil and political rights, which are not intended to cause death or serious physical harm to a person, to endanger a person’s life, or to create a serious risk to public safety.²⁶

²⁴ Lian Buan. “Explainer: Comparing Dangers in Old Law and Anti-Terror Bill.” RAPPLER, June 5, 2020. <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/in-depth/262912-explainercomparison-old-law-dangers-anti-terror-bill/>.

²⁵ McCarthy. “Why Rights Groups Worry about the Philippines’ New Anti-Terrorism Law.”

²⁶ Republic of the Philippines, Vicente Sotto, and Allan Peter Cayetano, Republic Act No. 11479 An act to prevent, prohibit and penalize terrorism, thereby repealing Republic Act No. 9372, otherwise know as the Human Security Act of 2007 § (2020).

The authors of the law have announced in some interviews that there is a safeguard in this section. Simple acts of dissent or protest are not included in the scope of the law. One of the principal authors of the ATA 2020, Sen. Bato de la Rosa says in an interview that the provision on Section 4 clearly states that terrorist acts do not include advocacy, protest, dissent, stoppage of work, industrial or mass action, and similar exercises of civil and political rights. He adds rallies are expressions of dissent. Activists and protesters against the government should not be afraid of ATA because they are not covered in the definition of a terrorist.²⁷

Atty. Domingo Cayosa, the national president and chairman of the Board of Governors and the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, however, argues that ATA 2020 may appear harmless for ordinary Filipinos. But, for those who are lawyers and experts in law, ATA 2020 gives the law enforcer the freedom to judge whether or not the act is a terrorist one. Law enforcers may arrest according to their whim if they impute a terrorist intention to the activists. Atty. Galileo Angeles, a criminal law and litigation lawyer, asserts that the law sets no parameters that test a civil or political right as different from a terrorist act. The section, thus, will be subject to different interpretations.²⁸

²⁷ Cf. GMA Public Affairs. “Fact or Fake: Anti-Terror Act, Kontra-Terrorismo o Kontra-Kritisismo?”

²⁸ Cf. Ibid.

Section 16

This section of ATA 2020 provides the provision for widened surveillance over potential terrorists. It states:

Sec. 16. Surveillance of Suspects and Interception and Recording of Communications. - The provisions of Republic Act No. 4200, otherwise known as the "Anti-Wire Tapping Law" to the contrary notwithstanding, a law enforcement agent or military personnel may, upon a written order of the Court of Appeals secretly wiretap, overhear and listen to, intercept, screen, read, surveil, record, or collect, with the use of any mode, form, kind, or type of electronic, mechanical or other equipment or device or technology now known or may hereafter be known to science or with the use of any other suitable ways and means for above purposes, any private communications, conversation, discussion/s, data, information, messages in whatever form, kind or nature, spoken or written words (a) between members of judicially declared and outlawed terrorist organization, as provided in Section 26 of this Act; (b) between members of a designated person as defined in Section 3(e) of Republic Act No. 10168; (c) any person charged with or suspected of committing any of the crimes defined and penalized under the provisions of this Act: Provided, that, surveillance interception and recording of communications between lawyers and clients, doctors and patients, journalists and their sources and confidential business correspondence shall not be authorized.

The law enforcement agent or military personnel shall likewise be obligated to (1) file an ex-parte application with the Court of Appeals for the issuance of an order, to compel telecommunications service provider (TSP) and internet service providers (ISP) to provide all customer information and identification records as well as call and text data records, content, and other cellular or internet metadata of any person suspected of any crimes defined and penalized under the provisions of this Act; and (2) furnish the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) a copy of the said application. The NTC shall likewise be notified upon the issuance of the order for the purpose of ensuring immediate compliance.²⁹

²⁹ Republic of the Philippines, Vicente Sotto, and Allan Peter Cayetano, Republic Act No. 11479 An act to prevent, prohibit and penalize terrorism, thereby repealing Republic Act No. 9372, otherwise known as the Human Security Act of 2007 § (2020).

The petitioners of ATA 2020 raise concern about wiretapping and broad surveillance. Activists are concerned about privacy which is a constitutional right.³⁰ This provision on surveillance and wiretapping "may violate due process, as it allows law enforcement agents to conduct the same by mere application, even without a case filed in court. There is a danger, therefore, of abuse that will effectively authorize unreasonable searches and seizure against anyone who has been suspected of being a terrorist."³¹

A government agency created by Duterte in 2018 through Executive Order No. 70 institutionalizing the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC).³² This agency has been known for "carrying out long-running surveillance, harassment, and suppression campaigns against activists and groups that operate openly and legally. The agency has frequently accused these groups and individuals of being front organizations, members, or supporters of the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines."³³

Section 32

This section of ATA 2020 states the instructions and directives on the official logbook of the custodial unit and its contents. It mandates:

Sec. 32. Official Custodial Logbook and Its Contents - The law enforcement custodial unit in whose care and control the person suspected of committing any of the acts defined and penalized under Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 of this Act has been placed under custodial arrest and detention shall keep a securely

³⁰ Cf. McCarthy. "Why Rights Groups Worry about the Philippines' New Anti-Terrorism Law."

³¹ Mendoza, Ong, Romano, and Torno. "Counterterrorism in the Philippines."

³² "About: NTF." ELCAC. Accessed February 23, 2022. <https://www.ntf-elcac.org/about>.

³³ "Philippines: New Anti-Terrorism Act Endangers Rights." Human Rights Watch, October 28, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/06/05/philippines-new-anti-terrorism-act-endangers-rights>.

and orderly maintained official logbook, which is hereby declared as a public document and opened to and made available for inspection and scrutiny of the lawyer of the person under custody or any member of his/her family or relative by consanguinity or affinity within the fourth civil degree or his/her physician at any time of the day or night subject to reasonable restrictions by the custodial facility. The logbook shall contain a clear and concise record of: (a) the name, description, and address of the detained person; (b) the date and exact time of his/her initial admission for custodial arrest and detention; (c) the name and address of the physician or physicians who examined him/her physically and medically; (d) the state of his/her health and physical condition at the time of his/her initial admission for custodial detention; (e) the date and time of each removal of the detained person from his/her cell for interrogation or for any purpose; (f) the date and time of his/her return to his/her cell; (g) the name and address of the physician or physicians who physically and medically examined him/her after each interrogation; (h) a summary of the physical and medical findings on the detained person after each of such interrogation; (i) the names and address of his/her family members and nearest relatives, if any and if available; (j) the names and addresses of persons, who visit the detained person; (k) the date and time of each of such visit; (l) the date and time of each request of the detained person to communicate and confer with his/her legal counsels; and (n) all other important events bearing on and all relevant details regarding the treatment of the detained person while under custodial arrest and detention...³⁴

The 32nd section of ATA 2020 states that the custodial facilities for declared or suspected terrorists. It is said in the 29th section that the law enforcers can put them in custody even without a warrant of arrest for a maximum of 14 days and can be extended for 10 more days, for a total of 24 days. The HSA 2007, on the other hand, allowed three days only. While they are in custodial facilities, the law enforcers shall write every significant detail of the declared or suspected terrorists' actions inside the custody. These records shall be made available for his/her lawyer/s and family members for transparency.

³⁴ Republic of the Philippines, Vicente Sotto, and Allan Peter Cayetano, Republic Act No. 11479 An act to prevent, prohibit and penalize terrorism, thereby repealing Republic Act No. 9372, otherwise know as the Human Security Act of 2007 § (2020).

The declared or suspected terrorist in custody shall also be under surveillance including his/her correspondence, text messages, and calls.

This section was not given much more attention by the petitioners than the other sections of ATA 2020. The researcher thinks that Sec. 32 is relevant to the study. This may appear harmless or powerless because this section simply states the requirement to have a logbook and its contents. This may be insidious when analyzed through the writings of Foucault.

Red-tagging Phenomenon

This section is not included in the ATA 2020 but the researcher thinks that this portion of the third chapter is a relevant variable to this study. This is directly related to the ATA 2020. Red-tagging and censorship are prevalent in the Duterte administration. The ATA 2020 aims to prevent insurgency and terrorism in the country from happening. Red-tagging, on the other hand, brands a person or an organization whether or not a person or organization is a communist or a terrorist.

Human rights advocates define red-tagging as “a tactic whereby individuals are labeled as communists or terrorists - often without substantial proof - being increasingly deployed by government supporters and state officials”.³⁵

The red-tagging phenomenon has been present in Philippine society for decades. It is also known as ‘red-baiting’. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as “the harassment or persecution of a person because of known or suspected communist sympathies”.³⁶ Supreme Court Associate Justice Marvic Leonen in the court case Zarate vs. Aquino III in 2015 defines red-tagging as “the act of labeling, brand-

³⁵ Oliver Haynes. “Deadly ‘Red-Tagging’ Campaign Ramps up in Philippines.” VOA. Deadly ‘Red-Tagging’ Campaign Ramps Up in Philippines, February 18, 2021. https://www.voanews.com/a/east-asia-pacific_deadly-red-tagging-campaign-ramps-philippines/6202221.html.

³⁶ “Red-Bait: Meaning & Definition for UK English.” Lexico Dictionaries | English. Lexico Dictionaries. Accessed February 28, 2022. <https://www.lexico.com/definition/red-bait>.

ing, naming and accusing individuals and/ or organizations of being left-leaning, subversives, communists or terrorists (used as) a strategy... by State agents, particularly law enforcement agencies and the military, against those perceived to be ‘threats’ or ‘enemies of the State.’”³⁷

It has been the campaign and response of the government to combat the communist New People’s Army (NPA) since 1969. The Philippine government’s “counterinsurgency efforts include publicly accusing activists, journalists, politicians, and others and their organizations of being directly involved in the fighting or supporting the NPA. The Philippine military has long been responsible for large numbers of extrajudicial killings and torture of alleged communists.”³⁸

Carlos Conde, the Philippines’ senior researcher at Human Rights Watch, says in a statement, “Red-tagging is a pernicious practice that targets people who often end up being harassed or even killed ... Red-tagging is rapidly shrinking the space for peaceful activism in the Philippines.”³⁹ The establishment of NTF-ELCAC by the Duterte administration worsened this phenomenon. The congress entrusted this agency “with billions of pesos at its disposal, making red-tagging [Duterte’s] government’s official policy. The task force is composed of, and headed by, former military officials. It carries out red-tagging through its social media posts and official pronouncements.”⁴⁰ This practice prosecutes all activists and party-opposition leaders that resulted in “78 deaths and 136 arrests”⁴¹ in the year 2020 alone. The NTF-ELCAC has tagged publicly “legitimate organizations and

³⁷ Vera Files. “Vera Files Fact Sheet: Why ‘Red-Tagging’ Is Dangerous,” October 11, 2018. <https://verafiles.org/articles/vera-files-fact-sheet-why-red-tagging-dangerous>.

³⁸ “Philippines: End Deadly ‘Red-Tagging’ of Activists.” Human Rights Watch, January 20, 2022. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/01/17/philippines-end-deadly-red-tagging-activists>.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Morgan Moon. “Philippines’ Anti-Terrorism Act and Deteriorating Rule of Law.” Georgetown Security Studies Review, April 23, 2021. <https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/2021/04/22/philippines-anti-terrorism-act-and-deteriorating-rule-of-law/>.

party-list groups as communist fronts”⁴² such as Gabriela, Kabataan, IBON Foundation, and ACT Teachers Party-List as Communist Party of the Philippines-made and lead surface or front mass organizations and institutions.

Section 25 of the ATA 2020 states that the Anti-Terrorism Council (ATC) “may designate an individual, groups of persons, organizations, or association, whether domestic or foreign, upon a finding of probable cause ...”⁴³ This empowers the assigned members of the ATC to designate whether an individual or a group is a terrorist. The ATC, according to Section 45, is composed of the Executive Secretary, the National Security Adviser, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, the Secretary of National Defense, the Secretary of Interior and Local Government, the Secretary of Finance, the Secretary of Justice, Secretary of Information and Communications Technology, and the Executive Director of Anti-Money Laundering Council. The NICA will be the Secretariat of the ATC. Two of the ATC members had been known for red-tagging human rights groups before the ATA 2020. The law entrusted to the said people the power to exercise it.

The ATA 2020 has been controversial since it was posted as a bill. Human rights groups, both local and international, have been vocal about this issue. The overbroad power given to the government was put into question. The sections of ATA 2020 discussed by the researcher will be relevant to the following chapter as they are to be analyzed through the lens of Michel Foucault’s Discipline and Punish and other primary works. The author will discuss in the following sections how the 1970s work in France is relevant to the 2020 Philippine society under the ATA 2020.

⁴² Mendoza, Ong, Romano, and Torno. “Counterterrorism in the Philippines.”

⁴³

Normalization through law

For Foucault, normalization is a mechanism of power that exerts at the same time a maximum control and minimum expenditure of force.⁴⁴ In his lecture in 1978 entitled *Security, Territory, Population* given in College de France, Foucault asserts:

Disciplinary normalization consists first of all in positing a model, an optimal model that is constructed in terms of a certain result, and the operation of disciplinary normalization consists in trying to get people, movements, and actions to conform to this model, the normal being precisely that which can conform to this norm, and the abnormal that which is incapable of conforming to the norm. In other words, it is not the normal and the abnormal that is fundamental and primary in disciplinary normalization, it is the norm. That is, there is an originally prescriptive character of the norm and the determination and the identification of the normal and the abnormal becomes possible in relation to this posited norm.⁴⁵

In other words, he argues here that the norm is the universal standard of things. It is the model by which everything should abide. The control is implanted in the subtle coercion of the established “normal”. This is concretely seen in the set of rules in institutions such as schools, hospitals, military barracks, and factories. No violent force from the overseer is applied because the restriction to discipline them is imposed on their minds which makes them the bearers of power in themselves.⁴⁶ The thought of relegation or promotion directs them to act accordingly.⁴⁷ Following the same rules and regulations, the subjects of this technique of power operate the same way. Normalizing judgment, therefore, “compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, excludes. In short, it normalizes.”⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Cf. Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p 209.

⁴⁵ . *Security, Territory, Population Lectures at the College De France, 1977-78*. Edited by François Ewald, Alessandro Fontana, and Michel Senellart. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. p. 85

⁴⁶ “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p 201.

⁴⁷ Cf. Dianna Taylor, and Marcelo Hoffman. *Essay in Michel Foucault: Key Concepts*. London: Routledge, 2014. p 40.

⁴⁸ Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p 183.

Marcelo Hoffman argues that “disciplinary power judges according to the norm ... [Foucault] depicts the norm as a standard of [behavior] that allows for the measurement of forms of behavior as ‘normal’ or ‘abnormal’. The norm thus establishes the figure of the ‘normal’ as a ‘principle of coercion’ for the figure of the ‘abnormal’.⁴⁹ The ‘norm’ does not only homogenate but also, as Foucault mentions, differentiate and exclude. The ‘abnormal’ is separated from the ‘normal’.

