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*Quid est matrimonium?
Marriage as an Objective Relation.*

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Introduction

The science of sacred doctrine studies God insofar as He has revealed Himself to the world and insofar as He has created this world.¹ This is no small body of knowledge, but rather includes all things of nature and of grace insofar as they are “sub ratione Dei.”² This thesis will focus on the union and bond of marriage insofar as it is an institution of nature. This will require a study into the philosophical and theological background of such an objective binding union. Such natural objectivity is necessary for theology, to account for the whole permanent structure of God’s creation. For this reason, Aquinas includes demonstrations of a more philosophical kind in the preambles to the faith so that these demonstrations are found in sacred theology.

Sicut autem sacra doctrina fundatur supra lumen fidei, ita philosophia fundatur supra lumen naturale rationis; unde impossibile est quod ea que sunt philosophie sint contraria his que sunt fidei, set deficient ab eis, continent tamen aliquas eorum similitudines et quedam ad ea preambular, sicut natura preambular est ad gratiam. ...Sic ergo in sacra doctrina philosophia possumus tripliciter uti: primo ad demonstrandum ea que sunt preambular fidei, que necesse est in fide scire, ut ea que naturalibus rationibus de Deo probantur, ut Deum esse, Deum esse unum, et alia huiusmodi uel de Deo uel de creaturis in philosophia probate, que fides supponit; secundo...³

Such proofs on natural beings, like marriage, under the light of God’s revelation properly belong to the scientific whole of theology.⁴ This scientific holism requires a slow and detailed encounter with any theological topic. The things of God’s creation

¹ cf., Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae. Prima Pars, 1-49*, ed. John Mortensen and Enrique Alarcón, trans. Laurence Shapcote, vol. 13 (Lander, WY: The Aquinas Institute for the Study of Sacred Doctrine, 2012), q. 1, a. 7, resp.

² Loc cit.

³ Thomae de Aquino, “Super Boetium De Trinitate,” in *Tomus L: Super Boetium De Trinitate, Expositio Libri Boetii De Ebdomadibus* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1992), pp. 69-171, 99 (q2 a3 resp.). cf., John F. Wippel, “Thomas Aquinas on Philosophy and the Preambles of Faith,” in *The Science of Being as Being: Metaphysical Investigations*, ed. Gregory T. Doolan (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 2012), pp. 196-220, 196-199; 217; “Human philosophy studies [creatures] precisely insofar as they are creatures, whereas Christian faith considers them not insofar as they are in themselves, for instance, fire insofar as it is fire, but insofar as they represent the divine heights. Hence the philosopher considers those things that belong to creatures in terms of their proper nature, while the Christian believer studies those aspects of creatures that pertain to them insofar as they are related to God, that is, insofar as they are created by him, subject to him, and so on.” (Underlining added.)

⁴ cf., Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 1, a. 2, ad. 2.

must be shown in their proper natural place so that theology cannot be reduced to the focus on supernatural topics as separate from natural institutions and essence.⁵ In this way, marriage will be treated according to the whole of its objective being in this thesis. For this reason, marriage as an objective institution created by God will be the focus of this thesis.⁶

This means that the sacramentality of marriage cannot be the proper focus of this thesis: rather this thesis will attempt to locate the being of marriage, without distinguishing between marriage as a natural datum and marriage as elevated to a sacrament of Christ. Thankfully, the sacramentality of marriage is a true elevation of a natural being and not a substantial alteration, wherefore Pope Leo XIII wrote,

We record what is to all known, and cannot be doubted by any, that God, on the sixth day of creation, having made man from the slime of the earth, and having breathed into his face the breath of life, gave him a companion, whom He miraculously took from the side of Adam when he was locked in sleep. God thus, in His most far-reaching foresight, decreed that this husband and wife should be the natural beginning of the human race, from whom it might be propagated and preserved by an unflinching fruitfulness throughout all futurity of time....From the Gospel we see clearly that this doctrine was declared and openly confirmed by the divine authority of Jesus Christ. He bore witness to the Jews and to His Apostles that marriage, from its institution, should exist between two only, that is, between one man and one woman; that of two they are made, so to say, one flesh; and that the marriage bond is by the will of God so closely and strongly made fast that no man may dissolve it or render it asunder.⁷

⁵ John Paul II, "On the Relationship Between Faith and Reason: Fides Et Ratio," *On the Relationship Between Faith and Reason: Fides Et Ratio* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1999), 83-86 (n. 55). "There are also signs of a resurgence of *fideism*, which fails to recognize the importance of rational knowledge and philosophical discourse for the understanding of faith...One currently widespread symptom of this fideistic tendency is a 'biblicism' which tends to make the reading and exegesis of Sacred Scripture the sole criterion of truth." Again, "Other modes of latent fideism appear in the scant consideration accorded to speculative theology, and in disdain for the classical philosophy from which the terms of both the understanding of faith and the actual formulation of dogma have been drawn."

⁶ For a magisterial example of the fundamental importance of marriage as an objective institution as a point of doctrine, see; Pius XI, "Casti Connubii. Encyclical of Pope Pius XI on Christian Marriage: December 31, 1930," in *The Papal Encyclicals 1903-1939*, ed. Claudia Carlen (Raleigh, NC: The Pierian Press, 1990), pp. 391-414, §5.

⁷ Leo XIII, "Christian Marriage," *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII* (New York, NY: Benziger Brothers, 1903), pp. 58-82, 60 (n.5).

He goes on to say that,

But what was decreed and constituted in respect to marriage by the authority of God has been more fully and more clearly handed down to us, by tradition and the written Word, through the Apostles, those heralds of the laws of God...namely, that Christ our Lord raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament...He not only perfected that love which is according to nature, but also made the naturally indivisible union of one man with one woman far more perfect through the bond of heavenly love.⁸

The doctrine of the Catholic Church is clear—marriage is a datum of the natural order created by God. Even the elevation of this same natural being retains the same essence of marriage in further perfection through Divine grace. As such, that this thesis will treat of the union and bond of marriage directly is acceptable within Catholic theology.

To locate the objective being of the bond of marriage, there will first be a metaphysical recounting of the basic categories of being, with an eye to extended treatment on the category of relation. The different conditions and aspects of relation will be described, largely according to a restriction to real relation but with some space given to relations of reason which go outside of metaphysics proper. This will constitute a philosophical preamble in service of the investigation of the objective being of the institute of marriage. After this, Sacred Scripture will be investigated to draw out how marriage is a joining (union, bond) of subjects naturally capable of being inclined to each other. Finally, based on the Thomistic tradition of theology, marriage will be shown to be mutual real relation. It is the hope of this thesis to contribute a greater categorical depth to the contemporary theology of marriage which has become dominated by a more personalistic and phenomenistic approach, following the preferences of Karol Wojtyła's writings along with some of his magisterial documents as Pope John Paul II (alongside other authors as well). This

⁸ Leo XIII, "Christian Marriage," 63 (n.9).

new movement in theology has emphasized and developed many important points about marriage through a focus on the subjects of marriage; husband and wife. However, the real objectivity of the institution of marriage itself must ever be recalled.⁹ Therefore, this thesis will not enter into dialogue with the huge body of literature that these disciples of Karol Wojtyła have put out since it largely reacts upon modern methods and concerns in philosophy and contemporary pastoral concerns in the Church based on individuality of persons.¹⁰ This is a tactical decision. These tactics are not polemical in intention, but intend to build up a point of marital

⁹ Errors in understanding marriage's fundamental objectivity due to this modern shift to considering marriage through its subjects of husband and wife are not difficult to find. Thus, the common English translations of *Gaudium et Spes* actually create a subjective focus on marriage into this Conciliary Constitution, whereas the Latin original holds to a more traditional theological focus on marriage as an objective institution. The translations prefer to speak of partnership or sharing instead of the objective *communitas* of marriage. While these translations do speak of something real pertaining to marriage, they move to a focus on the subjects instead of the objective institution of marriage, contrary to the mind of the Councilor text. "Intima communitas (partnership; sharing) vitae et amoris coniugal, a creatore condita suisque legibus insturcta, foedere coniuguu seu irrevocabil consensus personali instauratur." Norman P. Tanner, ed., "Constitutio Pastoralis De Ecclesia in Mundo Huius Temporis," in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils.*, vol. II (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990), pp. 1069-1135, 1100 (para. 48). Translations of *communitas* added; "sharing" being preferred by the English translation in the same place in Tanner's volume. For the translation as "partnership," see; "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: Gaudium Et Spes," The Holy See, accessed April 20, 2022, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html, para. 48.

¹⁰ An example of this may be found in an excellent recent essay by Andrzej Kuciński wherein he builds upon Pope St. Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. "In fact, the encounter between a male subject and a female subject suggests that there is a deeper dimension than a temporary (biological) experience of pleasure given to each other without the participation of the totality of one's own person. This dimension of depth rests on the transmission of human life, where two subjects (need to) interact. However, the procreative dimension contains the spiritual aspect of mutual recognition, which the Bible uses as a synonym for sexually 'becoming one flesh.' The law of nature which governs the human order of love cannot be interpreted as a law of biology, but as a rational structural law of moral virtue, which combines *unio* and *procreatio* to create a new level of significance. However, if it is a virtue, an *attitude* and not merely a specific *action*, the unitive and procreative dimensions of the conjugal act may form a unity even when not directly realized..." (underlining added). Without prejudice to the excellent point that there is a deeper reality to men and women's lived encounter in the sexual order and that this must include a genuine procreative and unitive aspect, Kuciński does not move away from focusing on the subjects of male and female and the moral actions and habits in use between them. In searching for a deeper reality, he does not pierce back to an objective institution of nature which God created in which men and women should rightly be if they want to go on and live in the way Kuciński and Paul VI call for. The *res* behind the right sexual relation between men and women is not fully reached in this account, partially because Kuciński's good focuses are elsewhere and partially because the importance of such objects as the real institution of marriage have passed from current memory. Andrzej Kuciński, "Order of Nature--Order of Love: Arguments Against a Naturalistic (Mis-)Interpretation of *Humanae Vitae*," *Nova Et Vetera* 19, no. 1 (2021): pp. 21-31, 24.

theology by other, Scholastic, means.¹¹ Approaching an individual point of creation and of theology, like marriage as an objective institute, from numerous vantages while using different methods contributes to the breadth and depth of sacred doctrine.

Preambula Philosophica: Relations

Aristotle's Ten Categories

To begin the inquiry into the essence of marriage and the human sexes relative to this reality, a philosophical preamble is necessary. In this thesis, the being of relation will be represented generally according to Aristotelian-Thomistic lines. To this end Aristotle's own philosophy of relations will be discussed before moving on to a detailed Thomistic treatment of the same. There are not a great number of texts in Aristotle's works, however, which aid an investigation into the "big-picture" of his categorical understanding of concrete being. Happily, relation is one of the ten most general kinds of beings which Aristotle lists. While he only mentions his categories in five places in the whole of his surviving works and he does not always list all ten, relations are always one of the categories explicitly mentioned in all these lists.¹² Of these mentions, the categories are only incidentally listed in the *Posterior Analytics*, *Topics*, and *Metaphysics XIV*—which passages also do not say much about the distinction between

¹¹ cf., R. R. Reno, "Theology After the Revolution," *First Things* (The Institute on Religion and Public Life, May 2007), <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2007/05/theology-after-the-revolution>.

¹² cf., Paul Studtmann, "Aristotle's Categorical Scheme," in *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle*, ed. Christopher Shields (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 63-80, 65; Aristotle, "Categories," in *Aristotle I: The Categories, On Interpretation, Prior Analytics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), pp. 1-109, 1b25-2a4; Aristotle, "Topics," in *Aristotle II: Posterior Analytics, Topics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 263-739, 103b20-24; Aristotle, "Posterior Analytics," in *Aristotle II: Posterior Analytics, Topics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 1-261, 83b14-18.; Aristotle, *Aristotle XVII: Metaphysics Books I-IX*, trans. Hugh Tredennick, vol. 1 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1933), 1017a25-28; Aristotle, "Metaphysics Books 10-14," in *Aristotle XVIII: Metaphysics, X-XIV; Oeconomica; Magna Moralia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), pp. 1-320, 1089b18-25. All further quotes from these books of Aristotle's will solely include the title of his work and the Bekker number of the cited lines, e.g., *Metaphysics*, 1089b18.

substantial being and accidental being which would help flesh out the nature of categorical relation. Therefore, this thesis will focus on the category of relation in Aristotle's *Categories* and *Metaphysics V*.¹³

Primary Substance: Substances and Their Accidents

A discussion on predicamental or categorical relations must begin by identifying the mode of being that properly belongs to them. Therefore, an overview of Aristotle's view on such modes relative to the categories and the beings which belong to the categories is necessary. First, the mode of being of these ten categories themselves must be explained—that they are the most basic kinds of essences which can be deduced from things. Therefore, concrete things must be distinguished from the kinds of general being which can be abstracted from them. Aristotle says, “secondary substances—those within which, being species, the primary or first are included, and those within which, being genera, the species themselves are contained.”¹⁴ By “the primary or first” in this sentence, Aristotle means primary substance—concrete individuals.¹⁵ While secondary substances will be returned to below, Aristotle names concrete individuals “primary substance” because they are what immediately and properly exist. “‘Substances,’ again,

¹³ When reading the section on the “antepredicamenta” and that of the ten categories together in Aristotle's *Categories*, this treatise on what seems to be pure logic must be moved to a consideration about ontology. In the context of Aristotle's day and his disagreements with the Platonic Academy surrounding the Forms, Aristotle's “antepredicamenta” expresses a thing-orientated theory of how to recognize dissimilarity, identity, and relative similarity in competition to certain discussions within the Platonic Academy. The same apply to Aristotle's distinction of how certain kinds of “beings” are in substances versus how other kinds of “beings” are of substances. That this is in the context of debates surrounding being of the Forms, it is metaphysical. Insofar as it is in the context of human recognition of various kinds of being, it pertains to a mind-dependent science or art. Aristotle himself, however, does not sufficiently specify which of these two focuses he prefers in the *Categories* nor does he express whether such a distinction is of importance to him. Due to this overall context, however, the *Categories* has a distinct harmony with the books of the *Metaphysics*. See, Wolfgang-Rainer Mann, *The Discovery of Things: Aristotle's Categories and Their Context* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3-4 (see footnote 2); *ibid*, 69-71; *ibid*, 188; *ibid*, 191-193; *ibid*, 196-200, 202-204. For the general connection between being (*Metaphysics*) and logic (*Categories*), see; Jacques Maritain, *Formal Logic*, trans. Imelda Choquette (New York, NY: Sheed & Ward, 1937), 12-14; *ibid*, 17-20.

¹⁴ Aristotle, “Categories,” 2a13-15.

¹⁵ *cf.*, *ibid*, 2a11-13.

strictly speaking, applies to first substances only, because they not only underlie but provide all things else with their subjects.”¹⁶ In this way, the most real beings are those things which exist stably through themselves while being the subjects of all other kinds of being.¹⁷ An example of such a stable existing substance is the individual man Socrates. An indicator of the primacy of such a one as Socrates is that he can have many general things predicated of him, for example “Socrates is strong” or “Socrates is in Athens,” but he cannot be predicated of any other thing, as if it would make sense to say “Wisdom is Socrates” or, better, “Wise is Socrates.”

Aristotle makes another distinction, in *Metaphysics* V, between accidental and absolute being.¹⁸ While absolute beings are “those which are indicated by the figures of predication;”¹⁹ meaning that they pertain to the categories of being belonging to the secondary substances, accidental being in their primary senses pertain to concretely existing substances. Accidents are those beings which exist by being in a substantial being, which is often recognized because something is predicated of a subject as being in or belonging to said subject, like when Socrates is called white or philosophical.²⁰ These beings have their existence through being in Socrates as a subject, accidental beings “fall into being through” (*per accidens*) some other subject.²¹ Accidental beings also “cannot exist as apart from the subject referred to.”²² While these accidents are not themselves primary substances, they do have a certain primacy in their own orders (just as substances are divided into primary substances and secondary substances, so are accidents dividable into the primary and into secondary abstract kinds). Thus, the

¹⁶ Ibid, 3a1-3; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1017b10-15.

¹⁷ cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 3a1-3; *ibid*, 4a18-19.

¹⁸ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1017a8-23.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 1017a23-24.

²⁰ cf., *ibid*, 1017a19-23.

²¹ These accidents can then be further divided, most importantly into unnecessary and contingent accidents versus eternally necessary ones, *ibid*, 1025a14-35.

²² Aristotle, “Categories,” 1a23-24.

whiteness which is actually in Socrates is concretely existing in and through Socrates. Yet insofar as this very whiteness is concrete, it is a real being.

Moreover, primary substances never exist except insofar as they have accidents individuating them.²³ An example can be taken from the different ways that things can be substantial. Aristotle says, “All parts [*μέρη*] immanent in things which define and indicate their individuality, and whose destruction causes the destruction of the whole; as, e.g., the plane is essential to the body (as some hold) and the line to the place.”²⁴ Aristotle cites the shape (geometrical quantity or quality depending on context) of bodies as “parts” or *μέρη*—which is different than a modern material concept of “part” as when an atom is part of a molecule or an organ a part of a human being.²⁵ “Part” in this context is an accident of a body which is necessary for it to exist; as how an absolute being, like Socrates, must have a certain height in order for him to exist.²⁶ While Socrates’ substantial being is not predicated of his height, his individuality would fail if he were to lose his bodily extension. Therefore, while substances are that through which accidents exist, accidents are critical to the real existence of substances.

These different kinds of beings, substance (which is in the simplest sense being) and accidental beings; which are themselves diverse according to whether that which is in a substance characterizes its breadth or affection or inclination, etc., are what belong to Aristotle’s categories. Socrates’ substantial being (humanity) thus belongs to the category of substance, his height to the category of quantity, his role as a teacher to Plato to the category of relation, etc. In this way these most remote secondary

²³ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1033b5-1034a9; 1037a26-1037b8.

²⁴ cf., 1017b18-20. Underling added.

²⁵ For how Aristotle speaks of geometrical terms and realities as qualities in certain contexts, *ibid*, 1020b2-8.

²⁶ Aristotle is speaking of “parts” and individual existence in this context to show how there are things which exist in subjects which are themselves analogously named “substance.” This analogy is due to their necessity for the absolute being’s existence.

substances (the ten categories) are the most general essences predicated of individual beings and which apply to such individuals according to the mode of being (substance versus accidents versus type of accidents) of the different categorical essences.

Secondary Substance and the Ten Categories

First secondary substances will be discussed insofar as abstractions from substantial being are prior to and simpler than abstractions from beings which exist through substantial beings (i.e., accidental beings). As quoted above, Aristotle says “secondary substances—those within which, being species, the primary or first are included, and those within which, being genera, the species themselves are contained.”²⁷ These secondary substances are those which exist insofar as they are what contain the essence of the primary substance either immediately or mediately.²⁸ These two senses of “substance” (and, indeed, the ten categories) all correspond to really existing beings—just in many different ways—wherefore all these kinds of beings are related to objective being.²⁹ The distinction between secondary and primary substances is easily seen by comparing whether they can be predicated of another—secondary substances can be predicated of an individual or can have something predicated of them whereas primary substances can only ever have something predicated of them.³⁰ In the case of the secondary substance “human:” “Socrates is human” and “Humans have mass” are possible sentences. Yet, in the case of the primary substance “Socrates:” “Socrates is human” is a possible sentence but “Human (or humanity) is Socrates” is impossible.

²⁷ Aristotle, “Categories,” 2a13-15. Underlining added.

²⁸ cf., *ibid*, 2b3-6; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1017a23-26

²⁹ cf., *ibid*, 1003a33-1003b10.

³⁰ cf., Mann, *Discovery of Things*, 51. “Before proceeding any further, it is important once more to recall that, in the *Categories*, predication is a relation between things, not linguistic items. However, whenever we apply a common name to a thing, this will be a matter of (linguistically) predicating an expression of a (name of a) thing. And, in all cases, if *y* is (ontologically) predicated of *x*, there will be some sentence that expresses that *y* is predicated of *x*.”

Amongst secondary substances, however, there is a distinction of species and genera. Species exist insofar as they are the immediate essential class of all individuals recognizable as being the same.³¹ For example, every individual dog is recognizable as identical in natural kind as members of the same species “Dog.” This class is expressible as the whole essence of its relevant primary substance. Genera exist insofar as they are the remote essential class of specifically same individuals and differing classes of specifically identical individuals—whereby genera are the immediate essential class of similar species.³² For example, the natural kinds, “Dog,” “Cat,” “Bear,” “Man,” etc. are members of the genus of “Animals.” Species or genera are differentiated from each other insofar as they are abstract essences; a single species or single genus is one as an essence. Therefore, species X is different from species Y, even though both are of one genus, by some essential difference.³³ The same can be said of any genus A versus genus B which both belong to a single higher genus. For example, an individual man, Socrates, exists. He is immediately of the same kind of being as all other human persons—whereby they are all of the species of humanity. Humanity itself is similar to the species of other mobile beings who are living—the other animals. As such, humanity and all other species of animals are immediately of the same general kind of being, which is the genus of animality. However, the species of humanity and the species of dog-ness are separated by some essential difference, in this case mankind’s rationality.

This chain of secondary substances which begins with species and is extended to the different genera of being eventually find their term in the irreducible most basic genus of “substance” which all other secondary substances and primary substances

³¹ cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 2b15-22; *ibid.*, 3a10-13.

³² cf., *ibid.*, 2b15-22; *ibid.* 3a13-15; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1024b1-4.

³³ cf., *ibid.*, 1024b10-17.

belong to. In a similar way, when any concretely existing accidental being is considered—first in its own being *per accidens*, then according to its abstract species, and then according to its ever more abstract genera—come to irreducible most basic genera of “quantity,” “quality,” “relation,” etc. From all the various concrete beings, substantial and accidental, there are ten categories.³⁴ That these are the most basic classes containing the essences of different concretely existing beings is deduced by the fact that they are the most basic and universal classes which simple predicates belong to.³⁵ At each stage of this chain, the need for their being some difference which differentiates each kind from all others is necessary. This is not some oddity of metaphysics; it merely means that abstract essences which fundamentally exist relative to some primary substance(s) must be recognizable as the essences of those concrete individual—all the way up to and including the categories themselves.³⁶ While any given person, like Socrates, is contained by the species of humanity, which is in turn contained by the genus of animality, etc., the category of substance is not contained by any other abstract essence. This category is “merely” that sort of being which exists through itself and is the most basic essential class of being which can be predicated of the primary substance, Socrates. For this category to be contained in another class, as if “being” were a single kind which contained the ten categories, this further class must itself be recognizable as divided from all others via some essential difference. However, any reality deducible beyond substance (or the other categories), such as “being” or “unity,” is inherently non-differentiable and belonging to an order which transcends the kind of being deducible from concretely existing things.³⁷ Therefore, as the most general classes deducible from experience, the ten categories are also the most remote

³⁴ cf., Studtmann, “Aristotle's Categorical Scheme,” 65

³⁵ cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 1b22-26.

³⁶ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 998b23-27.

³⁷ cf., *ibid*, 998b17-27;

classes of being.³⁸ The category of relation is one such most basic secondary substance, meaning it is a remote essence which cannot be resolved into another kind of being.

As a caveat before proceeding—any Aristotelian discussion of the categories of being or species versus genera will straddle the apparently logical work of the *Categories* and the apparently ontological collection of works known as the *Metaphysics*. In the *Categories*' treatment on species, genus, and the categories and *Metaphysics* V's treatment on the same there is no internal statement of Aristotle's that these are strictly logical or ontological considerations—he merely considers “ὄντα,”³⁹ “γένος,”⁴⁰ “οὐσία,”⁴¹ “πρὸς τι,”⁴² etc. It is true that the *Categories* focuses more on understating these through recognition and naming than the *Metaphysics*, but that he intends to reduce these to a matter of mere logic in the former is not stated and unclear. That the distinction between a nascent logic and ontology is unclear in Aristotle's own writings is perhaps unsurprising, since he is likely reacting upon the discussions about the Forms in the late Platonic academy.⁴³ For an early debate about formal being to have a hard division between purely logical considerations of abstracted forms and forms insofar as they genuinely exist is too much to expect.

This is not to say that logical considerations are exactly the same as those of being. It is, however, to say that when human mind thinks according to “logical categories,” it is reacting upon objects-as-abstracted according to how they reflect reality formally.⁴⁴ This is because mental beings primarily come into being in the mind

³⁸ cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 2b7-14.

³⁹ cf., *ibid.*, 1a1; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1017a8.

⁴⁰ cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 1b15; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1024a29.

⁴¹ cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 1b11; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1017b10.

⁴² cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 1b27; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1020b26.

⁴³ cf., Mann, *Discovery of Things*, 191-206.

⁴⁴ cf., Jacques Maritain, *Distinguish to Unite or The Degrees of Knowledge*, trans. Gerald B. Phelan, vol. 7 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2014), 37-39; *ibid.*, 76-77; *ibid.*, 89-96; *ibid.*, 142-144.

through sensation and intellectual abstraction.⁴⁵ These considerations are very close to each other, especially when a person is just developing an understanding of these distinctions. The kinship between these considerations is why Jacques Maritain says;

“Since these beings of reason imply in their very notion a relation to something real which is attained by the mind, they are said to be *founded on reality*. It thus happens that a being of reason, which cannot exist outside the mind as it itself is presented to the mind, i.e., as a being, does make manifest, by reason of its foundation in the real, that which exists outside the mind, and it has not even been constructed except for that purpose.”⁴⁶

Categories of being, such as species, genera, and the ten categories themselves, are founded upon the essences of things which exist in concrete individuals—this does not mean that these categories directly are the same as reality itself. It is, however, to say that these “logical beings” genuinely say something about reality. The consideration of these categories, as truly founded in the real, is the bridge between metaphysics and logic.

Category of Relation

At this point the category of relation in Aristotle’s works can be distinguished from the other categories. Distinguishing relation, since it is an accident which only exists through a substance, from the category of substance itself is manifest once the deduction of the modes of being is made. Distinguishing it from the other eight categories of accidents, however, requires one to focus on what “relation” actually means. In fact, Aristotle does not even use a direct name, like “relation,” when speaking about this category. He usually speaks of “πρός τι,”⁴⁷ or a similar phrase, “‘A relative’ translates a phrase consisting of a preposition followed by a word which can function

⁴⁵ cf., *ibid*, 37-41.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 143.

⁴⁷ Aristotle, “Categories,” 1b27; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1017a26-27. For alternative prepositional phrases see, *ibid*, 1020b26-1021b11.

as the interrogative ‘what?’ or the indefinite ‘something.’ In some contexts, the preposition will be rendered by ‘in relation to’ or ‘related to.’”⁴⁸ Categorical relations are, therefore, the towardness, respect for, reference to, habitude, etc. found between substances—which is how Aristotle immediately distinguishes the category of relation from the other modes of being when listing them in the *Categories*. “We call a thing relative, when it is said to be such as it is from its being *of* some other thing or, if not, from its being related to something in some other way.”⁴⁹ The other categories, in themselves, do not have this reference to another. Relations exist through their substance as making the substance of or toward some other. All such realities which are inherently sorts of reference to another fundamentally belong to the category of relation, “Other relatives also there are, such as habit, disposition, perception, position or attitude, knowledge. All these are explained by a reference to something to which they belong, and in no other way whatsoever.”⁵⁰ Such inherent reference towards another is uniquely relational, in distinction from the other accidental categories of being.

Whenever a subject has any such relation toward another thing, this other thing has a returning reference to the original subject, without exception.⁵¹ Whenever Socrates is a teacher to a student—like Plato—Plato will have a relation of being student to his teacher, Socrates. These correlatives, however, are sometimes difficult to identify for various reasons on the level of predication.⁵² Indeed, sometimes correlatives are not things or concepts common to everyday life such that there are

⁴⁸ Aristotle, *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione Translated with Notes and Glossary*, trans. J. L. Ackrill (New York, NY: Clarendon Press, 1985), 78.

⁴⁹ Aristotle, “Categories,” 6a37-39.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 6b1-6.

⁵¹ cf., ibid, 6b29.

⁵² cf., ibid, 6b38-7b14.

common names for them in any given language.⁵³ The relation of “teacher” is a good example, as there is no single English word directly for the relation of teacher to student, as if “teacher-ship” were a word. However, the key of what Aristotle is saying here is that whenever there is a relation, there is a correlate as well. Indeed, to speak of relations in Aristotle is to implicitly speak of a kind of mutuality or of correlates; whenever A is related to B, B is related back to A.

Such correlates do not absolutely have to come into existence at the same time, “Correlatives are commonly held to come into existence together, and this for the most part is true.”⁵⁴ Aristotle even extends this usual existential relation a step further, “to cancel one cancels the other.”⁵⁵ Thus, Socrates first became a teacher when he gained his first disciple and this same disciple immediately became a student to Socrates from the instance that Socrates accepted him—the correlates of teacher and student here come into existence simultaneously. Moreover, as Socrates’ execution killed his ability to teach, so all his disciples’ relations of being students to Socrates were simultaneously killed. Aristotle offers the object of knowledge and knowledge as the example of correlatives whose existence are not necessarily existentially linked to each other. “[T]he object of knowledge is prior to, exists before, knowledge. We gain knowledge, commonly speaking, of things that already exist, for in very few cases or none can our knowledge have come into being along with its own proper object.”⁵⁶ Here Aristotle notes that objects which can be known have an independent existence from any given human person knowing them—the various galaxies of the universe had no difficulty existing before mankind had telescopes strong enough to observe them, study them, or extrapolate them from data drawn from phenomena closer to the Earth.

⁵³ cf., *ibid*, 7a5-23.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 7b15-16.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 7b20.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 7b23-27.

This example of the object of knowledge and knowledge is extended further, however. Not only does the object of knowledge pre-exist the act of knowledge, but the object of knowledge does not cease to exist when no human person has knowledge about it. “If the object no longer exists, there can no longer be any knowledge, there being nothing to know. If, however, of this or that object no knowledge has yet been acquired, yet that object itself may exist.”⁵⁷ Lest anyone think that Aristotle is still only speaking of the coming to be of knowledge, he says that the example of the object of perception and perception acts the same way. “Suppose you cancel the perceptible; you cancel the perception as well. Take away or remove the perception, the perceptible still may exist.”⁵⁸ If the whole research team that discovers the cure for cancer dies before disseminating that knowledge, then the knowledge disappears. But the reality of cancer, its ability to be cured, and the knowability of such a cure would still exist. Or again, that the dwarf planet Pluto exists does not depend on mankind’s ability to optically perceive it or on mankind’s current actual perception of Pluto. In these cases, it is true that the full destruction of any kind of object of knowledge would destroy any knowledge of that kind of being, the reverse is not true—objects of knowledge are existentially independent of any human act of knowing. These kinds of correlates based on knowing and perceiving are exceptions where the correlates are not universally existentially linked, whereas other cases taken from arithmetic, geometry, and social power are universally existentially linked.⁵⁹ Some correlatives are mutually ontologically linked and some are only partially ontologically linked.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 7b29-34.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 7b37-39.

⁵⁹ cf., ibid, 7b15-22.

Kinds of Relations

After having spoken generally of relations it is right to reflect on the three different ways things are relative in Aristotle's *Metaphysics V*. This is especially fitting since this division reflects the differences in correlation just discussed.

Things are called 'relative' (a) In the sense that 'the double' is relative to the half... (b) In the sense that the thing which heats or cuts is relative to the thing heated or cut; and in general the active to the passive. (c) In the sense that the measurable is relative to the measured, and the knowable to knowledge, and the sensible to sensation.⁶⁰

Aristotle goes on to name the first kind the "numerically relative."⁶¹ These three, the numerically relative, the relative of active to the passive, and the relative of measure seem to be split between the first two where correlates are universally existentially linked and the third which is only partially so. Numerical relations, such as those found in geometry and arithmetic are the most obvious examples of this. The equation $2x=y$ equally expresses "x's" relation of being double to "y" and "y's" relation of being half of "x"— $2x=y$ is convertible with $x=y/2$. "Numerical" relations are not strictly mathematical, however, but extend to substances which are specifically (or generically) the same, generically the same, alike through some quality, or equal through the accident of quantity.⁶² "Thus not only are all these things said to be relative in respect of number, but also the 'equal' and 'like' and 'same,' though in another way: for all these terms are used in respect of 'one.'"⁶³ This last clause is of great importance, sameness of essence and likeness of quality are "numerical" only insofar as they pertain to the "one" in any way when said essences and qualities concretely exist in a thing. In this way, one white wall has a "numerical" relation of likeness to a white plate insofar as the two white items can be counted and recognized according to their common

⁶⁰ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1020b26-33.

⁶¹ Ibid, 1020b33-34.

⁶² cf., ibid, 1021a11-14.

⁶³ Ibid, 1021a8-11.

denomination of whiteness. Such countability is due to the essential identity of this *per accidens* quality which exists through differing subjects, which concrete wholes then may be recognized according to that very whiteness.

Relations of action and passion are also inherently correlate precisely because an active power in one correlate and a passive one in the other always have to be present. “Active and passive things are called relative in virtue of an active or passive potentiality or actualization of the potentialities.”⁶⁴ Actualization of potentialities always is existentially correlate with its other—as when Socrates is actually teaching Plato, Plato is always learning from Socrates. Again, if all of Socrates’ students were to die and not be replaced so that there was no one learning from Socrates, then Socrates could not have a relation of being a teacher to anyone—and vice versa. This existential connection between the correlates in both numerical relations and relation of action and passion is admitted by Aristotle, “Thus relative terms which involve number and potentiality are all relative because their very essence contains a reference to something else; but not because something else is related to their essence.”⁶⁵ These kinds of relations are all of the sorts of things which are inherently linked to another, and vice versa; number, essence, quantity, quality, actualization of some potency, and potency for some actualization. All subjects characterized by these are inclined toward another who is itself characterized by one of these, whereby this other is also inclined back to the first subject.

The existential connection of correlates is different in the case of things which are related by some other being referred to it. This is the third way of being relative which Aristotle listed, “that which is measurable or knowable or thinkable is called

⁶⁴ Ibid, 1021b14-16. Note that the case of creation ex nihilo is a separate case of a thing being made, both because Aristotle lacked Christian Revelation and because creation ex nihilo is not creation from pre-existing potentiality.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 1021a27-29.

relative because something else is related to its essence. For ‘thinkable’ signifies that there is a thought which thinks it; but thought is not relative to that of which it is the thought.”⁶⁶ The object of thought, as object, is called “relative” because someone’s thought is referred to it, i.e., objects of thought are only relative insofar as some other thinks of them. In this way, thought itself depends on there being a relevant object for its own existence—no man can think of the nature of roses if these were to cease to exist. The things which are the objects of thought themselves, however, have no ontological connection to any such thinker. To extend the example, neither any given rose nor the species of rose-ness existentially cares about being thought by some human person. Aristotle is, therefore, showing that only one leg of the correlations in this third kind of relation actually predicates something existing between the correlates; that some man thinks rose-ness depends on the reality of the objective rose for this relation to exist. But the returning relation where the act of thought is referred to the object does not have this existential character; that the objective rose is thought of by someone (meaning that the person thinking is related to the being of the rose) does not mean that the rose’s existence is dependent upon the thinker.⁶⁷ That someone begins to think about roses or if every possibility of persons thinking about roses would cease, does not change the existence of the rose—this is precisely what was said above about how there are correlates which do not come into existence simultaneously and correlates which are not canceled or destroyed simultaneously.⁶⁸ Therefore, relations (i.e., correlations) belonging to this third kind are mixed between one relation whose subject (the thinking of roses) depends on the existence of the term of the relation (roses and rose-ness) for its being and another relation whose subject (roses and rose-ness) does

⁶⁶ Ibid, 1021a29-33.

⁶⁷ cf., loc cit.

⁶⁸ cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 7b23-27; *ibid*, 7b29-34.

not depend on the existence of the term (some thinker) for its being. The relations of knowledge and perception discussed above belong to this unique third kind of relation.

Ontological Notions belonging to the Category of Relation

After having explained all this about relations in Aristotle's philosophy, some other relational concepts may be discussed. Of these, accidental union is most important.⁶⁹ In distinguishing the senses of "one," Aristotle wrote, "Most things, then, are said to be 'one' because they produce, or possess, or are affected by, or are related to, some other one thing..."⁷⁰ Therefore, "one" in these external, and therefore accidental, senses can be a relation ("related to" here directly translates "πρός τι," exactly the form which Aristotle prefers for speaking of the Category of Relation). This is unsurprising insofar as Aristotle's own way of speaking places this sense of union amongst those things which exist via action and passion, which distinguishes one of Aristotle's main senses of categorical relations. While this connects accidental union and relation as a matter of definition, it is interesting to note that "having" intimately belongs to this accidental union as well. The Latin translation of Aristotle's text, included in Aquinas' commentary on the *Metaphysics*, translates this occurrence of *πρός τι* as "*habere*." "Plura quidem igitur unum dicuntur per alterum aliquid facere, aut pati, aut *habere*, aut aliquid esse unum."⁷¹ While this is not a logical argument for

⁶⁹ There are other important relational concepts, like ἔξις⁶⁹ (having). Specifically, the sense of "having" that Aristotle recognizes as being a disposition (διάθεσις) is here relevant; "in virtue of which the thing which is disposed is disposed well or badly, and either independently or in relation (πρός ἄλλο) to something else" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1022b10-12). Such disposition is a kind of *per accidens* state⁶⁹ in relation toward another (πρός ἄλλο). This *πρός ἄλλο* disposition is obviously a kind of propositional term for relation, like *πρός τι*, signifying that this disposition a member of the category of relation. Aristotle seems to envision this dispositive having, at least when the *διάθεσις* is ordered toward another, as a moral relation where this other defines the standard of how good the one disposed is. In this way, a man is good insofar as he is well disposed to his spouse, his children, the state, God, etc. cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1022b10-12; *ibid*, 1022b13-14.

⁷⁰ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1016b7-9.

⁷¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, trans. John P. Rowan, vol. 1 (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2020), 422. *Italic added*.

“having” as part of the definition of accidental union, it does show how intimately these concepts are united, at least in the Latin tradition.

It is further interesting to note what Aristotle says about the notion of the “whole.” Aristotle admits that “...’wholeness’ is a kind of ‘oneness.’”⁷² This is because wholeness belongs to those kinds of things which is produced by parts coming together, whereby something accidentally one is made. Thus Aristotle’s first definition of “whole” is, “(a) That from which no part is lacking of those things as composed of which it is called a natural whole.”⁷³ A family is a kind of whole insofar as it is some one thing produced by the existence of many “parts;” a father, mother, and children, who taken together fulfill what it is to be family. This is not only an external union of persons, but it is a union based on many relations taken as parts. These different notions which pertain to categorical relations, such as “union” and “wholeness,” in various ways are deployed when speaking of marriage—for which reason they are mentioned briefly here as a matter of vocabulary. Thus marriage is “one” and a married couple forms (and is productive of) a certain “whole.”⁷⁴

Friendship in Aristotle

This ends what Aristotle himself has to say about the category of relations. However, his philosophy of friendship is a particularly powerful example of the importance of the philosophy of relations and deserves mention in this section. Friendship itself is no mere example of this importance—it is a genuine species of objective relation amongst human subjects. This is something friendship shares with marriage. This is especially

⁷² Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1023b37-1024a21.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 1023b26-28.

⁷⁴ This is not said in prejudice to Aristotle’s limiting the importance of some of these notions when it comes to marriage, “People say that a man ‘has’ (ἔχειν) a wife and a wife, in like manner, a husband. This meaning is very far-fetched. When we say that a man has a wife, then we mean that he lives with her merely.” Aristotle, “The Categories,” 15b18-35.

true insofar as natural friendship does belong to marriage—or at least to the perfection of marriage. To this end, the essence of friendship, *simpliciter*, in the *Nicomachean Ethics* will be quickly recounted in light of Aristotle’s philosophy of relations. Aristotle defines “friends,” in general, as “To be friends therefore, men must (1) feel goodwill for each other, that is, wish each other’s good, and (2) be aware of each other’s goodwill, and (3) the cause of their goodwill must be one of the lovable qualities mentioned above.”⁷⁵ He quickly adds that these last mentioned “qualities,” i.e., the loveable as truly good, the loveable as pleasant, or the useful as productive of something further, are different kinds of quality which divide friendship in general into three different kinds.⁷⁶ As friendship is a matter of the good, there is an obvious hierarchy of analogous kinds of friendship.⁷⁷ Aristotle immediately notes that friendships of utility are the least of all kinds of friendship insofar as the useful exists for the sake of some other thing good in itself.⁷⁸ Thus friendships based on utility are inclined towards other relations based on a more inherent goodness.

Insofar as the relationship exists for mere use it is open to (though not determined to) evil ends or to the most temporary of bonds which last only for however long they are profitable.⁷⁹ While friendships of pleasure are themselves directly ordered to a kind of good, i.e., the good of pleasure, this does not mean that the friendship is inherently ordered to what is truly proper to either person in the relationship.⁸⁰ Insofar as this good of pleasure is only a lesser good, it may actually be an evil in any given instance and will be as short lived as the pleasure derived is.⁸¹ Both of these kinds of

⁷⁵ Aristotle, *Aristotle XIX: The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934), 456-457. Bekker numbers not available in the Loeb edition of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

⁷⁶ cf., *ibid*, 454-455; *ibid*, 456-459.

⁷⁷ cf., *ibid*, 466-469.

⁷⁸ cf., *ibid*, 454-455.

⁷⁹ cf., *ibid*, 464-467; 464-465; 528-529.

⁸⁰ cf., *ibid*, 148-151; 412-415; 432-443.

⁸¹ cf., *ibid*, 466-467; 458-459; 460-461; 516-519; 528-529.

friendship, therefore, equivocate on the goodness which a friend most perfectly should find loveable in another and upon the most proper end which a perfect friend would wish for the other.⁸² Indeed, “in a friendship based on utility or on pleasure men love their friend for their own good or their own pleasure, and not as being the person loved, but as useful or agreeable. And therefore these friendships are based on an accident.”⁸³ The external aspect of use or pleasure for which a person is loved is a mere accident of their person and does not holistically characterize them.⁸⁴ Perfect friendship is based on loving another for their whole person insofar as they are truly good. These lesser kinds of friendship are discussed here so that they may be set aside in favor of friendship, simply speaking. “The perfect form of friendship is that between the good, and those who resemble each other in virtue.”⁸⁵ This is not to say that the pleasure and aid are not found in perfect friendships—rather the higher the kind of friendship the more it will include the lower kinds.⁸⁶ Friendships of virtue will be helpful and pleasurable. Going forward only friendship between the virtuous for the sake of the good will be discussed, but much of what is said actually applies to friendship in general.

Perfect friendship is found when a truly virtuous person wishes genuine good for another. This other must himself be similarly good to the first and must return the same kind of regard to the first.⁸⁷ Moreover, this all has to be distinctly known and

⁸² cf., *ibid*, 468-469.

⁸³ *Ibid*, 458-459.

⁸⁴ cf., *loc cit*.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 460-461.

⁸⁶ cf., *ibid*, 462-463. “Such friendship is naturally permanent, since it combines in itself all the attributes that friends ought to possess. All affection is based on good or on pleasure, either absolutely or relative to the person who feels it, and is prompted by similarity of some sort; but this friendship possesses all these attributes in the friends themselves, for they are alike, *et cetera*, in that way. Also the absolute good is pleasant absolutely as well; but the absolutely good and pleasant are the chief objects of affection; therefore it is between good men that affection and friendship exist in their fullest and best form.”

⁸⁷ cf., *ibid*, 460-461.

intended by both parties.⁸⁸ The foundation of all friendship, which is epitomized here, is that each person must be similar to the other in goodness and must make a choice relative to this same other person for there to be a friendship.⁸⁹ “Liking seems to be an emotion, friendship a fixed disposition, for liking can be felt even for inanimate things, but reciprocal liking involves deliberate choice, and this springs from a fixed disposition.”⁹⁰ Through this similarity in each person’s virtue, their knowledge of the other’s virtues, and their distinct act of the will to love the other, each friend must have a numerical relation for the other based on their similar qualities of goodness and a truly willed relation of the soul, a loving inclination, for the other.

Moreover, these relations must always be mutual between both friends and known to be mutual. “[P]ersons who wish another good for his own sake, if the feeling is not reciprocated, are merely said to feel goodwill for him: only when mutual is such goodwill termed friendship. And perhaps we should also add the qualification that the feeling of goodwill must be known to its object.”⁹¹ If the love of the other person for his own sake is not reciprocated, then the two persons do not have a bond between them. Moreover, even if this mutual love is present, but it is not known to exist, then the friendship is not complete. A man’s deliberate action based on comprehension of another’s goodness requires knowledge that this same other person loves in return—otherwise there is an imperfection in comprehension and deliberate choice. This imperfection then extends to how one would act with the other. Most practically, nothing from the one who is loved would be expected in return—nor would contact with this other likely be maintained. Such a relationship does not fit the perfect communion of friendship.

⁸⁸ cf., *ibid*, 462-463; 470-471.

⁸⁹ cf., *ibid*, 460-461; 478-479; 482-483.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 470-471.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 456-457.

Much can be said about the nature of simple virtue belonging to each individual and the simple goodness that each must intend for the other. However, the key here is that the virtues of each friend must be of a similar degree of goodness. They must “resemble each other in virtue. For these friends wish each alike the other’s good in respect of their goodness, and they are good in themselves.”⁹² Moreover, they wish this very good for the other for the other’s sake simply. Therefore, each friend resembles the other according to this mutuality of goodness. While some deviation from identity of virtue is possible, there must always be a relative proportionality of virtue, and therefore of love for the other, between both friends.⁹³

The affection rendered in these various unequal friendships should also be proportionate: the better of the two parties, . . . should receive more affection than he bestows; since when the affection rendered is proportionate to desert, this produces equality in a sense between the parties, and equality is felt to be an essential element of friendship.⁹⁴

At a certain point, the proportion becomes so distant that no friendship is possible anymore.⁹⁵ Ideally, however, there will be true equality between friends,

And in loving their friend they love their own good, for the good man in becoming dear to another becomes that other’s good. Each party therefore both loves his own good and also makes an equivalent return by wishing the other’s good, and by affording him pleasure; for there is a saying, ‘Amity is equality,’ . . .⁹⁶

This similarity, or indeed near equality, in virtue corresponds to what Aristotle says about numerical relations in *Metaphysics V*—relations of likeness (ὁμοία) are found where the qualities belonging to substances are of one kind.⁹⁷ Perfect friends’ moral character is highly virtuous and truly good, which provides this sameness. In this way friendship is a mutual real “numerical” relation of qualitative likeness.

⁹² Ibid, 460-461.

⁹³ cf., ibid, 474-475.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 478-479. cf., 482-483.

⁹⁵ cf., ibid, 478-479.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 470-471. cf., ibid, 474-475.

⁹⁷ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a8-11.

That each friend is really alike the other according to their virtues is not enough to account for their friendship, however. Both friends must genuinely choose to wish the true good for the other and they must mutually know that they have this relationship together. Such comprehension and deliberate judgment for a friendship takes a great deal of time and proximity to achieve. “[T]hey require time and intimacy...you cannot admit him to friendship or really be friends, before each has shown the other that he is worthy of friendship and has won his confidence.”⁹⁸ However, once achieved this adds a relation, or relations, of mind-dependent measure to the numerical relation just mentioned.

Relations of measure encompass knowledge and perception according to Aristotle.⁹⁹ The only act of the rational soul not included is the will.¹⁰⁰ Friendship, however, encompasses the will when a man must choose to love his friend for the friend’s own sake. Some relational account of the will is therefore necessary. It would seem that, insofar as the will depends upon the intellect, the will must be the grounds for a categorical relation of the same overall kind as the intellect. Thus, Aristotle says, “the cause of action...is choice, and the cause of choice is desire and reasoning directed to some end. Hence choice necessarily involves both intellect or thought.”¹⁰¹ Since the will involves knowledge, there is a structural similarity in how a person knows an object and how he wills relative to some object. The action of knowing which requires a relation is similar to the action of willing, meaning that the will also is relational in a way similar to knowledge’s relation of measure. Thus, while the intellect’s active consideration of any object depends upon the existence of that object, but the object’s

⁹⁸ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 462-463.

⁹⁹ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a27-1021b4.

¹⁰⁰ cf., Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 326-329.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 328-329.

existence does not depend upon the existence of any person's thinking of it;¹⁰² so the will's determined love for some object depends upon the existence of that desirable object, whereas the existence of that object does not depend on some person loving it. Therefore, since friendship requires that both friends know the other to be truly virtuous and know that they are both mutually inclined toward each other in accord with that virtue; each friend will have a relation of knowledge to the other. Simultaneously, both friends must genuinely be so inclined to each other both in light of their virtues and for the good of the other as such. This then would be another relation of measure belonging to the will, not the intellect.

These relations of measure in friendship are very complex. Aristotle notes that some relations do not have absolute co-existence between correlates, where he gives relations of knowledge and perception as examples.¹⁰³ Therefore, for the case of the relation of knowledge found in friendship—man A's knowledge of another man, B, as one who is truly good and who has goodwill for A, only exists insofar as man B objectively is such a person. However, man B's existence is not dependent upon man A's knowledge of him or A's friendship for him. This non-dependence pertains both to B's being as a good man and as a man who has goodwill for A. Therefore, man A's relation of knowledge to man B is one of existential dependence, but man B's relation of being known by A is not one of existential dependence. However, since friendships must be mutual to be anything more than goodwill, friendship between man A and man B depends upon man B also knowing the virtues of friend A and knowing that man A loves him (man B). Then the same statements about existential dependence and non-dependence in this relation from man B to man A apply again. Two whole correlations

¹⁰² cf., Aristotle "Categories," 7b23-34.

¹⁰³ cf., *ibid*, 7b23-8a12.

of measure according to knowledge must exist between men A and B to categorically explain the knowledge needed for their friendship! The same is also the case to explain the love needed for their friendship. Therefore, when taking the whole of friendship between men A and B, there must be one numerical correlation of likeness in goodness between them, two correlations of measure according to knowledge, and two correlations of measure according to love.

This is a marvelous and very pedantic level of complexity! Insofar as friendships of utility and pleasure analogously fulfill what the definition of friendship, the same would be said of them. In these ways friendship is of the moral order and is a correlation partially real and partially mind-dependent. Indeed, since friendships must be chosen and are not indissoluble, they are ultimately correlations mixed between real relations and mind-dependent relations. Categorically parsing complex human realities, like the nature of friendship, requires many aspects to understand, or better—to surround—it's being. However, to delay and investigate something, like friendship, in this way can be fruitful if for no other reason, for the sake of comparing with others of the same category.¹⁰⁴ While much more could be said of both friendship in general and of perfect friendship, indeed many things of greater importance, it is time to move to St. Thomas Aquinas' philosophy of categorical relations. Friendship as a member of the category of relation will return below as closely similar to, though not an absolutely necessary component of, marriage.

¹⁰⁴ For which reason it may be appropriate to say that Aristotle includes some philosophy of marriage within his theory of friendship; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 476-477; 492-493; 494-495; 502-503.

The Category of Relation in St. Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas was a Master of the Sacred Page and rarely wrote as a pure philosopher in the way Aristotle did. It is true that Aquinas left some commentaries on philosophical works, mainly on Aristotle's works, and wrote some *opuscula* of his own on philosophical topics—but the vast majority of his work was overtly Scriptural and doctrinal. For this reason, essentially all of his thought on and use of the category of relations is found in theology proper, even though it retains its inherent status of being a naturally knowable kind of being. This is very convenient because Aquinas' theological approach allows for certain aspects of categorical relations to come into greater relief—and the theological importance that relations have has allowed them to receive greater reflection than other categories amongst the disciples of the Angelic Doctor. However due to categorical relation's place within Aquinas' theology, usually in his Trinitarian theology and theology of creation, it must always be born in mind that the description going forward in this part of the thesis belongs to the internal structure of created being. Following this description, the Thomistic account of relation will be deployed within the theology of marriage.

As such, Aquinas' own developed notion of relations, building upon the Aristotelian theory, will be described. This will be broken into how categorical relations are accidental and into how they are, amongst the kinds of accidental beings, uniquely characterized as *ad aliud*. The greatest amount of space, however, will be given over to the developed Thomistic philosophy of the essence and aspects of real relations, with an eye to their later application to the case of marriage. Incidentally, categorical relations, i.e., real relations, will be distinguished from relations of reason. While real relations—indeed *ens realis*—are the focus of this thesis, *ens rationis* must

be considered in the theology of marriage due to the correlations of mixed real dependency and independence found in the relations founded upon the human mind.

Relations as Unique Accidents

As described above, Aristotle lists nine kinds of beings which only exist by inhering in and are only concretely spoken of as predicated of a substantial being or subject.¹⁰⁵

These different kinds of accidents all share a certain common trait—that they inhere in a subject (as mentioned just above). Amongst these nine categories of *per accidens* beings there are differences in the mode of inherence—the most obvious of which divides the category of relation from the other eight categories. St. Thomas Aquinas uses the categories of quantity and quality as the most manifest of these eight categories in contrast to relation, “relation differs from quantity and quality in that quantity and quality are accidents residing in the subject, whereas relation, as Boethius says (*De Trin.*), signifies something not as adhering to a subject but as passing from it to something else.”¹⁰⁶ Here, the eight categories which include quantity and quality all inhere in their subject simply. Their orientation is absolutely to the subject in which they exist *per accidens*. The category of relation, however, inheres in its subject “in a relational way,”¹⁰⁷ for example, “through an ordering of Socrates towards Alkibiades.”¹⁰⁸ The former predicates a self-orientation of accident to subject, the latter predicates an orientation to another by the accident in its subject. When Socrates is called “white,” the “whiteness” is in simple reference to his own

¹⁰⁵ cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 1b25-2a4.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *On the Power of God*, trans. The English Dominican Fathers (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1952), Q.7 A8, resp. cf., Mikail Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations: A Topic Which Aquinas Himself Perceives as Foundational to Theology,” *European Journal for the Study of Thomas Aquinas* 38 (June 11, 2020): pp. 15-32, <https://doi.org/10.2478/ejsta-2020-0002>, 19.

¹⁰⁷ Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 19.

¹⁰⁸ Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 19.

self while inhering in him. When Socrates is named “father,” the “paternity” inheres in him by orientating him to another. Thus the common characteristic of inherence which each category of accidental being shares is modulated between relation and the other eight categories.

Nor does Aquinas merely posit this difference—it is experientially evident, as his confrère John of St. Thomas (Poinsot) pointed out.