In the contemporary justice system, the ‘normal’ and the ‘abnormal’ are tantamount to the terms ‘legal’ and ‘illegal’ respectively. The ‘normal’ acts are defined by the law. The normalizing power, thus, is entrenched in the law. In his other writings, Foucault asserts that the “law is the principal mode of representation of power”.⁵⁰ Larry Backer calls it substantive surveillance normativity. He writes, “Substantive surveillance normativity suggests overarching behavioral constraints. The sources, characters, and limitations of these constraints are well known. They comprise the morals and ethics of religious, cultural, ethnic, political, and economic systems. And they are sometimes recognized by and normalized within legal systems at the local, municipal, or international levels.”⁵¹

The weaponization of the law against enemies or critics is not alien to Philippine society under the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte. The concept of the ‘normal’ has been legalized through a hastily passed law. Foucault would say that the “penal system makes possible a mode of political and economic management which exploits the difference between legality and illegality.”⁵²

⁴⁹ Marcelo Hoffman. *Foucault and power: The influence of political engagement on theories of power*. A&C Black, 2013. p. 30

⁵⁰ Michel Foucault. *Power / Knowledge, Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. Edited by Colin Gordon and Colin Gordon. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1980. p. 141

⁵¹ Larry Backer. “Global Panopticism: States, Corporations, and the Governance Effects of Monitoring Regimes.” *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 15, no. 1 (2008): 101. <https://doi.org/10.2979/gls.2008.15.1.101>.

⁵² Foucault. *Power / Knowledge, Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. p. 141

The Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 (ATA 2020), lays down the qualifications of an ‘abnormal’ or the ‘illegal’. It provides an overbroad and vague definition of a terrorist, an ‘abnormal’. This technique of power is done subtly. While a number of human rights advocates noticed the deceitful provisions, many Filipinos may not be aware of them. This is a subtle control imposed upon the citizens by the ATA 2020. This successful coercion was noticed by a group of researchers. They write:

Unlike dictatorships of the past which generally seized power through military coups, the success of modern authoritarian regimes such as Duterte’s [relies] on the traditional channels of democracy: elections. Having secured convincing electoral mandates, authoritarian leaders use methods of control that are ‘legal’ and [legitimized] by legislative fiat and sanctioned by the courts.⁵³

Normalizing judgment, as mentioned in the second chapter, brings five operations. The first two operations talk about non-conformity to the law as punishable. The first operation can be simply said as “at the heart of all disciplinary systems, functions a small penal mechanism.”⁵⁴ While the second one is simply put as “whole indefinite domain of non-conforming is punishable.”⁵⁵ In other words, the obvious non-observance and a minute aberration from the established law are punishable by the law. Any deformation should be molded according to what is normal. The ATA 2020, on the other hand, punishes both the horrendous acts of terrorism and even the intent, which is indefinite. The Human Rights Watch reports in a statement concerning Section 4:

Under the ... law, those convicted on the basis of overbroad definitions of “terrorism” face up to life in prison without parole. An individual, as well as a group, commits terrorism when he or she

⁵³ Robert G. Patman, Köllner Patrick, Balazs Kiglics, and Aurora J. de Dios. “Democracy Under Strain in the Philippines: The Populist Politics and Diplomacy of President Rodrigo Duterte.” Essay. In *From Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific: Diplomacy in a Contested Region*, 319. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021.

⁵⁴ Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p 177.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

“engages in acts intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to any person, or endangers a person’s life,” or “causes extensive damage to public property,” in order to “create an atmosphere or spread a message of fear.” While the definition also includes aims often associated with terrorism, such as seeking to “seriously destabilize or destroy the fundamental social, economic or political structures of the country,” it does not require such intent. By this broad definition, starting a fight in a bar could technically be classified as an act of terrorism”⁵⁶

The third operation of normalizing judgment is also evident here. Foucault posits this as “disciplinary punishment ... must therefore be essentially corrective.”⁵⁷ The law, being overbroad and punitive, will impose ‘correction’ according to the norm. “Borrowing Foucauldian phraseology, a fair amount of sovereign power is simultaneously being expressed, from waging war against ‘oppressive regimes’ to the illegal physical detention of ‘enemy combatants.’”, Duterte is known for appointing cabinet members because of utang na loob (debt of gratitude). Duterte is asserting his legal rights as the head of the executive branch in appointing freely his members of the cabinet. This is a clear manifestation of the fourth and fifth operations of normalizing judgment. The fourth one speaks of the double system of gratification-punishment, while the fifth talks about the ranking “understood as the place occupied in this hierarchy [that] is used as a form [of] punishment or reward.”⁵⁸ Those who are suspected of having the intent to terrorize are punished by the law. On the other hand, those whom he sees grateful for will attain a sure seat in the government.⁵⁹

Hoffman argues that normalization through law “is not done by the ideological manipulation of their minds, but on and through their bodies. The aim of disciplinary techniques is to inscribe the norms of

⁵⁶ Philippines: New Anti-Terrorism Act Endangers Rights.” Human Rights Watch, October 28, 2020. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/06/05/philippines-new-anti-terrorism-act-endangers-rights>.

⁵⁷ Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p 179.

⁵⁸ Hoffman. Essay in Michel Foucault: Key Concepts. p 40.

⁵⁹ Cf. Jose Dalisay. “Who Owes What to Whom.” Philstar.com. Philstar.com, March 6, 2022. <https://www.philstar.com/opinion/2022/03/07/2165392/who-owes-what-whom>.

society in the bodies of criminals by subjecting them to reconstructed patterns of behavior. The prisoners must subject themselves to power to the extent that its aims become their inner meaning of normal.”⁶⁰

Broad Surveillance

Michel Foucault defines hierarchical observation as an “apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power, and in which, conversely, the means of coercion make those on whom they are applied clearly visible.”⁶¹ Surveillance is a way of control. Foucault mentions the importance of the architecture of the building that “would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly.”⁶² The thought of being seen - or even the thought of its possibility - would automatically make power operate in itself with or without the gazer.

Broadened surveillance is one of the controversial provisions in the ATA 2020. Observation of the suspected terrorist is extended in the new law compared to the repealed one. Here are the critical remarks of an online news outlet comparing the ATA 2020 and the HSA 2007:

While both allow surveillance on not only judicially declared terrorists, but also suspected terrorists, because the new bill adds a lot of new crimes, there are more people who can be subjected to surveillance. These include those suspected of threatening, planning, training, facilitating, proposing and inciting to terrorism – unlike the old law where only the suspected terrorist and conspirator can be subjected to surveillance.⁶³

ATA 2020 broadens the permission for surveillance of suspected terrorists. Sec 16 of ATA 2020 adds “any person charged with or suspected of committing any of the crimes defined and penalized under

⁶⁰ Hoffman. Essay in Michel Foucault: Key Concepts. p 108.

⁶¹ Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. pp 170-171.

⁶² Ibid. p. 173.

⁶³ Buan. “Explainer: Comparing Dangers in Old Law and Anti-Terror Bill.”

the provisions of this Act”.⁶⁴ The legality of surveillance includes persons who are suspected of terrorism.

Surveillance is not limited to the physical body. It does not only refer to the security cameras or a spy. It has expanded along with the advancement of technology and social science. Observation is done not only in the physical environment, but it has extended to the sphere of social media brought by the progress of technology. The Philippine civic space “has come to be equated more so with the digital realm than any actual physical location. Given that 94% of Filipinos have access to the internet, online conversations – political and otherwise – are commonly interwoven with face-to-face interactions and lead to tangible repercussions, giving the impression that there is no longer a palpable distinction between online and offline spaces in the Philippines.”⁶⁵ Despite the amicable face of social media, it has “become susceptible to ... diversion of public attention from controversial issues and harassment of the government critics.”⁶⁶ This leads to “an emerging challenge, therefore, for civil society to go beyond their thematic, issue-based interventions and begin problematizing the quality of the civic space as a whole”.⁶⁷

A month after Duterte signed ATA 2020, on August 3, 2020, then Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief, Lieutenant General Gilbert Gapay expressed his desire to include social media use in the scope of surveillance. He said in a press briefing, “We need to have specific provisions on this, pertaining to the use of social media ... We will capitalize on this very, very good anti-terror law. It is comprehensive, it is proactive... Pinaplano pa lang nila, ma-stop na natin (We can

⁶⁴ Republic of the Philippines, Vicente Sotto, and Allan Peter Cayetano, Republic Act No. 11479 An act to prevent, prohibit and penalize terrorism, thereby repealing Republic Act No. 9372, otherwise know as the Human Security Act of 2007 § (2020).

⁶⁵ Micheline Rama. “Redrawing Battle Lines in the Struggle for Civic Space: Insights from the Philippines.” CIVIC SPACE: p. 55.

⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 56.

⁶⁷ Czarina Medina-Guce and Ana Martha Galindes. “Democratic Backsliding & Shrinking Civic Spaces: Problematizing the Strengthening of Philippine Democratic Institutions.” Institute for Leadership, Empowerment, and Democracy Working Paper (2018).

stop them as they are still planning).”⁶⁸

The hierarchized power in surveillance brings an insidious effect on society. ATA 2020’s power is hierarchized in the sense that it comes from the president, then is passed to the Anti-Terrorism Council (ATC), distributed to each law enforcer spread around the country. This is power from top to bottom. The sphere of the online world is also penetrated by this power. Foucault writes, “By means of such surveillance, disciplinary power became an ‘integrated’ system, linked from the inside to the economy and to the aims of the mechanism in which it was [practiced].”⁶⁹ Disciplinary power has become arranged and systematized as automatic and anonymous power.

Examination: Data-accumulation and Red-Tagging

In this section, the researcher will analyze Section 32 of ATA 2020 and the red-tagging phenomenon through Michel Foucault’s third technology of power: examination. Examination, as Foucault writes, is a combination of “the ceremony of power and the form of the experiment, the deployment of force and the establishment of truth.”⁷⁰ In the disciplinary age, after the reform, the exercise of power as a ceremony still exists but in a different way. Foucault writes: “disciplinary power manifests its potency, essentially, by arranging objects. The examination is, as it were, the ceremony of this objectification.”⁷¹

Foucault posits a feature of examination as the introduction of the individual in the field of documentation. He articulates, “The examination that places individuals in a field of surveillance ... situates them in a network of writing; it engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them. The procedures of examination were accompanied ... by a system of intense registration and documentary accumulation. A ‘power of writing’ was constituted as an

⁶⁸ Rambo Talabong. “Social Media Use Should Be Regulated by Anti-Terror Law – AFP.” *RAPPLER*, August 3, 2020. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/afp-chief-gapay-says-social-media-use-should-be-regulated-by-anti-terror-law/>.

⁶⁹ Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p. 176.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* p. 184.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* p. 187.

essential part in the mechanisms of discipline.”⁷²

On the other hand, the ATA 2020 provides a provision of documentation of those who are under their custody and surveillance. The petitioners of ATA 2020 did not focus on this section as much as the other sections. This section simply requires a logbook wherein the actions of the suspected terrorist in custody must be recorded. Section 32 seemingly aims for transparency of records that are accessible to the lawyer/s and family members of the suspected terrorist. There is a fraudulent intention here. With the presence of the ATA 2020, human rights advocates claim that surveillance will happen anywhere with anyone with or without the knowledge of the subject.⁷³ This documentation falls under what Foucault thinks as situating “them [suspected terrorists] in a network of writing [that] engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them. The procedures of examination were accompanied ... by a system of intense registration and of documentary accumulation.”⁷⁴ Foucault highlights here the ‘power of writing’ that is essential for disciplinary power. The data accumulated from a suspected terrorist consequently leads to the accumulation of knowledge of said suspected terrorist. He discusses this strategy of data accumulation further in one of his writings. He says:

There is a further omnipresent figure: ... that of the inventory or [catalog]. And this kind of inventory precisely combines the triple register of inquiry, measure and examination ... strategic function collects information in an inventory which in its raw state does not have much interest and is not in fact usable except by power. What power needs is not science but a mass of information which its strategic position can enable it to exploit ... [Seventeenth] century [travelers] and nineteenth-century geographers were actually intelligence-gatherers, collecting and mapping information which was directly exploitable by colonial powers, strategists, traders and industrialists.⁷⁵

⁷² *Ibid.* 189.

⁷³ Cf. McCarthy. “Why Rights Groups Worry about the Philippines’ New Anti-Terrorism Law.”

⁷⁴ Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p. 189.

⁷⁵ _____. *Power / Knowledge, Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. p. 75

Another feature of examination is the individualizing attribute thereof. Foucault writes, that examination, “surrounded by all its documentary techniques, makes each individual a ‘case’: a case which at one and the same time constitutes an object for a branch of knowledge and a hold for a branch of power.”⁷⁶ Foucault asserts that “the individual is not a pre-given entity which is seized on by the exercise of power. The individual, with his identity and characteristics, is the product of a relation of power exercised over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, forces.”⁷⁷

An extralegal although prevalent phenomenon being done, especially, by high-ranking government officials is the red-tagging. During the tenure of Duterte as the President of the Republic, many leftist’ activities and human rights advocacy are equated with terrorism. Red-tagging is used against doctors, activists, journalists, academics, students, and others. This has led to a number of unlawful seizures, arrests, detentions, and even killings. The Secretary-General of KARAPATAN Cristina Palabay reports at least 78 people were killed as a result of either red-tagging or anti-terrorism police operations a year passed since the enactment of the ATA 2020. Some 136, on the other hand, arrests were compiled by the organization.⁷⁸ Because they are labeled - in Foucault’s terms, ‘individualized’ - as against the government, they will face punishments based on the ATA 2020 - the norm. A reporter writes:

The term “communist-terrorist”, popularised by the military, seeks to denote that one cannot be a communist without being a terrorist as well. Subscribing to radical ideologies is not illegal, per se. But to the armed forces, someone who is left-leaning is automatically a communist, and all communists are always terrorists, and thus threats that must be liquidated. The Philippines Commission on Human Rights expressed alarm at the recent string of killings, which follow the pattern under Duterte that

⁷⁶ _____, “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p. 191.

⁷⁷ _____, Power / Knowledge, Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977. pp. 73-74.

⁷⁸ Cf. Haynes. “Deadly ‘Red-Tagging’ Campaign Ramps up in Philippines.” VOA. Deadly ‘Red-Tagging’ Campaign Ramps Up in Philippines.

comes after victims have been labeled communists.⁷⁹

The ATA 2020 is enforced by the same persons, headed by the Anti-Terrorism Council. They “may designate an individual, groups of persons, organizations, or association, whether domestic or foreign, upon a finding of probable cause ...”⁸⁰ Phil Robertson, Deputy Director of Human Rights Watch, Asia Division, argues “The new counterterrorism law could have a horrific impact on basic civil liberties, due process, and the rule of law amid the Philippines’ shrinking democratic space. The Philippine people are about to face an Anti-Terrorism Council that will be prosecutor, judge, jury, and jailer.”⁸¹

The alleged communist-terrorist is pinned down as such. That person is individualized. This phenomenon was envisioned by Foucault in his writing. It can be said that red-tagging is a phenomenon that operates as a technology of power, specifically the examination. He writes, “examination as the fixing ... of individual differences, as the pinning down of each individual in his own particularity ... clearly indicates the appearance of a new modality of power in which each individual receives as his status his own individuality, and in which he is linked by his status to the features, the measurements, the gaps, the ‘marks’ that characterize him and make him a ‘case’.”⁸²

The Philippines: A Panoptic Country

Michel Foucault maintains the argument of Jeremy Bentham that the architecture of the panopticon is significant to the subtle coercion happening inside the prison walls. The geometry and the architecture are physical instruments that act precisely on the individuals, “it gives ‘power of mind over mind’.”⁸³ The design of the panopticon heightens the apparatus of power and its intensity because it is more

⁷⁹ Michael Beltran. “In the Philippines, a Label Can Take Your Life.” The Interpreter. The Interpreter, December 4, 2020. <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/philippines-label-can-take-your-life>.

⁸⁰ Republic of the Philippines, Vicente Sotto, and Allan Peter Cayetano, Republic Act No. 11479 An act to prevent, prohibit and penalize terrorism, thereby repealing Republic Act No. 9372, otherwise know as the Human Security Act of 2007 § (2020).