“We know there are forms of quantity and quality from seeing their effects. In the same way, from seeing in the world of nature the effect of somethings ordered and having a condition relative to other things, such as similitude, paternity, order, etc.; and from seeing that in these things this effect of respecting is without admixture of any absolute rationale, that their whole being consists in a respect; it is from seeing this, I say, that we best gather that there is this pure sort of relative being, just as we gather from absolute effects that there are absolute entities. Nor is greater experience needed for this than in the case of other accidental forms where we experience the effects, to be sure, but not their distinction from substance.”¹⁰⁹

Therefore, the recognition of a distinction in kinds of accidents is evident from the experience of effects due to order. This recognition is experientially distinct from the experience of effects that are not in themselves ordered to something other than their direct cause.¹¹⁰ In this way the experience of an arroyo (wash, periodically dry creek) indicates both its immediate cause (moving water) and also indicates natural incline, long-term relations of precipitation to pre-existing climate and erosion, and direction toward a more stable water source. This indicates a relation between subject (elevation of the ground) and term (water collection at a lower elevation) through some foundational cause in the subject (receptivity to water and directed water flow). This is opposed to the experience of any given height in a person, which absolutely indicates a quality inhering in some bodily thing. This consideration of experience

¹⁰⁹ Joannis a S. Thoma, *Tomus Primus: Logica*, Nova Editio (Parisiis: Ludovicus Vivès, 1883), 497 (II, q17, a1); John Poinsot, *Tractatus De Signis: The Semiotic of John Poinsot*, trans. John N. Deely, 1st ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985), 86.

¹¹⁰ cf., Poinsot, *Tractatus De Signis*, 86 (footnote 16).

shows that this distinction between the category of relation and the other eight categories of accidents is not only a mental distinction of Aquinas' philosophy, but is something in the world.

This modulation is directly connected to the proper characteristic of relation. As relation inheres in its subject by way of orientating the subject to another, its proper essence is to be toward another thing.

But the true idea of relation is not taken from its respect to that in which it is, but from its respect to something outside. So if we consider even in creatures, relations formally as such, in that aspect they are said to be assistant, and not intrinsically affixed, for, in this way, they signify a respect which affects a thing related and tends from that thing to something else...¹¹¹

Aquinas makes comparison, again, to other categories of accidents. For example, the proper essence of quality is the relevant disposition of the substance in which it exists.¹¹² Here, the essence of quality, proper to it alone, does not add any orientation to its subject beyond the inherence of the disposition to said subject. The opposite is said of relation—“To be relative is to be in relation to something else.”¹¹³ Not only is relation's inherence in its subject opened beyond the subject, such that its existence *per accidens* is not fully contained by the inherence, but it ontically is the towardness which the subject has to another thing. This is very easily seen when “relation” is given its proper Greek name that Aristotle uses or one of the preferred ways that the Scholastics translated it. These languages name relation “related to what;” in Greek “πρός τι” and in Latin “ad aliquid.”¹¹⁴ It would be good to remember here, however, that this towardness is not the locus of relation's being. “Sed relatio est aliquid

¹¹¹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 28, a. 2, *resp. cf.*, Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 18.

¹¹² *cf.*, Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 28, a. 2, *resp.*

¹¹³ Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 19.

¹¹⁴ Aristotle, “Categories,” 1b26; Aristoteles, “Translatio Guillelmi De Moerbeka: Praedicamenta Aristotelis,” in *Categoriae Vel Predicamenta*, ed. Laurentius Minio-Paluello (Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1961), pp. 81-117, 86 (1b27).

secundum esse suum quod habet in subjecto; sed secundum rationem suam non habet quod sit aliquid, sed solum quod ad aliud referatur; unde secundum rationem suam non ponit aliquid in subjecto.”¹¹⁵ While relation is properly characterized and most important as *ad aliquid*, its being—its thingness—is due to its accidental character, which *esse* is not passed on to its proper characteristic of referral.

Real Relations as Opposed to Relations of Reason: The Subject of a Relation

The category of relation, therefore, is defined according to two aspects, “(1) inasmuch as it is an accident, it inheres in a subject (accidental *esse* of the relation); (2) but ‘as relation,’ that is to say, in its proper formal *ratio*, the relation does not regard the subject which bears the relation, but it concerns only the connection (*respectus*) to something else.”¹¹⁶ Relation, insofar as it really exists, is that which exists *per accidens* in a subject making it to be (εἶναι) of another subject or orientating (πρὸς) it to another subject.¹¹⁷ That relation can be defined with an option between being and orientation implies that there is a key differentiation amongst relations. While this Aristotle did not develop this distinction within relation, the fact that it can be perceived in a nascent fashion in his philosophy is important insofar as it justifies Aquinas’ own focus on the distinction and insofar as Aquinas explains diverse parts of a philosophy of relations through this very distinction. Aquinas defines categorical relations in his treatise on the Trinity. He is here focusing on categorical relations insofar as they are truly natural and actually exist.

¹¹⁵ Thomae Aquinatis, *In Quattuor Libros Sententiarum*, ed. Roberto Busa, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Friedrich Frommann Verlag Günther Holzboog, 1980), 57 (Bk. 1, d. 20, q. 1, a. 1, resp.). cf., David Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” *AUC Theologica* 6, no. 1 (2016): pp. 147-172, <https://doi.org/10.14712/23363398.2016.8>, 162-163.

¹¹⁶ Giles Emery, “*Ad aliquid*: Relation in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas,” in *Theology Needs Philosophy*, ed. Matthew Lamb (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 2016), 181 quoted in Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 19.

¹¹⁷ Aristotle, “Categories,” 1a23-24; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1017a19-23; *ibid*, 1025a14-35; Aristotle, “Categories,” 1b27; *ibid*, 6a37-39; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1017a26-27.

Such regard to another exists sometimes in the nature of things (*natura rerum*), as in those things which by their own very nature are ordered to each other (*res secundum suam naturam ad invicem ordinatae sunt*), and have a mutual inclination; and such relations are necessarily real relations; as in a heavy body is found an inclination and order to the center; and hence there exists in the heavy body a certain respect in regard to the center, and the same applies to other things.¹¹⁸

Aquinas immediately speaks of these relations as real relations (*relationes reales*), which holistically means that everything of the relation actually exists according to the modes of being proper to relations (as accidents) and terms of relations (which will most fundamentally be substances). It should be quickly noted that Aquinas' example invokes the heaviness of a body as the reason for the real relation in that body, thereby implying that the center of the cosmos' potency to be the place of bodies having such heaviness is the reason for the center being the term of the same real relation. The reasons why the real relation between body and center exist are these powers—heaviness and potency—it is not immediately the substance of the body or the being of the center of the cosmos. This will be returned to as the foundations of real relations.

Aquinas in the same place contrasts these real relations with another kind of *ad aliquid*, logical relation (*relationis rationes*).

Sometimes, however, this regard to another, signified by relation, is to be found only in the apprehension of reason comparing one thing to another (*conferentis unum alteri*), and this is a logical relation only; as for instances, when reason compares man to animal as the species of the genus.¹¹⁹

While real relation has two distinct natural things (*natura rerum*) as its terms, such as a substantial body and a physical location, and which has an actually existing ordering between them (*res secundum suam naturam ad invicem ordinatae sunt*)—logical relation is not existentially between two concrete things and the ordering between its

¹¹⁸ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 28, a. 1, *resp.*

¹¹⁹ *Loc cit.*

extremes does not exist in natural things, but is restricted to whatsoever existence the mind grants to concepts.¹²⁰ For example, man:animal::species:genus is an abstract proportion and does not designate concretely existing things between which a relation can exist in as a thing (*rei*). Or again, the relation of a rose's being seen by some man is not a real relation between these two substances since the rose's being seen is not an existential dependency in the rose. In fact, Aquinas is distinguishing between two senses of "being" within his theory of relations—this is the distinction of real being and beings of reason. This is, while seemingly abstract, a very common-sense distinction. In the experience of rational discourse on the world, some things encountered have their own existence in the created world—either substantially or by accidentally inhering in such a substance—regardless of whether any created mind considers them.¹²¹ Put simply, real beings have existence. Alternatively, there are "objects" which have no such independent existence in the created world. Instead, these "objects" only exist insofar as they are actively in the mind of some person.¹²² "Such a thing does not exist in nature,—it is not an object which exists in reality,—but it is only conceived and known. Hence a being of reason may be defined: *a being which has objective existence in reason, and can have no existence in reality.*"¹²³

Thus the act of existence that beings of reason have is its being actively worked upon

¹²⁰ This should not be taken as a degradation of logical relations. These are definitive for all the arts of the quadrivium and trivium—as Aquinas' example in *Summa Theologiae*, I, q28, a1, *resp* shows. This also extends to certain comparisons made by analogy in *Metaphysics* (again, following Aquinas' example). It is also very important in the theology of Creation. cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 45, a. 3, ad. 1. In all these cases, logical relation is based on something actually belonging to the subjects of the relation, but not in such a way that the *ad aliquid* relation exists in the world regardless of a mind's noticing it (as in the cases of logical relations in the liberal arts) or necessarily such that this same *ad aliquid* actually denotes some ontic inherence in the subject (as in the case of God's creation of the world).

¹²¹ cf., Henri Grenier, *Thomistic Philosophy. Volume II: Metaphysics*, trans. J.P.E. O'Hanley, vol. 2 (Charlottetown, Canada: St. Dunstan's University, 1948), 13.

¹²² cf., *ibid*, 13.

¹²³ Henri Grenier, *Thomistic Philosophy. Volume I: Logic and Philosophy of Nature*, trans. J. P. E. O'Hanley, vol. 1 (Charlottetown, Canada: St. Dunstan's University, 1948), 133.

by some person's mind. While there are several “kinds” of beings of reason; privation, possible being, logical relations, abstract categories, etc., logical relation will be the exclusive focus of beings of reason in this thesis. Such matters will not be the primary focus going forward, however. This thesis is about the essence of marriage whose bond is indissoluble, regardless of the spouses' considering of their marriage or personal choices after the marriage is ratified and consummated.¹²⁴ Therefore, objectively real relation will be the overall focus of this thesis—though relations of reason will return incidentally, in an important way, later. Any mention of relation, *ad aliquid*, towardness, or similar concepts should be assumed to be focusing on real relation—except where “logical relations,” “mixed relations,” etc. are invoked.

The Term of a Relation

Setting aside such matters as *ens rationis* and *relatio rationis*, the structure of categorical relations must be understood in greater depth so that the full proper being of real relations be evident. Very simply, relations between two things have some obvious aspects which must always be present for these relations to actually exist.

There must be a *subject* of the relation. This is the substance in which the accident of relation inheres, and which is the thing which is ordered towards another. Then there is the other. That toward which the relation is ordered is the *term* of the relation. Thirdly there must be a *foundation* which is a type of cause of the relation in the subject.¹²⁵

The subject of a relation has already been adequately described above—for real relation, it is the concrete substance in which the accident of relation inheres and which is consequently towards its relevant term. This term must also be a real

¹²⁴ For an extended treatment on the inherent indissolubility of marriage see, Matthew Levering, *The Indissolubility of Marriage: Amoris Laetitia in Context* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2019).

¹²⁵ Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 20.

substance distinct from the original subject of the real relation. That the term to a real relation must itself be real should not be surprising; *ad aliquid* would be mind-dependent if the *aliquid* itself only existed in the mind!¹²⁶ Moreover, real towardness of one subject *ad aliquid* is only possible if the subject and term are not the same reality. Towardness requires there to be some kind of opposition between subject and that to which it is towards; real relation would then require this distinction between subject and term to be equally real.¹²⁷ In this way, relation—even real relation—is “least existent” of all the categories. Substance is that which exists in itself, accidents are those things which exist by inhering in a substance, relation is that unique accident which exists by inhering in a substance and by ordering the same substance toward another. The other accidents only require one subject in order to exist, while relation requires a subject and a term. From this, relation is commonly called “minimally entitative.”¹²⁸

This real term of the relation can itself be further divided. Since the term is itself a substance, i.e., a really existing thing; it can be divided into the formality by which this substance is a term to such a relation and its substantial self, considered as a certain matter to this formality. “The term materially considered is certainly something absolute; v.g., Peter, the father of Paul, has a relation of paternity to Paul...But we are concerned not with the material aspect of the term...but rather with

¹²⁶ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 202; Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 23.

¹²⁷ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 202.

¹²⁸ cf., Joannis a S. Thoma, *Logica*, 498 (II, q17, a2); Poinso, *Tractatus De Signis*, 888-889. “And though a cause is required for every entity and form, yet in a special sense a fundament is said to be required for relation, because other forms require a cause only in order to be produced in being and exist, whereas relation—owing to its minimal entitative character and because in terms of its proper concept it is toward another—requires a fundament not only in order to exist but also in order to be able to remain in existence, that is, in order to be a mind-independent rationale of physical being. ...And the reason for this is that relation, on account of its minimal entitative character, does not depend on a subject in precisely the same way as the other absolute forms, but stands rather as a third kind of being consisting in a resulting from the coordination [in time] of two extremes; and therefore, in order to exist in the nature of things, a relation *continuously* depends on the fundament coordinating it with a term, and not *only* on a subject and productive cause.”

its formal aspect, with the formal term, with the term *by which* as such.”¹²⁹ In other words, insofar as a substance (term) is not identical to that by which it is open to receiving from another, this substance stands as a kind of matter to an additional distinct formality which is the locus of this reception or orientation. Therefore, that by which Paul is son to Peter is the formality of sonship. This formal attribute is where Paul’s person is open to Peter’s inclination to him. This same formal term, as ordered to receiving a relation, is itself relative! “Thomists commonly teach that the formal term of a relation is something relative; v.g., paternity attains its term, which is a son, under the aspect of sonship.”¹³⁰ In this way, the real relation immediately terminates in this formal aspect of the *aliquid* of the relation, though it ultimately and substantially terminates in the whole *aliquid*. More will be said about the term of a real relation below when mutual relations are discussed.

Foundations of Relations

The last aspect of relation is the foundation of said relation in its subject. This foundation is the capacity or cause of the relation in the subject.¹³¹ Indeed, as the capacity for the relation in the subject, without which the relation cannot exist—the foundation overlaps with the relation’s point of inherence in its subject.¹³² As cause of relation in the subject, however, the foundation must inhere in the subject prior to any relation’s inherence.¹³³ In this way, though the accident which is the foundation to

¹²⁹ Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 205.

¹³⁰ Loc cit.

¹³¹ cf., Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 20-21; Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 153. Svoboda specifies that the foundation is the formal cause.

¹³² cf., *ibid*, 164; Thomae Aquinatis, *Commentaria in Octo Libros Physicorum Aristotelis*, vol. 2 (Romae: Ex Typographia Polyglotta S. C. de Propaganda Fide, 1884), 237 (Bk. V, Lect. 3, n. 8); Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 482; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1020b26-33.

¹³³ cf., Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 169; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1019a1-14. Aristotle’s fourth sense of prior and posterior, that by way of their nature and power, seems to apply in this context.

relation overlaps with the relation's being in the subject, the foundation's inherence is really distinct from relation's inherence—indeed, relations and their foundations are really distinct.¹³⁴ This is because of how subjects are composed of their substantial being and accidents; composition occurs by a natural priority of certain accidents over others.¹³⁵ Therefore, after a certain accident—say quantity—inheres in a subject, this quantity can be the formal cause of a relation in the same subject. As this accident is the cause of another accident in the same subject, this quantity is the point where the relation inheres in this subject. Hence Aquinas says, “[R]elation seem to be farther removed from substance than the rest of the categories are, inasmuch as they have a more imperfect mode of being. And for this reason, they inhere in substance by means of (*mediantibus*) the other categories.”¹³⁶ The real distinction between the two comes from the fact that the being of quantity is due to an absolute reference to its subject, both as an accident and according to its proper characteristic of measuring the subject, while the being of relation is only referred to the inherence in the same subject through its foundation as orientating the whole subject *ad aliquid*—without which other this accident of relation does not exist at all.¹³⁷ The proper essence of this quantity—or any other accident which is the foundation to a relation—and the proper essence of relation are mutually opposed, which creates real distinction.¹³⁸ As the relation is really distinct, in this fashion, from its cause (foundation)—the relation has its own mode of being through inhering *per accidens* in its subject, though it does so posteriorly to its foundation.

¹³⁴ cf., Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 166; Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 204-205.

¹³⁵ Thomas Aquinas and Enrique Alarcón, *Summa Theologiae Tertia Pars*, 60-90, ed. John Mortensen, trans. Laurence Shapcote, vol. 20 (Lander, WY: The Aquinas Institute for the Study of Sacred Doctrine, 2012), q. 77, a. 2, resp.; Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1001b26-1002b11; Aristotle, “Categories,” 5a15-24; Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 487; Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 170.

¹³⁶ Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 487.

¹³⁷ cf., Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 171.

¹³⁸ cf., *ibid.*, 168-169; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 28, a. 3, resp.; *ibid.*, ad. 1; Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 204-205.

After having located the being of relation relative to its foundation, the divisions in the foundation itself can be discussed. Such a capacity can be divided into something in the subject which is necessary for a relation to come into being, but which does not immediately make a relation—that a man has the power to generate does not mean that he has generated or that he is a father.¹³⁹ This is called the remote foundation of the relation.¹⁴⁰ This foundation then gives rise to the proximate foundation of the relation.¹⁴¹ The proximate foundation is what writers on relation usually speak of when they merely say “foundation of a relation.” This is because it is what the relation immediately results from—as generative action is the proximate cause of paternity—which terminology will be followed in this thesis.¹⁴² The proximate foundation of relation can be divided into three basic kinds, which the Thomists directly repeat from Aristotle.

Things are called ‘relative’ (a) In the sense that ‘the double’ is relative to the half, and ‘the triple’ to the third; and in general the ‘many times greater’ to the ‘many times smaller,’ and that which exceeds to the thing exceeded. (b) In the sense that the thing which heats or cuts is relative to the thing heated or cut; and in general the active to the passive. (c) In the sense that the measurable is relative to the measure, and the knowable to the knowledge, and the sensible to the sensation.¹⁴³

It should be noted that these foundations are usually spoken of as in the subject of the relation, but there has to be a correlate foundation in the term (*aliquid*) of the relation as well. This is most easily seen in the case of proximate foundations according to action and passion. A man has to have a generative activity as the foundation to his conjugal relation to his wife and she must have a simultaneous receptive act as foundation of her conjugal correlation back to him in order for there to be mutuality in their conjugal correlation. This kind of mutuality will be returned to below. Aristotle’s

¹³⁹ cf., *ibid* 208.

¹⁴⁰ *loc cit.*

¹⁴¹ *loc cit.*

¹⁴² *loc cit.*

¹⁴³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021b26-33. cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 208.

account of these three senses of relatives is comparably vague, which is unsurprising of one who stands at the beginning of a tradition. Nowhere does he clearly explain that these senses are actually proximate dispositions for the existence of relations, i.e., that they are truly foundations prior to the existence of a relation, which distinguish ways of being towards another from each other in a causal fashion.¹⁴⁴ For this reason, these three different senses, now foundations of relations, must be recapitulated according to this more developed viewpoint in the Thomistic tradition.

1. Foundations of “number”

Each of Aristotle’s three kinds of relations based on different foundations will be discussed in turn, beginning with the two unequivocally real kinds—relations founded on something “one” and those founded on causality. Relations founded on oneness are manifold, depending on how many kinds of unity there are. It is critical to remember, however, that these relations based on some relation to a “one” (along with the other two kinds of foundations of relations just listed) are proximate foundations.¹⁴⁵ This means that if a “oneness” belongs to a remote foundation (whether an essence, quality, faculty, quantity, etc.) in any way, it could possibly belong to a relation of this kind.¹⁴⁶ The most basic distinction in unity is between the predicamental unit and ontological unity.¹⁴⁷ This latter kind of unity can found a relation “*as regards substance*: thus we have identity and diversity.”¹⁴⁸ Amongst this kind of relation, however, some individual relations will be real and some will be logical—as when a person self-reflects upon themselves and some personal attribute. Such self-reflection

¹⁴⁴ This reading of these three senses is confirmed by Grenier’s own explanations, see; *ibid*, 202-204.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 208.

¹⁴⁶ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a8-11.

¹⁴⁷ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 11, a. 1, ad 1.

¹⁴⁸ Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 203.

is a logical relation of identity since the subject and term of the relation are concretely the same. This kind of numerical relation is unimportant in this thesis. However, when a relation of identity between substances regards two concrete instances of one essence—as in a relation of two human beings—then this first kind of “numerical” relation will be important to this thesis. Another kind of relation based on a kind of oneness is that which “*regards quality*; thus we have the relations of similarity and dissimilarity.”¹⁴⁹ Here, when a substance has a certain kind of quality, like whiteness, and another substance is also informed by the accident of whiteness, then these two substances are similar to each other due to their accidental qualities. This kind of relation is very important for a realistic theory of the sexes due to their natural complementarity. Sadly, such a topic would be the topic of another thesis. Instead, this thesis will only mention this kind of foundation of relation in a limited fashion in the context of how spouses must be on a level with each other when contracting marriage.

The third kind of “numerical” relation belongs directly to “oneness” in the category of quantity, which founds the relations of equality and inequality.¹⁵⁰ It is in this way that a ten-centimeter line has a relation of equality to another ten-centimeter line. Aquinas, however, first divides the relation of equality further, into equalities of simple quantities, as in the example just given, and into equalities of proportion.

Equality is twofold: of quantity and of proportion. Equality of quantity is that which is observed between two quantities of the same measure, for instance, a thing two cubits long and another two cubits long. But equality of proportion

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, 204; *ibid*, 203; “The kind of unity with which we are concerned at present is not quantitative or predicamental unity only, but quasi-ontological quantity, i.e., any predicament in as much as it has the formal aspect of unity, and consequently of multitude; v.g., there is a certain unnamed relation of dissimilarity between Peter as naked and Paul as dressed on account of the negation of unity as regards the predicament of habit.”

¹⁵⁰ cf., *ibid*, 204.

is that which is observed between two proportions of the same kind, as double to double.¹⁵¹

From this, Aquinas distinguishes kinds of relations predicable of marriage depending on the (inequal) nobility and authority between spouses, on one hand, and depending on the proportionate possession (*tenetur*) that each spouse has over the other.¹⁵² Here, it seems that Aquinas is actually extending the concept of the relation of equality as far as possible—speaking of nobility and possession as quantifiable in some sense. Regardless, relations founded on a “one”—real relations of “number”—will be an important part of this thesis.

Yet due to the fact that Aquinas and Aristotle extend this kind of “numerical” relation to anything susceptible of being recognized as “one” in any way, this is a particularly difficult kind of relation. It is often difficult to see how qualities can be counted or quantified, even if it is true that many can be. Moreover, it is not always acceptable to the modern mind to speak of certain things as recognizable quantities—as in comparing the nobility of certain actions or goods. For this reason, it would be preferable to have a different name or hermeneutic to view these various relations of essential sameness, qualitative likeness, and certain instances of quantitative equality. However, insofar as there is a way to predicate a “one” of the different foundations belonging to these relations and insofar as this kind of “numerical” relations are now a traditional category in the Thomist and Aristotelian traditions, the name will be

¹⁵¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, 1-68, trans. Laurence Shapcote, vol. 21 (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, Inc., 2017), q. 64, a. 5, resp.

¹⁵² cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 64, a. 5, resp.; “Accordingly, speaking of the first equality, husband and wife are not equal in marriage: neither as regards the marriage act, wherein the more noble part is due to the husband, nor as regards the household management, wherein the wife is ruled and the husband rules. But with reference to the second kind of equality, they are equal in both matters, because just as in both the marriage act and in the management of the household the husband is bound to the wife in all things pertaining to the husband, so is the wife bound to the husband in all things pertaining to the wife. It is in this sense that it is stated in the text (Sentences IV, D. 32) that they are equal in paying and demanding the debt.”

retained in this thesis as an expediency. However, it will only be used in “scare-quotes” to designate it as such.

2. Foundations of action and passion

The second kind of foundation to relation is similarly important to this thesis. “The causal relation is based on the active or passive potency of a subject, or on the action (*actio*) of a subject or on its ‘passivity’ (*passio*).”¹⁵³ The easy example of this proximate foundation is the generative action that a man exercises when begetting a child and the potency of the child in coming to be due to that action—thus the real relation of paternity comes to be from the fathers action and its mutual complement of filiation or sonship comes to be from the child’s passivity or receptivity. This kind of foundation of relation requires that both the subject and term are real substances so that there can be true action and passion, for which reason Aquinas immediately classes them amongst the foundations which give rise to real relations.¹⁵⁴ Relations founded on action and passion can be divided into the foundation being actualized (*in fieri*), which also would correspond to how the relation would come into being, and the foundation already having been actualized (*in facto esse*), wherein the relation would stably exist.¹⁵⁵ Due to this division, it is important to remember that the exercise of this active power and correlate passive power is not the same as the real relation which arises from it. “One can point to the generative power within man as

¹⁵³ Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 152. cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 203. Note that active and passive potency are not identical with actions and passions—the former directly go into every act as cause or principle, while the latter are the modes of acts themselves.

¹⁵⁴ cf., Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 482. Here Aquinas is speaking according to created foundations and created *relata* and is not considering the special question of God’s (logical) relation to creatures which he calls a relation of action and passion in the *respondio* and reply to objection one in *Summa Theologica* I, q45, a3. See Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 24-30.

¹⁵⁵ Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 204; Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1021a14-21; Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 486.

the foundation for the relation of fatherhood. However, this is not the same as the relation itself.”¹⁵⁶ Indeed this is obvious—no man becomes a father without exercising his generative power, yet a man is only a father once a child is conceived based off of his exercising said power.

3. Foundations of measure

Moreover, Aquinas excludes, at least partially, the third kind of relation from the species of real relation.¹⁵⁷ He does this because “the measurable” is not founded on something “which pertains to [it]—such as quality, quantity, action, or passion...but only because of the action of other things, although these are not terminated in them.”¹⁵⁸ Aquinas means, for example, that when the eye (the measurable) is acted upon by the sensible form of a flower this relation is due to an accidental being which inheres in the organ of the eye. The sensation of the flower becomes an accident of the eye, whereby the eye’s sensing the flower is a real relation. Conversely, the flower which is “acting on” the eye—that which measures which is acting upon the measurable—does this through its sensible quantities and qualities which actually inhere in it (the flower). However, the relation of the flower (whose sensible form is what measures the potency for sensation in the eye) to the eye does not really predicate anything of the flower. That this flower happens to be seen by this eye does not define the being of the flower—indeed, its sensible form’s ability to inform any number of eyes is not exhausted or even qualified by a single eye’s sight. That the flower (and its various quantities and qualities) is seen by the eye is a logical relation. In this way, Aristotle’s third kind of relation is nonsymmetrical, i.e., it is not mutual,

¹⁵⁶ Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 21.

¹⁵⁷ cf., Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 152.

¹⁵⁸ Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 487-488.

because one of the correlates is not susceptible of having a real relation.¹⁵⁹ The real relation of the measurable to the measure, that the eye sees the flower, is a categorical relation and thus a really existing thing *per accidens*. Its correlate, the relation of the measure to what is measurable, that the flower happens to inform an eye's potency for sight, is a logical relation and is excluded from the categories as a being of reason.

What is interesting about relations founded on the measurable and the measure is that there is reason to think that this kind of relation can be extended beyond sensation and knowledge which Aristotle and Aquinas largely prefer as examples.¹⁶⁰ This was already admitted in a cursory fashion above in the section on Aristotle— insofar as the will is dependent upon the actions of the intellect, relations based upon the will seem to belong to the same kind as relations based on knowledge. This is no mere inference of one student, but is a common reflection. “This relation to object as to measure can be analogically transposed to habits, cognitive powers, and also to the subject to which this whole hierarchy of acts ultimately belongs.”¹⁶¹ Earlier the same author said that “Whenever things are ordered in some way, as when one originates from another or is ordered to another...when we know or love...we encounter relation.”¹⁶² In this way the kind of relation which is founded on the measurable and the measure could include the relation between lover and beloved insofar as the lover's appetite is informed (as measurable) by the form of the beloved (as measure).

Aquinas admits this in his *De Veritate*,

But *true* and *good*, being predicated positively, cannot add anything [to being] except a relation which is merely conceptual. A relation is merely conceptual, according to the Philosopher, when by it something is said to be related which

¹⁵⁹ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 204; “Predicamental relations which result from the third foundation are real on the side of one term, and unreal on the side of the other term, i.e., they are non-mutual or unilateral relations.”

¹⁶⁰ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021b26-33; Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 487.

¹⁶¹ Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 152.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, 147.

is not dependent upon that to which it is referred, but vice versa; for a relation is a sort of dependence.¹⁶³

He ends this paragraph by noting that he does indeed mean to include the good in the kind of relations between the measured and measure. He describes the relation that the good has to that which is inclined to it thus,

A being is perfective of another not only according to its specific character but also according to the existence which it has in reality. In this fashion the good is perfective; for the good is in things, as the Philosopher says. Inasmuch as one being by reason of its act of existing is such as to perfect and complete another, it stands to that other as an end. And hence it is that all who rightly define *good* put in its notion something about its status as an end. The Philosopher accordingly says, that they excellently defined good who say that it is ‘that which all things desire.’¹⁶⁴

Therefore, when the form of the good in the beloved is perceived by the will of the lover, then this formal good perfects the lover’s will—which is why the lover then loves the beloved. That the good of the beloved here measures the will of the lover is a real relation which inheres *per accidens* in the lover; the perceivable good of the beloved and the appetite in the lover are real foundations to this relation. Conversely, that the beloved is loved by the lover does not make the them depend on the lover in any way—meaning that the lover’s inclination to its measure (the goodness of the beloved) does not require anything to inhere *per accidens* in the beloved. Therefore, the relation of the lover’s will actively inclining to the beloved is a relation of reason, or perhaps it is better to say that it is a *relatio animae*. While there is a real action in

¹⁶³ Thomas Aquinas, *Truth*, trans. Robert W. Schmidt, vol. 3 (Indianapolis, ID: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), q. 21, a. 1, resp. It should be noted that Aquinas’ views on love being a mixed relation developed over time, beginning with an explicit confirmation that love is a species of real relation; Aquinas, *In Quattuor Libros Sententiarum*, 80 (Bk. 1, d. 30, q. 1, a. 3, ad3). Thus from his lectures on the Lombard’s *Sentences* as a bachelor of the Sentences, Aquinas almost immediately changed his view on the essence of love, i.e., the relation of the good which measures and the appetite which is measured by that good, as soon as he became Regent Master, since these *Disputed Questions on Truth* were his first disputations as a Master at Paris. For a chronology of Aquinas’ life and works I have referred to; Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Person and His Work*, trans. Robert Royal, Revised, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 2005), 328. I would like to thank Dr. Gundula Harand for bringing these texts and their connection to each other to my attention.

¹⁶⁴ Aquinas, *Truth*, q. 21, a. 1 resp.

the lover which is a foundation to a relation, the term of the relation—the beloved—has no foundation for being informed by the appetitive inclination of the lover. This kind of relation which is mixed between logical and real relation will be returned to in the context of the human will (love) relative to marriage and to the contracting of marriage. It is not the main focus of this thesis, however.

Mutuality Amongst Relations

Now that the three components of relation have been discussed; the subject, the term (*aliquid*) which must be really distinct from the subject, and the foundation of the relation, mutual relations (correlations) may now be discussed. These are largely defined according to the reality of the relations in question, not what the real relation is founded upon. Therefore, for the sake of simplicity, most of the examples of mutuality will be taken from real relations founded on active and passive potency. Indeed, it is common to view friendships and marriage according to this kind of relation. The mutuality of this kind of relation is not difficult to see when the subjects and terms are restricted to created substances. A primary substance whose active power is referred to (acts upon) the receptivity of another substance as term of the relation of action, has this last term as correlate. Then, the term's passive potency (receptivity) is reflexively referred back to the original substance as the term of the relation of passion. For example, a hot stone's activity of heat may be referred to a piece of raw meat's potency for heat and, as correlate, the raw meat's receptivity to heat is referred to whatever active source of heat is near, as the hot stone is. For this reason, Aristotle says that "All relatives have their correlatives."¹⁶⁵ This is the case,

¹⁶⁵ Aristotle, "Categories," 6b29.

presuming “they are rightly defined.”¹⁶⁶ At times, added work must be done so that relations will obviously have a correlate on the level of predication, to express the real (or logical, when such applies) correlate.¹⁶⁷

Such correlates of one order—as in the one causal order where a certain act and the relevant passion interact—is a mutual relation; “Mutual relations are correlatives...that is to say, a mutual relation in one extreme is explained by the relation corresponding to it in the other extreme, and vice versa.”¹⁶⁸ This one order is important—unless the extremes of the relations are of the same kind of being, then the correlates are unsymmetrical and nonmutual.¹⁶⁹ Mutual relations only belong to relations where every condition of the relations are real or they are all logical—mutually logical relations, however, will not be discussed in this thesis. The case of relations of action and passion are useful in this context as a sort of example of mutual real relations. The subject and term are both real substances and are really distinct. They have real foundations in their active and passive powers.¹⁷⁰ The division of correlations into mutual and nonmutual has traditionally been considered accidental insofar as the division only defines the general character of the correlations.¹⁷¹ This thesis intends to focus on mutually real relations, with some

¹⁶⁶ Aristotle, “Categories,” 7a23-24.

¹⁶⁷ cf., *ibid*, 6b38-7b14.

¹⁶⁸ Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 208.

¹⁶⁹ cf., *ibid*, 206.

¹⁷⁰ What is here said of mutual real relations of action and passion is meant to be understood of “numerical” mutual real relations as well. These two species of relation follow a nearly identical mode of mutuality with the main differences being that all relations of action and passion are related by some sort of actualization, whereas “numerical” relations are related without an account of actualization or motion, see; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a20-21.

¹⁷¹ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 206-207; Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 153-154. Grenier names the specific division between kinds of relation as the final restriction of the relation by its foundations whereby the relation is specifically determined both according to its reference through its foundation in the subject in which it inheres and further determined by its reference from that same foundation toward the term of the relation—Svoboda explains that the different way these two referrals interact can make two specifically different relations. However, the accidental division into mutual and non-mutual (or symmetrical and nonsymmetrical) correlations only determines whether the correlation is only of natural beings (real relation) or only beings of reason (logical relations) or mixed between the two modes of being.

concern for mixed correlations where a real relation and a logical relation are correlate.

In the case of mutual real relations there is another point. Here, both legs of the correlation have to be of the same or associated orders. Given a father's paternity to his son is his relation to his son and the son's correlation back begins thus; "the [formal] term is a kind of real relation, i.e., the term is subjectively and intrinsically relative; v.g., the term of paternity in the son is the relation of sonship."¹⁷² Then, the question is whether this real relation which arises in the formal *terminus* of the father's single relation to his son (i.e., the relation of sonship) is of the same species as that prior relation (the first relation of paternity) or not. In this case of paternity and sonship, the answer is relatively simple—paternity and sonship are associated together because they both belong to the generative order, but they are specifically different within that order.¹⁷³ As in the example of the hot stone and raw meat—the hot stone's heating the cold raw meat is the prior single relation. The formal term of this relation is the relation of "being heated," or rather "being cooked," in the raw meat. This formal term is reflexively a real relation back toward its original subject. Therefore, the raw meat is, as a receiver, slowly being heated and is related back to the active source of heat—the hot stone. In this example, the correlates of heating and being heated (action and passion) are specifically distinct.¹⁷⁴ This is obvious since action and passion are two distinct basic categories of being.¹⁷⁵ The foundations of the mutual real relation, like action and passion, the extremes of active potency (heat in

¹⁷² Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 205.

¹⁷³ cf., *ibid*, 207.

¹⁷⁴ cf., *loc cit*. "Since action and passion do not belong to the same supreme genus, the relations which derive from them are specifically distinct. . . . If the term is considered, we find that relations are essentially or specifically distinct when their terms are essentially distinct; v.g., the relation of likeness which one white object has to another white object is specifically distinct from the relation of unlikeness which this white object has to a black object.:

¹⁷⁵ cf., Aristotle, "Categories, 1b25-2a4.

the hot stone) and passivity (coolness of the raw meat) are essentially—
 categorically—distinct. Such distinction means that the reflexive correlation in the
 mutual relation will be of a different species than its prior relation, though they are
 still associated together in some way as in the example of paternity and sonship
 above.¹⁷⁶ This is called “a mutual relation of different denomination.”¹⁷⁷ This is where
 there is a distinction in mutual relations between real relations founded on causality
 and those founded on number. Mutual relations founded on number can belong to the
 same categorical species—as when a ten-centimeter line has a relation of equality to
 another ten-centimeter line, and vice versa. When the foundations across both
 correlates are the same as the dimensions of these two lines are, then the relation is
 called “a mutual relation of the same denomination (*relatio mutua aequiparantiae*).”¹⁷⁸
 Interestingly, logical relations of number—as in cases of self-identity where a subject
 is considered as related to itself or to a necessary principle or attribute it possesses—
 are still susceptible of being mutual relations of the same denomination. This is the
 case, however, when both correlations are logical. This distinction is made for the
 sake of Aquinas’ claim that marriage is such a relation of equiparence.¹⁷⁹

In mutual relations, whether of different or the same denominations, the
 formal term of the real relation is itself the reflexively corresponding real relation—
 for example, when paternity formally terminates as the corresponding sonship of the
 son.¹⁸⁰ As such, a real relation formally terminates in its correlate considered as
 inhering *per accidens* in the term, not considered as the subject of its own relation.

¹⁷⁶ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 207.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 206.

¹⁷⁸ loc cit.

¹⁷⁹ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 47, a. 4, s.c.; ibid, q. 64, a. 5, s.c.

¹⁸⁰ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 205;

“b) Thomists commonly teach that the formal term of a relation is something relative; v.g., paternity attains its term, which is a son, under the aspect of sonship.

In mutual relations, the term is a kind of real relation, i.e., the term is subjectively and intrinsically relative; v.g., the term of paternity in the son is the relation of sonship.”

This distinction merely means that the formal term of a real relation is itself an accident in the material term (i.e., the son who is the term of the relation of paternity) which can be divided into its general component of inherence in its subject, whereby the correlation of sonship can be considered as an accident, or aspect, inhering in a son; and into its proper component of inclining toward its term, whereby the correlation of sonship can be considered as determining the son in his towardness, namely back to the father in the real relation of sonship. Therefore, the formal term of mutual real relations can immediately be considered as another real relation which exists in its material term *per accidens* susceptible of the same distinctions as any relation. This consideration of formal terms would be key for future work into the theology and philosophy of the dichotomous sexes.

It should be noted that nonmutual relations of the measurable to the measure are always accidentally divided between their correlates insofar as they mix a logical relation with a real relation as correlations. However, the measurable and the measure are one order (species) of foundation—as between something thinkable and the thought in the one thinking.¹⁸¹ Therefore, granting that correlations of measure are mixed (nonsymmetrical) *per accidens*, they remain specifically (*per se*) one, i.e., specifically correlated. However, since these mixed relations inherently cannot be really compared, since they combine the real and the rational, the distinction between different denominations and the same denomination do not apply to them. Moreover, the formal term of a mixed relation is not susceptible of the same treatment as formal terms of real relations—in this case, the formal terms is only logically and grammatically referred back correlatively.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1021a29-31; Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 207.

¹⁸² cf., *ibid*, 205.

Conclusion

This section has been dedicated to explaining what categorical relations are in great depth—first from Aristotle’s own philosophy since he stands at the beginning of the tradition which adheres to the ten categories of being and second from the developed Thomistic account of the same. Many of these aspects and distinctions in the philosophy of relation will reoccur in the coming pages in the context of several classical distinctions and attributes of marriage, including its traditional definition. In the meantime, the key from this section is that mutual real relations belong to the category of relation and exist *per accidens* by inhering in a substance. As such, these relations are real beings. Their nature is not determined by the human mind, regardless of any wishes to the contrary! Moreover, mutual real relations inherently incline their subjects *ad aliquid*, which other is then reflexively referred back to the prior subject—thus all real relations necessarily exist alongside a returning correlation. Some of these correlations will be similarly real relations, some will be logical relations; the key is that no subject really related to some other will ever be left alone without that other being referred back to it in some mode. Even in the case of logical relations, these relations do exist—their existence is mediated through the action of some mind, but they are not some sort of privation. Both kinds of relations genuinely exist and correspondingly keep their related substances referred to each other according—whether naturally or through an act of mind. This is of great importance for the objective institution of marriage. Indeed, such mutual real relations are the very being of this objective institution. The bond of marriage must be a really existing thing independent of changes in spouses’ will and intellect after their marriage has been contracted. Moreover, the consent to enter into this institution—

and the mixed correlation founded upon such an act of the will—do genuinely exist, though in the souls of the spouses, the considerations of the Church and state, and in the Divine Will.¹⁸³ The existent relations of are, therefore, key to the theology of marriage.

This thesis will indeed discuss all three kinds of relations discussed above. Specifically, mutual real relations founded on “number,” mutual real relations founded on active and passive potency, and mixed relations of measure will all be discussed. Mutual real relation of “number” will be understood according to, and will build upon, Aquinas’ *essential* definition of the bond of marriage, that “Matrimony is an equiparant relation.”¹⁸⁴ Mutual real relations founded on active and passive potency will be discussed in the context of those aspects of marriage which cannot belong to a relation of equiparence, yet still are definable as a real relation.¹⁸⁵ Mixed relations of measure will be discussed insofar as the relation of lover and beloved is

¹⁸³ cf., John C. Ford, “The Validity of Virginal Marriage” (dissertation, Harrigan Press, Inc., 1938), pp. 1-139, 48-51. While Father Ford, S.J. does not think that the question of real relations versus logical relations in the context of marriage is much importance, as he thinks that it is a terminological discussion only, he does not parse through the different kinds of relations which are present in marriage. He only discusses the rights and duties of marriage. For him, the various sorts of relations pertaining to marriage all have a high dignity and importance. Moreover, since Father Ford’s lifetime there have been mounting attacks on the indissolubility of marriage—a precise distinction of real relations and logical relations in marriage could be helpful to categorize what is being discussed in this controversy. For an example of how these mixed relations founded upon the will also have an existence in the Divine Wills see; Matthias Joseph Scheeben, *The Mystery of Christianity*, trans. Cyril Volbert (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1946), 595-598.

¹⁸⁴ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 47, a. 4, s.c. cf., ibid, q. 64, a. 5, s.c.; ibid, q. 64, a. 5, resp.; “Equality is twofold: of quantity and of proportion....But equality of proportion is that which is observed between two proportions of the same kind, as double to double....But with reference to the second kind of equality, they are equal in both matters, because just as in both the marriage act and in the management of the household the husband is bound to the wife in all things pertaining to the husband, so is the wife bound to the husband in all things pertaining to the wife.”

¹⁸⁵ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 64, a. 5, resp.; “Equality is twofold: of quantity and of proportion. Equality of quantity is that which is observed between two quantities of the same measure, for instance, a thing two cubits long and another two cubits long....Accordingly, speaking of the first equality, husband and wife are not equal in marriage: neither as regards the marriage act, wherein the more noble part is due to the husband, nor as regards the household management, wherein the wife is ruled and the husband rules.”

an aspect of the marriage bond¹⁸⁶ and insofar as marriage has traditionally been described as a positive and natural contractual matter.

Scriptural Overview of Marriage

After this philosophical concept of relation has been clarified and sufficiently expounded, it is time to turn to the direct study of Sacred Doctrine. Since theology is differentiated from philosophy by, and receives its principles from, the higher science of God and the Blessed in Revelation,¹⁸⁷ it is best to turn Sacred Scripture first. The creation of Adam and Eve in Genesis 1 and 2 will first be discussed in the context of their primordial union. This will draw out both the separate identities of Adam and Eve, the masculine and the feminine, and their marital union. After this, the Gospels of Mark and Matthew will be investigated relative to the dignity and indissolubility of marriage, along with Colossians and Ephesians in the writings of St. Paul. From these New Testament writings, the special dignity of marriage and the importance of the union of the sexes will be further explained.

The Book of Genesis

Genesis I

First, Genesis 1 on the creation of man should be explained.

Then God said, ‘Let us make man (ἄνθρωπον) in our image, after our likeness;...’ So God created man (ἄνθρωπον) in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male (ἄρσεν) and female (θῆλυ) he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful (Αὐξάνεσθε) and multiply (πληθύνεσθε), and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.’ (Gen 1: 26-28 RSV-CE).¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ cf., Aquinas, *Truth*, q. 21, a. 1, resp.

¹⁸⁷ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 1, a. 2, resp.

¹⁸⁸ *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004). English translations of Sacred Scripture going forward will be taken from the RSV-CE and will be cited in-line accordingly. Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta: Id Est Vetus Testamentum*

In order to explain the institution of marriage, the very first mention of humanity and the togetherness of man and woman is of capital importance. Indeed, it gives a near-definition of man: “Let us make man in our image....So God created man in his own image,...male and female created he them” (Gen. 1:26-27 RSV-CE).¹⁸⁹ This is the heart of the whole of revelation on humanity.¹⁹⁰ While it may be that this first chapter of Genesis has a temporal priority of the first man over the first woman, the text prefers to focus on their essential identity as *imago Dei*. In this way, the image and likeness of God stands as the highest expression of the universal nature of all human persons who are then distinguished according to the two sexes, but who are not distinguished according to their both simply being *imagines Dei*.¹⁹¹ This is because all human persons are of one essence and identically endowed with a rational soul.

That the human soul is of one kind and thus human life belongs to one sort of principle is what makes the *imago Dei* common between men and women.¹⁹² This soul is the principle, though not exclusive, seat of the *imago Dei*.¹⁹³ It is very important not to primarily consider this image in the material order

You may ask: In what manner did this image of God, expressed in man, exist? The Anthropomorphists, whose founder was Audaeus, from whom the name Audianism comes, thought that man was the image of God according to his body, and thus that God was corporeal. But this is heresy. Oleaster and Steuco think that in this verse God endowed the human form so that He created a man like Him. But this notion is equally worthless and recent.¹⁹⁴

Graece Iuxta LXX Interpretes, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1935), . All Greek Old Testament citations going forward use this edition.

¹⁸⁹ cf., International Theological Commission, “Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God,” in *International Theological Commission: Texts and Documents 1986-2007*, ed. Michael Sharkey and Thomas Weinandy (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2009), pp. 319-351, 321.

¹⁹⁰ cf., loc cit.

¹⁹¹ cf., Bede, *On Genesis*, trans. Calvin B. Kendall, vol. 48 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008), 92-93; International Theological Commission, “Communion and Stewardship,” 330-331.

¹⁹² Basil the Great, “First Homily. On the Origin of Humanity, Discourse 1: On That Which Is According to the Image,” in *On the Human Condition*, trans. Nonna Verna Harrison (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2005), pp. 31-48, 45-46.

¹⁹³ cf., Cornelii a Lapide, *Commentaria in Scripturam Sacram. Tomus Primus: In Pentateuchum Mosis. Genesis Et Exodus*, ed. Augustinus Crampon, vol. I (Parisiis: Apud Ludovicum Vivés, 1868), 71.

¹⁹⁴ Cornelius a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 83. Cornelii a Lapide, *In Pentateuchum Mosis. Genesis Et Exodus*, 70. cf., Bede, *On Genesis*, 92-93.

That the *imago Dei* is primarily predicated of the soul but still is of the whole person, body included, must be carefully understood. Individual persons are hylomorphically composed of soul and body, wherefore anything belonging to the soul must also extend to the body in some fashion.¹⁹⁵ For this reason, Cornelius quotes a traditional strand of exegesis to say “the image of God is not properly in man’s body, but nevertheless it shines and glows in his body in a certain way, because man’s body is actually the image of his mind.”¹⁹⁶ The *imago Dei*, while principally of the human soul, truthfully belongs to the whole human person, as the International Theological Commission asserts. “If the soul, created in God’s image, forms matter to constitute the human body, then the human person as a whole is the bearer of the divine image in a spiritual as well as a bodily dimension.”¹⁹⁷ Therefore, Genesis 1 teaches that man and woman are coequally *imagines Dei* which image exists in their persons as wholes.

Yet this reading of Genesis 1 which focuses on the persons and being of the first man and first woman is insufficient. “[I]n the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it’ (Gen. 1:27-28 RSV-CE). God created these persons, each of them individually *imago Dei*, together for the sake of procreation—that is, the persons God made were created as married.¹⁹⁸ In this way, the *imago Dei*—a singular image, not a compound of images from two persons—belongs in a certain way to the perfection of this primordial state of marriage, not exclusively to the individuality of human personhood. “[T]he *imago Dei* manifests itself, at the outset, in the difference between the sexes. It could be said that human

¹⁹⁵ International Theological Commission, “Communion and Stewardship,” 327-329.

¹⁹⁶ a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 87. a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 71. cf., Bede, *On Genesis*, 110.

¹⁹⁷ International Theological Commission, “Communion and Stewardship,” 329. cf., *ibid*, 322.

¹⁹⁸ cf., *ibid*, 332.

beings exist only as masculine or feminine, since the reality of the human condition appears in the difference and plurality of the sexes.”¹⁹⁹ The sexes, as mutually ordered to each other for the sake of procreation, belong to this very *imago Dei* insofar as they are together. For this reason, the Venerable Bede taught,

“[U]nlike the other animals which he created in their separate kinds not individually but many at a time, God created one male and one female, so that by this the bond of love might bind the human race more tightly to one another, because it remembered that it all arose from one parent.”²⁰⁰

This togetherness is the naturally proper perfection of the creation of humanity and a perfection of the *imago Dei* found in every individual. “The image of God, which is to be found in the nature of the human person as such, can be realized in a special way in the union between human beings.”²⁰¹ This is an inherently relational anthropology; “It is of the essence of the *imago Dei* in them that these personal beings are relational and social beings.”²⁰² This creation account shows that the sexes and marriage belong to the relation order. The very essence of humanity, from creation and by Divine Intention, is naturally to be together man and woman for the sake of procreation to the point of filling the Earth.

[I]n Genesis 1 ‘humans are created male and female specifically so that they can ‘be fruitful and multiply’ [Gen 1:28],’ and, furthermore, ‘as the story of Israel unfolds in the Old Testament, this procreative purpose stands at the center of the story.’... The association of marriage with the procreation and raising of children is treated by the Bible as a self-evident element of human life.”²⁰³

Thus, the sexes are caught up in the meaning of the *imago Dei* relative to the objective institution of marriage—one of the most basic constitutive accidents of

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 330.

²⁰⁰ Bede, *On Genesis*, 92.

²⁰¹ International Theological Commission, “Communion and Stewardship,” 331.

²⁰² Ibid, 332. cf., *ibid*, 322; 327; John Grabowski, “Sexual Difference and the Catholic Tradition: Challenges and Resources,” *Nova Et Vetera* 19, no. 1 (2021): pp. 111-134, 125.

²⁰³ cf., Matthew Levering, *Engaging the Doctrine of Marriage: Human Marriage as the Image and Sacrament of the Marriage of God and Creation*, vol. 4 (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020), 140-141.

individuality as human persons, the dichotomy of the sexes, is inherently linked through creation and the *imago Dei* with marriage.²⁰⁴ This is unsurprising due to the fact that God, in whose image mankind is created, is three Persons in one Essence—human persons must carry a vestige to this most august communion of persons in some remote fashion.²⁰⁵ By this vestige mankind is inherently relational, which is first and foremost seen through the existence of the two sexes and marriage.²⁰⁶

Genesis II

Genesis 2 begins with a different order of God's creative action. Without the enumeration of the parts of Creation and before the creation of animals and plants, one man was made. He was alone. Only after the creation of the rest of the biological realm was a woman made to complement this First Man.

[T]hen the LORD God formed man (ἄνθρωπον) of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man (ἄνθρωπος) became a living being.... Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man (ἄνθρωπον) should be alone; I will make him a helper (βοηθὸν) fit (κατ') for him.' So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man (Ἀδάμ) called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for man there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman (γυναῖκα), and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman (γυνή), because she was taken out of Man (ἄνδρὸς).' Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother, and cleaves (προσκολληθήσεται) to his wife, and they become one flesh (δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν). And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed. (Gen. 2: 7, 18-25 RSV-CE)

²⁰⁴ International Theological Commission, "Communion and Stewardship," 330; *ibid*, 332-333; Aquinas, *Commentary of the Gospel of Matthew, Chapters 13-28*, 161 (1550); a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 91; a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 73. Moreover, this is the core of the relational account of the two sexes, which could be fully fleshed out in a separate thesis.

²⁰⁵ cf., International Theological Commission, "Communion and Stewardship," 332-333.

²⁰⁶ cf., *ibid*, 322; 329; 331.

While the creation of Eve is here after that of Adam, this does not mean that she was created at some vastly different time than Adam, after the Sixth Day of Genesis 1 so to speak.²⁰⁷ The authority of Genesis 1 requires a harmonization on this account – both the masculine and the feminine were created together and both were created before God rested from his creative work.²⁰⁸ On these grounds, to consider Eve’s creation in Genesis 2 as long after Adam’s, i.e., as not on the Sixth Day, would violate the symmetry of creation, and call Eve’s co-equal human dignity into question. However, her temporal and causal posteriority to Adam are clearly stated in this text.

Here it may be interesting to reference a comment of Cornelius’ on Genesis 1:27, already alluded to above: “So God created man (ἄνθρωπον) in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male (ἄρσεν) and female (θῆλυ) created he them.” Cornelius here records,

[R]ecently an overly inventive Frenchman asserted that Adam was a hermaphrodite and was both male and female. Such was Plato’s thinking in the Symposium when he said that the first men on earth were androgynous, but this is a silly assertion, for Scripture does not say, ‘He created him;’ it says ‘He created them,’ specifically Adam and Eve. In other words, He created Adam a male and Eve a female.²⁰⁹

Cornelius’ comments are pertinent to Genesis 2:18 especially (as he himself noted). Adam’s priority over Eve in creation and their having been created, more or less, together does not require such a convoluted theory as this anonymous Frenchman. A reflection on whether or not the feminine elements or a created disposition for the

²⁰⁷ cf., a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 139. a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 91. Here, it is interesting to note the words of Aristotle: “Correlatives are commonly held to come into existence together, and this for the most part is true...the view that correlatives come into being together does not appear true at all times, for it seems that the object of knowledge is prior to, exists before, knowledge. We gain knowledge, commonly speaking of things, that already exist, for in very few cases or none can our knowledge have come into being along with its own proper object.” Aristotle, “Categories,” 7b15-16, 23-27.

²⁰⁸ cf., a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 139. a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 91.