⁸¹ McCarthy. “Why Rights Groups Worry about the Philippines’ New Anti-Terrorism Law.”

⁸² Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p 192.

⁸³ Ibid. p. 206.

economical [less personnel, material, and time]. The architecture thereof also assures effectivity by its preventive character, continual operation, and automatic feature. Foucault writes:

It [panopticon] arranges things in such a way that the exercise of power is not added on from the outside, like a rigid, heavy constraint, to the functions it invests, but is so subtly present in them as to increase their efficiency by itself increasing its own points of contact. The panoptic mechanism is not simply a hinge, a point of exchange between a mechanism of power and a function; it is a way of making power relations function in a function, and of making a function function through these power relations. Bentham's Preface to Panopticon opens with a list of the benefits to be obtained from his 'inspection-house': 'Morals reformed- health preserved- industry invigorated- instruction diffused-public burthens lightened- Economy seated, as it were, upon a rock - the gordian knot of the Poor-Laws not cut, but untied- all by a simple idea in architecture!' (Bentham, 39).⁸⁴

On the other hand, "law helps to keep society moving as without law there would be chaos and it would be survival of the fittest. Laws are created to serve society and shape morals; promote peace and public policies; facilitate freedom and future."⁸⁵ In other words, the law is the design of society. It dictates how society should operate as it contains the policies and protocols required for running a society. Laws can influence behavior by imposing penalties for non-compliance. Over time, this can lead to shifts in social norms as people adjust their behavior to avoid legal consequences. Using Benthamian-Foucauldian phraseology, the researcher infers that the architecture of a society is found in its laws. Richard Lynch writes, "power always takes the form of a rule or law. This entails a binary system of permitted and forbidden, legal and illegal ... power operates through a cycle of prohibition, a law of interdiction."⁸⁶

Having said the aforementioned, the architecture of the pan-

⁸⁴ Ibid. pp. 206-207.

⁸⁵ Bharat. "The Law: Its Role and Rule." Tribuneindia News Service, September 6, 2020. <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/schools/the-law-its-role-and-rule-137251>.

⁸⁶ Dianna Taylor, and Richard Lynch. *Essay in Michel Foucault: Key Concepts*. London: Routledge, 2014. p 40.

opticon - which induces power in itself - is comparable to the laws of a democratic state. The panopticon induces the automatic operation of power. Similar to this, rule by the law "connotes the instrumental use of law as a tool of political power. It means that the state uses the law to control its citizens."⁸⁷ The existence of law can impose discipline by itself. Similar to the panopticon, the power of law is visible yet unverifiable. Additionally, Foucault introduced the concepts of "discourses" and "epistemes" to describe the systems of knowledge that shape our understanding of the world. He argued that laws are not objective or neutral but are constructed within specific discourses and epistemes that reflect the values and interests of those in power.⁸⁸

One of ATA 2020's characteristics is the particular provision on surveillance. This makes surveillance permanent for those who publicly expressed dissent as their political and civil rights. The ATA 2020 - as Concerned Lawyers for Civil Liberties (CLCL) claims - "supports secret surveillance - the courts are required to be informed of such surveillance, but only upon the filing of charges before the prosecutor. In short, subjects of surveillance and suspected persons will have already been hauled to jail before they are made aware of actions against them."⁸⁹ It also "adds a lot of new crimes, there are more people who can be subjected to surveillance. These include those suspected of threatening, planning, training, facilitating, proposing, and inciting to terrorism..."⁹⁰ This is akin to what Foucault posits as the panopticon where "surveillance is permanent in its effects."⁹¹ The fear of being watched is imposed. "In taking up the appeal to internalize the 'gaze of surveillance', individuals are encouraged to become inured in their watching."⁹²

⁸⁷ Jeremy Waldron. "The Rule of Law." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Stanford University, June 22, 2016. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rule-of-law/>.

⁸⁸ Cf. 1. Mark Bevir, "Foucault, Power, and Institutions," *Political Studies* 47, no. 2 (1999): 345-59, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00204>.

⁸⁹ Buan. "Explainer: Comparing Dangers in Old Law and Anti-Terror Bill."

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Foucault. "Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison". p 201.

⁹² Mythen.and Walklate. "Criminology and terrorism: Which thesis? Risk

Another controversial provision of ATA 2020 is the broadened and vague definition of a terrorist. The CLCL states “The danger therein lies with how the government can construe legitimate acts of dissent or opposition within these definitions – it gives the government almost free rein in determining who are suspected terrorists. Even ordinary citizens airing their grievances against the government on social media may fall within its ambit.”⁹³ With this statement, the ATA 2020 watches for those who air their dissent against the government. Subsequently, all those people concerned will impose self-surveillance whether or not they qualify for the definition of a terrorist. Foucault writes it as “the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers.”⁹⁴ This will create an individual who is a “conformist, docile, self-monitoring person, who is expected (including by emergent models in the biological and human sciences) to develop in particular ways and is subject to much closer yet more seemingly benign forms of management.”⁹⁵ With this regard, only a “few would rally against improving procedures for identifying terrorists, but, in the indiscriminate trawl, ‘suspect populations’ are being dreamt up, marginalized and put under suspicion.”⁹⁶ The principle behind this power lies “in confiscating not only [the] body but soul. Correction attempts to reset the soul back to a state of obedience by introducing new habits. It did not try to restore or rehabilitate the individual back to the place in society that he had lost by transgression, but sought rather create a subject who conformed, obeying unquestioningly and unhesitatingly.”⁹⁷

One of the main goals of the panopticon is to self-censor.

society or governmentality?.” p. 392.

⁹³ Buan. “Explainer: Comparing Dangers in Old Law and Anti-Terror Bill.”

⁹⁴ Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p 201.

⁹⁵ Cressida J. Heyes. “Subjectivity and power.” In Michel Foucault. Routledge, 2014. p. 163.

⁹⁶ Mythen and Walklate. “Criminology and terrorism: Which thesis? Risk society or governmentality?.” p. 390.

⁹⁷ Joseph M. Piro. “Foucault and the architecture of surveillance: Creating regimes of power in schools, shrines, and society.” *Educational Studies* 44, no. 1 (2008): p. 36.

Mythen and Walklate see the similarity between Foucault’s panopticon and the provision of a law similar to ATA 2020. They argue that “regulatory forms of control that work through self-restraint have fortified institutional power. As self-evident ‘truths’ cluster into discursive regimes that direct behavior, people become practiced in bringing themselves to order. Thus, governmentality equates to a ‘specific economy of power—in which societies are ordered in a decentred way and wherein society’s members play a particularly active role in their own self-governance’.”⁹⁸

Lastly, the author will dwell on the notion of a disciplinary society. In a disciplinary society, power lies in the “most minute and apparently inconsequential aspects of social life ... The effects of disciplinary power are not exercised from a single vantage point, but are mobile, multivalent and internal to the very fabric of daily life.”⁹⁹ This is because the power is intended to spread throughout society. The panopticon - like the ATA 2020 - is designed as a “diagram of a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form; its functioning, abstracted from any obstacle, resistance or friction, must be represented as a pure architectural and optical system: it is, in fact, a figure of political technology that may and must be detached from any specific use.”¹⁰⁰ It is extremely dangerous. The ATA 2020 - as the panopticon - poses an everyday threat and not just in specific times. The citizens living in a panoptic country - having the ‘eye of power’ - are permanently under unverifiable yet visible power of surveillance. Such attempts to activate citizens normalize the practice of surveillance and reshuffle power relations: . . . the aim is no longer to place the individual under the “eye of power” to exercise individualizing forms of surveillance; rather surveillance is “designed in” to the flows of everyday existence.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Mythen.and Walklate. “Criminology and terrorism: Which thesis? Risk society or governmentality?.” p. 385.

⁹⁹ Lisa Downing. “Works: Crime and Punishment.” Essay in *The Cambridge Introduction to Michel Foucault*, p 83. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

¹⁰⁰ Foucault. “Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison”. p 205.

¹⁰¹ Mythen.and Walklate. “Criminology and terrorism: Which thesis?”

Conclusion

The enactment of ATA 2020 during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic is still in question. Although the legislators have already answered this query, the unconstitutional ratification thereof remains unanswered. The issue of terrorism provides “a political lexicon through which ulterior motives are being camouflaged and hidden agendas executed.”¹⁰² The dubious urgency thereof “amidst the pandemic crisis has affected the public’s perception of the bill’s real intent. In much of the academic community, the ill-timed passage of the law only raised skepticism.”¹⁰³

Having observed the ideas of Foucault - the technologies of power: hierarchical observation in overbroad surveillance, normalizing judgment in the legislature, and examination in data-accumulation and red-tagging phenomenon, and the panopticism in the ATA 2020 - embedded in the ‘architectural design’ of the ATA 2020, the researcher concludes, that the law leads to [or maybe strengthens] the Philippines as a panoptic country.

Risk society or governmentality?.” p. 382.

¹⁰² Ibid. p. 392.

¹⁰³ Mendoza, Ong, Romano, and Torno. “Counterterrorism in the Philippines.” p. 15.

Dwelling in our Common Home: An Urban Existentialist Reading of the Laudato Si'

Joshua Jose Ocon

joshua.ocon@student.ateneo.edu

Introduction

Nine years after the promulgation of the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, it remains one of the many significant milestones that many associate with Pope Francis' pontificate. For the record, it is the first encyclical to address the concern for the environment directly, specifically global climate change, a move which proved to be 'controversial' and 'annoying if only to think of encyclicals as only preoccupied with matters of 'faith and moral.'¹ From this followed the creation of movements that hearkened to the encyclical's call for "care for all that exists," especially our common home.² The encyclical draws from all kinds of sources: spiritual, theological, scriptural, philosophical, scientific, economic, and civic, but this must be seen not from the standpoint of eclecticism but rather from the perspective that understands how proponents from each of these are all united by the same concern.³ This multifacetedness is instrumental to the influence that *Laudato Si'* exudes, and so while many programs and campaigns have been intensified already in response to it, there is more that can still be done to advance its commitments.

This paper attempts to further extend the range of this encyclical by reading it through the lenses of urban existential thinking. Shane Epting's urban existentialist proposal employs 'thought tech-

¹ See James T. McHugh, "Eternal Law and Environmental Policy: Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, and a Thomistic Approach to Climate Change," in Alynna J. Lyon, Christine A. Gustafson, and Paul Christopher Manuel (eds.) *Pope Francis as a Global Actor: Where Politics and Theology Meet* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), [59-81] 59-60.

² See Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* (Vatican: Vatican Press, 2015), n.11. Hereafter LS.

³ LS, n.7.

nologies' to bring about more from concepts that arise in particular texts, and two of these - *weak anthropocentrism and collaborative authenticity* - will be utilized to explicate the essential ideas of *Laudato Si': the harmony of creation and integral ecology*. Heidegger's thinking on 'dwelling' and 'the fourfold' remain foundational to phenomenological thinking which, in this case, figures importantly in thinking about the city as a locus of many phenomena daily around the clock.⁴ It will then serve as the paradigm that orients this urban existentialist reading of the encyclical, eliciting this question: *Are we 'dwelling' in the city which is situated within our common home?*

On Dwelling and the Fourfold

Before we can raise this question, how are we supposed to read and understand this dwelling? 'Dwelling' ordinarily denotes a place where something can live. Thus, we can speak of our planet as the dwelling place of humanity, or of the heavens as the dwelling place of gods. Understood as denoting an action, it becomes synonymous with 'inhabiting' which is 'habitat' in the nominative. The notion of 'habitat' entails the idea of 'living' within an environment where conditions for living are met and sustained. In ecology, it even includes factors abiotic and biotic, as well as the relationships that exist between them that allow life to survive and grow.⁵ This recourse in understanding the term in its ecological sense demonstrates how it is usually brought up in more technical discussions, say, when the lives of endangered animal species are the objects of concern, for instance. In any case, the idea of 'dwelling' leads one to think of 'living within a place'; of settling within a space where life could go on and flourish.

⁴ See Yi-Fu Tuan, "The City: Its Distance from Nature," *The Geographical Review* 68,1 (1978): [1-13] 1.

⁵ "Habitat," last modified May 17, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/science/habitat-biology>.

It is understandable, then, when slogans like "Better dwelling - better living" are popular, for they promote the improvement of urban housing and architecture.⁶ To most of us, these connections are practical and taken for granted - how else can we live if no dwelling places will be built? To someone like Martin Heidegger who profoundly reflected on what it means for humans to dwell on Earth, these cannot be mere coincidences. He situates his thinking within the horizon of two questions: "What is it to dwell?" and "How does building belong to dwelling?"⁷ As a kind of immediate response, Heidegger seems to pose building as the means to the attainment of dwelling as its goal.⁸

Even its etymological roots in both German and Old English - *buan* - suggest the idea of dwelling.⁹ It appears that Heidegger is proposing a necessary connection between the two where one belongs to the other as its telos, but this can be dispelled by counterexamples that demonstrate the act and products of building that do not call to mind the notion of dwelling. For instance, the building of a train station and the built station itself do not make one think of the prospects of settling within a place to live. The same can be said for the building of a skyway and the built skyway itself, and so on. In these and similar situations, there is building but no dwelling. As a point of fact, it sounds intuitive to affirm that not all buildings are constructed so that they can be used as shelter. Most buildings are function-specific, corresponding to the purposes for which they have been built, but select are those built solely for dwelling.

⁶ See Max Ott, "Shaping urban ethics: The 'making-of' a collective housing project at Berlin's river Spree," in Moritz Ege and Johannes Moser (eds.) *Urban Ethics: Conflicts Over the Good and Proper Life in Cities* (London/New York: Routledge, 2021), [147-63], 147.

⁷ Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," trans. Alfred Hofstadter, in *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1971), 143. Hereafter BDT.

⁸ See BDT, 143.

⁹ See BDT, 144.

If building does not encapsulate the meaning of dwelling, then it could be that dwelling surpasses building itself. By reflecting on the real meaning of *buan* in *bauen*, Heidegger believes that he had uncovered what dwelling really is, the meaning that had fallen into oblivion.¹⁰ Building is not just the means to dwelling but rather “building is really dwelling.”¹¹ It is not that we build so that we can dwell; it is that we can only build insofar as we dwell. If Heidegger is right in saying that “dwelling is the manner in which mortals are on earth,” then the building that originates from it is one that “cultivates growing things and...that erects buildings.”¹² From the initial response where building takes precedence over dwelling, Heidegger presents the priority of dwelling that orients the possibility of building.

At this point, we are led to ask beyond the meaning of dwelling the question that should concern us more, if this has something to do with the way we live at all: How, then, do we dwell? To ask this is to ask in another way the assumption that Heidegger associates with dwelling: In what manner are we mortals here on earth? Through another set of linguistic analysis and reflection (*wunian and Friede*), Heidegger arrives at another meaning associated with dwelling: “*sparing and preserving*.”¹³ More importantly, this manner of dwelling is only revealed in the presence of humans. Heidegger furthers this meaning of dwelling by orienting it relative to other elements close to humanity.

To dwell “‘on the earth’ already means ‘under the sky,’” and these “*also* mean ‘remaining before the divinities’ and include a ‘belonging to men’s being with one another.’”¹⁴ Each of these phrases describes an element with which humanity is supposed to establish

¹⁰ See *BDT*, 146.

¹¹ See *BDT*, 146.

¹² See *BDT*, 146.

¹³ See *BDT*, 147.