²⁰⁹ a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 90-91. a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 73.

feminine element (as having somehow been in Adam) may be possible.²¹⁰ It is brutal to pretend, however, that the true femininity of Eve, later to be removed from Adam through his side, concretely was in Adam before Eve's formation. What Genesis 1 proclaims as the final product of God's creation – man and woman *together* for the sake of procreation,²¹¹ Genesis 2 specifies as a two-stage formation of the sexes, without some kind of masculine-feminine primordial unitive mix (or some sort of hermaphrodite), for the sake of mutual aid in common life.²¹²

What remains true, however, is that the feminine – Eve – was born out from the side of the masculine – Adam. This was without Adam's own person being substantially altered or re-individualized (as if Adam did not have continuity of personhood), with both Adam and Eve being created together at the beginning of the physical world, and with their togetherness (marriage) being uniquely instituted by God. This fits with the Servant of God Hans Urs von Balthasar's poetic wonderings on the creation of Eve from the side of Adam.

If Eve was taken out of Adam, then Adam had Eve within him without knowing it. Of course, God created her and breathed his breath into her; but God took the material for her out of Adam's living flesh infused with the Spirit. There was something feminine in him which he recognizes when God brings him the woman. It is the feminine element that fashions creatures before the face of the Creator. And the Creator gives the man the power to be creative in this creaturely womb. But the woman is taken from the man; the substance from which she is made is masculine. She knows the man from the beginning. She is, together with him, feminine in relation to God, but she also has the actively responding power with him. She is able to give him the fully formed child that the see can only indicate. Though his 'helpmate' she does all the work, which he only, as it were, proposes and stimulates.²¹³

²¹⁰ cf., Hans Urs von Balthasar, *A Theological Anthropology* (New York, NY: Sheed and Ward, 1967), 312-313.

²¹¹ Cornelius a Lapide, *The Great Commentary of Cornelius a Lapide: The Holy Gospel According to Saint Matthew, Volume II*, trans. Thomas W. Mossman and Michael J. Miller (Fitzwilliam, NH: Loreto Publications, 2008), 230.

²¹² a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 90-91.

²¹³ von Balthasar, *A Theological Anthropology*, 312-313.

What von Balthasar here suggests may be understandable as pre-disposed matter or at least in a way like pre-disposed matter. A certain matter was taken from the side of Adam which was specifically pre-disposed to the feminine in an incomplete sense. Thus, von Balthasar says that all human persons are “feminine” relative to God since our created being is open and receptive to God in all things. The flesh taken from the side of Adam would then have a quasi-feminine status in the same way, more so than a concrete human male as this flesh has no soul. This pre-disposed matter is then what God used to fashion Eve.

In this way the creation of Adam and Eve originates in Adam, in a unity. To account for this mystery of creation under Divine Omnipotence by appealing to a hermaphrodite is an unfortunate overly-human way of thinking. The key is to reflect upon the mystery of how together man and woman are in the creation account of Genesis 2 as complementing their togetherness as two separate creations in Genesis 1. Thus a more Patristic comment, insofar as it is somewhat similar to von Balthasar and keeps his poetical mode in check, “In regard to the fact that the woman was made from the side of the man, we can suppose that it was proper for it to be done in this way for the sake of commending the strength of that union.”²¹⁴ The very fact that Adam and Eve were not made together but that her creation was after Adam’s – both in time and materially, since she was created out from Adam’s body—emphasizes their marital union.²¹⁵ Eve must be united to Adam because she is of and from him. Moreover, this shows that Adam must have a certain relative priority over Eve insofar as they are so united.²¹⁶ This also means that the dichotomy of the sexes does not

²¹⁴ Bede, *On Genesis*, 122.

²¹⁵ cf., Cornelius a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 143; Matthew Levering, *Engaging the Doctrine of Marriage*, 141; Bede, *On Genesis*, 122; a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 142; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, 50-119, trans. Laurence Shapcote, vol. 14 (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2018), q. 92, a. 2 *resp.*

²¹⁶ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 92, a. 2, *resp.*

change the essential sameness that Adam and Eve have—since Eve was taken out from Adam, her nature must be identical to his.²¹⁷ Therefore, regardless of the different orders of creation in Genesis 1 and 2 and the differing lengths of time implied in both, the *union* of the *dichotomous* masculine and feminine, in the persons of Adam and Eve, belongs to the perfection of creation.

Adam even comprehends the complementarity that he and Eve holistically had for each other: “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Gen. 2:23 RSV-CE). Jerome points out that Adam’s choice of name for Eve denotes his comprehension of the new person meeting him has an odd reason behind it. Why name her “Woman” just because she was taken out from Adam’s side? Jerome writes,

In Greek and Latin it does not seem to make sense why she should be called woman because she was taken from man; but in the Hebrew language the *etymology* [derivation of the word] is observed, since man is called *is* and woman *issa*. Therefore woman is rightly called *issa*, as from *is*. Consequently Symmachus also was determined to preserve the *etymology* in an elegant manner, even in Greek, when he translated: *This one shall be called andris, hoti apo Andros elēphthē*. In Latin, we can express it as: ‘This one shall be called *virago*, because she was taken from *vir*.’ On the other hand, Theodotion supposed another derivation, and translated: *This one shall be called takeing up, because she was taken up out of man*; since in fact *issa* can also be understood as ‘taking up’ according to a different manner of accentuation.²¹⁸

Adam perceived Eve’s complementarity with him as so deep and comprehensive that their very identities as persons must reflect it. Nor should this perception of Adam’s be lightly set aside. Venerable tradition amongst the Church Fathers teaches, with good reason, that Adam is speaking here in prophecy of the great intimacy of

²¹⁷ cf., Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, (Dallas, TX: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 70. Indeed, some have even speculated that if Adam had chosen a helpmate from creation before God had made Eve, that this other creation would have been modified by God to be of a fitting physical nature to compliment Adam, see; Ramban, *The Torah: With Ramban's Commentary Translated, Annotated, and Elucidated. Bereishis/Genesis: Volume 1*, trans. Yaakov Blinder and Yoseph Kamenetsky (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, Ltd, 2010), 116.

²¹⁸ Jerome, 32. cf., a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 147-148; Bede, *On Genesis*, 123.

marriage and the great mystery of the Mystical Body of Christ symbolized by sacramental marriage.²¹⁹ Upon this interpretation, Adam not only perceived the deep complementarity he and Eve had for one another, but that this also belonged to the intention and order of God. In this way, the holistic identity of man and woman as dichotomous complements to one another expresses the being of these two aspects of individuated humanity as marital.

This Divinely designed marital union belongs immediately to the words of Scripture. It rests in the reason why God created a second sex in Genesis 2: “Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper (βοηθὸν) fit (κατ’) for him’” (Gen. 2:18 RSV-CE).²²⁰

It probably happened for no other reason than for the sake of begetting children, just as for the earth is a help to the seed, so that a shoot may arise from each. For it had also been said in the first arrangement of things, ‘male and female he made them, and he blessed them, saying, Increase and multiply, and fill the earth, and rule it’. This arrangement and blessing of the creation and union of male and female (*coniunctionis masculi et feminae*) did not cease after the sin and punishment of man, for it is on account of it that the earth is now full of men who rule it.²²¹

The mutual aid of which God spoke is here that aid needed for the multiplication of humanity and its extension through time. Augustine’s position fits with some of Cornelius’ own, though this does not immediately follow from the Greek language of the Septuagint: “‘Unto himself,’ i.e., ‘unto *him*.’ For the phrase ‘like unto himself,’ the Hebrew is כַּנֶּגְדּוֹ, *kəneḡdōw*, which *first* means, *as if before his eyes*” (here, “like

²¹⁹ Bede, *On Genesis*, 123-124. Augustine, *De Genesis ad litteram*, 9.19.

²²⁰ cf., J. W. Etheridge, tran., “The Targum of Onkelos on the Book Bereshith on Genesis,” in *The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the Pentateuch; with the Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum: From the Chaldee. Genesis and Exodus* (Picataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2005), pp. 35-156, 39.: “And the Lord God said, It is not right that Adam should be solitary; I will make for him a helper as for his sake (or, as suited to him: Hebrew, *kenegdo*, as his counterpart).” It is interesting to note that the Targum for this verse explicitly emphasizes this concept of material aid, whereas the Hebrew more errs on the side of complementarity.

²²¹ Bede, *On Genesis*, 119. For the Latin: Bedae Venerabilis, *Libri Quatuor in Principium Genesis Usque Ad Nativitatem Isaac Et Eiectionem Ismahelis Adnotationum*, ed. CH. W. Jones (Turnholti: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1967), 53.

unto himself” corresponds to “a helper fit for him.” in the quoted translation of Genesis above).²²² Cornelius explains that this being “before” Adam’s eyes means that the woman was created to be his friend, so that Adam would have a companion. This interpretation is favored by some who do not think that Adam and Eve’s creation together before original sin was intended for the sake of procreation. John Chrysostom is one such exegete.

The paradisaical condition of Adam and Eve is a mysterious union of the first man with his unique and co-equal helpmate, divinely provided to him for conversation, consolation, and to ‘share the same being.’... Their union did not involve the many aspects of earthly marriage commonly associated with that state in the fallen age.²²³

This unique kind of companionship of man and woman was a fit foundation for marriage and procreation after the Fall, however. While Chrysostom, and those who follow his exegesis, would not allow that the two sexes were inherently created as naturally ordered for procreation, their exegesis is open to true marriage insofar as this exegesis correctly emphasizes the importance of loving cooperation between husband and wife.

Cornelius gives another exegetical option, however, which goes beyond all of these: “Second, *kəneḡdōw* can be translated *over against*, or *opposite to him*, i.e., placed opposite and corresponding to him. Accordingly, the Vulgate clearly translates the phrase as *like unto himself*, namely in nature, size, speech, etc.”²²⁴ In this way, the text of Genesis 2 de-emphasizes Adam’s original solitude and elevates the complementarity between Eve and Adam. Cornelius then says that it is this likeness

²²² a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 140. a Lapide., *Genesis Et Exodus*, 91. Note how “βοηθὸν κατ’ αὐτόν” does not immediately overlap with “כנגדו, *kəneḡdōw*.” While this deserves note, “κατ’ αὐτόν” is general enough to be open to many interpretations and specifications which does not violate the more rich meaning of the Hebrew original.

²²³ Josiah B. Trenham, *Marriage and Virginitly According to St. John Chrysostom* (Platina, CA: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2013), 100.

²²⁴ a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 140. a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 91.

which makes Eve a suitable helpmate to Adam, emphasizing the social aspect of marriage of two persons being into one, which in truth also points to procreation.²²⁵ Cornelius does not offer a further synthesis of these two emphases, friendship versus complementary aid, but they are not far separate and both should be found in a good marriage. This same likeness and unlikeness is the complementarity belonging to the second case listed above, due to which Adam and Eve are ideal aids for one another. The friendship then is the perfection of the loving similarity whereby Adam and Eve can have a common life together, whereas their complementarity makes procreation possible and child-rearing easier. These two aspects of Genesis 2 fit well with Charles De Koninck's characterization of marriage and marital friendship.

This is the fundamental criterion, for the primary end of marriage is the child; whereas the form and principle of the family consists mainly in the union of mind and heart between husband and wife, primarily in view of the child not only as to its generation, but even more so for the sake of its education to manhood. For this reason, whatever is characteristic of the married person must somehow be related to the child. Even the friendship of husband and wife (of which Aristotle has spoken so well in the *Ethics*) is intrinsic to marriage itself and must therefore be ultimately based on their union for the sake of the child whose education is the main reason for the indissoluble character of wedlock.²²⁶

This view of marriage, whereby the companionship that Eve has for Adam as an objective relationship, inherently belongs to the complementarity that they have for the sake of procreation. Adam and Eve are to be together as a social unit which is productive of children. This view retains the importance of companionship has in Genesis 2's account of the creation of Eve while not making the existence of the two sexes meaningless without sin, as Chrysostom's exegesis tends to.

²²⁵ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 67, a. 1, ad. 4; Ford, "The Validity of Virginal Marriage," 20; *ibid*, 29-30.

²²⁶ Cf., Charles De Koninck, "The End of the Family and the End of Civil Society," in *Integralism and the Common Good: Selected Essays from The Josias. Volume 1: Family, City, and State*, ed. Edmund Waldstein and Peter A. Kwasniewski, vol. 1 (Brooklyn, NY: Angelico Press, 2021), pp. 131-137, 132-133.

That this complementarity and friendship of Adam and Eve is genuinely unitive becomes clear as Genesis 2 goes on. “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen. 2:24 RSV-CE). This phrase is of capital importance since Christ Jesus, in the Gospel of Matthew expressly states that this punctuating comment of Adam’s was actually uttered by the Creator during his works of creation: “‘Have you not read that he who made man from the beginning made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave father and mother and be joined (κολληθήσεται) to his wife, and they shall become one (δύο εις σάρκα μίαν)’?” (Matt. 19:5 RSV-CE).²²⁷ Cornelius even calls this double imperative of God’s and Adam’s, “the law of matrimony.”²²⁸ This cleaving is so strong that it overcomes all other personal bonds in human life, even the ordinary bonds between parents and children, by God’s design.²²⁹

The final aspect of this Genesis account which should be mentioned is the line, “and they become one flesh (δύο εις σάρκα μίαν)” (Gen. 2:24 RSV-CE). This line has many interpretations.²³⁰ The most important for the purposes of this thesis, however, is amongst the most ancient interpretations. The union of man and woman which God created in Genesis 2 is so strong that husbands and wives form a sort of true union—one flesh. This union is not just some external conjunction of spouses or their externally existing children.²³¹ In speaking of marriage between two members of the Baptized, Tertullian, the father of Latin theology, wrote, “Whence are we to find

²²⁷ Eberhard Nestle, Erwin Nestle, and Kurt Aland, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 24th ed. (Stuttgart: Privileg. Württ. Bibelanstalt, 1960). All New Testament citations from the Greek going forward will be taken from this edition. cf., Bede, *On Genesis*, 123-124.

²²⁸ a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 148. “...matrimonii legem...” a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 94.

²²⁹ Cf., a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 148. “The Septuagint translates the verb as *προσκολληθήσεται*, which Tertullian aptly translates as *will be cemented*. For the Hebrew word קָבַץ, means a very firm union.”

²³⁰ cf., a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 150.

²³¹ cf., Aquinas, *Commentary of the Gospel of Matthew*, 162 (1553).

(words) enough fully to tell the happiness of that marriage which the Church cements...no difference of spirit or of flesh; nay, (they are) truly ‘two in one flesh.’ Where the flesh is one, one is the spirit too.”²³² This union belongs to the whole persons, soul and body. This holistic view of the union of spouses in marriage is Tertullian’s point. Moreover, insofar as Adam and Eve, i.e., what it is to be male and female, are themselves intended for marriage in Genesis 2, their whole persons are created such that they can have this holistic union, as the Servant of God Adrienne von Speyr put well when she comments on Ephesians using Genesis 2:

Since man and woman are created for each other, he will leave the first bond of the family to cling to his wife. That they *become one flesh* is wholly included in the new bond. It is not something preliminary, subject to free disposition, but something so definitive that it is included in the definitiveness of this clinging....Dissolution is no longer possible, because this unity is rooted in the spirit, in the bond created by clinging, a bond that clasps them so firmly they can no longer remove themselves from it.²³³

Individuated engendered persons exist for the sake of being one in spirit without the possibility of re-splitting their lives. Once they enter into this objective institution made by God they are indissolubly bound together—either relatively in natural marriage or absolutely in properly Christian marriage. Such permanence of the matrimonial bond is a universal aspect of marriage from the beginning.²³⁴

Genesis III

The last relevant text in Genesis is: “To the woman he said, ‘I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall

²³² Tertullian, “To His Wife,” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers. Volume 4: Tertullian, Part Fourth; Minucius Felix; Commodian; Origen, Parts First and Second*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, Reprint, vol. 4 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), pp. 39-49, 48. cf., *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2000), 410. CCC 1642.

²³³ Adrienne von Speyr, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1996), 238-239.

²³⁴ cf., Norman P. Tanner, ed., “Council of Trent--1545-1563: Session 24,” in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, II, vol. II (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990), pp. 753-774, 753-754.

be for your husband, and he shall rule over you (καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα σου ἢ ἀποστροφή σου, καὶ αὐτός σου κυριεύσει)” (Gen. 3:16 RSV-CE). This text is important because it gives a relative ordering of persons within the first marriage of Creation. This ruling of the Lord’s derogates the place of woman within marriage. She is forced into a subordinate role relative to her husband as a punishment for her role in the Fall. Genesis 3, however, is only speaking of a relative subordination within marriage—not of women being subordinate to men always and everywhere. The text itself is also only speaking of a subordination of servitude which is that is imported by sin as a kind of damage to the natural institution of marriage: “[It] *can rightly be accepted that this servitude, which is in the nature of a condition rather than of love, was signified, so that even such servitude as that whereby men afterwards began to be slaves to men is found to have arisen from the punishment of sin.*”²³⁵

Classical authors, however, often hold that a wife would have always by nature had a certain subordination to her husband—as Bede expresses,

“[3:16c] And you shall be under your husband’s power, and he shall have dominion over you, since *it would be wrong to believe that the woman was created before sin otherwise than under the dominion of her husband, and that she lived otherwise under his power.*²³⁶

This relationship, however, was naturally to be one of absolute charity. “‘Thou shalt be under thy husband’s power’ – Not as beforehand, voluntarily, willingly, with a marvelous pleasantness and harmony”²³⁷ or in other words, “Before sin the power a husband had over his wife was one of mutual charity and agreement where all was done in perfect harmony, unlike the subordination now experienced by married

²³⁵ Bede, *On Genesis*, 134. cf., a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 181. a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 107-108.

²³⁶ Bede, *On Genesis*, 134.

²³⁷ a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 181. a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 107. cf., Bede, *On Genesis*, 134.

women.” Wherever there is union, there must be some sort of relative order between parts—even within a marriage. This is why Cornelius can still say of the husband’s authority over his wife,

[T]he husband’s dominion, if it is just and moderate, is of the law of nature; if it is domineering and tyrannical, it is exclusive of nature....Therefore, it is contrary to nature, and something that borders on monstrous, if a woman should wish to have dominion over her husband.²³⁸

This fact is ratified by St. Paul, which will be returned to below. Realizing that the relative subordination of wives to their husbands in a servile role is a punishment and not a natural part of creation is important for two reasons. First, it does not reflect the nature of marriage, but is rather a characterization of fallen spouses’ punishment and their difficulty to live righteously in upholding the nature of marriage. Second, any given husband and wife do not have to choose to live in such a repugnant fashion, but can strive to live with each other in true charity.²³⁹ This latter type of marriage will still have a relative order between the authority of husbands and wives in their marriages, but it will strictly be according to the rule of charity for the sake of the true good of their family, which will be returned below in the context of St. Paul’s epistles.

²³⁸ a Lapide, *Commentary on Genesis 1-3*, 182. a Lapide, *Genesis Et Exodus*, 108; “Dominatus hic viri, si Justus et moderatus, legis est naturae; si imperiosus et tyrannicus, praeter naturam est...ergo contra naturam est, et instar monstri, si femina viro dominari velit.”

²³⁹ That the relative charitable subordination of women to men in marriage is a matter of nature and the servile aspect of this subordination is a mere description of the sinful character that this would have after the Fall is not something all agree upon. There are claims that this servile dominion that man has over women in Genesis 3:16 is a new positive law God gives after the Fall, that it is truly of human nature and God is just repeating this fact anew, that God re-creates human nature so that there is this dominating subordination, or a variation on these. cf., Richard M. Davidson, *Flame of Yahweh: Sexuality in the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007), 60-65. These views will not be followed since they either require that human nature was mutated by sin, so that Adam and Eve are not of the same essence after the Fall then they were before; that the natural institution of marriage was essentially altered by sin, so that the relation between Adam and Eve was essentially other after the Fall than it was before and that the original marriage before the Fall is of a different species than any marriage afterward; or that God despotically punishes human persons in this life and enacts a positive law of punishment for all generations of women for something they did not do. The ontology of the former two is flawed and the latter predicates injustice of God.

The Gospels of Matthew and Mark

In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, Christ Jesus restates and restores the nature of marriage in reference to Genesis. In this, Matthew 19: 3-9 and Mark 10: 2-12 are largely repetitive and, therefore, will be treated together.²⁴⁰ In both Gospels, Christ is approached by the Pharisees to be tested in His knowledge of the Law (Mark 10:2 and Matt 19: 3). The Pharisees ask Him whether divorce, as permitted by Moses, is acceptable. His response was,

‘Have you not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and be joined (κολληθήσεται) to his wife, and the two shall become one’? So that they are no longer two, but one (δύο εις σάρκα μίαν). What therefore God hath joined together (συνέζευξεν), let not man put asunder’ (Matt 19:4-6 RSV-CE).

The Pharisees rejoin by saying that Moses permitted divorce when the husband issues the proper paperwork to his (ex) wife – which Christ identifies as an allowance Moses temporarily included in the Law due to the Jews’ own hardened hearts (Matt 19:7-8). The narrative of Mark, admittedly, has Christ mention this hardness of heart before (Mark 10:3-5) entering into a near-identical statement about the nature of marriage based on Genesis (Mark 10: 6-9). Christ refuses to promote divorce due to the objective being of marriage as created by God in the beginning.²⁴¹ Humanity was

²⁴⁰ In defense of interpreting these lines of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark according to the indissolubility of marriage, and therefore the permanent reality of marriage during the lives of the spouses, along with Matt. 5:32 and 1 Cor. 7:10-11, see Roger W. Nutt, “*Gaudium Et Spes* and the Indissolubility of the Sacrament of Marriage: The Contribution of Charles Cardinal Journet,” *Nova Et Vetera* 11, no. 3 (2013): pp. 619-626, 624; *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II. Volumen IV: Periodus Quarta. Pars III: Congregationes Generales CXXXVIII-CXLV* (Civitas Vaticana: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1977), 59; Levering, *The Indissolubility of Marriage*, 36. This thesis does not intend to treat the issue of πορνεία in marriage. The intent is to focus on the categorical essence of marriage—engaging πορνεία through the lens of this categorical essence would require a separate work.

²⁴¹ It is true that at Matthew 19:9 and 5: 31-32, Christ allows for divorce (ἀπολύσις/ἀπολύων) in the case of incest or adultery—whichever πορνεία is translated as. While this thesis will not take up this issue, it should be said that this divorce, or better—recognition of nullity or separation from common life—is not the dissolution of the marital bond between the spouses. It only allows for the recognition that the man and woman never actually entered into a true marriage or that one spouse may repudiate the other without then being able to remarry during the other’s lifetime. It is true that this is a topic of discussion between the Catholic Church, Orthodox Churches, and Protestant communities. cf.,

designed as dichotomous (male and female) where husband and wife *cleave* (κολληθήσεται) to each other, are *joined* to each other (συνέζευξεν) and as a result are one flesh (εἰς σάρκα μίαν).

This very notion of “cleaving” is what makes divorce impossible, according to Thomas Aquinas in his *Catena Aurea*, where he ascribed this view to St. John Chrysostom:

If however he had wished one wife to be put away and another to be brought in, He would have created several women. Nor did God only join (*coniunxit*) one woman to one man, but He also bade a man quit his parents and cleave (*adhaerere*) to his wife. Wherefore it goes on: *And he said*, (that is, God said by Adam), *For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave (adhaerebit) to his wife*. From the very mode of speech, shewing the impossibility of severing marriage, because He said, *He shall cleave (Adhaerebit)*.²⁴²

In other words, because God created one woman from the one man and joined these two unique persons together then it was right that a man shall go out from his parents and cleave to his wife. This unifying act is so they cannot possibly be separated in this life, as Cornelius reminds the reader of the strength of the Greek word used for “cleaving,” “in Greek προσκολληθήσεται, *i.e.*, ‘shall be glued to’, that is, shall **adhere** closely and undividedly to his wife, coupled with her in the most close and intimate bond of matrimony.”²⁴³ Not only is the gluing, or cleaving, the cause of the bond of marriage, but Cornelius claims that it is an adherence of one subject to the

Levering, *The Indissolubility of Marriage*, 29-64; Cornelius a Lapide, *The Great Commentary of a Lapide: The Holy Gospel According to Saint Matthew, Volume I*, trans. Thomas W. Mossman and Michael J. Miller (Fitzwilliam, NH: Loreto Publications, 2008), 263-264; Cornelius a Lapide, *The Great Commentary of Cornelius a Lapide: The Holy Gospel According to Saint Matthew, Volume II*, trans. Thomas W. Mossman and Michael J. Miller (Fitzwilliam, NH: Loreto Publications, 2008), 234; Aquinas, *Commentary of the Gospel of Matthew*, 164 (1559); Nutt, “*Gaudium Et Spes* and the Indissolubility of the Sacrament of Marriage”; *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*, 58-60.

²⁴² Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea, Volume II: The Gospel of St. Mark*, trans. John Henry Newman, vol. 2 (New York, NY: Cosimo Classics, 2007), 195. Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea in Quatuor Evangelia. I. Expositio in Matthaem Et Marcum*, ed. Angelici Guarienti (Romae: Marietti, 1953), 508.

²⁴³ a Lapide, *The Holy Gospel According to Saint Matthew, Volume II*, 230-231. Bold type added.

other. The very notion of adherence in remarkably relational, since it requires one person to be *ad* the other and this other to be *ad* the former person.²⁴⁴

That husband and wife are related to the each other in this way is an unbreakable external union.

For hath joined, in Greek is συνέξυξε i.e., has yoked together, or has **joined in one yoke**, whence those united by a ‘conjugal’ bond are called σύζυγες, because as two horses are coupled together by one yoke in a chariot, that they may draw it, so are two spouses **coupled together by the one yoke of matrimony.**²⁴⁵

Cornelius repeats this same sentiment about the spouses being unbreakably related in a true union of persons due to Genesis’ and Christ’s words that “the two shall become one flesh,”

[E]ἰς σάρκα μίαν, *i.e.*, ‘**into** one flesh,’ so that they may be one flesh... This is commonly expounded of corporeal union. But it is better to take it more simply and purely as a Hebraism, signifying that husband and wife are *one flesh*, one human being, one civil person. For by synecdoche *flesh* denotes the whole man.²⁴⁶

Thus the unbreakable adherence of two persons into a union together such that they can be treated as one “person” is the bond of marriage. While Cornelius’ idea that this is a metaphor for single civil personhood need not be followed, the point is that “into one flesh” denotes the constitution of an ontological togetherness of the spouses in this marriage. This ontological union or relation then is naturally productive of another one flesh—offspring. This makes a family unit. This is what marriage is, the life-long objective relation of husband and wife for the sake of procreation and child rearing. This single word of Scripture expresses this objective relation of marriage well, συνέξυξεν; the completed joining together of the spouses.²⁴⁷ Indeed, Christ’s

²⁴⁴ cf., Aristotle, *Aristotle’s Categories and De Interpretatione Translated with Notes and Glossary*, 78.

²⁴⁵ a Lapide, *The Holy Gospel According to Saint Matthew, Volume II*, , 231-232. Bold type added.

²⁴⁶ a Lapide, *The Holy Gospel According to Saint Matthew, Volume II*, 231. Bold type added.

²⁴⁷ cf., John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2002), 294.

words on marriage in the Gospels is about the very essence of marriage, both insofar as marriage is an institution of nature and an institution of grace, “For Christ speaks of nature, and the natural and primary institution of marriage, according to which marriage, once it is contracted in any way whatsoever, and at the instigation of anyone at all is indissoluble.”²⁴⁸ While the Gospels focus on the immutability of the adherence of husband and wives in their marriages, it also ratifies this very adherence as described in Genesis.

Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians

St. Paul the Apostle has a particularly beautiful ecclesial-anthropology of marriage in his *Letter to the Ephesians*, with aspects repeated in the *Letter to the Colossians*. In *Ephesians* he writes, after having demanded that all members of Christ Jesus live in subordination to one another in Christ:

Be subject (ὑποτασσόμενοι) to one another out of reverence (φόβῳ) for Christ. Wives, be subject (τοῖς ἰδίοις) to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the church is subject (ὑποτάσσεται) to Christ, so let wives also be subject (τοῖς) in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love (ἀγαπάτε) your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up (παρέδωκεν) for her, . . . Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He that loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined (προσκολληθήσεται) to his wife, and the two shall become one (δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν). This is a great mystery (μυστήριον), and I mean in reference to Christ and the church; however, let each one of you love (ἀγαπάτω) his wife as himself; and let the wife see that she respects (φοβῆται) her husband (Eph. 5: 21-33 RSC-CE).²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ a Lapide, *The Holy Gospel According to Saint Matthew, Volume II*, 232.

²⁴⁹ Ephesians 5:32 has had an interesting translation history. The original Greek of the epistle uses the term μυστήριον, whereas the Vulgate of St. Jerome prefers the term *sacramentum* as a translation. The *Nova Vulgata* has restored the term *mysterium* to its place. Latin theology for a very long time read this verse as speaking of the sacrament of marriage insofar as it signified the mystery of Christ and His Church, whereas the Greek’s and *Nova Vulgata*’s preference for “mystery” is easier read as speaking of the union of Christ and His Church—which is then signified by Christian marriage. The transition is from focusing on the created sign or the supernatural significant. cf., Eberhard Nestle, Erwin Nestle, and Kurt Aland, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 24th ed. (Stuttgart: Privileg. Württ. Bibelanstalt, 1960); Bonifatius Fischer et al., eds., *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, 3rd ed. (Stuttgart:

Colossians teaches nothing different from this passage, but only presents a sliver of this same teaching. Its main pedagogical difference is that *Colossians* actually predicates subjection of wives, which *Ephesians* had only predicated of the Church and her members insofar as they are all coequally baptized members of the Church. Yet *Colossians* clearly states, “Wives, be subject (ὑποτάσσεσθε) to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord” (Col 3:18). *Ephesians* had only indirectly said that wives were subject (τοῖς ἰδίοις) to their husband through the context of the analogy of the Church’s subjection or the mutual subjection of the baptized amongst themselves (ὑποτάσσεται). In both these passages, however, Paul commands husband to absolute love—with no bitterness—to their wives where the life and intent of Christ is the sole standard for the husband.²⁵⁰ Moreover, in natural marriage this would correspond to the love that husband naturally have their wives in their marital union, on analogy to that natural love with supernatural charity which a husband has for his wife according to the sacramental sign of Christ and the Church in a sacramental marriage. This is not a subjection of servitude, as Genesis 3 condemns Eve to in punishment for her role in the Fall. Rather, it is a relative subjection in charitable cooperation within the institution of marriage for the good of the family. Social units always require some sort of relative order lest cohesion fails.²⁵¹

Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983); *Nova Vulgata: Bibliorum Sacrorum*, typica altera (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1986); Joseph Pohle, *The Sacraments: A Dogmatic Treatise. Volume I: The Sacraments in General. Baptism. Confirmation*, trans. Arthur Preuss, 2nd ed., vol. 8 (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1917), 5-8; Joseph Pohle, *The Sacraments: A Dogmatic Treatise. Volume IV: Extreme Unction. Holy Orders. Matrimony*, trans. Arthur Preuss, vol. 11 (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder Book Co., 1917), 149-150; Wim François, “‘Mystery’ or ‘Sacrament’: Ephesians 5:32, the Sacrament of Marriage in Early Modern Biblical Scholarship, and Nicolas Poussin’s Visual Exegesis,” in *Quid Est Sacramentum? Visual Representation of Sacred Mysteries in Early Modern Europe, 1400–1700*, ed. Walter Melion, Elizabeth Carson Pastan, and Lee Palmer Wandel (Boston, MA: Brill, 2019), pp. 125-153, 127-139.

²⁵⁰ Joannis Chrysostomi, “In Epistolam Ad Ephesios Commentarius,” in *Opera Omnia Quae Exstant. Tomus Undecimus*, ed. D. Bern. De Montfaucon and J.-P. Migne, vol. LXII (Parisii: J.-P. Migne, 1862), p. c. 9-c. 176, 136-137.

²⁵¹ Chrysostomi, “In Epistolam Ad Ephesios Commentarius,” 136.

Moreover, the Apostle reminds the Ephesians that there is another responsibility that husband's have relative to their wives, as commanded by Genesis – the man leaves his parents and clings to his wife in union with her. This key aspect of the relation of marriage between husband and wife is repeated in Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:7, along with Ephesians 5:31. In all of them it is quoted essentially verbatim, which is particularly interesting because this means that the responsibility of acting and cleaving to (note that this is literally a specific prepositional phrase, like *πρός τι*) is the husband's. It is never said of the wife in Scripture, though much the same must be said of a wife's duty to her husband as well. The Gospels even have this being taught by Christ Jesus as a reminder to many of the leading men of Judea.

The repetition of this fundamental aspect of marriage is found before the Fall as a datum of natural marriage (though this would be a marriage of spouses who lived in perfect nature and in true grace) and in marriage as sacramentalized by Christ for His Church. In all cases of marriage, it is not the wife who is commanded via the repetition of revelation to give herself over to her husband and to never break from him. This belongs to the husband, even though Scripture always gives the familial and marital headship to him. Marriage exists with this institutional orientation that husband's must have—which means that the submission proper to wives (as opposed to women in general) exists within the context of this intentional cleaving on the part of the husband.

The woman is naturally subject, so this clinging is not her affair. The man has to cling in his courtship; he has to show the unbreachable strength of the bond. When the man has said to the woman: I bind myself to you, then the possibility of being subject is opened up for the woman. She cannot be subject before the bond is fastened by the man. The man must bind himself even before the woman binds herself.²⁵²

²⁵² von Speyr, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 239.

Here, women are not called naturally subject to men, but rather that all are naturally subject to Christ and to others according to the fundamental submission in charity proper to the Church. Therefore, the tapestry that the Apostle has woven is no caricature of women's absolute submission to their husbands. Rather, St. Paul teaches that men must love their wives with the love proper to Christ Jesus and they must be the first to actualize this love by leaving their parents, and any responsibilities that they may have relative to their parents, to cling to their brides. The husband must give his whole self over to his bride—within which she may choose to (lovingly) subject herself to him.²⁵³ That wives are to be subject to their husbands is a very real part of marriage.²⁵⁴ Yet this subjection only exists within marriage, St. Paul nowhere states that women are naturally subject to men in general, and only exists insofar as the husband gives himself over in love to union with his wife.

The relation of marriage which St. Paul describes does not disrespect women, rather it humbles men and elevates the dignity of marriage. Indeed, St. Paul is radically elevating the social status of wives in these lines by emphasizing the union of marriage and the mutuality that spouses must have for each other;

The wife recognizes her husband as 'head' in terms of submitting to his authority (5:22-23), but the husband recognizes his headship in terms of loving and serving his wife (5:28-30). The image of head and body here is meant to emphasize especially that the husband and wife should see themselves as one and work together with a common purpose and goal (5:31).²⁵⁵

²⁵³ cf., Eduard Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon: A Commentary on the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, ed. Helmut Koester, trans. William R. Poehlmann and Robert J. Karris (Philadelphia, PN: Fortress Press, 1975), 158 (footnote 26). Neither *Colossians* or *Ephesians* commands wives to love their husbands, this is left to the *Letter to Titus* 2:4. "...young women to love their husbands..."

²⁵⁴ Chrysostomi, "In Epistolam Ad Ephesios Commentarius," 140-141.

²⁵⁵ Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), 168.

This is a far smaller submission than was common in the Roman and Jewish milieus of St. Paul's day, wherefor Paul is indeed elevating wives to a higher dignity.²⁵⁶

However, Craig Keener perhaps goes too far in presuming that St. Paul was only reacting to the household issues of his day, especially since St. Paul does not himself say that he is issuing this teaching in response to imbalances amongst the Roman or Jewish communities—rather, he seems to be giving a positive teaching on marriage and spousal roles.

Some think that this subordination-and-love relationship between spouses is only due to the Fall – that there was no such order between the spouses in Paradise.²⁵⁷ This position is hard to defend insofar as Eve was brought out from the side of Adam and then brought by God to Adam to be his helpmate. This is complicated by concerns for ancient Near-Eastern socio-cultural views that Biblical authors likely had; however, Genesis is clear that Eve had some kind of order to and from Adam.²⁵⁸ However, this certain subordination of wives to their husbands in charity only now exists within the subordination of all believers to each other for the sake of Christ and for the common good of the family.²⁵⁹ “If the man patterns himself on Christ and

²⁵⁶ Keener, *Paul, Women & Wives*, 159-166.

²⁵⁷ cf., Adrienne von Speyr, *The Letter to the Colossians*, trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1998), 133-135.

²⁵⁸ Care must be exercised here lest the ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern practice of younger women and men in their prime marrying one another color this part of Scripture. In these cultures, there was a very obvious subordination of wives to their husbands simply because women married so young that there generally was a very large age gap between them and their husbands. An occasional example of Patristic exegesis presupposing this culture without comment is found in John Chrysostom's Commentary on St. Paul's *Letter to the Ephesians*. Chrysostomi, “In Epistolam Ad Ephesios Commentarius,” 145-147; *ibid*, 148-150. For an example of a contemporary “moderate” position which goes too far in denying the truths of Scripture in favor of social justice positions, while still admitting that the Apostle taught a subjection of wives to their husbands (regardless of the ages of the spouses) see; William Loader, “Social Justice and Gender,” *Open Theology* 6, no. 1 (January 2020): pp. 288-295, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1515/opth-2020-0115>.

²⁵⁹ cf., von Speyr, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 225-226; “This does not mean being obedient in two separate relationships and acts, on one side to the Lord and on the other to her husband, but – this is what is meant by the word *as* – to both in a unity of obedience. Hence, obedience characterizes the whole existential attitude of the woman...”; Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, trans. Matthew L. Lamb, vol. 2 (Albany, NY: Magi Books, Inc., 1966), 217.

receives his instructions from him, he cannot arbitrarily use and misuse the subjection of the woman for his human ends; he must form her with her help in the same way that the Lord uses the subjection of the Church to form her.”²⁶⁰ Therefore, the husband must retain a certain order with his wife relative to the constitution of the Mystical Body. Only for this end is a wife subject to her husband. This whole order of relative subjection, therefore, exists insofar as it is directed toward Christ Jesus.²⁶¹

Conclusion

Scripture is clear. From Genesis, through the Gospels, and into St. Paul’s Epistles, marriage is that natural and indissoluble external union between a man and a woman for the sake of children. In the fullness of time and through grace, this union and the relative roles between husband and wife signify the union of Christ and His Church. God created one man and one woman at the beginning of time where both naturally were His very image in the world. These two were created together in the context of a marital union, i.e., a bodily union for the sake of filling the world with their progeny. That man and women were created for this unique conjoining is a natural perfection of the *imago Dei*. Christ Jesus ratifies the dignity of marriage in the Gospels and clarifies the natural indissolubility of marriage, emphasizing that man and woman were created to be capable of cleaving together in a true union of persons. This emphasis on the bond, the cleaving, of husband and wife draws out the relational nature of marriage. St. Paul gives greater emphasis to the dignity of marriage, placing it within the context of the mystery of Christ Jesus’ union with His own Mystical Body. This *mysterium*, insofar as it pertains to marriage, strengthens the natural

²⁶⁰ von Speyr, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 227.

²⁶¹ Ibid, 225-226; Aquinas, *Commentary on Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 216-226.

indissolubility of marriage.²⁶² No longer is it “merely” a union created to last for the lives of the spouses, but the union is recast as pertaining to God’s own personal dignity. Across all of these texts in Scripture, each emphasizes the objective bond of marriage. That humanity is male and female and that to enter into marriage they must cleave as bound together to become one flesh. Yet St. Paul also emphasizes the relative order between the spouses in marriage. Wives have a somewhat secondary role relative to their husbands and husbands have an utterly sacrificial priority over their wives. Such loving sacrifice on both the parts of wives and of husbands exist for the sake of the good of the whole of the marital union, whenever two (or more) subjects are related to each other, one subject must have a leadership role. To cleave and join in marriage is not only an incredibly unique relational union, but is also to admit an internal order between those who cleave. While a great deal can be written on these subjects, the key point is that marriage in Scripture is always a matter of adherence between spouses. For this reason, it is always remarkably relational.

Theology of Marriage

The Definition of Marriage

After having described the Category of Relation, its various aspects, and immediate sub-species; and after having described the very relational nature of marriage and the sexes in Sacred Scripture; the institution of marriage itself must now be discussed. As was said in the introduction to this thesis, marriage is both a natural institution and a true sacrament of the New Testament—where the essence of marriage is shared between both of these institutional modes. This core essence of marriage remains the

²⁶² cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 42, a. 1, ad. 4; *ibid.*, a. 2, resp.; *ibid.*, q. 49, a. 2, ad. 4; *ibid.*, q. 67, a. 1, ad. 2; François, “‘Mystery’ or ‘Sacrament’,” 132-133; *ibid.*, 133-139.

focus of this thesis, wherefore the *sacramentum* of marriage will not be focused on whenever it is mentioned by various sources. However, these sources will still be used insofar as the essence of sacramental marriage is still that same institution belonging to nature.²⁶³ Out from all that belongs to marriage, this thesis focuses on the objective union and bond of marriage. Happily, the texts of Genesis, the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, and St. Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians all agree that husband and wife—whether in the original creation of man and woman, in the natural institution of marriage persisting after this first instance of marriage, and in marriage as a true sacrament of the New Law—are joined as one for the duration of their lives. This union found in these texts has been sufficiently described for its joining and binding character to be evident as the very marriage itself.

To this end, the definition of marriage as listed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and its predecessor the *Roman Catechism* will first be quickly described and what they say about the union and bond of marriage will be drawn out. The definition of St. Thomas Aquinas will then be shown from the *Supplementum* of his *Summa Theologiae*. Afterwards, the essence of marriage will be identified as a mutual real relation following the various distinctions and aspects of the category of relation described earlier in this thesis. Finally, some added aspects of marriage will be discussed in the context of mutual real relations and mixed correlations.

²⁶³ cf., Paul Gondreau, "The Natural Ordering to Marriage as Foundation and Norm for Sacramental Marriage," *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review of Theology and Philosophy* 77, no. 1 (January 2013): pp. 41-69, 41. "In short, all that belongs to marriage as a natural institution belongs also to sacramental marriage, even if this latter far exceeds the former in what it signifies and in its superadded elements. The intelligibility of sacramental marriage can be retained, then, only with reference to natural marriage as its norm and foundation."

Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Roman Catechism

As a natural reality which has been elevated to the sacramental order, there is a long history of theology and philosophy pertaining to marriage. For this reason, there are definitions of marriage in magisterial documents. In the current *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, marriage is defined:

The matrimonial covenant (*foedus*), by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership (*consortium*) of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament.²⁶⁴

This definition is highly descriptive and less ontological than a truly “scientific” definition, however it remains true. Here marriage is defined according to its covenantal status, not according to its internal being. This is an external and social approach to marriage, which fits with most of the definition covering the ends of marriage and its sacramental nature.²⁶⁵ This does not, however, reduce the core relation of marriage—that marriage is a covenant joining one man and one woman.

Fortunately, this current Catechism does not stop at this definition of marriage via marriage’s social aspect—the covenant—but continues to describe marriage. In doing so, it comes to speak of the core being of marriage in several place. An example, where it describes marriage as a union and a bond is,

“In his preaching Jesus unequivocally taught the original meaning of the union (*unionis*) of man and woman as the Creator willed it from the beginning... The matrimonial union (*coniunctio*) of man and woman is indissoluble: God himself has determined it: ‘what therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.’”²⁶⁶

²⁶⁴ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC 1601; *Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae* (Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997), CCC 1601. cf., Canon Law Society of America, tran., *Code of Canon Law: Latin-English Edition* (Washington, D.C.: Canon Law Society of America, 1984), can. 1055 §1.

²⁶⁵ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, 1-68, q., 44, a. 3, resp.

²⁶⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC. 1614; *Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae* CCC1614.

This is not a definition of marriage, but it shows that the given definition in the Catechism is intended to include such internal concepts. It should be noted that the Catechism prefers to speak of the union of marriage directly in terms of “union,” i.e., *unionis*. Many older authors did not principally do so as *unio* more expresses true unity than it does a union of individuals. However, it retains the term *coniunctio*, which was the preferred term in the Scholastic authors. The text then immediately turns to the bond of marriage, “This unequivocal insistence on the indissolubility of the marriage bond (*vinculi*) may have left some perplexed and could seem to be a demand impossible to realize.”²⁶⁷ The Catechism here identifies marriage, in speaking of Christ Jesus’s defense of His creation’s nature, by three different terms—all three of which apply to that which is indissoluble. Union, conjunction, and bond therefore are one and the same reality, though expressing different aspects. Of these terms used in the Catechism, *unio* will not be discussed in this thesis only insofar as it has been a less common descriptor amongst the theologians of the union of two persons who are each *unio*.

The definition from *Roman Catechism* of the Council of Trent is more essential and simpler than its younger brother: “Matrimony...is defined ‘the conjugal and legitimate union (*coniunctio*) of man and woman, which is to last during life.”²⁶⁸ Similarly to how the current *Catechism of the Catholic Church* expounds its definition of marriage by drawing out the deeper reality of the “matrimonial covenant,” the *Roman Catechism* draws out the meaning of the “*coniunctio*” used in its own definition, showing how various terms may be equated with it. This older

²⁶⁷ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC. 1615; *Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae*, CCC 1615.

²⁶⁸ J. Donovan, tran., *The Catechism of the Council of Trent* (New York, NY: Christian Press Association Publishing Company, 1905), 226; *Catechismus Romanus Ex Decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini Jussu S. Pii V Pontificis Maximi Editus* (Romae: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1796), 330.

catechism specifies the very nature of marriage, which is not the various conditions of consent, the social ceremony, or the marriage debt—but rather,

...the obligation (*obligatio*) and tie (*vinculum*) which arise from the contract, and the marriage debt (*coniugum copula*) by which it is consummated; yet the obligation (*obligationem*) and tie (*nexum*) expressed by the word ‘union’ (*coniunctionis*), alone have the force and nature of marriage.²⁶⁹

While it is possible that there is no real, or perhaps no important, difference between the *vinculum* of marriage and the *nexus* of marriage, they are mentioned separately.

The *Roman Catechism* opens its next paragraph with, “Hence, it is evident, that in that tie (*vinculo*) consists marriage.”²⁷⁰ The essential core of marriage, however, is the unifying bond between the spouses—regardless of its aspect one wishes to emphasize. This core, the *coniunctio* and bond, are what will be shown to be mutual real relations in this thesis.

***Summa Theologiae* of Saint Thomas Aquinas**

St. Thomas Aquinas had set aside his work on the *Summa Theologiae* before having written on marriage. The *Supplementum* which his students compiled from his more youthful work—the *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*—happily has enough material in it for the purposes of this thesis. Moreover, it follows the mode of scientific theology with fewer polemic or apologetic motivations. Its major deficiency is that it is a compilation of texts taken from other works of Aquinas. However, one text taken wholly over into the *Summa Theologiae* is a question “*De matrimonii definitione*.”²⁷¹ This text does not quote, but works from, Peter Lombard’s definition of marriage. “Sunt igitur nuptiae vel matrimonium viri mulierisque coniunctio

²⁶⁹ *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, 226. *Catechismus Romanus Ex Decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini Jussu S. Pii V Pontificis Maximi Editus* (Romae: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1796), 330. Underlining added.

²⁷⁰ *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, 226. *Catechismus*, 331.

²⁷¹ cf., Aquinatis, *In Quattuor Libros Sententiarum*, l. 4, d. 27, q. 1, a. 1.

maritalis, inter legitimas personas, individuum vitae consuetudinem retinens.”²⁷² This definition identifies the genus and species of marriage, with determinate precision. The genus of marriage is the *coniunctio*, the species is the marital aspect of the union (as opposed to mere friendship), and it specifically determines that this species inherently requires the subjects of the union be a properly disposed man and woman. This is the essence of marriage whose general category of being this thesis seeks to identify as a relation.

Aquinas’ text immediately pulls upon the core of this definition, the “*coniunctio maritalis*,” to verify that marriage belongs to the genus of the conjoined.²⁷³ His answer is as illuminating as it is simple and unites the two terms *unionis* and *coniunctio* which the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* used.²⁷⁴ “A joining denotes a kind of uniting (*adunationem*), and so wherever things are united (*adunatio*) there must be a joining.”²⁷⁵ Whenever two subjects are brought together such that they can no longer be treated as separate, especially when such togetherness is a “partnership of the whole of life,” then they have formed a union.²⁷⁶ Not only does this show how the *Catechism* is correct in using the term *unionis*, even though it is more novel, but it also invokes what Aristotle says about “union.” “Most things, then, are said to be ‘one’ because they produce, or possess, or are affected by, or are related to, some other one thing...”²⁷⁷ For this reason, Aquinas then says, “Now things directed to one purpose are said to be united in their direction to it.”²⁷⁸ This is the first

²⁷² Petri Lombardi, *Sententiae in IV Libris Distinctae. Tomus II: Liber III Et IV*, 3rd ed. (Grottaferrata: Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1981), 422 (Lib. IV, Dist. XXVII, Cap. II).

²⁷³ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 44, a. 1, obj. 1.

²⁷⁴ cf., *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC. 1614; *Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae*, CCC 1614.

²⁷⁵ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 44, a. 1, resp. cf., *ibid*, q. 48, a. 1, resp.

²⁷⁶ cf., *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC 1601; *Catechismus Catholicae Ecclesiae* CCC 1601. cf., Canon Law Society of America, tran., *Code of Canon Law*, can. 1055 §1. cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 45, a. 1, ad. 2; *ibid*, ad. 3.

²⁷⁷ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1016b7-9.

²⁷⁸ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 44, a. 1, resp.

reason for how two subjects can be considered one according to Aristotle—because they are united in being directed to producing something. Since marriage is that joining whereby one man and one woman may have and raise children as a family whole, then it is a kind of accidental union. Therefore, the union of marriage is a true *coniunctio*, a joining of two persons, and this is marriage’s essence.²⁷⁹

This article continues to make a very important identification in its reply to its first objection (especially since it unites these two terms which were taken up by the catechisms). “Matrimony is the bond (*vinculum*) by which they are tied formally, not effectively, and so it need not be distinct from the joining (*coniunctione*).”²⁸⁰ This concept of the “bond” does not primarily apply to the action of tying man and woman together in marriage, but it rather applies to the union itself insofar as it is the kind of thing which is tied. This latter aspect is what Aquinas names the bond according to its formal sense. Insofar as husband and wife are joined as one, they are also formally tied. Therefore, the bond and the *coniunctio* are one and the same reality under minorly different aspects. It is for this reason that the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* moves indiscriminately between these terms when speaking of the indissolubility of marriage according to Christ Jesus’ speech in the Gospels, as quoted above.²⁸¹ It is also why the *Roman Catechism* does not attempt to adjudicate between the different terms for this fundamental togetherness of marriage: *coniunctio*, *nexum*, and *vinculum*.²⁸² This is why this thesis focuses both upon the union and bond of marriage, they are one reality.

²⁷⁹ This is explicitly said by Aquinas in the *respondeo* of the next article. “Three things may be considered in matrimony. First, its essence, which is a joining together, and in reference to this it is called the *conjugal union*.” *ibid*, q. 44, a. 2, resp.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid*, q. 44, a. 1, ad. 1.

²⁸¹ cf., *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC. 1614- 1615.

²⁸² cf., *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, 226.

Scattered throughout the questions on marriage in the *Supplementum*, there are references and uses of these key concepts surrounding the generic essence of marriage. Here, several must be discussed insofar as they show the importance that the union of marriage, as union, has. This will constitute a segue into how marriage is a mutual real relation. To this end, some words on the *coniunctio* of marriage will be necessary, followed by the *vinculum* and *nexus* of marriage. The *obligatio* of marriage will be discussed last, insofar as the *obligatio* belongs to the notion of marriage as contract.

The joining (*coniunctio*) which is the genus of marriage is first seen in Genesis 2, “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother, and cleaves to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen. 2:23 RSV-CE).²⁸³ As was just said, this joining is a uniting insofar as the kind of joining seen in marriage is for the sake of some one end—offspring.²⁸⁴ Aquinas names this joining for the sake of children marriage itself, “in matrimony there is a joining (*coniunctio*) in respect of which we speak of husband and wife; and this joining (*coniunctio*), through being directed to some one thing, is matrimony.”²⁸⁵ This first joining of marriage is naturally, though not necessarily, productive of a second joining within the married lives of spouses, “the joining (*coniunctio*) together of bodies and minds is a result of matrimony.”²⁸⁶ Here, the institution of marriage, which is naturally and intentionally for the sake of offspring, demands that there be a union of persons which is the marriage. Building upon this first objective and permanent union of marriage, there is a further joining of the bodies of husband and wife in the conjugal act and a further union of minds in their common life.

²⁸³ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 44, a. 1, s.c.

²⁸⁴ cf., *ibid*, q. 44, a. 1, resp.

²⁸⁵ Loc cit. Underlining added.

²⁸⁶ Loc cit.

This first *coniunctio* which is marriage itself is naturally and sacramentally indissoluble.²⁸⁷

But since divorce is more directly incompatible with the signification of the sacrament than with the good of the offspring, with which it is consequently incompatible, as stated above, the indissolubility of marriage is implied in the good of the sacrament rather than in the good of the offspring, although it may be connected with both. And insofar as it is connected with the good of the offspring, it is of the natural law, but not as connected with the good of the sacrament.²⁸⁸

That the joining is inseparable is first a matter of the natural law insofar as this very union is such due to the single and lasting nature of its end—procreation and the subsequent rearing of children. It should be said that this end, children being raised up to their fully formed natural perfection by two parents living together and aiding each other, is of the union of marriage itself. It is the common good of marriage insofar as marriage is a union ordered to this end.²⁸⁹ What Aquinas said of marriage’s permanence being relative to children’s need to be raised to adulthood is not to claim that the natural indissolubility of marriage only lasts until the youngest child of a given marriage reaches some twenty-odd years of age. Rather it lasts for as long as the spiritual and bodily perfection of offspring would still be dependent upon the

²⁸⁷ This is not meant to identify natural indissolubility of marriage with perfected sacramental indissolubility. cf., *ibid.*, q. 42, a. 2, resp.; *ibid.*, q. 44, a. 3, resp.; *ibid.*, q. 49, a. 2, ad. 7; *ibid.*, q. 67, a. 1, resp.; *ibid.*, ad. 2.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, q. 67, a. 1, ad. 2.