¹⁴ See *BDT*, 147.

rapport. To this interrelationship, Heidegger ascribes the name *the fourfold*, the intertwining of the earth and the sky and the divinities and the mortals, wherein one cannot *be* without the other three; it is a “simple oneness.”¹⁵ At first glance, this appears to be nothing but an abstract assertion, a metaphysical blabbering, and there are indeed those who think of it in this way.¹⁶ On the contrary, more than being a poetic utterance, the fourfold can reveal to the mindful the appropriate and even practical way of dwelling on earth. The fourfold is preserved by dwelling when it is made present in things; when the four are gathered in the presence of a thing, say, a thing that is built.

For Heidegger, it is in this way that dwelling is simultaneously building, thus, recovering the genuine meaning of building with dwelling as its end. We can use the building up of a house to demonstrate how the fourfold is preserved in building-dwelling. The making of a house suitable for human habitation takes into account the preferences of those who will live in it. The house will require materials like lumber and rocks coming from the earth. The provision of these elements from the earth depends on the clemency of the seasons, as well as the process of construction whose success is eventually determined by being tested by the same season manifested by the sky. The house becomes a dwelling when it attains a harmonious relationship with the other elements of the environment where it is situated: the seen wonders that delight its dwellers, and the unseen elements that inspire them all the same - the divinities. To dwell, therefore, is to be mindful of our belongingness to this fourfold.

With Heidegger’s cryptic yet profound reflection in mind, a more important question surfaces: In our manner of being on earth as humans, are we dwelling or just inhabiting? This Heideggerian

¹⁵ See *BDT*, 148.

¹⁶ See Andrew J. Mitchell, “The fourfold,” in Bret W. Davis (ed.) *Martin Heidegger: Key Concepts* (New York: Routledge, 2014), [208-218] 209.

reflection provides a paradigm through which an urban existentialist reading of *Laudato Si'* can be achieved.

Thought Technologies in Urban Existentialist Thinking

The two senses through which the notion of the 'city' could be understood are key to approaching urban existentialist thinking. On one hand, 'city' pertains to humans themselves who constitute the city as its citizens.¹⁷ On the other hand, 'city' refers to the area itself, and this is what most people think of when the word is uttered.¹⁸ In relation to the fourfold as the paradigm of this paper, it would be fitting to refer to the 'city' in the sense that unifies the environment and its constituents. Precisely this is what Epting understands by 'urban existentialism' (or urban existentialist thinking) which is "about citizens taking responsibility for the city and finding meaning in the process."¹⁹

Simplified further, it speaks about how humans can responsibly relate to the environment. This can be said in many different ways, but it cannot deviate from the point of view perspective taken for granted by this way of thinking. Even if we attempt to seek ways that properly account for the welfare of the environment, the determination of whether or not this has been attained is still subsumed under the human perspective. This is problematic mainly for those who find fault in the predominance of anthropocentric thinking that prioritizes humans in terms of moral consideration.²⁰ In hindsight, it can even be said that the presumed unity that makes dwelling possible is set aside.

¹⁷ See Shane Epting, *Meaning in the Metropolis: Toward an Urban Existentialism* (New York/London: Routledge, forthcoming in 2025), 1. doi: 10.4324/9781003392767.1. Hereafter, MM.

¹⁸ See MM, 1.

¹⁹ See MM, 1, 7.

²⁰ See MM, 5.

On the contrary, it is more obvious that the anthropocentric standpoint cannot be totally overcome since for as long as we get to assume our place within the fourfold, the human perspective will always be implicated. In realizing this, we get to see that it would be enough to begin with what we already know about things nonhuman through the lenses of our humanity, if only for the sake of emphasizing our responsibility to the environment. This weak anthropocentric position would then be enough to fulfill our role within the fourfold, even in a limited manner. It is enough that weak anthropocentrism recognizes how its more radical variant, strong anthropocentrism, enjoined much apathy and violence against the nonhuman constituents that also belong to the same environment where we find ourselves. This capability to recognize this part of its own history suggests that the weak anthropocentrism is also capable of engendering a more charitable consideration for the environment and its nonhuman constituents by deliberately avoiding the destruction that strong anthropocentrism had wrought. In weak anthropocentrism, humans transform their cities to be "more considerate of the nonhuman world while remaining epistemically congruent with the sciences, real-world policy, and the ways that many people probably already view reality."²¹

This latter point on the congruence with various fields and points of view that influence how humans relate with the environment considers other relationships that must arise so that dwelling in the fourfold could hold sway. While it is clear that this plainly means the intervention of many experts as well as the participation of citizens, the recognition of nonhuman contributors appears to be the intended focal point of the city's transformation. More than acknowledging that we cannot survive without the instrumentation of nonhuman entities, we are supposed to see them not merely as instruments but as intrinsically valuable elements of the environment.²² In this sense, the term co-planning can be extended to include

²¹ See MM, 6.

²² See MM, 7.

nonhuman entities on the basis of their *prima facie* contribution to the environment. Of course, nonhuman entities cannot plan, but as the ones being taken into account in the human endeavor to develop the city, they are guaranteed a niche in every decision that humans must come up with.

Out of the co-planning of citizens comes *collaborative authenticity*,²³ and it becomes more authentic if the actions deliberated for the city are not limited to the benefit of the citizens but are inclusive of the nonhuman entities as well. It is most desirable that through the combined efforts of the citizens, the conditions that make city living dreadful be eradicated, and this only becomes genuine when we can affirm the harmonious rapport between humans and their environment evidenced by the latter's flourishing condition. After all, collaborative authenticity not only refers to the process but also to "the fruits of co-planning's ethically guided labor."²⁴

Reading Urban Existentialist Thought in *Laudato Si'*

Let us now turn to *Laudato Si'*; if one were to look for a sentence in the encyclical that resonates with the spirit of urban existentialist thinking, it would be this: "Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home."²⁵ The premise of weak anthropocentrism and the promise of collaborative authenticity is already present in Pope Francis' appeal, and it would be notable to see how these can be made more profound by reflecting on some themes elaborated in the encyclical. An immediate note that can be pointed out, however, is that there is an apparent disparity between the 'city' in urban existentialism and the 'common home' in *Laudato Si'*. This, however, is only superficial. As already mentioned, the notion of the 'city' includes the environment where the citizens are,

²³ See *MM*, 12.

²⁴ See *MM*, 41.

²⁵ See *LS*, n.13.

and while the idea of the 'common home' is more encompassing, the fact that the 'city' can be subsumed under it, alongside discussions in the encyclical on what it means to 'feel at home' within a city, this note can just be set aside.²⁶

Since the encyclical draws mainly from the Christian worldview, it is inevitable that the notion of creation will be brought up vis-a-vis the environment. Included in the idea that all things are creatures of God is the assertion that each has its own purpose too.²⁷ Each purpose is not self-enclosed for the sake of preserving every individual striving to be but is interdependent amidst "their countless diversities and inequalities."²⁸ To recognize this is to cling to a way of life that despises cruelty to other creatures, and this is telling of two things that are interconnected nonetheless - one about our "sense of deep communion with the rest of nature" and one about our treatment of fellow humans.²⁹ On one hand, being human is characterized by responsible stewardship that demands the task of monitoring the status of the environment and nature in its entirety, if only to ensure that it flourishes alongside its human caretakers.³⁰ On the other hand, the same stewardship that humans extend to the rest of creation is supposed to lead each one to a greater degree of caring for fellow humans.

The encyclical is clear on the idea that no matter how much care we exert for the environment, it will never be tantamount to the responsibility that we owe to other human beings.³¹ In fact, the former will just end up in vain if despite all efforts to serve it, acts that affront human dignity are still being permitted to prevail. Worse than this is the reality that many believe themselves to be virtuous

²⁶ See *LS*, n.151.

²⁷ See *LS*, n.84

²⁸ See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n.340; See *LS*, n.86.

²⁹ See *LS*, nos.90-91.

³⁰ See *LS*, n.116.

³¹ See *LS*, n.90.

enough regarding the environment but are apathetic, in actuality, to the conditions of the underprivileged.³² For instance, what value would an agricultural company's advocacy for 'sustainability' be if its existence revels in the exploitation of its laborers by exposing them to harsh working conditions without adequate compensation?³³This dynamic is what weak anthropocentrism is all about.

Even if the environment and its nonhuman constituents are given utmost importance by treating them not merely as means but as ends, "humans' interests remain respected as a highly regarded priority."³⁴ Even if most are ready to accept that "humans can sacrifice for nonhuman life,"³⁵ what ultimately matters is the safekeeping of human life and dignity, only if this implies that the wellbeing of the stewards also ensures the flourishing of the nonhuman and their environment. This is dwelling in the fourfold lived in actuality - one lives for and with the other, and one cannot exist without and apart from the other. Recalling the fourfold brings us to think of interconnectedness in terms of collaboration. In the encyclical, the spirit of something akin to collaborative authenticity inspired by St. Francis of Assisi begins with a sentiment of communion with all creatures.³⁶

This sentiment is accompanied by a sense of responsibility that makes each individual see the meaning inherent in every activity.³⁷ This means that every work done contributes to the thriving of the creation, an integral ecology that benefits the whole. The spirit of this integral ecology is primarily manifest in the *ecology of daily*

³² See *LS*, n.91.

³³ See Eric Gottwald, "Certifying exploitation: Why "sustainable" palm oil production is failing workers," *New Labor Forum* 27, 2 (2018): 74-82.

³⁴ Shane Epting, "On Moral Prioritization in Environmental Ethics: Weak Anthropocentrism for the City," *Environmental Ethics* 39,2 (2017): 131-146.

³⁵ *MM*, 6.

³⁶ See *LS*, n.11.

³⁷ See *LS*, n.125.

life wherein certain elements of city-dwelling can be gleaned. The primary consideration that ensures the possibility of collaboration is "the setting in which people live their lives."³⁸ For instance, the encyclical thinks that a chaotic, noisy, and ugly environment can be overstimulating and non-conducive to individual productivity. In response is the suggestion that "a wholesome social life can light up a seemingly undesirable environment."³⁹

The idea implicit here is that even before actual collaboration for solving common problems, the initiative to build camaraderie with humans we encounter more frequently already accomplishes a necessary portion of collaborative authenticity. The coming together of people from various backgrounds will not be attainable in the first place if individual situations are exceedingly compromised. It may be argued, on the contrary, that alleviating individual difficulties for the sake of people coming together is never achievable; there is just enough on each one's plate to deal with from time to time. However, collaborative authenticity for city-dwelling cannot be "patient for such things if the desired goal of thinking is clarity of thought, manifesting in real-world change in cities."⁴⁰ In other words, if the simple attempt to build connections with neighbors at the very least, for instance, is proving to be almost impossible for many, then it would just be easier to just give up on the hope of dwelling genuinely.

Recapitulation: Dwelling in the City

The encyclical speaks of the city as that which includes and brings people together, capable of making them "have a sense of the whole."⁴¹ The spirit of the Heideggerian fourfold and the invitation

³⁸ *LS*, n.147.

³⁹ *LS*, n.148.

⁴⁰ *MM*, 42.

⁴¹ *LS*, n.151.

to collaboration born out of weak anthropocentrism present us with the right way of thinking about it. The paper is not a proposal that seeks to give ways through which these can be reached. Suffice it to say that amidst ongoing initiatives to think about how to dwell in the city, the decade-old encyclical could be an effective guide in explaining what it means to really dwell. We dwell, not only to inhabit places and survive within existing means. We dwell when we realize that we dwell alongside others, humans and nonhumans alike, and that it is ourselves that we ultimately benefit when we assume the responsibility of stewardship.

The question remains: *Are we 'dwelling' in the city which is situated within our common home?* Perhaps it could be easier to just assume the impossibility of doing so given what we have now, and so move on trying to think of another one that can be found more actualizable. However, “a totally different kind of city” is hard to imagine,” and it is far less realistic to think that we still have the capacities to realize a completely new one apart from what we already have.⁴² Let us just answer instead, then: We are trying to, and we eventually will.

⁴² See Remmon E. Barbaza, “The City as Illusion and Promise,” in Remmon E. Barbaza (ed.) *Making Sense of the City: Public Spaces in the Philippines* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2019), 225.

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The Thomist is no Gnostic: Worldliness in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas

Bryan Lawrence J. Cipres

cipresblj@scs.edu.ph

Abstract: As a thinker, St. Thomas Aquinas sought out truth. To accomplish such a task, he understood that he had to take a holistic gaze at reality, that is to look at the totality of encountered phenomena in the world as they are and to draw ultimate meanings from them by attempting to render them intelligible to the mind. Part and parcel of reality, as St. Thomas and Aristotle before him held, are sensible objects – things firmly in the here and now. This approach also emphasizes the senses as the initial means of attaining knowledge. What all this means then for the Thomist is that, by way of the this-worldly outlook of St. Thomas' thought, he need not to detach himself from this world as such, thereby he clearly is no Gnostic who holds the world in contempt as something evil nor is he a completely otherworldly thinker. All these goes on to show the perennial value of philosophy and truth which is accessible in the here and now whether by the erudite scholars or by common folk.

Keywords: *St. Thomas Aquinas, Thomist, Philosophy, This-worldliness, Truth*

Introduction

Many a person might tend to be dismissive of the enterprise of philosophy as something that may not be for them, possibly thinking that it nothing more than the realm of big words and confusing concepts. Yet for those who may have taken a second look at philosophy and have made the decision to peer more deeply into what philosophy is like, they might very well find out that he or she who

is engaged deeply in the philosophical enterprise is called a philosopher – a “lover of wisdom”. And they might begin to ask, very much in keeping with the spirit of philosophy, “What is a philosopher like? What do the ideas a philosopher espouse reveal about philosophy?”

A philosopher, as many might generally define him as such, might very well be someone engaged in seeking, and understanding fundamental truths about himself, the world, and the others around him, and even God.¹ Dealing with such abstract matters then occupy most of the philosopher’s time as he goes around asking, answering, and disputing questions and answers to life’s perplexing yet basic questions, be they on the level of simple conversations or on the academe. What might we make of the philosopher of the philosopher and the character of philosophy from all this?

Numerous colloquial descriptions of what might it mean to be philosophical can begin to enter the picture. Popular imagination, after perhaps the image of Pilosopo Tasyo of Rizal fame, can picture the philosopher to be someone who ponders over things so much at the risk of being eccentric and misplacing his or her mental powers. On one hand, others may depart somewhat from this image and probably conceive of the philosopher as someone adept in agitating argumentation. Other still may opine that the philosopher is engaged in the business of asking questions and of clarifying thought. Yet others may say that the philosopher ought to be engaged in changing the world in practical ways or in venturing towards the limits of one’s reason.² These descriptions are but a few in the already vast scheme of what people think philosophers and philosophy might be like. These descriptions, varied as they are, seem to reflect only a partial image of philosophy is like.³ What seems needed now is a definition of philosophy which covers its many aspects.

¹ FSU Department of Philosophy, “What is Philosophy?,” Department of Philosophy, last modified 2024, <https://philosophy.fsu.edu/undergraduate-study/why-philosophy/What-is-Philosophy>.

² Cf. Robert Montaña, *Thomistic Ethics* (University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2015), 2.