²⁸⁹ cf., Michael Waldstein, “Children as the Common Good of Marriage,” *Nova Et Vetera* 7, no. 3 (2009): pp. 697-709, 701. “This division shows that St. Thomas understands Peter Lombard’s—and his own—account of marriage as standing under the formality of the common good. ‘Marriage is principally ordered to the common good because of its principal end, which is the good of offspring.’ ‘Intercourse is ordered to the common good of the whole human race.’ The common good is also decisive in establishing the communion of husband and wife. ‘Offspring is the common good of husband and wife.’” cf., Aquinas, *In Quattuor Libros Sententiarum*, 570 (Bk. 4, d. 24, q. 1, prologue); Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 67, a. 1, ad. 4; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Secunda Secundae*, 92-189, trans. Laurence Shapcote, vol. 18 (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2018), q. 154, a. 2, resp.; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 67, a. 1, resp. Waldstein uses this to show how certain common over-emphases on the subjects of marriage rejects viewing marriage as an objective institution capable of having a common good and how such an emphasis on the persons—when understood more properly—is still compatible with the common good precisely be accounting for the bond of marriage as an objective reality, see; Waldstein, “Children as the Common Good of Marriage,” 704-709.

integral family first found in their parents. This is a dependency which does not end in this life, for which reason the natural “indissolubility” of marriage is life-long.

The indissolubility of sacramental marriage is easier to enunciate, if far more mysterious. The sacramental good of marriage, which Aquinas mentions in this quote, is a spiritual formality added to the natural institution of marriage.²⁹⁰ This good is due to sacramental marriage’s pointing to the mysterious union that Christ has with His Church—insofar as the union of Christ and His Church is absolutely indissoluble by God’s own power, that which is specially created to signify this mysterious union must be just as strongly joined (cf., Eph. 5:29-32).²⁹¹ It is unsurprising, therefore, that Aquinas names this uniquely holistic union of the soul and body of both man and woman as the greatest kind of human mankind has. “It is thus with the case in point, for the joining (*coniunctio*) of husband and wife by matrimony is the greatest of all joinings (*est maxima*), since it is a joining of soul and body, wherefore it is called a conjugal union (*coniugium*).”²⁹² This inseparable joining of husband and wife, whether of natural or (even more eminently) sacramental institution, is the greatest human joining (*coniunctio*) of its genus.

This greatest of joinings, since it involves both a man being joined to his wife and a woman being joined to her husband, is a matter of true mutuality. “If mental consent is lacking in one of the parties, on neither side is there marriage, since marriage consists in a mutual joining (*mutua coniunctione*) together, as stated above.”²⁹³ While Aquinas is here speaking in the context of issues surrounding the consent to marry, he immediately speaks of a correlativity of joining. This is fortuitous, since it bleeds language which is used in speaking about categorical

²⁹⁰ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 49, a. 2, ad. 7.

²⁹¹ cf., *ibid.*, q. 42, a. 2, resp.; q. 42, a. 1, ad. 4

²⁹² *ibid.*, q. 44, a. 2, ad. 3.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, q. 45, a. 4, ad. 2.

relations over to a discussion about the genus of marriage. Indeed, the *coniunctio* is what Aquinas names as a “*relatio aequiparentiae*,” an equiparent relation.²⁹⁴ However, the application of all Aquinas says about the relation of the mutual joining of husband and wife shall wait until the next section of this paper. It should be noted that this follows the groundwork of Aristotle’s philosophy of friendship: mutual relation between two persons. The relation of marriage is for the sake of procreation—and secondarily for mutual society. The friendship of virtue is not particularly found in marriage insofar as marriage is focused on its primary end of procreation (though the same could not be said about the accounts of friendships of use or pleasure). This relationship of virtue more belongs to the secondary end of marriage, though aspects of all three species of friendship could be found in both ends of marriage.²⁹⁵ Yet an equiparent relation of marriage where there is also a genuine friendship of virtuous spouses would be perfective of this *coniunctio* and would epitomize what Aquinas says about a good marriage being the greatest of friendships.²⁹⁶ To really pull on this cord of the objective institution of marriage as friendship in the category of relation, while extremely close to the purpose of this thesis, would still go beyond its precise scope.

In the meantime, the *vinculum* and *nexus* of marriage must be discussed. It was already noted that the *vinculum* and *coniunctio* of marriage are only distinct in aspect.²⁹⁷ This identity of bond and union extends to the indissolubility of marriage. At times, as above, Aquinas names the union of marriage indissoluble; at others, he names the bond indissoluble. “Hence the marriage bond (*vinculum*) does not last after

²⁹⁴ Ibid, q. 64, a. 5, s.c. cf., ibid, q. 44, a. 1, obj. 1.

²⁹⁵ cf., ibid, q. 42, a. 2, resp.; ibid, q. 55, a. 1, resp.

²⁹⁶ cf., Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles, Books III-IV*, trans. Laurence Shapcote, vol. 12 (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2018), 246 (Bk. III, c. 123).

²⁹⁷ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 44, a. 1, ad. 1.

the life in which it is contracted, and consequently it is said to be inseparable, because it cannot be sundered in this life.”²⁹⁸ Again, just after this, Aquinas calls it an “everlasting bond (*perpetuitate vinculi*).”²⁹⁹ This tie between husband and wife is also named a *nexus*, though Aquinas only uses this of marriage once in the *Supplementum*—and only in a sacramental context, “the outward acts and the words expressive of consent directly effect a certain tie (*nexum*) which is the sacrament of matrimony; and this tie (*nexus*) by virtue of its divine institution works dispositively to the infusion of grace.”³⁰⁰ Whether Aquinas is being very careful with the use of this term for the bond of marriage relative to the making of marriage or not it clearly denotes that same tying or joining of husband and wife, perhaps with an emphasis on the bond as being tied (“effect a certain tie”).

Lastly, the *obligatio* of marriage must be discussed. This term refers to the bond of marriage insofar as it is a contractual bond between legal partners (the spouses).³⁰¹ In fact, Aquinas is willing to equate how the legal bond, i.e., *obligationis*, pertaining to normal legal contracts using material goods and how the *coniunctio* of marriage are made, since they both require sensible consent of both parties (presumably in front of witnesses so that the contract is recognizable in the relevant society).³⁰² This contractual bond (*obligatio*) refers to the bond of marriage insofar as it sets up mutual rights and duties between the spouses,

In the marriage contract (*contractu*) one party is bound (*obligatur*) to the other in the matter of paying the debt (*debitum*); wherefore if one who thus binds (*obligat*) himself is unable to pay the debt, ignorance of this inability on the side of the party to whom he binds (*obligatio*) himself voids the contract (*contractum*).³⁰³

²⁹⁸ Ibid, q. 49, a. 3, ad. 3

²⁹⁹ Ibid, ad. 4.

³⁰⁰ Ibid, q. 42, a. 3, ad. 2.

³⁰¹ cf., ibid, q. 47, a. 5, s.c.

³⁰² Ibid, q. 45, a. 2, resp.

³⁰³ Ibid, q. 52, a. 1, resp.

The bond relative to these rights and duties is obviously a secondary matter for the essence of marriage since the actual use of these rights and duties does not pertain to marriage and can even be legally and morally suspended.³⁰⁴

Since this bond is not primarily a matter of positive law, however, it does pertain to the nature of marriage itself, which is why it must be mentioned here. This is easily understood as a matter of natural law once it is remembered that procreation is a natural need of all material species, such as man.³⁰⁵ In this case of man, offspring depend on their parents for existence, nourishment, and education—while the first of these may not seem to require a tie (*obligatio*) in justice between man and woman, the latter two do.³⁰⁶ Since the conjugal act is ordered to offspring, which offspring require these three goods to grow to the full perfection of the human species, natural justice requires that there be some tie (*obligatio*) between man and woman who consent to this conjugal act.³⁰⁷ This natural justice is not just a justice existing between the parents of some child, lest a father abandon his child to the mother and she has to do all the work of raising the child, but is also a matter of justice to any offspring, since that child's natural development depends upon two parents together bringing him into existence, nourishing him, and educating him. Therefore, insofar as spouses' use of their marital rights is natural, the bond (*obligatio*) which constitutes those rights and duties is also of the essence of marriage, though it is not the first aspect of said essence. This is why Aquinas says, "Now this obligation (*obligatio*) which binds the female and her mate to remain together constitutes matrimony."³⁰⁸ Moreover, this

³⁰⁴ cf., *Code of Canon Law*, can. 1151-1155; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC 1649; Ford, "The Validity of Virginal Marriage," 17-21; *ibid*, 25-29.

³⁰⁵ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 98, a. 1, resp.; *ibid*, a. 2, resp.; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 41, a. 1, ad. 1; *Ibid*, a. 2, resp.

³⁰⁶ cf., *ibid*, q. 41, a. 1, resp.

³⁰⁷ cf., *ibid*, q. 41, a. 1, resp.; *ibid*, q. 45, a. 5, ad. 2.

³⁰⁸ *ibid*, q. 65, a. 3, resp.

obligatio which is marriage must be understood fundamentally as a partnership of equals relative to these rights and duties, i.e., both spouses are legal equals.³⁰⁹

Not only is the *obligatio* dignified by being a constitutive aspect of marriage, but it is also the *res et sacramentum* of marriage. This is a traditional category in sacramental theology, particularly for those sacraments that leave a permanent character in the soul of the recipient (baptism, confirmation, holy orders) and those which have manifest external effect (Eucharist, holy matrimony).³¹⁰ These categories are the *res tantum*, *res et sacramentum*, and *sacramentum tantum*. “

The Schoolmen distinguish between ‘*sacramentum tantum*,’ i.e., the external sign consisting of matter and form; ‘*res tantum*’ i.e., the internal grace effected by that sign; and ‘*res simul et sacramentum*’ i.e., the character, which is both the result of a sign and itself the sign of something else.³¹¹

These three aspects should be found in all seven sacraments of the New Law. Aquinas divides the sacrament of marriage into these three as well, except he adds a further distinction in the *res tantum*, following Peter Lombard.

“[T]he acts externally apparent are the *sacrament only*; the bond (*obligatio*) between husband and wife resulting from those acts is *reality and sacrament*; and the *ultimate reality contained* is the effect of this sacrament, while the *non-contained reality* is that which the Master assigns.”³¹²

Here, the *res tantum* of the sacrament is divided into the “non-contained reality” of marriage as the union of Christ and His Church and the “ultimate reality contained” which is the sacramental grace given to the spouses so that they may fulfill the ends of marriage fittingly relative to this mystical union and their mutual sanctification.³¹³

³⁰⁹ cf., *ibid* q. 52, a. 1, ad. 1; *ibid*, q. 59, a. 4, ad. 1.

³¹⁰ cf., Joseph Pohle, *Volume I: The Sacraments in General. Baptism. Confirmation*, 82.; *ibid*, 83-84. It should be noted that the development of these categories began with the Eucharist and was first extended to the sacrament of marriage by Gandalf of Bologna, with the first full application of all three categories to the sacrament of marriage belonging to Alexander of Hales. cf., Ronald F. King, “The Origin and Evolution of a Sacramental Formula: *Sacramentum Tantum, Res Et Sacramentum, Res Tantum*,” *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review of Theology and Philosophy* XXXI, no. 1 (January 1967): pp. 21-82, 21-34; *ibid*, 57; *ibid*, 71.

³¹¹ Pohle, *Volume I: The Sacraments in General. Baptism. Confirmation*, 82.

³¹² Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 42, a. 1, ad. 5.

³¹³ cf., *ibid*, ad. 4.

This foray into sacramental divisions, however, is to point out the importance that the *obligatio* has relative to the essence of marriage. While it remains true that concepts pertaining to actions, like the *obligatio*, are secondary to concepts pertaining to essence, here Aquinas identifies the stable reality of sacramental marriage through which sacramental grace is dispensed with the tie (*obligatio*) of rights and duties in marriage.³¹⁴ This bond of marriage must go to the core of the institution of marriage, as common to both natural and sacramental marriage, as it is the stable reality of sacramental marriage capable of being the avenue for the dispensation of sacramental matrimonial grace.

The *obligatio* and *nexus* of marriage are very important aspects of the union of marriage about which much more can and should be said. However, they are mentioned here by way of “mopping up” what Aquinas says about the real joining together of spouses in marriage, regardless of what aspect of this joining is discussed. These two terms, in fact, overlap with the bond (*vinculum*) of marriage by pertaining to the legal ramifications of such a tie and by focusing on that same tie insofar as it is being made. This thesis, however, focuses more on the stable ontological essence of marriage—the union (*coniunctio*) and the bond (*vinculum*) of marriage. Since Aquinas has already said that the *vinculum* refers to the tie between the spouses as a formal reality, whereby it is the same reality as the union of marriage, it seems safe to say that the truths of the *obligatio* and *nexus* which have just been discussed also belong to the *coniunctio*.³¹⁵ This seems especially safe since Aquinas obliquely identifies the *coniunctio* with the *res et sacramentum* of marriage, after previously

³¹⁴ cf., Bernard Leeming, *Principles of Sacramental Theology*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, 1960), 326-328; Pius XI, “Casti Connubii,” §41-42; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Tertia Pars*, q. 84, a. 1, ad. 3; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 42, a. 3, ad. 2; Gondreau, “The Natural Ordering to Marriage as Foundation and Norm for Sacramental Marriage,” 69.

³¹⁵ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 44, a. 1, ad. 1.

having clearly classed the *obligatio* under this sacramental category.³¹⁶ Granting that this is true, it is now time to turn to what Aquinas has to say regarding the *coniunctio* as a categorical relation.

Marriage is a Mutual Real Relation

Marriage as a Relation in the *Summa Theologiae*

Aquinas clearly states a few times in the 27 questions on marriage in the *Supplementum* that marriage is a relation. In his mind this is rather evident to experience, but he does not have a focused discussion on marriage's categorical being. Therefore, marriage as a relation will be pieced together from the few places that Aquinas explicitly mentions it and by applying this to the greater philosophy of relations and theology of marriage.

It is by relation (*Relatio*) that things are related to one another (*aliqua ad invicem referuntur*). Now by matrimony certain things are related to one another (*aliqua ad invicem referuntur*); for the husband is the wife's husband, and the wife is the husband's wife. Therefore, matrimony is a kind of relation (*in genere relationis*), nor is it other than a joining.³¹⁷

The *coniunctio* of marriage is that whereby a man is objectively tied to his wife and this woman is objectively tied to her husband. Such referral, which is expressed by a prepositional statement (“*aliqua ad invicem referuntur*”), is manifestly an objective “πρός τι.”³¹⁸ Therefore, the *coniunctio* is a relation, “The joining together (*coniunctio*) can be taken for the relation (*relatione*) itself which is marriage.”³¹⁹

³¹⁶ cf., *ibid*, ad. 2. “Nec in sacramento requiritur quod sit sensibile illud quod est res et sacramentum: hoc enim modo se habet in hoc sacramento praedicta coniunctio.”

³¹⁷ *Ibid*, q. 44, a. 1, s.c.

³¹⁸ cf., Aristotle, *Aristotle's Categories and De Interpretatione Translated with Notes and Glossary*, 78.

³¹⁹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 48, a. 2, ad. 2.

Nor should this be surprising insofar as there is no visible thing which exists between husband and wife, nor a visible accident pertaining to the spouses which can be identified as the relation of marriage.

Although relation (*relatio*) is not itself a sensible accident, its causes may be sensible. Nor is it necessary in a sacrament for that which is both reality and sacrament to be sensible (for such is the relation of the aforesaid joining [*coniunctio*] to this sacrament), whereas the words expressive of consent, which are sacrament only and are the cause of that same joining (*coniunctionis*), are sensible.³²⁰

The sensible point of contact that the relation of marriage has is found in the consent to marriage, i.e., the wedding ceremony. This draws out the high importance that marriage in its visible act of being made, has. This is why, classically, there is a distinction between *matrimonium in fieri* and *matrimonium in factum esse*—there are unique aspects to both and common aspects which receive special emphasis in one or the other.³²¹ In this particular case, *matrimonium in fieri* is the place of the sensible accidents which show the relation of marriage itself.³²² This is not to say that marriage, simply speaking, is not a relation—it is only to say that the ability to sense this relation is clear to society in the making of marriage. As far as the sensible point of contact of *matrimonium in factum esse* goes, this is seen both in the conjugal act and in the mutual society of the spouses—of which more will be said below.³²³

This relation is further specified by Aquinas, “Marriage is a relation of equiparence (*relatio aequiparentiae*), since it is a kind of union (*coniunctio*).”³²⁴

Equiparant relations are those whose terms are equal to each other; “Now a relation

³²⁰ Ibid, q. 44, a. 1, ad. 2.

³²¹ cf., Leonard F. Gerke, “Christian Marriage: A Permanent Sacrament” (dissertation, The Catholic University of America Press, 1965), pp. 1-171, 2; *ibid*, 25-26.

³²² Insofar as the making of marriage is not marriage itself, this is not the focus of this thesis. However, *matrimonium in fieri* will briefly return at the end of this thesis. cf., Ford, “The Validity of Virginal Marriage,” 13-15.

³²³ To the sensible aspects of the relations of *matrimonium in factum esse*, see; Gerke, “Christian Marriage,” 18-19; *ibid*, 63-64.

³²⁴ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 64, a. 5, s.c. cf., *ibid*, q. 47, a. 4, s.c.

(*relatio*) of that kind is equally (*aequaliter*) in both terms.”³²⁵ This equality means that the correlations of husband to wife and wife to husband are specifically the same.³²⁶ This places marriage in the subcategory of numerical relations (ἀριθμόν).³²⁷ Such relations have their correlates coming into existence simultaneously, i.e., husband becomes such at the same time that his wife becomes such.³²⁸ This is why Aquinas says that this kind of relation always requires that both terms of the relation be in relation to one another—both terms of the relation must come into existence as related to one another at the same time.³²⁹ While the Aristotelian convention of naming relations of identity in essence and similarity in quality alongside that of strict equality in quantity under the title “numerical” can be debated and certainly does not fit a modern notion of number—it remains true that there is a unity which can be identified here in the case of marriage.³³⁰ “Now ‘one’ is the starting-point and standard of number; and so all these relations involve number, though not all in the same way.”³³¹ This is the basis of the diversity that Aquinas identifies in marriage, “But the relations (*relatio*) of matrimony...on the part of the subject there is numerical diversity. The fact of this relation having a diversity of subjects is signified by the terms *husband and wife*.”³³² Insofar as the subjects of marriage, one man and one woman, are two persons, they must be capable of being counted and distinguished in their own proper (and quantifiable) matter. In the case of these equiparent relations that Aquinas speaks of, the quantities identifiable in the spouses are the relevant foundations to this relation.³³³

³²⁵ Ibid, q. 47, a. 4, s.c. cf., ibid, q. 44, a. 1, obj. 3.

³²⁶ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 206.

³²⁷ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1020b31-33.

³²⁸ cf., Aristotle, “Categories,” 7a15-18.

³²⁹ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 47, a. 4, resp.

³³⁰ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a8-14.

³³¹ Ibid, 1021a12-14.

³³² Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 44, a. 1, ad. 3.

³³³ Loc cit.

Aquinas then does something odd. He divides what it is to be equal into two further species, recognizing fundamentally different kinds of foundations to “numerical relations.”

Equality is twofold: of quantity and of proportion. Equality of quantity is that which is observed between two quantities of the same measure, for instance, a thing two cubits long and another two cubits long. But equality of proportion is that which is observed between two proportions of the same kind, as double to double.³³⁴

It should be noted that this quote is from the *respondeo* to the question “Whether husband and wife are equals in the marriage act?” and is not explicitly speaking of a categorical relation, but about an act which pertains to multiple categorical relations. Since it is somewhat removed from the context of relation, these species of equality—and the oddity of the way in which Aquinas speaks of different aspects of marriage as “equal” and “numerical”—may not have been intended to be directly applied to categorical relations of equality. However, since equality of quantity and equality of proportion are both susceptible of relations and are both numerical, there is nothing barring them from being transferred to this species of relation. This would constitute a third level of categorization beyond Aristotle’s numerical relations of the category of relations.

Aquinas says that marriage is not a relation of equality of quantity since, “husband and wife are not equal in marriage: neither as regards the marriage act, wherein the more noble part is due to the husband, nor as regards the household management, wherein the wife is ruled and the husband rules.”³³⁵ It is imperative to recall that this is not a matter of essence, which would be a relation of “the same.”³³⁶

³³⁴ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 64, a. 5, resp.

³³⁵ Loc cit.

³³⁶ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a11-12.

Husband and wife are the same in essence and in essential dignity.³³⁷ What Aquinas is claiming here, however, is that the quantifiable dignity of power in procreation and authority in the family pertaining to the husband, as a married man, and to the wife, as a married woman, are unequal. While inaccuracies abounded in discussions about the relative “natural power” that husbands have over their wives, what remains true is that men tend to give a greater genetic specificity to their offspring in the conjugal act and that husbands do have a certain predominance of authority in the family.³³⁸ The former of these two belongs to the clear, if greatly debated and obfuscated, teachings of Aristotle and of the Thomist school. While space does not allow for a fair treatment of the truth of the Aristotelian-Thomistic biology, it may suffice to quote Michael Nolan on Aristotle’s use of the terms “active” and “passive” relative to males and females in the sexual act.³³⁹

Aristotle’s use of the concepts ‘active’ and ‘passive’ is reflected in modern biology texts. One reads in such texts that in plants ‘the pollen tube penetrates the stigma, style, and ovarian tissues on its journey to an ovule,’ and that in animals ‘the sperm moves into the oviduct,’ that it ‘reaches the secondary oocyte,’ and that ‘it penetrates the zona pellucida.’ These phrases present the male element as active and the female element as passive. Yet they surely do not imply that the male animal is active and that the female animal is passive.

³³⁷ cf., Michael Nolan, “The Aristotelian Background to Aquinas’s Denial That ‘Woman Is a Defective Male,’” *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review* 64, no. 1 (January 2000): pp. 21-69, 34. “When an animal is said to be a female or a male, this is not said regarding the whole animal, but only regarding a particular power and a particular part, a part that is evident to the senses. Being an animal comes first, so to speak, and being a female or male animal comes later. This implies that the female and male animal comes later. This implies that the female and male of any species are fundamentally the same as each other.”

³³⁸ This is not said in prejudice to the Aristotelian-Thomistic position that the male is the principle active generator relative to the female in the conjugal act is a manifest truth immediately verifiable by the senses. While the ancients and medieval would say that this is the principal way that a certain biological superiority of masculinity over femininity is seen in the conjugal act and in marriage, this is no longer a matter of agreement amongst the theologians, philosophers, or biologists. For a Thomistic presentation of this position, see Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 92, a. 1, resp.; Dennis Doherty, *The Sexual Doctrine of Cardinal Cajetan* (Regensburg: Verlag Friedrich Pustet, 1966), 50-52.

³³⁹ A fair summarization of an accurate and largely non-misogynistic Aristotelian-Thomistic biology on the relative equality and difference between males and females can be found in Sophia M. Connell, *Aristotle on Female Animals: A Study of the Generation of Animals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Michael Nolan, “The Aristotelian Background to Aquinas’s Denial That ‘Woman Is a Defective Male,’” *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review* 64, no. 1 (January 2000): pp. 21-69; Doherty, *The Sexual Doctrine of Cardinal Cajetan*.

The modern physiologist does not wish to anticipate what is a matter for the student of animal behavior. Nor does Aristotle.³⁴⁰

The “male factor” in biology refers to the male reproductive system and the natural effects proper to the male sperm, which Nolan here identifies as the formal determinant (active principle) in fertilization. This Aristotelian position would also have been defended by Cardinal Cajetan.³⁴¹ This position has recently been ratified, insofar as the male semen has been shown to be, by a statistically significant margin, the biological principle of the offspring’s gender.³⁴²

The latter point, that husbands have a certain predominance of quantifiable authority (broadly speaking) over their wives, is ratified by Sacred Scripture as seen above in the section on St. Paul’s *Epistle to the Ephesians*. This must be understood within its limits, however. While wives are commanded to have the same orientation to their husbands that the Church has to Christ, husbands are also commanded to completely give themselves over to their wives as Christ gave Himself to His Church (Eph. 5:21-28). St. Paul is clear that the subordination that wives have to their husbands only exists within the mutual love and subordination of spouses, “Be subject (ὕποτασσομένοι) to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Eph. 5:21 RSV-CE). Within this union of mutual submission in the family unit, there must be an order.

If, then, it is natural for man to live in the society of many, it is necessary that there exist among men some means by which the group may be governed. For where there are many men together and each one is looking after his own interest, the multitude would be broken up and scattered unless there were also an agency to take care of what appertains to the commonweal. In like manner, the body of a man or any other animal would disintegrate unless there were a general ruling force within the body which watches over the common good of

³⁴⁰ Nolan, “Aristotelian Background,” 44.

³⁴¹ cf., Doherty, *The Sexual Doctrine of Cardinal Cajetan*, 52; *ibid*, 52-54.

³⁴² cf., Corry Gellatly, “Trends in Population Sex Ratios May Be Explained by Changes in the Frequencies of Polymorphic Alleles of a Sex Ratio Gene,” *Evolutionary Biology* 36, no. 2 (2009): pp. 190-200, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s11692-008-9046-3>; Newcastle University, “Boy or Girl? It's in the Father's Genes,” *ScienceDaily*, December 12, 2008, <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/12/081211121835.htm>

all members.—With this in mind, Solomon says: ‘Where there is no governor, the people shall fall’” (Prov. 11: 14).³⁴³

In this way there is a priority of authority and dignity given to the husband within a marriage and within the family, within a radical mutuality of the spouses. This is why von Speyr wrote, “If [the husband] does, if he carries out his role as head according to the mind of Christ, then the life of the woman, if she is married, is charted and steered by his leadership and planning. She is given a line to which she can readily accommodate herself.”³⁴⁴ This is the rulership that husbands have over wives by which Aquinas notes an inequality in the quantity of power between the spouses. Yet, insofar as equality is a matter of absolute precision, St. Paul does describe an inequality of authority in the family.

While Aquinas denies that marriage is a relation of the equality of strict quantities, he does say that it is a relation of proportional equality. “But with reference to the second kind of equality,” i.e., equality of proportion, “they are equal in both matters, because just as in both the marriage act and in the management of the household the husband is bound to the wife in all things pertaining to the husband, so is the wife bound to the husband in all things pertaining to the wife.”³⁴⁵ Insofar as husbands and wives married, they each owe the other everything due to them in the institution and sacrament of marriage. This is the relative equality, i.e., proportionality, that St. Paul described in the absolute mutuality of husbands and wives. Whatsoever a man can give his wife, following the exemplar of Christ, he is bound to give her and whatsoever a woman can give her husband, following the exemplar of the Church, she is bound to give him. This is why Aquinas, pointing back

³⁴³ Thomas Aquinas, *On Kingship to the King of Cyprus*, trans. Gerald B. Phelan and I. Th. Eschmann (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2000), 5-6.

³⁴⁴ Von Speyr, *Letter to the Ephesians*, 226-227.

³⁴⁵ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 64, a. 5, resp.

to Peter Lombard, says that this relation of proportional equality is why spouses are “equal in paying and demanding the debt.”³⁴⁶ The marriage debt is narrower than what St. Paul speaks of, but the mutual right and duty of the debt does go to the heart of the relation of proportion that spouses have for each other relative to their authority over each other. This proportionate equality of giving all of oneself matrimonially over to one’s spouse fulfills Grenier’s criterion for equiparence in mutual real relations as well.³⁴⁷ Aquinas’ choice in focusing on the equiparent relation of marriage is exceedingly divisive by today’s standards and much of what was said in his day of the inequality of man and woman was based in error. However, some aspects of truth in his own statements have been here defended sufficiently to show that marriage indeed has a relation of proportionate equality and to exclude certain relations of simple quantitative equality.