³ Cf. *Ibid.*

Here is where St. Thomas Aquinas, one of the greatest thinkers in philosophy, as well as in theology, may make his entrance, offering us, by his thought (inspired in no small measure by that of Aristotle⁴) illumination into the matter. Philosophy, as may be gleaned from St. Thomas’ writings, is a science (that is to say, a systematic body of knowledge or a disciplined study)⁵ concerned with probing into all things (that is to say, being) in terms of their ultimate causes, principles, and reasons by means of human reason alone.⁶ It is born of wonder as it has at its heart the fundamental question, “Why?”⁷ It emerges furthermore, that philosophy is an exercise in the natural and spontaneous use of reason in an endeavor to understand reality as it is.⁸ It is, then, for all intents, a contact with reality. And as it is a science, or wisdom⁹, it makes use of receptivity and deepened reflection (thus making it also transcendental in character¹⁰) to arrive at its ideas,¹¹ the goal being truth and ultimately union with God.¹²

From this understanding of what philosophy is, the paper will to proceed to understand better how St. Thomas Aquinas may very well serve as an “antidote”¹³ for certain currents of thought that paint philosophy as an endeavor exclusively for those who possess some special capacity for knowing.¹⁴ The Angelic Doctor’s thought may very well serve to highlight the accessibility of philosophy for

⁴ Cf. Peter Redpath, *A Simplified Introduction to the Wisdom of St. Thomas* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1980), 22.

⁵ Cf. Redpath, *A Simplified Introduction to the Wisdom of St. Thomas*, 21.

⁶ Cf. Claro Ceniza and Romualdo Abulad, *Introduction to Philosophy*, vol. 1 (University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2001), 1.

⁷ Cf. *Ibid.* 1-2.

⁸ Joseph de Torre, *Christian Philosophy* (Makati City: Sinag-tala Publishers, 1980), 21.

⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 42

¹⁰ Cf. Montaña, *Thomistic Ethics*, 3-4.

¹¹ De Torre, *Christian Philosophy*, 41.

¹² *Ibid.*, 42.

¹³ Gilbert Keith Chesterton, *Saint Thomas Aquinas* (1933; repr., New York: Image Books, 1953), 5.

¹⁴ Mariano Artigas, *Philosophy* (1990; repr., Makati City: Sinag-tala Publishers, 2006), 32.

everyone and not just for a select few, seeing as how his thought has been described as being closer to a more “commonsensical” and corporeal understanding of the world as opposed to, say, more “otherworldly” views influenced by Platonic ideas¹⁵ or even from the Gnostics who offer the promise of a “gnosis” – a knowledge that “liberates” one from this imperfect material world.¹⁶

Moreover, philosophy, especially when one follows St. Thomas’ lead, begins to take on a more this-worldly character when it begins on its perennial pursuit of truth. This character is evident in both the philosophical and theological thought of St. Thomas Aquinas as he took on a holistic gaze at reality in his pursuit of truth.¹⁷ This is to say, he looked at the totality of encountered phenomena in the world as his point of departure as he attempted to draw ultimate meanings from them by rendering them intelligible to the mind.¹⁸ In other words, we can say that St. Thomas did not neglect reality; ¹⁹instead, he methodically sought to fully understand and convey it through his thought.²⁰

Taking all that into account, the philosopher as a student of St. Thomas does not appear so otherworldly now as compared to what some may conceive of philosophers. St. Thomas’ philosophy begins to emerge as something firmly rooted in this side of reality yet still transcendent as we can begin to see later on. What this paper will attempt to peer into is how St. Thomas Aquinas, inspired by Aristotle, takes up a “this-worldly” and holistic approach to philosophy through his emphasis on the sensory origins of knowledge thereby grounding truth in the here and now of the physical world in con-

¹⁵ Cf. Chesterton, Saint Thomas Aquinas, 60-62

¹⁶ Cf. Joseph Saranyana, History of Medieval Philosophy (Makati: Sinag-Tala Publishers, 1996), 17.

¹⁷ Cf. Josef Pieper, Guide to Thomas Aquinas (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 44

¹⁸ Cf. Frederick C. Copleston, Aquinas (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1955), 19

¹⁹ Ronald P. McArthur, “The Study of St. Thomas,” Thomas Aquinas College, last modified February 1991, <https://www.thomasaquinas.edu/a-liberating-education/about/seminal-documents/study-st-thomas>.

²⁰ Copleston, Aquinas, 21-22

trast to certain conceptions of philosophy as merely being “otherworldly”, “occult”, or simply wholly unconcerned with immediate realities and what all these may mean for the student of St. Thomas, or in a word, the Thomist.

Aristotle’s Legacy

St. Thomas’ philosophy bearing a worldly or realist character is not something altogether unique to him, nor will St. Thomas probably ever say it is original to him.²¹ His concern, after all, is to know truth wherever it may be found animated by reverence and a relentless will to know.²² This worldly character traces its roots to Aristotle on whom St. Thomas bestowed in his works the title, “The Philosopher.” St. Thomas, taking after Aristotle’s lead, did not neglect in his studies the whole of natural reality as an object. He underscored the vital role that sense perception plays in making sense of natural realities, seeing in it the way whereby one can begin to grasp and make sense of reality in general.²³

Illustrative of this are some of St. Thomas’ assertions in the Summa Theologica, for instance, where he discussed questions concerning how man, as body and soul, understands corporeal realities²⁴ as well as the mode and order of man’s understanding.²⁵ In those discussions, St. Thomas traced the beginning of human knowledge to sense-knowledge derived, of course, from material objects which are abstracted by the mind to derive concepts and ideas as the process of knowing unfolds. Man, by virtue of his mind’s natural cognitive power, rises from sense-findings to concepts.²⁶ In effect,

²¹ Cf. McArthur, “The Study of St. Thomas.”

²² Cf. Étienne Gilson, Wisdom and Love in St. Thomas Aquinas (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995), EPUB, 26

²³ Cf. Robert A. O’Donnell, Hooked on Philosophy: Thomas Aquinas Made Easy (New York: Alba House, 1996), 1-2

²⁴ ST. I. Q84. A6

²⁵ Cf. ST. I. Q85

²⁶ Paul J. Glenn, Tour of the Summa | Precipis of the Summa Theologica of St Thomas Aquinas | Msgr P Glenn, accessed March 5, 2024, <https://www.catholictheology.info/summa-theologica/summapart1.php?q=535>

sense-knowledge is named, by metaphor, as the material cause of intellectual knowledge.²⁷This stress on human knowledge finding its ordinary beginnings from sense perceptions which in turn are derived from objects found in the world helps mark out the “this-worldly” character of St. Thomas’ thought concerning knowledge.

All that considered, it can be said that his line of thought in his discussions of man’s knowledge and intellect are practically elaborations of Aristotle’s ideas.²⁸Take, for instance, the opening lines of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* as we have it today,

All men by nature desire to know. An indication of this is the delight we take in our senses; for even apart from their usefulness they are loved for themselves; and above all others the sense of sight. For not only with a view to action, but even when we are not going to do anything, we prefer seeing (one might say) to everything else. The reason is that this, most of all the senses, makes us know and brings to light many differences between things.²⁹

Aristotle clearly places high regard on the senses and the foundational role it plays in human knowledge. This is in contrast with the views of Plato with whom he disagreed with on the existence of the world of forms as well on matters of knowledge and sense-perception. Aristotle, who rejected the Platonic idea of a world of forms, viewed as real the physical world in which particular things are found. Moreover, he espoused the idea that knowledge begins with the senses and so are not innate in the mind as Plato thought. Innate ideas or principles are absent from St. Thomas’ thought.³⁰There is then an emphasis on paying attention to reality as such, encompassing even those that are sensible, and a penetrating and clarifying analysis into

²⁷ Glenn, *Precis of the Summa*, <https://www.catholictheology.info/summa-theologica/summapart1.php?q=534>

²⁸ A. P. Martinich and Avrum Stroll, “Epistemology - Aquinas, Knowledge, Reason,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last modified July 20, 1998, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/epistemology/St-Thomas-Aquinas>.

²⁹ Aristotle, *Metaphysics in The Philosophy of Aristotle*, trans. W. D. Ross, I.1. 980a

³⁰ Copleston, *Aquinas*, 28

things.³¹Seeing as all this is evident in St. Thomas’ ideas, it is not hard then to trace St. Thomas “this-worldliness” to Aristotle.

“This-Worldliness”

Turning our gaze onto St. Thomas once more, we can begin to see that his following of Aristotle has had a wide-reaching influence on his line of thinking. As Aristotle had a “thisworldly” outlook, so too does St. Thomas.³²It may be helpful at this point to delve a little more into what is meant by “this-worldliness.” “This-worldliness” may be understood here as a focus on earthly realities as such and in so doing accepting them as part of reality. Even those particular objects here on this world (like the flower we see by the wayside or the people walking on the road, and the very ground they walk upon) are very much real and can be found reliable for human efforts to penetrate into and begin to understand reality. An affirmation of the particular senses as well as its faculties follows from this, which leads to a previously unfamiliar mode of seriously making sense of the world.³³

Moreover, these particulars found in the world are not to be taken as shadows or reflections of some mysterious otherworldly reality but they are to be taken in and seen as they are in themselves: “Secundum quod huiusmodi sunt.”³⁴At this point, the contrast against “other-worldliness” begins to be more apparent wherein there could be talk of fleeing to some other world or realm so as to make sense of reality, like the Platonic world of forms for instance.³⁵ The world as such thus is not something inferior and so contemptible, as certain currents of thought would be inclined to say.³⁶There is no talk then of

³¹ Cf. Copleston, *Aquinas*, 36-37

³² Cf. Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, 46

³³ *Ibid.* 44-45

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ It must be noted that St. Thomas formulated a philosophical system that did not dismiss Plato completely. His philosophy, while evidently including Aristotelian elements, also included Platonic and Neo-Platonic influences. cf. Battista Mondin, *A History of Medieval Philosophy* (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2021), 297.

³⁶ Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, 46. This is in no way a sweeping dis-

rejecting this world to flee to some other occult or hidden knowledge to truly take account of all reality. The Gnostics come to mind as an instance.³⁷ It has to be noted that “this-worldliness” here is to be understood in the epistemic sense. It should not be understood in the moralistic sense, as if it is an enjoining of man to occupy himself with worldly pursuits. Rather, “this-worldliness” at its finest means being grounded on the things within this world and accepting them as the points of departure for making better sense of reality.³⁸

Yet with all this talk of and emphasis on this-worldliness, it does not mean that it is all there is of St. Thomas’ thought. Indeed, knowledge begins with sense-experiences but it does not end there.³⁹ Moreover, transcendence is not pushed out of the picture as it still forms a major part of St. Thomas’ thought. There can still be talk of God and the supernatural⁴⁰ while being firmly grounded in this-worldly realities. They may even serve as points of departure for speaking about God.⁴¹ After all, philosophically speaking, it emerges that there is not much ground for holding this world in contempt. And in addition to the strictly philosophical grounds, St. Thomas finds more ground to hold on to this-worldliness: that of the theological.⁴²

It appears that in his task of philosophizing, St. Thomas took in firmly the influence of Christianity and the Bible in addition to that of Aristotle. It would seem that there could be a clash between the Christian Bible and Aristotle, the “pagan.”⁴³ But St. Thomas, who decided for both, cannot be accused of being an infidel to one or the other. In spite of key and fundamental differences, Aristotle and the dismissal of all prevailing currents of thought contemporary to St. Thomas Aquinas as simply being contemptuous of the world. Though there are indeed shades of this world-contemptuous position present in the time of St. Thomas Aquinas, such a sweeping dismissal would be a simplistic view as Pieper notes (Pieper, 46).

³⁷ Cf. Saranyana, *History of Medieval Philosophy*, 17

³⁸ Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, 47

³⁹ O’Donnell, *Hooked on Philosophy*, 6-7

⁴⁰ Cf. Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, 130

⁴¹ Copleston, *Aquinas*, 43

⁴² Pieper, *Guide to Thomas Aquinas*, 129-130

⁴³ Cf. *Ibid.*, 117-118

Bible need not be pitted against each other at first glance.⁴⁴ As we can see, in accepting Aristotle, he did not take on a “pagan” philosophy completely alien to Christianity. Very much in keeping with a spirit of truth-seeking that is at once both Aristotelian and Christian,⁴⁵ St. Thomas recognized something distinctly his own in Aristotle’s affirmation of sensuous objects. It was, as it were, another shade of the Christian affirmation of creation. One need not, therefore, dismiss sensual objects as evil in themselves. They are still creation, and God has in the beginning designed creation to be good, inclusive of corporeal realities.⁴⁶ Moreover, as St. Thomas operates from a distinctly Christian outlook, the Incarnation of Jesus Christ reinforces for him the goodness of creation. An “incarnational” defense of this-worldly reality even begins to take shape. As Christ, the Logos, has taken flesh, one cannot hold that the divine abhors the material. Besides, the sacraments, where spiritual graces are bestowed through material signs, are also illustrative of this dynamic between spirit and matter.⁴⁷ And so, even in his this-worldly outlook, St. Thomas’ characteristic harmony between philosophy and theology still shines through.

The This-worldly Thomist

What now for the thinker who undertakes philosophy under the banner of St. Thomas Aquinas’ thought or, in a word, the Thomist? It would not be surprising for the true-blue Thomist, who has St. Thomas as his magister, to follow St. Thomas in his this-worldly approach to philosophy.

To begin with, the Thomist, as with all philosophers, would see it his task to attempt at an explanation of the real world⁴⁸, to render the world intelligible.⁴⁹ His following of St. Thomas (who in turn followed Aristotle) would land him firmly in the realm of realism.

⁴⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, 49

⁴⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, 125

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 129-130

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 131

⁴⁸ O’Donnell, *Hooked on Philosophy*, 6

⁴⁹ Copleston, *Aquinas*, 19

That is to say, in such a train of thought, there is a clear distinction between the knower and the world that is to be known. The world, then, is an objectum: An object which imposes itself, as it were, on the knower. The world's existence is not dependent on the knower. Whether or not there is a perceiver or a knower, the world would still be.⁵⁰ This-worldliness shows itself more clearly when the sensory origins of knowledge are considered. All knowledge can be traced from sense experiences, that is clear.⁵¹

What results from this is that one begins to take in ordinary things and processes that are often overlooked or taken for granted. In effect, there is no talk of producing "new" information but of giving clarificatory analyses into the nature of things. The world from which the philosopher takes in data to arrive at the truth is the same world as everybody else. The Thomist does not claim for himself a special sphere of reality from which only philosophers are admitted and non-philosophers are rejected. No detachment from the sensible world happens for him. The world of everyone else is his world. The data which he deals with is none other than those drawn from sense experience which is, at any rate, accessible to all, whether philosopher or non-philosopher. What is being done can be described as making explicit the implicit in a non-superfluous manner. It is not so much, as some dismissive of it might think, a common-sense way of understanding turned pedantic.⁵²

From here, it can be said that there then is no whiff of "occultism" in St. Thomas' line of thought as the sensible world as such is valid. The Thomist can say that the processes and realities which he describes are the same as for anyone else. This appreciation of sensible realities and the emphasis laid on them grounds the Thomist firmly upon this world and therefore shields him becoming a kind of "Gnostic," whose "head is above the clouds" and whose knowledge is of an occult origin and nature. Moreover, the world is not despised as evil and fled from as is the case with classical Gnosticism. Such

⁵⁰ O'Donnell, *Hooked on Philosophy*, 6-7

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 1

⁵² Copleston, *Aquinas*, 40-41

an approach to the world is untenable, philosophically and theologically speaking, as St. Thomas has shown. The Thomistic this-worldly attitude can then be taken as something closer to modern scientific views⁵³ and even to the views of the classical British empiricists, for instance.⁵⁴

Furthermore, though much has been said already on the value of the sensible world and the power of the senses to grasp them, there is still a bit of a risk here to run into a form of "Gnosticism" whereby the Thomist would begin to profess that he could:

"...be able to be able to plumb the depths of ultimate reality or... read off, as it were, the contents of the divine mind".⁵⁵

But what again shields the Thomist from such a Gnosticism would be that it is a balanced system. Some would even be inclined to describe such a balance by saying that Thomism has elements which may be singled out as "empiricist" and "rationalist."⁵⁶ Yes, there is much confidence in the power of human faculties and reason, yet at the same time, it is firmly conscious of its limitations. The human faculties cannot (on its own, at any rate) peer into realities that are hidden and firmly separate.⁵⁷ There still is no room for "occult" knowledge in the Thomistic line of thought after all.

More than simply shielding the Thomist from Gnosticism, the balanced perspective that Thomism offers opens up the Thomist to intelligent dialogue with other philosophies while remaining firmly grounded on a holistic appreciation of reality that avoids extremes.

⁵³ James Brent, "Thomistic Epistemology (Aquinas 101)," [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmWmHB50DG0) (The Thomistic Institute, February 11, 2020), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mmWmHB50DG0>.

⁵⁴ Copleston, *Aquinas*, 25

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 253

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* This is not aimed at classifying Thomism firmly within the categories of empiricism and rationalism. What this simply means to say is that there are elements of Thomism that seem to be closer to rationalism and there are some that seem to be closer to empiricism.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 253-254

Thomism thereby is shown capable of painting a just portrait of reality without a hyper fixation on one part to the detriment of the whole.⁵⁸ For instance, the holistic gaze of Thomism shows itself in its capability to take account of the this-worldly, creation, and the other-worldly, the Creator. In other words, God, the Ultimate Reality, and the transcendent all find a place in his philosophical system alongside the created, worldly, and sensible realities. To these ends, St. Thomas' philosophy shows itself truly to be a *philosophia perennis*: a perennial philosophy that is at once living and developing, grounded in common experience with profound metaphysical underpinnings, that continues to stimulate and inspire streams of thought.⁵⁹ Here, St. Thomas once again shows how deservedly he holds the epithet of Doctor Communis – the Common Doctor.

In the final analysis, it emerges that, for the Thomist, one thing alone truly matters: Truth. Truth has been the “one thing necessary” for St. Thomas, so must it be for the Thomist. St. Thomas' passion for the truth has been described by Etienne Gilson:

Were I asked to sum up the main example given to us by our master, I would answer: it is the example of a relentless will to know, coupled with an absolute intellectual respect for truth.⁶⁰

It is worth looking at St. Thomas' this-worldly outlook as it was borne out of his quest for truth wherever it may be found. And speaking of where truth may be found, it is not necessarily confined to concepts or systems new or the old, nor is it solely in the domain of the material or of the spiritual alone. It is not even confined rigidly to the words of St. Thomas nor of Aristotle, as St. Thomas himself would likely agree. Truth is to be found and respected in and out of season, the Thomist's business is simply to understand that truth.⁶¹

Therefore, the perennial philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, under the light of Divine guidance, lends the Thomist a guide into and tools for the perennial quest for truth on which practically everybody embarks

⁵⁸ Ibid., 254

⁵⁹ Ibid., 254-255

⁶⁰ Gilson, *Wisdom and Love*, 26

⁶¹ Cf. Ibid., 31

on.

Conclusion

A charge more often than not made against philosophy and philosophers is that it is too high up in the clouds. In other words, philosophy seems too distant and almost unreal. No one but philosophers get to come close to philosophy as it is in another world. The philosophers appear to be equally so, they seem to be in another realm of experience detached from what non-philosophers would call reality. All these seems to be proven when someone “uninitiated” would begin a foray into philosophy and stumble upon things abstract and beyond him. But is this all that can be said of philosophy and philosophers? In a word, philosophy and philosophers can seem too otherworldly to be taken seriously.

St. Thomas Aquinas, the saintly philosopher-theologian, would show that it is not really so. How was he able to do so? In his works, St. Thomas lays an emphasis on and appreciates sensible realities as such, recognizing them as valid and firmly belonging to reality. Case in point here is his position (following Aristotle) that the origin of knowledge in the senses which pick up sensible objects. The senses and the sensible as valid and real. And so, in St. Thomas' line of thought, no “new” information is really produced, merely a penetrating and clarificatory insight into the nature of reality is present. We can see that St. Thomas' philosophy is grounded on this world as such. It is in these terms that it may be characterized as this-worldly.

The this-worldly outlook of St. Thomas is important for his followers, the Thomists as they may be called, as it shows that the Thomist is no Gnostic. Worldliness is in truth part of their frame of thought. This world cannot be despised and fled from as if it were evil nor can the only knowledge that may count be hidden or occult. Such a position is tenable not only philosophically but also theologically, as can be seen in the Angelic Doctor's theology.

All things now considered, the this-worldliness present in the

Common Doctor's thought can even cast philosophy as a whole in a more favorable light, revealing it not as some occult property of a chosen few set high in some other world but something firmly set in the here and now and so accessible to both philosopher and non-philosopher alike. In the end, as St. Thomas himself has shown, all these things are in view of searching for the perennial quest for that one thing that truly matters: Truth.

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Revaluing Contemplation: Byung-Chul Han and St. Thomas Aquinas Ideas on Vita Contemplativa

Nataniel Fernandez

fernandezna@scs.edu.ph

Abstract: One can observe that modern man already is in a society where achievement becomes the main, even sole, goal. Neo-liberalism highly influenced people to see themselves as subjects of achievement. The society becomes the one that dictates the activities of man, leaving him without freedom. It is observed that in today's world, man submits himself easily to the demands of the particular situation without even thinking. In this paper, we look at the ways of life, namely, Vita Contemplativa and Vita Activa, as means towards liberation from the achievement society. The relevance of Vita Activa is acknowledged as a reminder of our true selves as homo faber, but still looks upon the primacy of Vita Contemplativa. Contemplation and these ideals both feature prominently in the ideas of the contemporary philosopher, Byung-Chul Han, and the Christian thinker St. Thomas Aquinas. This paper shows an approach towards revaluing contemplation, especially as actualized in prayer. The value of taking time to rest and pausing for a while so as to contemplate and encounter the Divine amidst the ever-rising reality of the busy contemporary world is appreciated once more.

Keywords: *Byung-Chul Han, Thomas Aquinas, Achievement Society, Vita Activa, Vita Contemplativa*

The Achievement Society

Today's modern world tends to look at contemplation as merely doing nothing or inactivity; the importance of contemplation is often neglected and held at a not-so-important level. The so-called "achievement society" turned the minds of modern people to the irrelevance of inactivity. Byung Chul-Han, a South Korean-born

philosopher and cultural theorist living in Germany and a professor at Berlin University who is famously known for his books, most particularly *The Burnout Society*, looks at the achievement society as the problem of most people nowadays; it is an excess of positivity that affects us, not just merely socially but also psychologically. Han wrote on the first page of his book *Vita Contemplativa: In Praise of Inactivity*:

We increasingly resemble the sort of active people who ‘roll as the stone rolls, in obedience to the stupidity of the laws of mechanics’. Because we look at life exclusively from the perspective of work and performance, we view inactivity as a deficiency that must be overcome as quickly as possible. Human existence is fully absorbed by activity, and thereby becomes exploitable. We are losing a sense for the kind of inactivity that is not an incapability, not a refusal, not just the absence of activity but a capacity in itself.¹

A problem that is also to be considered is the effect of the ever-active rise of neoliberalism² that constitutes man as a working being, unable to do things outside his work, more precisely, inactivity or contemplation. This problem can be evidently observed in the decrease in religious sense among modern people. The Philippines, even as a country that has held religion or prayer in a very important place since the Spaniards colonized and influenced them, is also experiencing a decline in faith, most especially the decrease in people making time to attend mass every week. A survey done by Social Weather Stations (SWS) from November 21 to November 25, 2020 shows that the number of Filipinos who believe that religion

¹ Byung-Chul Han, *Vita Contemplativa*, Polity Press, 2022, p.8.

² Though not all scholars agree on the meaning of the term, “neoliberalism” is now generally thought to label the philosophical view that a society’s political and economic institutions should be robustly liberal and capitalist, but supplemented by a constitutionally limited democracy and a modest welfare state. Kevin Vallier, “Neoliberalism,” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, June 9, 2021), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/neoliberalism/>.

is “very important” in their lives has gone down by 10 percentage points, from the record high of 83% recorded in December 2019 to 73%³. Perhaps it is because of the centrality or the excess attention on activity and seemingly irrelevance of contemplation. Man who should be capable of knowing and contemplating the transcendent, as Thomas Aquinas would say, is hindered by the busy, in effect burned-out society.

Sundays were usually a special day for prayer and contemplation, but because of the influence of an achievement-driven society, it became also part of the days only for work. We merely think of what is useful, which focuses us on what is material, and forget things that are immaterial yet essential, like prayer.

Because of the demands and current trends influenced by capitalism, most people nowadays always want to achieve something that they think will help them seek out what is true, good, and beautiful. Han reminds us that the problem of today’s achievement-oriented world is that inactivity is something that we must get rid of, but in truth, inactivity constitutes man. Han turns our faces to the reality of excess positivity and invites us to think of the importance of contemplation or inactivity amidst what is happening in our society. The problem is not actually the activity but the excess of it, as our modern society does. Blaise Pascal is famously quoted in his words: “All of humanity’s problems stem from man’s inability to sit quietly in a room alone.”⁴ It encapsulates the reality we are facing right now: the degradation of contemplation and the excess of activity.

³ Gabriel Lalo, *SWS: Number of Filipinos who think religion is ‘very important’ drops from 83% to 73%*, INQUIRER.NET, April 1, 2021, <https://news-info.inquirer.net/1413554/losing-faith-filipinos-who-think-religion-is-very-important-down-survey-says>

⁴ Blaise Pascal, “The Project Gutenberg EBook of Pascal’s Pensées, by Blaise Pascal,” Gutenberg.org, 2019, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/18269/18269-h/18269-h.htm>

Given the background, we shall examine the two ways of life—Vita Activa and Vita Contemplativa—in this essay. The paper will be divided into the following sections: first, it will discuss Hannah Arendt’s argument for Vita Activa and Byung-Chul Han’s critique of it. This part of the paper will go through essential ideas on the active life in order for us to revalue Vita Contemplativa. Second, the significance of Byung-Chul Han’s Vita Contemplativa will be discussed, emphasizing the importance of inactivity in a society that is goal-oriented, constantly active, and ultimately burnt out. We will also examine Thomas Aquinas’ ideals of a contemplative life from a Christian perspective, emphasizing that it is appropriate for man, particularly for the intellect and will. Third, an analysis of the ideas will emphasize the significance of Vita Contemplativa, which allows man to pause and encounter. The paper concludes that, in today’s fast-paced, achievement-driven world, Vita Contemplativa is important because, on the one hand, it encourages us to pause before acting in order to fully realize the action as Han would have thought of it, and, on the other hand, contemplation is defined by Thomas Aquinas as encountering and coming to know and love the Truth Himself—God.

Vita Activa

While we, in this paper, value the importance of Vita Contemplativa, I believe it is also befitting and necessary to glimpse at the idea of Vita Activa, the other way of life that is the ‘opposite’ of contemplation.

Vita Activa, or active life, is usually in contrast with Vita Contemplativa, or life of contemplation. The question that is being asked is: which of these two should take primacy in a man’s life? It has been a mainstay question even since the time of the Greek philosophers, most especially Aristotle, who held contemplation (*theoria*) as the highest form of science, a way of life par excellence, and the source of the highest happiness:

If happiness is activity in accordance with virtue, it is reasonable that it should be in accordance with the highest virtue; and this will be that of the best thing in us. Whether it be reason or something else that is this element which is thought to be our natural ruler and guide and to take thought of things noble and divine, whether it be itself also divine or only the most divine element in us, the activity of this in accordance with its proper virtue will be perfect happiness. That this activity is contemplative we have already said.⁵

On the other hand, Aristotle, at the same time, does pay attention also to the importance of Vita Activa. Aristotle considered the active life of the politically and socially active person to be less perfect, but he also conceded a high rank to this way of life, emphasizing in particular the value of friendship. “In this sense, the contemplative (for Aristotle) seems to be better because it includes the task of the philosopher of studying and reflecting about life affairs.”⁶

Hannah Arendt, a German-American historian and philosopher who wrote the book *The Human Condition* and was one of the most influential 20th-century political theorists, revived during her time the idea of Vita Activa, a way of living she suggested because during her time she experienced a form of government that is totalitarian⁷ and that made man, as she thinks, a product of modernity that is characterized by the loss of the world.⁸ The modernity for

⁵ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Nicomachean Ethics by Aristotle, trans. W. D. Ross, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>.

⁶ Isaias Doleo, “Aristotle’s understanding of happiness and its relation to the active life”, rev. isaias doleo: a christian theist in a postmodern world, January 19, 2021, <https://isaiasdoleo.com/blog/2021/01/19/aristotles-understanding-of-happiness-and-its-relation-to-the-active-life/>

⁷ Totalitarianism is best understood as any system of political ideas that is both thoroughly dictatorial and utopian. Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Accessed February, 17, 2024, <https://iep.utm.edu/totalita/>

⁸ Tatjana Tömmel and Maurizio Passerin d’Entreves, *Hannah Arendt*, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2024 Edition), February 12, 2024, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arendt/#VitaActiLaboWorkActi>

Arendt is the age of mass society... and of the victory of *animal laborans* over *homo faber* and the classical conception of man as *zoon politikon*.⁹ This implies that man is already alienated from his work, the world, and himself. Originally, man should be a natural maker and a political animal, but because of modernity, man has become merely a maker, not out of freedom but because he is bound to make; he is merely an *animal laborans*. That is why Arendt reconceptualized and regained the true meaning of man as a maker, a *homo faber*, and as an active political animal. The loss of man's sense of his work and of the world made Arendt look at Vita Activa again as a way of life.

Byung-Chul Han, in his book *The Burnout Society*, elaborated on Arendt's Vita Activa. In order to give way to his importance of Vita Contemplativa, he wrote:

In *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt seeks to rehabilitate the *vita activa* against the primacy a long tradition has granted the *vita contemplativa* and to articulate its inner richness in a new way. In her estimation, the traditional view has wrongly reduced *vita activa* to mere restlessness: *nec-otium* or *a-scholia*.¹⁰

Arendt's claim believes that the tradition holds the *vita activa* into a mere restlessness and in turn puts the *vita contemplativa* on a higher level, whereas in truth, the tradition (Christian) holds the *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* in harmony. A way of life is at its best when it is lived both contemplatively and actively.¹¹

Furthermore, Arendt believes that action is already in us, but man often neglects it. "Action, she maintains, occasions new possibilities, yet modern humanity passively stands at the mercy of the

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Byung-Chul Han, *The Burnout Society*, Stanford, California: Stanford Briefs, An Imprint Of Stanford University Press, 2015, p.17.

¹¹ Ibid.

anonymous process of living."¹² It is perhaps because man is afraid of committing to action that he uses his thinking to mere calculations, in turn degrading its essence.¹³

What has been written above is just a glimpse of Vita Activa. There is more to say about the importance of an active life. While we appreciate it, contemplation is what we want to present here as a way of life. Arendt, in fact, never disregards contemplation. Because in the last pages of Arendt's *The Human Condition*, she inadvertently endorses Vita Contemplativa. It escapes her notice that the loss of the ability to contemplate—which, among other things, leads to the absolutization of Vita Activa—is also responsible for the hysteria and nervousness of modern society.¹⁴ Neglect of contemplation is also, for her, a cause of the problems of modern society.

Byung-Chul Han's Praise of Inactivity

Byung-Chul Han is best known as "the philosopher who lives life backwards." An article describes Byung-Chul Han as:

...a 64-year-old man who lives life backwards. He's awake when people are sleeping, and goes to bed when others are starting to work. A proudly lazy thinker, he writes just three sentences a day. He spends most of his hours caring for his plants and playing pieces by Bach and Schumann on his Steinway & Sons grand piano. For him, these are the things that truly matter in life.¹⁵

It is quite ironic to believe in a person who lives a life not usual

¹² Han, *The Burnout Society*, p.30.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid, p.36.

¹⁵ Joseba Elola, *Byung-Chul Han, the Philosopher Who Lives Life Backwards: 'We Believe We're Free, but We're the Sexual Organs of Capital,'* EL PAÍS English, October 8, 2023, <https://english.elpais.com/culture/2023-10-08/byung-chul-han-the-philosopher-who-lives-life-backwards-we-believe-were-free-but-were-the-sexual-organs-of-capital.html>.

to people nowadays, but perhaps this is the reason he sees the situation of man more than what every person sees. ‘Living life backwards’ turned him into someone who values contemplation more than the busy life that most people do.

The problem of today’s world for Han is that we are living in a situation where modern man lives a “shallow, achievement society, where all negativity has been erased, edges smoothed, and filters applied. We are showing more of ourselves, often in close-ups, and seeing less of the ‘other.’”¹⁶ We became more self-centered, Han observes; we already looked at ourselves more often than the ‘other’.¹⁷ Because of this egoistic approach of the modern man, we are faced with constant pressure for achievement, success, and self-gratification. We are becoming isolated and mentally ill, detached from nature, authentic experiences, and other people.¹⁸ What we are living right now is an “achievement society,” as opposed to what the 20th century had, a “disciplinary society,” influencing us to become “achievement subjects” and not “obedience subjects.”¹⁹

This situation that we are in right now became the springboard of Han’s philosophy on Vita Contemplativa. The “achievement society” causes man to act immediately according to their needs without even thinking. Contemplation is Han’s strategy for resistance to the violence of positivity that consumes the burnout society.²⁰

¹⁶ Joshua Krook, *The Philosophy of Byung-Chul Han*, New Intrigue, June 28, 2020, <https://newintrigue.com/2020/06/29/the-philosophy-of-byung-chul-han/>.

¹⁷ ‘Other’ is a term used to define another person or people as separate from oneself. Edmund Husserl, identified the Other as one of the conceptual bases of intersubjectivity, of the relations among people., Ted Honderich, *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

¹⁸ Joshua Krook, *The Philosophy of Byung-Chul Han*

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Robert Wyllie, *Byung-Chul Han and the Subversive Power of Contemplation*, Church Life Journal, July 9, 2018, https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/byung-chul-han-and-the-subversive-power-of-contemplation/#_e_dnref2.

In *The Burnout Society*, Han affirmed the unexplicit thought of Friedrich Nietzsche on the revival of Vita Contemplativa. In *The Twilight of the Idols* Nietzsche formulates three tasks where pedagogues are necessary:

One needs to learn to see, to think, and to speak and write. The goal of education, according to Nietzsche, is “noble culture.” Learning to see means “getting your eyes used to calm, to patience, to letting things come to you”—that is, making yourself capable of deep and contemplative attention, casting a long and slow gaze. Such learning-to-see represents the “first preliminary schooling for spirituality [Geistigkeit].” One must learn “not to react immediately to a stimulus, but instead to take control of the inhibiting, excluding instincts.” By the same token, “every characteristic absence of spirituality [Ungeistigkeit], every piece of common vulgarity, is due to an inability to resist a stimulus”—the inability to set a no in opposition. Reacting immediately, yielding to every impulse, already amounts to illness and represents a symptom of exhaustion.²¹

What Nietzsche is suggesting is that we should consider our decisions to act in contemplation. We should do things as a fruit of our thinking; it is something that is not passive. Contemplation is resistance to what the situation is offering us to do. “As a mode of saying no, sovereign action proves more active than any and all hyperactivity, which represents a symptom of mental exhaustion.”²² This idea of Nietzsche was reaffirmed by Han, for he believes that seeing and contemplating is a pedagogy of action. Therefore setting contemplation’s primacy before action.

Arendt has been saying that we are already subjected to our work and must therefore be ousted from it by bringing back the idea that man is a ‘free maker’. Han, on the other hand, responded to this contemporary issue of excess activity and the loss of freedom

²¹ Han, *The Burnout Society*, 38.

²² Ibid., p.39.

in making caused by the modern world by seeing man as an animal laborans and pointing out that man is a naturally contemplative being. Han wrote that “inactivity constitutes the human. The inactivity involved in any action is what makes doing something genuinely human.”²³ He said that “without moments of pause or hesitation, acting deteriorates into blind action and reaction. Without calm, a new barbarism emerges. Silence deepens conversation. Without stillness, there is no music—just sound and noise. Play is the essence of beauty.”²⁴ Basically, inactivity or contemplation is not just an idleness but a ‘pause’ that actualizes.

As a Heideggerian himself, meaning some of his thought is in line with Martin Heidegger’s thought, Han takes Heidegger’s interest in *Gelassenheit*, a term he borrows from the Christian mystical tradition that means “letting things be as they are.”²⁵ Apart from Heidegger, Han also sees Zen as a viewpoint. These two, *Gelassenheit* and Zen, are seen by Han as influential in his way of viewing contemplation. This leads us to his thought that contemplation is a means towards serenity (*Gelassenheit*) and mindfulness (Zen) that is also an event of encountering the Ultimate Other, which is God.

Without a doubt, Han is also someone who is spiritual. He was influenced by some of the known contemplatives, such as Thomas Aquinas, Gregory the Great, and Meister Eckhart. He then defends the mystical tradition from his own spiritual master, Martin Heidegger. Han, indeed, was influenced by Heidegger, more precisely through the works of Heidegger about contemplation; “it is at the heart of Han’s project from the start.”²⁶ In Han’s book *Vita Contemplativa*, he suggests a spiritual approach, he said: “During the Sabbath, all activity must cease. No business may be pursued. Essential

²³ Ibid., p.9.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Wyllie, *Byung-Chul Han and the Subversive Power of Contemplation*.

²⁶ Ibid.

to the Sabbath are inactivity and the suspension of economic life...”²⁷

In addition, Han affirms sleep and boredom as an inactivity. Well, it may sound slothful but it is indeed an inactivity that produces happiness. “Sleep is the highest form of human relaxation, whereas boredom is the highest point of mental relaxation”²⁸, he said. It is also interesting that, for Han, a genuine experience is that which “does not arise out of work and performance. It cannot be created through activity.”²⁹ Genuine experience is a product of passivity or inactivity: “To undergo an experience with something – be it a thing, a person, or a god – means that this something befalls us, strikes us, comes over us, overwhelms and transforms us.”

Han highlighted that contemplation is an inactivity that is neither “incapability nor a refusal of it”. More than that, it is a capacity that has a different approach and is often not realized. The active society thinks that our modern world has no capacity for contemplation, and what has taken importance is the idea of work and activity. Han sees inactivity as something on its own. He said, “Inactivity has a logic of its own, its own language, temporality, architecture, magnificence—even its own magic.”³⁰

In conclusion, it is essential to highlight that Han’s view of inactivity is that it is a way of pausing and reflecting before doing an action, affirming its primacy and importance before to the active life. Moreover, Han views of contemplation are somewhat fragments of Christian ideas as he is influenced by various thinkers, including that which is coming from a Christian upbringing, this will help us that there is this indirect affirmation that Han’s philosophy can be connected to that of Aquinas’.

²⁷ Han, *Vita Contemplativa*, p.10.

²⁸ Ibid., p.19.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid. p.8.

St. Thomas Aquinas and Contemplative Life

It is known that St. Thomas Aquinas belongs to the congregation of the Order of Preachers or Dominicans, named after their founder St. Dominic De Guzman. In accordance with the Rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions of the Order of Preachers, Dominican friars devote their lives to study, preaching and contemplation.

3

Aquinas in his most renowned work the *Summa Theologica*, has written in question 180 of the book the topic of *The Contemplative Life*. In his works, Aquinas, tells us that there are three vocations in life namely: the active life, the contemplative life, and the superior one is the mixed life, both contemplative and active, the vocation of his own order, the Friars Preachers.³² Nevertheless, he looks at Vita Contemplativa as a higher way of life than the active life, Thomas Merton in his *Seven Storey Mountain* wrote:

But St. Thomas also comes out flatly with a pronouncement no less uncompromising than the one we read from “Ubratitem.” *Vita Contemplativa*, he remarks, *simpliciter est melior quam activa* (the contemplative life in itself, by its very nature, is superior to the active life.³³

The contemplative life by Aquinas is “the contemplation of the divine truth, because this contemplation is the end of the whole human life.”³⁴ Supporting this, the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that the end and goal of man’s life is the eternal contempla-

³¹ *What Is a Dominican?*, Dominican Friars Province of St. Joseph, accessed March 3, 2024, <https://opeast.org/vocations/what-is-a-dominican/#:~:text=Augustine%20and%20the%20Constitutions%20of>

³² Thomas Merton, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1999, p.453.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q.180, a.4.

tion of God, the *Beatitudo*.³⁵ At the same time, contemplation requires loving God, for in Charity (Caritas) we find our heart burning with the desire to see the Creator.³⁶ Therefore contemplation must be the proper work of those who love, and in contemplation they must return to love.³⁷ Aquinas got the idea first hand in Aristotle’s thought on Vita Contemplativa, and from pagan thought he baptized it and explained contemplation profoundly in Christian terms.

Aquinas sees contemplative life directly and immediately occupies itself with love of God, than which there is no act more perfect or meritorious. ³⁸

There are degrees of contemplation but how can one reach to its perfection? First, we remember that for Aquinas, contemplation is proper to the intellect, for the subject of contemplation is knowing the truth.³⁹ But cannot be fully in the intellect alone for it is also in the faculty of the will, since it is love.⁴⁰ Through a constant contemplation we ought to know the truth and therefore our knowledge and love of the Divine Truth increases. The contemplative life for Thomas Aquinas comprises two elements which are:

The first is the contemplation of divine truth, the end of all human actions and the fullness of eternal joy. However, this contemplation will only be perfect in the life to come, when we

³⁵ John Paul II, *Catechism of the Catholic Church - PART 3 SECTION 1 CHAPTER 1 ARTICLE 2*, Scborromeo.org, 2019, <http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc/p3s1c1a2.htm>.

³⁶ Ana Rafa Maragno, *Contemplation according to St. Thomas Aquinas – to Contemplate Is to Know and Love!* | *Heralds of the Gospel Magazine*, catholic-magazine.news, July 2023, https://catholicmagazine.news/contemplation-according-to-st-thomas-aquinas-to-contemplate-is-to-know-and-love/#_ednref3.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Merton, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, p.454

³⁹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II-II, q.180, a.1.

⁴⁰ Cf., Ibid.

shall see God face to face.⁴¹

Therefore, it only means that in this life we exercise contemplation, but the most perfect contemplation that can satisfy the intellect and the will is when we are already in eternal contemplation, seeing God face-to-face.⁴² Aquinas suggests that the end goal of our contemplation must be eternal happiness. The created being cannot satisfy man's perfect happiness. Again, this final and perfect happiness, for Aquinas, can consist of nothing else but the vision of the Divine Essence.⁴³ This is the reason why Aquinas held contemplative life in a primacy over active life:

With this in mind, Saint Thomas could not fail to give the highest place to a vocation which, in his eyes, seemed destined to lead men to such a height of contemplation that the soul must overflow and communicate the secrets of the world.⁴⁴

What we have here is that St. Thomas Aquinas sees contemplative life as an exercise of the intellect and of the will, an act of knowing and of loving, a perfection of our being, in this temporal world but will reach its perfection in the world to come. The only action we can take to reach this perfection is to contemplate again and again, a *repetitio*, in order for man to reach his longing for perfect happiness. Only in contemplation can we see God, the eternal and divine truth.

Contemplation is proper to man. In the course of man's life what he will be seeking for, restlessly, is the desire for truth and goodness, but these he can only find in God, the Truth Himself, the

⁴¹ Ana Rafa Maragno, *Contemplation according to St. Thomas Aquinas – to Contemplate Is to Know and Love!*

⁴² Cf. Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Merton, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, p.455

Omnibenevolent one, the Eternal *Beatitudo*, an encounter of everlasting happiness .

Point of Encounter: Pause and Prayer

The ideas of Byung-Chul Han and St. Thomas Aquinas on contemplation cannot be treated exhaustively in this paper. What we have included here are those ideas concerning contemplation that are relevant. Nonetheless, based on the ideas of Byung-Chul Han and St. Thomas Aquinas on contemplation, perhaps we can focus on two ideas about contemplation within the context of the present society right now.

As achievement subjects of society, it is imposed that we should always strive to work untiringly. If we were to face a particular situation, hesitation is not the best choice as the achievement society turns our faces to an excess of positivity. We think that we have no choice, that we are not free. Because of the achievements society, we become pleasers—not of ourselves but of the people we think see what we are doing.

Byung-Chul Han responded to the issue of the achievement society by saying that, yes, activity is important. As *homo faber*, it is our nature to do so. But more to that is the reality of man's capability to contemplate. An excess of positivity for Han is something that will eventually burn us out. Man already forgot rest—to stop for a while, to be inactive. Han believes that man should contemplate. Every time he is faced with a particular situation, he should pause for a while and think before acting for contemplation is freedom. Through contemplation, we act not because society tells us to do so but based on the fruit of our meditation. Basically, Han teaches us to learn to pause, for it is best for us to say “no” sometimes:

Only by the negative means of making-pause [Innehalten] can the subject of action thoroughly measure the sphere of contingency (which is unavailable when one is simply active). Although delaying does not represent a positive deed [Tathandlung], it proves necessary if action is not to sink to the level of laboring.⁴⁵

St. Thomas Aquinas on the other hand sees contemplation as the activity proper to man. He believes that it is man's vocation. Through contemplation, we come to know the truth and at the same time satisfy the will because aside from the intellect contemplation is also a proper to the will because what is being contemplated by man is Divine Truth and Love Himself. Furthermore, contemplation constitutes our being. In other words, contemplation for Aquinas is:

...the terminus of human reasoning; it is the high-point of human understanding; it is this which mirrors the intellectual operation of angels; and it is this climax of understanding that pertains especially to contemplation, and bestows unity on the contemplative life.⁴⁶

The point here is that Byung-Chul Han reminded us that it is best for man to pause sometimes and reflect, especially in the context that he is being in the achievement society. For us not to be burned out, we should contemplate often as a means of coping and, at the same time, exercising our freedom. The ability to pause, in turn, prepares us for an encounter. Contemplation, as St. Thomas Aquinas would say, is an encounter with the Divine.

While there are different approaches to understanding contemplation, there is a common ground for the two philosophers

⁴⁵ Han, *The Burnout Society*, p.40

⁴⁶ Rik van Nieuwenhove, "Aquinas on Contemplation: A Neglected Topic," *European Journal for the Study of Thomas Aquinas* 35, no. 1 (December 1, 2016): 8–33, <https://doi.org/10.2478/ejsta-2016-0001>.

here; they both teach us to pause and always take time to contemplate as a way to have an encounter with the 'other' and most especially the 'Ultimate Other'. Han sees contemplation as a way to resist burnout, while Aquinas views it as a path to understanding the divine truth.

Conclusion

The problem we face right now is that the neoliberalist society has conditioned our minds into ever-constant activity. While we consider activity as truly proper to man, what we have in our modern world is not what it should be. People only see themselves and, in the process, lose their sense of the 'other'. The achievement society drives man into a meaningless excess of positivity, an incapability to pause and to reflect. Unfortunately, the present society is already the one that dictates our activities. In effect, we are already losing our freedom. In order for us to regain our being, as *homo faber*, we should get out of our *animal laborans* tendencies.

An effect of the excess of activity can also be seen in the reality that people nowadays, already, have lost the sense of the transcendence. We are already in a world where we already think that only the material is what is essential. The decrease in the number of people who attend Sunday masses is a proof of such. Most people already think that the day for rest is already unnecessary because they need to work.

Byung-Chul Han pointed out that contemplation is important because it makes us pause and think, in spite of the busy world around us. It is an inactivity that produces genuine happiness and experience. Han suggests and affirms the relevance of contemplation in an ever-active and achievement-centered society. Contemplation takes primacy over activity, for it teaches us to stop and think, even when a particular situation moves us to act. Thomas Aquinas,

in a similar view, thinks that contemplation is appropriate for man because man will always have a restless thirst for goodness and truth, and he can only find these in God.

Byung-Chul Han's rising popularity seems to be a revolution. While he hails philosophically from a postmodernist context and background, especially of an Germanic abode, his perspective is more congenial to the Catholic tradition and is making an unlikely appearance in continental philosophy.⁴⁷ The thoughts of Byung-Chul Han on contemplation indeed fit in the tradition of Christian thought, especially alongside St. Thomas Aquinas, therefore making their philosophy congruent.

While Vita Activa is an important means of regaining our true selves (Homo Faber), as Hannah Arendt would have it, we saw that Vita Contemplativa is more important and affirmed its primacy over Vita Activa. We do not disregard the importance of Vita Activa because both ways of living should go hand in hand, as Byung-Chul Han said: "A vita contemplativa without acting is blind; a vita activa without contemplation is empty,"⁴⁸ At the same time, St. Thomas Aquinas could agree with this statement that the 'mix life' that consists of Vita Activa and Vita Contemplativa is the way of life people should have. He never dismissed the active life, but he admits that the active life can be more perfect under certain circumstances. These circumstances serve to enhance contemplation. Action, such as the practice of virtues, mortification, and charity, is a fruit of contemplation and, after doing so, will prepare man to contemplate again. From this, contemplation can perhaps be considered the source or summit of all activities.⁴⁹ With this, We put the ideas of Byung-Chul Han and St. Thomas Aquinas Vita Contemplativa on a

⁴⁷ Wyllie, *Byung-Chul Han and the Subversive Power of Contemplation*

⁴⁸ Byung-Chul Han, *The Scent of Time : A Philosophical Essay on the Art of Lingerin*, trans. Daniel Steuer (Cambridge Polity, 2017).

⁴⁹ Merton, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, p.454.

higher priority.⁵⁰

To summarize key points clearly, what we have acknowledged based on the given ideas on contemplation is that there is an occurring overemphasis on activity that conditioned the mind's of the present man to always achieve that which are seemingly standards of the society highly driven by the capital, and to address it, man should reclaim its capability and nature to contemplate. The thoughts and ideas of Byung-Chul Han, in truth, affirmed that contemplation is important, as Han highlights the importance of pausing and experiencing genuine happiness through inactivity, and Thomas Aquinas, on the other hand, views it as a necessary means of seeking that which is beautiful, true, and good.

Perhaps, in actualizing these thoughts, concrete examples of the essentiality of contemplation in real-life experiences are: meditations and mindfulness, solitude, prayer, reconnecting with nature, writing one's thoughts and experiences in a journal, introspection, and even in art and creativity, and many more. These examples are in fact ways of knowing oneself and the world. Constant knowing of capabilities and finitudes and the world outside oneself.

The thoughts of Byung-Chul Han and Thomas Aquinas make us aware of our capability to regain our true selves. The act of pausing and contemplation also helps us to encounter the truth. What has been written here, admittedly, cannot exhaust the overflowing ideas of Byung-Chul Han and St. Thomas Aquinas on contemplation, but what we have written here is an approach to revaluing contemplation all the more!

⁵⁰ Cf., *Ibid.*, p.453.

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Pursuit of Truth: Reflections on Lessing and Aquinas

Albert Christian L. Payongayong

payongayongacl@scs.edu.ph

Abstract: The search for truth is the aim of many people in today's contemporary context, it inspired different groups of philosophers. In this essay, the researcher explored the contrasting yet parallel views of Gotthold Ephraim Lessing and St. Thomas Aquinas on the nature of truth. Lessing, an enlightenment-era philosopher, highlighted the value of the journey towards the pursuit of truth over its possession. He emphasized the perpetual evolution of human understanding and the distinction between human and divine knowledge. While St. Thomas Aquinas, a Catholic philosopher and theologian, defines truth as the conformity between intellect and reality. He focused more on the medieval approach, focusing on intellectual conformity and the role of judgement in apprehending truth. Despite these differences, both acknowledge an ultimate truth, with Lessing attributing it solely to God and Aquinas associating it with intellectual conformity to being. Their insights underscore the importance of humility, open-mindedness, and critical thinking in the quest for truth. These philosophical perspectives offer valuable frameworks for navigating contemporary issues, such as misinformation in the digital age and communal discernment processes like the Roman Catholic Church's Synod on Synodality. Ultimately, the views of Lessing and Aquinas highlight the richness of truth and the finitude of human understanding, reinforcing the need for a balanced approach to the pursuit of truth in modern life.

Keywords: *Truth, Pursuit of truth, Humility, Finite, Richness*

Introduction

Throughout history, the pursuit of truth has been a central theme in man's thought. The pursuit of truth has inspired various

philosophers from different periods and schools of thought to have unique perspectives on the nature and the attainment of the matter. Among these thinkers are Gotthold Ephraim Lessing and St. Thomas Aquinas. They presented contrasting yet complementary views on the nature of truth, reflecting the complexities of their respective periods.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's Perspective on Truth

During this period of pursuit, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing offered valuable insights on truth. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing is a German philosopher from the Enlightenment period. This era characterized the burgeoning dawn of reason when intellectual and philosophical exploration challenged established norms and authorities. Once unassailable, the authority of the Church was being questioned, and the power of science was on the rise, heralding a new age of empirical understanding and rational thought. During this time of uncertainty, Lessing had valuable insights on how he promoted the value of the journey towards truth. Lessing, in his work entitled, *A Rejoinder* states:

Not the truth that someone possesses or believes he possesses, but his honest effort to get at the truth constitutes a human being's worth. For it is not through the possession of truth, but through its pursuit, that his powers are enlarged, and it is in this alone that his ever-growing perfection lies. Possession makes us inactive, lazy, and proud.

If God held fast in his right hand the whole of truth and in his left hand only the ever-active quest for truth, albeit with the proviso that I should constantly and eternally err, and said to me: 'Choose!' I would humbly fall upon his left hand and say: 'Father, give! For pure truth is for you alone!'¹

¹ Gottfried Ephraim Lessing, *Philosophical and Theological Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 98.

In this statement, Lessing articulates two primary concepts. Initially, he underscores the inherent imperfection in the pursuit of truth, even within science. This suggests that our understanding of the world perpetually evolves and transcends our existing knowledge. In essence, the totality of the world surpasses the sum of our understanding of it, and Lessing acknowledges the boundaries of finite epistemology. This leads into the second concept: Lessing's recognition of the distinction between humanity and divinity. The human endeavor to transcend our finitude is our species' defining characteristic. However, establishing and adhering to our limitations prevents us from overreaching in our understanding of other concepts in the world. Lessing asserts that we are not divine beings, and should we be presented with the chance to attain divinity, we must emphatically renounce it.

St. Thomas Aquinas's Theory of Truth

Conversely, St. Thomas Aquinas takes a different approach. St. Thomas Aquinas, the great doctor, philosopher, and theologian of the Roman Catholic Church, views truth in *Summa Theologica* as the 'conformity' (or 'adequatio') between mind and reality, expressed as '*adequatio rei et intellectus*.'² For instance, an apple is true because it corresponds to our concept of "apple." Thus, truth is the correspondence between an object and the form of that object in the mind. This emphasizes the active role of the intellect in understanding truth. The apprehension of truth occurs in judgment, where we express this match by connecting two concepts using the verb "to be." This verb affirms that the combination of the two concepts is true, which is the existential meaning of judgment. Therefore, judgment is an action that formally introduces the relation of truth in our intellect.

² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 194), Ia, q. 16, a 1.

Analysis of Lessing and Aquinas

One of the main contrasts between Lessing and Aquinas is their approach to truth. While Lessing values the pursuit of truth more than its possession—suggesting that the journey toward truth enhances human capabilities and contributes to our ongoing perfection—Aquinas, in contrast, focuses on intellectual conformity with reality. He argues that truth is found in our judgments when they align with what exists and reject what does not. Furthermore, Lessing believes that humans can only make approximations toward the ultimate truth, which only God possesses. In contrast, Aquinas suggests that truth resides primarily in the intellect insofar as it conforms to being.

Additionally, Lessing promotes openness to the ideas of others and argues against stopping a conversation because "science says...". He contends that a man who attempts to speak of falsehood, which he believes to be true, is more valuable than one who defends the best and noblest truths with prejudice.³

While these differences are evident, there are also significant parallels in their philosophies. Both philosophers acknowledge the existence of an ultimate truth. Lessing believes that only God possesses this ultimate truth, while Aquinas views it as the 'conformity' or 'adequatio' between mind and reality. Moreover, both Lessing and Aquinas place a high value on truth. Lessing sees the pursuit of truth as contributing to our ever-growing perfection, while Aquinas views truth as what our intellect strives for. Hence, although Lessing and Aquinas have different perspectives on the nature of truth and human understanding, they offer valuable insights into the pursuit and comprehension of truth.

³ Cf., Gottfried Ephraim Lessing, *Philosophical and Theological*, p. 97.

Man's Finitude and the Richness of God in the Pursuit of Truth

A quotation often attributed to St. Thomas Aquinas states, "All the efforts of the human mind cannot exhaust the essence of a single fly," which reflects his thoughts on the finitude of man's intellect. Here, it is apparent that Aquinas discusses the vastness of the world, emphasizing that regardless of man's intellectual prowess and capacity, he remains finite. For him, the mind can constantly be subjected to error. He posits that our understanding of the world is complex because we are bound by our capacity to perceive.

Lessing, on the other hand, as explicated above, believes that man's ability to know the truth is only an approximation; he asserts that man can only search for the truth, as reality always surprises him. Both philosophers recognize the finiteness inherent in man's epistemology and the imperfections that accompany it.

In relation to the richness of God, both acknowledge that there is a richness and transcendence present in the divine. Aquinas posits that ultimate truth resides in the intellect, as it is related to the divine intellect, which transcends mere human comprehension. God, being a divine being, is omniscient and possesses the ultimate capacity to perceive things beyond human understanding. In contrast, Lessing believes that God is the sole possessor of truth, which man never truly possesses. Both philosophers affirm God's richness and transcendence.

Reflections and Implications

As we study the contrasting views of these philosophers, it reveals to us that they offer valuable insights. Lessing's perspective underscores the humility and openness required in the pursuit of truth. He acknowledges that the world continues to develop and reminds us that the journey to find truth is as valuable as the truth itself, emphasizing that humans can only approximate the ultimate

truth, which only God possesses. St. Thomas, on the other hand, offers a more traditional perspective, focusing on truth as intellectual conformity with reality. This view suggests a more objective approach to truth and emphasizes the importance of aligning our minds with reality, especially in a world where relativism is prevalent.

In the context of current events, such as the war in Palestine, where warfare extends to social media, these philosophies provide a helpful framework. Aquinas' emphasis on truth encourages us to critically evaluate the information we encounter, particularly in an age of social media, where misinformation can quickly spread. Meanwhile, Lessing's philosophy promotes open-mindedness, reminding us that our understanding of complex issues can constantly be deepened and refined. Their contributions to the concept of truth demonstrate how to balance an objective, critical mindset with open-mindedness as we navigate the stories of people around us.

These philosophies can also be reflected in the context of the Roman Catholic Church's Synod on Synodality, which refers to a process of communal discernment or walking together. In this aspect of the Church's current stage, the invitation for communion, participation, and mission is made possible by recognizing the diverse perspectives and experiences of the people. Lessing's ideas on the pursuit of truth align with the principles of Synodality, which encourages dialogue and continuous search. His emphasis on humility and open-mindedness in the search for truth resonates with the synodal process. At the same time, St. Thomas' philosophy informs how the synodal process should work by discerning human understanding in relation to divine truth. The ideas of Aquinas resonate with the theological foundation of Synodality, which acknowledges the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit through the collective discernment of the Catholic Church. Overall, dialogue and the continuous search present in the synodal process embody the ideas of Lessing, while the importance of discernment is reflected in St. Thomas Aquinas's views on truth.

To conclude, the contrasting yet complementary views of Lessing and Aquinas highlight the enduring complexity of truth. Both philosophers acknowledge the existence of an ultimate truth and place a high value on it. Their perspectives provide a rich tapestry of philosophical thought on the concept of truth, emphasizing the importance of balancing open-minded exploration with critical evaluation in the pursuit of truth. They remind us of the richness of truth and the finitude of man, reinforcing the significance of humility, open-mindedness, and critical thinking in our pursuit of truth. These insights are particularly relevant in our contemporary context, where the pursuit of truth remains a central theme in our everyday lives.

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Contributors to the issue

FR. ROQUE L. REYES, Ph. D. teaches Metaphysics and Epistemology in San Carlos Seminary. He received his Doctorate in Philosophy from the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome. He is currently also the Chaplain of the School of Economics and the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) where he also teaches the required subjects of the Profession of Faith, the Sacraments and Moral Theology. He is a priest of Opus Dei.

DEVIN R. CALIDAYAN is currently working under the Campus Ministry of Holy Trinity Academy, Balic-Balic, Sampaloc, Manila. He teaches Christian Living Education and Introduction to the Philosophy of the Human Person in the same institution. Mr. Calidayan finished his Bachelor of Arts Major in Philosophy in the Royal and Conciliar San Carlos Seminary, Makati City in 2022.

JOSHUA JOSE R. OCON is currently a graduate student and candidate for the degree M.A. Philosophy at the Ateneo de Manila University, and a faculty member for the Senior High School Department of Our Lady of Perpetual Succor College. He is editor-in-chief of the Socorro: The Academic Journal of Our Lady of Succor College. He obtained his B.A. Philosophy degree, cum laude, from San Carlos Seminary in 2023. His research interests are in the areas of analytic and social epistemology, philosophy of God, science and religion, Thomism. and Habermas.

BRYAN LAWRENCE J. CIPRES is currently in his third year of undergraduate philosophical studies in the San Carlos Seminary as a seminarian for the Diocese of Pasig. His research interests include ancient philosophy, philosophy of religion, and Catholic philosophy.

NATANIEL A. FERNANDEZ is currently in his third year of undergraduate philosophical studies in the San Carlos Seminary as a seminarian for the Diocese of Pasig. His research interests include metaphysics, medieval philosophy, personalism, and the philosophies of Byung-Chul Han and Karol Wojtyła.

ALBERT CHRISTIAN L. PAYONGAYONG is currently in his fourth year of undergraduate philosophical studies in the San Carlos Seminary as a seminarian for the Diocese of Parañaque. His research interests include Christian personalism, phenomenology, medieval philosophy, and the philosophy of Dietrich von Hildebrand..