Marriage as a Relation according to Louis Cardinal Billot

Marriage as an equiparent relation was not limited to the *coniunctio* of marriage. It also has been predicated of the other aspects of the core of the institution of marriage—the *vinculum* and *obligatio*. Louis Cardinal Billot, S. J., the greatest Thomist theologian of his day in the Roman schools who resigned his status as a Cardinal due to controversies in France and the Vatican on political matters, said;

Sicut ergo impossibile est ut dominium maritale in uno *coniugum* sit, et non in altero: ita etiam impossibile est ut *obligatio* viri ad mulierem firmior sit quam mulieris ad virum, aut vice versa; quod tamen accideret, si *vinculum* ex una tantum parte rationem haberet sacramenti, hoc est, si matrimonium foret ratum in fideli, et non ratum in infideli.³⁴⁸

³⁴⁶ Loc cit.

³⁴⁷ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 206.

³⁴⁸ Billot, *De Ecclesiae Sacramentis: Commentarius in Tetriam Partem S. Thomae. Tomus Posterior: Complectens Questiones De Poenitentia, Extrema Unctione, Ordine, Et Matrimonio*, 378. Italics added. For the controversies leading to Billot’s voluntary acceptance of the constraints placed upon him by the Roman Curia, perhaps by Pope Pius XI’s private requests, see Peter J. Bernardi, “Louis

Here, Cardinal Billot indicates that the authority that spouses reciprocally have over each other is inherently connected to the *obligatio* of marriage and that both must be truly reciprocally in each spouse. He further asks whether this reciprocal inherence of what is equally between spouses also hold for the *vinculum* of marriage in the case of disparity of cult—since the *vinculum*, as the binding union between the spouses, is an objective aspect of the spouses’ bond (*obligatio*) relative to their rights and duties (*dominium maritale*).

After having connected the realities of the *vinculum* and *obligatio*, Cardinal Billot goes on to say, “Quippe vinculum est relatio quaedam inter duos, et quidem relatio aequiparantiae, eiusdem rationis in utroque.”³⁴⁹ This repeats Aquinas’ words on the *coniunctio* of marriage—since the joining of marriage is between two subjects, i.e., two units, it is a “numerical” relation of equality. As Aquinas says in the case of the *coniunctio*, this relation of equality pertains to proportional equality only, insofar as men and women are not identical in the accidents which make up the two sexes and insofar as marriage builds upon these accidental differences.³⁵⁰ The same holds true of the *vinculum* of marriage.³⁵¹ By extension, Cardinal Billot would have the *obligatio* of marriage be the same kind of thing insofar as the strength (*firmior*) of the *obligatio* which is reciprocally between husband and wife still depends upon the proportionality of how each spouse owes the other what is due to them.³⁵² This is unsurprising since the concept of “bond” or “obligation,” requires two concrete subject to be stably and

Cardinal Billot, S.J. (1846–1931): Thomist, Anti-Modernist, Integralist,” *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 8, no. 4 (2021): pp. 585-616, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22141332-08040004>.

³⁴⁹ Billot, *De Ecclesiae Sacramentis*, 378. It should be noted that the concept of the marital bond has not been set aside by the Church, as some theologians have claimed, but is still handed on as an adequate expression of marriage’s indissoluble being; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC 1640; Levering, *The Indissolubility of Marriage*, 84-85; *ibid*, 87.

³⁵⁰ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 64, a. 5, resp.

³⁵¹ cf., *ibid*, q. 44, a. 1, ad. 1.

³⁵² cf., *loc cit*.

reciprocally *ad aliud*. This would then be the genus of relation in which marriage belongs—which extends to the *vinculum* and *obligatio* of marriage, not just the *coniunctio*.

Marriage as a Mutual Real Relation: A Thomistic Explanation

Moving from Thomas Aquinas' and Cardinal Billot's words on how marriage is an objective relation, a "thomistic" account of marriage as a mutual real relation will be given. This will focus on the *coniunctio* and *vinculum* of marriage, though some words on the *obligatio* and the manifest joining of the *carnalis copula* will be added. These aspects of marriage, which are truly the same reality (*coniunctio* and *vinculum*), an immediately further aspect of the same reality (*obligatio*), and an external sign thereof (*copula*), will be recognized as relations. They will be shown to be truly existing (categorical relations), placed in their proper species of categorical relations, and shown to be really correlate (mutually real). However, since the *coniunctio-vinculum* has already been identified as an equiparent relation, some added words on marriage as a "numerical" relation will be added. These are not the simplest kinds of relation to discuss in the context of human persons, but the Thomistic tradition's acceptance of it makes it a necessary discussion. The primary thing to draw from the following discussion on "numerical" relations, in supplement to Aquinas' and Billot's own words, is that such relations add a radically objective dimension to any consideration on the being of marriage. The secondary thing to draw from this is that "numerical" relations are very complex and the numerable character of qualities is of a comparably esoteric character. After "numerical" relations are discussed, marriage

as a mutual real relation according to action and passion will be discussed. The conjugal act and the *obligatio* of marriage will also be discussed in this context.

1. More on “numerical” relations

Aquinas’ and Billot’s account of “numerical” relations in marriage is inadequate. This is for two reasons: first, that the “numerical” relations of equality are notoriously difficult to deploy when speaking of human persons since human actions are not strictly quantifiable and comparisons between men and women are of great controversy; second, that boiling the relation of marriage down to this kind of relation is very bare-bones since it ignores the other two basic kinds of relations, ignores the distinction between *matrimonio in fieri* and *matrimonio in factum esse*, and does not describe how these proportionate and unequal “numerical” relations fulfill all the aspects of a categorical relation. This second reason is especially important, since failing to focus on marriage holistically when speaking of relations gives the appearance of misogyny. For these reasons, some additions to Aquinas’ words on “numerical” relations must be added and the “numerical” relation of marriage in the making of a marriage will be here discussed in distinction from the previous sections’ comments on the “numerical” relation of marriage in itself.

Most unfortunately, Aquinas and Billot do not mention the fundamental fact that marriage is a relation of essentially identical individuals. Amongst the “numerical” relations Aristotle mentions, the relation founded upon both subject and term being of one essence is clearly applicable to marriage. It is true that this relation of sameness is not specific to marriage—it applies to all human relationships—but it establishes marriage as primarily being a matter of sameness between spouses. It also benefits from clearly being something identifiable as one, insofar as unity is

convertible with being and such ontic units can be rationally identified, which is not immediately clear in other cases of “numerical” relations.³⁵³ Since marriage is between human persons, the *coniunctio* of marriage and all other relations applicable to marriage are based on the relation of sameness between husband and wife insofar as they are both human beings. In this relation, the two spouses can both stand as subject and term; whereby the subject, the term, and the foundation of the relation—i.e., the essence common to both—are all real.³⁵⁴ As such, the reference between subject and term founded on this essence is also real. Not only is the “numerical” relation of sameness here a real relation, but it is a mutual real relation. This is because the spouses can both equally (equiparantly) be considered subject or term of the relation since the husband as a human being is the same essence as his wife as a human being.³⁵⁵ Indeed, the late Thomists would call this a “mutual relation *of the same denomination*” which is “a relation to which corresponds in another extreme a relation of the same entity and of the same species; v.g., the relation of likeness between two white objects.”³⁵⁶ This mutual real relation of sameness is the generic essence of marriage and establishes the fundamental identity between spouses, so that any differentiation between husbands and wives exists within their “equal dignity” as human beings.

To specify this generic relation for the case of marriage, so that marriage is not just another relation of essential identity amongst human beings, the duality of the sexes must be taken into account. Aquinas and Billot presume not only a duality of the sexes but an order between them once man and woman enter into marriage—

³⁵³ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1016a32-1016b7; Aquinas, “On Being and Essence,” in *Opuscula I*, (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2018) pgs. 259-80, 277-278.

³⁵⁴ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 202.

³⁵⁵ cf., *ibid*, 206.

³⁵⁶ *Loc cit*.

which is why Aquinas speaks of a quantitative inequality between husbands and wives and a proportionate equality between them in fulfilling their duties toward one another. Here the relative opposition in the sexes, male and female, must be discussed. The two sexes are differentiated from each other according to the sexual faculties of concrete persons.³⁵⁷ Since human beings are true wholes, this difference in reproductive faculty effects the whole body of the person.³⁵⁸ Moreover, since human reproduction is not merely a matter of bodily procreation, but includes the raising of any offspring and common life in a family ordered toward such procreation and childrearing, the sexes rightly seem to extend to biological tendencies in men and women which are ordered to complementary abilities in raising children and operating in a family.³⁵⁹ For example, this is why men, for the most part, are object orientated such that they are better at ordinary defense and materially providing for a family; and why women, for the most part, are person or subject orientated such that they are better able to provide immediate care and support for children.³⁶⁰ These tendencies

³⁵⁷ cf., Doherty, *The Sexual Doctrine of Cardinal Cajetan*, 50-51; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 91, a. 1, resp. It must be noted that the two sexes are not specifically alike, but are of one genus according to the class of reproductive qualities which make-up the reproductive faculties in concrete persons. cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1016a24-32; *ibid*, 1018a5-8; *ibid*, 1018a25-26; Aristotle, "On Coming-To-Be and Passing Away," in *Aristotle III: On Sophistical Refutations, On Coming-To-Be and Passing Away, On the Cosmos* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1955), pp. 157-329, 323b25-324a9.

³⁵⁸ For examples as to how differentiation due to the two sexes is found throughout person's bodies, especially the brain, see; M.D. Wheelock et al., "Sex Differences in Functional Connectivity during Fetal Brain Development," *Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience* 36 (April 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcn.2019.100632>; Amber N.V. Ruigrok et al., "A Meta-Analysis of Sex Differences in Human Brain Structure," *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews* 39 (February 2014): pp. 34-50, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2013.12.004>.

³⁵⁹ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 41, a. 1, resp; *ibid*, ad. 1; *ibid*, ad. 4; *ibid*, q. 49, a. 2, ad. 1. For examples of tendencies to differences in ability and actions between men and women due to biological factors, see; University of Iowa, "Sex Difference on Spatial Skill Test Linked to Brain Structure," *ScienceDaily* (*ScienceDaily*, December 18, 2008), <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/12/081217124430.htm>; Madhura Ingalhalikar et al., "Sex Differences in the Structural Connectome of the Human Brain," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 111, no. 2 (December 2, 2013): pp. 823-828, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1316909110>; Ardita Ceka and Rabije Murati, "The Role of Parents in the Education of Children," *Journal of Education and Practice* 7, no. 5 (2016): pp. 61-64.

³⁶⁰ cf., Ceka and Murati, "The Role of Parents in the Education of Children," 62-63; Ingalhalikar et al., "Sex Differences in the Structural Connectome of the Human Brain."

follow the actual biochemistry which seem to originate from the physical principles of sexual differentiation. These examples are only describing these actions insofar as the different sexes more emphasize them, without prejudice to how any person is capable of exercising these abilities.³⁶¹ These examples are also only for the most part and cannot be statistically universalized. However, these differences in tendency of action follow upon the usual differences in the bodies of men and women. Such differences are generally ordered to the same end as those of the obvious sexual differentiation of the reproductive faculties in human persons—this single end being the bringing into being of perfected human persons, i.e., procreation and the raising of any offspring. “Nature intends not only being in the offspring, but also perfect being.”³⁶²

Therefore, the two sexes are “contrary” to each other insofar as they “split” mankind’s proper reproductive faculty—or, more generally, insofar as they are contrary principles of human faculties needed for reproduction and childrearing. The former sense of contrariety is spoken of by Aristotle as, “‘Contrary’ means:...(d) falling under the same faculty.”³⁶³ By this, Aristotle has predicated contrariety of these faculties as a kind of opposition within them.³⁶⁴ The latter is spoken of by Aristotle as, “‘Other things are called ‘contrary’ either because they possess attributes of this kind,...or because they are productive of or liable to them, or actually produce or incur them.’”³⁶⁵ Since the sexes are a differentiation in the reproductive faculty, or since the sexes designate that accident of being which produces the bodily dichotomy which is found in the reproductive faculty of persons and in the faculties pertaining to

³⁶¹ cf., Cornell University, “Brain Neurochemicals Tell a Female to Act like a Female, Not Her Gender, Cornell Biologists Discover,” ScienceDaily, February 17, 2000, <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2000/02/000217081522.htm>; Daphna Joel et al., “Sex Beyond the Genitalia: The Human Brain Mosaic,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112, no. 50 (December 15, 2015): pp. 15468-15473, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1509654112>.

³⁶² Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 41, a. 1, ad. 4. cf., *ibid*, q. 49, a. 2, ad. 1.

³⁶³ Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1018a26-30.

³⁶⁴ cf., *ibid*, 1018a20-31.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 1018a31-34.

childrearing within a family, the sexes are opposites.³⁶⁶ It must be noted that this opposition does not involve privation in the sexes, as some may have thought that women are privative relative to men. Rather, it is an opposition of qualities and faculties of persons relative to the proper end of said qualities and faculties. Masculinity and femininity are opposite formalities in individual persons who themselves are both separately self-sufficient relative to their individual lives in a society, but are complements relative to further ends needed for the continuation of the species.³⁶⁷ Their opposition is seated in their different faculties which are ordered out from themselves, i.e., ordered to procreation.³⁶⁸ “Hence, while man and woman are alike in that they both have active potencies, the function of those potencies is that whereby the male and female differ from each other.”³⁶⁹ As such, they have a “numerical” relation of dissimilarity of quality, i.e., the *per accidens* forms of masculinity and femininity.

In saying this, it must be recalled that contrary things belong to the same kind of being, whereby dissimilarity belongs to the same class of things as similarity.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁶ It should be noted that contrariety does not require that contrary forms be capable of successively existing in the same subject; “Of contraries this, too, holds good, that, the subject remaining identical, either may change to the other, unless, indeed, one of those contraries constitutes part of that subject, as heat constitutes part of fire.” Aristotle, “The Categories,” 13a19-22. The sexes constitute part of human persons insofar as human persons are by definition individuated, i.e., concretely existing with and through their relevant accidents. No person is ever individuated without either the male or female sex, except in cases of rare abnormalities which mix biological characteristics which obviously belong to these two reproductive kinds. Since persons remain themselves, no changes in biological sex or changes in the opposition of the sexes are possible.

³⁶⁷ As to the general capabilities of all persons, particularly that all concrete human beings are ordered to the perfections of intellect and will and that fulfilling this is possible, see; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 92, a. 1, resp. For the narrow ends for which the sexes are needed in human society, see; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 92, a. 1, resp.; Doherty, *The Sexual Doctrine of Cardinal Cajetan*, 51-52.

³⁶⁸ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 92, a. 1, ad. 1. This is not cited to promote Aquinas’ idea that women are defective relative to their procreative power compared to men’s procreative power. Rather, it is cited to show that Aquinas considers the two sexes and their complementary reproductive being insofar as they are ordered to said procreative power. He does not consider the sexes insofar as they belong to static individuals.

³⁶⁹ Doherty, *The Sexual Doctrine of Cardinal Cajetan*, 52.

³⁷⁰ cf., Aristotle, “The Categories,” 14a14-19. Aristotle is clear that this identity of kind is either specific or generic. This is repeated in terms of causality in, Aristotle, “On Coming-To-Be and Passing Away,” 323b25-324a9.

Thus there can be relations of dissimilarity in the same class of “numerical” relations as relations of quantitative likeness.³⁷¹ This is ratified by the fact that the sexes are naturally real qualities which go into the make-up of individual persons, i.e., of concrete wholes. Thus, a subject, a man as masculine; and a term, a woman as feminine, are real beings and really distinct. Moreover, the sexes are naturally referred to each other, both insofar as the sexes only exist (i.e., not considering an actual marriage) for the sake of the conjugal act—regardless of the animal species—and insofar as men and women in an actual marriage are naturally ordered to each other as sexually differentiated. Thus, there is a real reference that masculinity has to femininity and a husband, as man, has to his wife, as woman. When considering this reference as a natural inclination of the forms of masculinity and femininity, which are not currently at work—which would belong to relations of action and passion—these forms are recognizable as one contrary reproductive form and as one other contrary reproductive form. Thus, the forms of masculinity and femininity are the remote foundation of this real relation and the “one” which is identified here in each remote foundation is the proximate foundation of this “numerical” relation.³⁷² This countability in the real relation is why it is classed as a “numerical” relation of qualitative dissimilarity, which could be described as mutual in the same way as the case of the “numerical” relation of essential sameness above.³⁷³ In this way, marriage is not only a mutual real relation of sameness between human persons but it is also a mutual real relation of dissimilarity between a male and a female person. Aquinas’ and Billot’s words on the *coniunctio-vinculum* as a “numerical” mutual real relation

³⁷¹ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 204.

³⁷² Note that this is why Grenier classes Aristotle’s three kinds of relations as the proximate foundations of real relations. Thus, the reference to “one” necessary for a “numerical” relation properly belongs to this proximate point. Ibid, 203.

³⁷³ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a8-11.

of proportional equality and one of quantitative inequality should only exist within the context of these mutual real relations which emphasize that the spouses are on the same level as each other.

2. Mutual real relations of action and passion

After having discussed how the union (*coniunctio, vinculum*) of marriage is a “numerical” mutual real relation, the union will be discussed according to the categorical relations of action and passion which are proper to it. This union which is a joining and binding of husband and wife has to be understood as connected to a mutual acting together—both in the conjugal act and in their common life (family life).³⁷⁴ Whenever two principles act together to one end, whether this is procreation (conjugal act) or the raising of children (common life), then these principles must split a primarily active principle and a primary passive principle between them.³⁷⁵ For this reason, the mutual actions of husbands and wives which pertain to the objective institution of marriage in which they live are the full actualizations of their mutual real relations of action and passion. Here, the conjugal act and the exercise of authority in a family unit) will be discussed.

As discussed above in the section on “numerical” relations focusing on the mutual real relation of quantitative opposition of male and female, the opposition of the sexes is a biological matter largely focusing on a qualitative differentiation of the

³⁷⁴ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 41, a. 1, resp. These two, procreation and mutual society, are the two traditional natural ends of marriage. These ends are diversely inclined to by the generic essence of animality and the specific essence of rationality within the single human essence; *ibid.*, ad. 1. Since humanity is a single essence, these two ends are not simply separable, wherefore the successful generation of children up to their full natural perfection is naturally to occur within this very mutual society that spouses have with each other. In this way, these two ends of marriage have an order between them with procreation taking the primacy.

³⁷⁵ cf., Aristotle, *Aristotle XIII: Generation of Animals*, trans. A. L. Peck (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 716a4-8; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1019a15-23; Aquinas, *Suma Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 92, a. 1, resp.; *ibid.*, q. 98, a. 2, resp.; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 44, a. 1, resp.

reproductive faculties in concrete persons. This difference in quality also gives rise to the relations of action and passion being discussed here. Or rather, these qualities of masculinity and femininity which divide the reproductive organs have such a relation. These qualities of masculinity and femininity which holistically divide persons' tendencies and abilities relative to those ends for which mankind reproduces, i.e., the generation of perfected offspring raised to adulthood in a common family life which common life has also supported the spouses themselves, also give rise to divisions in authority and acceptance in a family unit. It must be realized that any actions and potencies pertaining to these are not only being considered insofar as something is actually being brought into being by said action and passion, as when spouses actually make use of the conjugal act and conceive a child. These relations are also found once said child has already been conceived, where the spouses are considered as in the relation founded upon his being conceived. This is the distinction between considering the relation founded upon these actions and potencies insofar as it is actively being made and insofar as it has already been made;

Action and passion found relation, not only in as much as they are *actually being produced* (in *feri*), but also in as much as they are *already produced* (in *facto esse*). In other words, action and passion are foundations of relation, because, when they are produced, they leave a subject changed.³⁷⁶

Therefore, the objective relation between spouses founded upon their relative actuality and potentiality in the conjugal act and within the family unit is both a matter of coming-into-being and of permanent effects. This distinction will not be insisted upon in the coming descriptions of these two different objective mutual relations though it will always pertain to them. It will even, perhaps be of defining importance for certain individual instances of the marriage between concrete

³⁷⁶ Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 204.

persons—such as the permanent effect of the conjugal act in consummating a marriage and the permanent relation which is perfected by said consummation. This, however, is a tangent.

To explain how husband and wife have a mutual real relation of action and passion remotely founded upon their co-generative powers and proximately founded upon the use of those powers requires some insight into these co-generative powers directly.³⁷⁷ That there are certain organs which exist to generate through another human being and certain organs which exist to generate in its own substance is self-evident to the senses and to all human and animal experience.³⁷⁸ This is because “generation manifestly involves the deposition of semen by the man and its reception by the woman; the very external disposition and configuration of the sexual organs attest to activity on the part of the man and receptivity by the woman.”³⁷⁹ The deposition and reception can here be named the act of insemination, prior to the actual fertilization of the ovum by the male sperm, i.e., conception. Here, the sexual act relative to insemination manifestly is divisible into the man’s agency and the woman’s receptivity.³⁸⁰ This self-evident differentiation according to activity and receptivity/passivity, however, only extends to the act of insemination and the bodily organ’s natural potencies for this—it says nothing metaphysical or formal about the whole person, male or female.³⁸¹ Indeed it does not even say anything of the woman’s

³⁷⁷ For a similar example of this distinction of generative power and use thereof corresponding to the remote and proximate foundations of this relation, see; *Ibid*, 203.

³⁷⁸ Doherty, *The Sexual Doctrine of Cardinal Cajetan*, 51; *ibid*, 189 (footnote 3); St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Evil*, trans. Jean Oesterle (Notre Dame, ID: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 426 (q. 15, a. 1, resp.).

³⁷⁹ Doherty, *The Sexual Doctrine of Cardinal Cajetan*, 51.

³⁸⁰ *Loc cit*.

³⁸¹ cf., *Loc cit*; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 92, a. 1, resp. “And as among animals there is a vital operation nobler than generation, to which their life is principally directed; therefore the male sex (*masculus*) is not found in continual union with the female (*feminino*) in perfect animals, but only at the time of coition; so that we may consider that by this means the male (*mare*) and female (*femina*) are one, as in plants they are always united; although in some cases one of them preponderates, and in some the other. But man (*homo*) is yet further ordered to a still nobler vital action, and that is

external activity in the *coniugium*, the actual uniting herself to her husband. Rather, it focuses on her receptive role in the core purpose of the conjugal act which focuses on actual procreation. What this manifest difference does immediately show is that the sexual organs characteristic of men and women are endowed with complementary powers which are naturally inclined to their procreative use. The man's reproductive faculty is active in the conjugal act relative to insemination and the woman's reproductive faculty in the conjugal act is passive in the insemination, within the context of her active role in uniting herself to her husband in the *coniugium* itself. This is a relative passivity on the wife's part—nothing more.

This bodily relation of the sex organs does not stop at insemination, as if that is the sum total of the conjugal act's proper effects, but extends to the fertilization of the mother's ovum by the father's sperm, i.e., to conception. In this way the conjugal act is the natural cause of human procreation. In fertilization, the male active role in insemination is extended. Here the father's semen fertilizes and actively informs the ovum. This is at least true insofar as defining aspects of the person conceived are due to the genetic material provided by the father.³⁸² It must be remembered, however, that human generation is a unique procreation.

intellectual operation. Therefore there was greater reason for the distinction of these two forces in man (*homine*); so that the female (*femina*) should be produced separately from the male (*mare*); although they are carnally united for generation. Therefore directly after the formation of woman (*mulieris*), it was said: And they shall be two in one flesh (Gen 2:24)."

³⁸² Aristotle, *Generation of Animals*, 729a10-12; *ibid*, 729a21-730a34; Aristotle and A. L. Peck, "Aristotle XIII: Generation of Animals," in *Aristotle XIII: Generation of Animals*, trans. A. L. Peck (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), p. vii-xxxix, xiv-xvii; Gellatly, "Trends in Population Sex Ratios May Be Explained by Changes in the Frequencies of Polymorphic Alleles of a Sex Ratio Gene." "Men determine the sex of a baby depending on whether their sperm is carrying an X or Y chromosome. An X chromosome combines with the mother's X chromosome to make a baby girl (XX) and a Y chromosome will combine with the mother's to make a boy (XY). The Newcastle University study suggests that an as-yet undiscovered gene controls whether a man's sperm contains more X or more Y chromosomes, which affects the sex of his children." Though this study shows that a child's sex is due to the father's sperm which is not the same as the claim that this sperm is the active and formal principle of the whole act of fertilization, it would be difficult to show that a person's sex is sufficiently external to their individuated substance that locating it within the sperm does not support this Aristotelian-Thomistic claim about the male seed's role in fertilization. None of this is said with prejudice to the orthodox faith, wherein it is known that the human soul is created by God at the

Cajetan notes that in human generation there are two actions one of which is the creation of the soul by God, the other of which is the action of semen as the instrument of the intellectual soul. At the moment of creation the soul not only has existence, it has as well a definite mode of existence, namely to exist in the body. Each of these two actions has an intrinsic term; the term of creation of the soul is its existence while the proper term of the action of the semen is the very mode of existence which the soul has. The action of the semen terminates in a disposition of the matter for the reception of the soul; according to Cajetan it would seem to be precisely for this reason that the order of nature is abused if semination is misused. Properly speaking the proper term of generation is the union of soul and body which man actively causes through the medium of his semen.³⁸³

The father and mother generate their children by creating the proper mode of existence—the predisposed matter—for the human soul created immediately by God. Indeed, before this ensoulment the predisposed matter generated by the conjugal act cannot be called a human body! This is interesting, not only for the sake of accuracy, but because it reduces the active role that belongs to the husband in the conjugal act. While it remains true that he acts upon his wife in the conjugal act and principally specifies the formal disposition granted to the matter which will be dignified by God with a human soul, it is God who acts in granting the proper form of the offspring and it is God who acts upon the pre-disposed matter that husband and wife have generated. In this way, the role that the husband has in the conjugal act and procreation is passive.

By comparison, when it is said that women are only passive principles of conception, this means that the woman was receptive in the act of insemination and that her body was the active principle in generating most of the matter which is then further determined by the male seed.³⁸⁴ During this, the woman is the “passive principle,” but this passivity is principally relative to the final determination of the

moment of conception in cooperation with the human parents, see; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles, Books I-II*, trans. Laurence Shapcote, vol. 11 (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2018), 341-353 (Bk. II, c.86-89).

³⁸³ Doherty, *The Sexual Doctrine of Cardinal Cajetan*, 61-62.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 52.

pre-disposed matter which God Himself may choose to instantaneously ensoul at the moment of fertilization, which passivity is shared by the man as was just pointed out. In fertilization, the man's active role is diminished compared to insemination and the woman's passive role is far more active compared to the same. It should be pointed out that the mother's body is the agent in the acts of creating the pre-disposed matter for fertilization by the male sperm, of gestation, and of birth. After fertilization the man and his seed have fulfilled their active roles. From that moment on the mother and the newly conceived person in the womb are the agents in question for further development.³⁸⁵ This ancient and medieval theory of generation is very deficient, to be sure, however its broad outlines have some merit.³⁸⁶ At the very least, the claim that the Thomists are metaphysically misogynistic by claiming that women are essentially passive, citing their role in generation, is vastly overstated. The male role, while active, is far less dominant in procreation than this caricature would lead one to believe and the female role, while largely receptive, is far more active and eminent. In any case, similarly to how the male and female sexual organs are manifestly inclined to the other in the act of insemination, the male sperm is naturally inclined to the female ovum and vice versa. This is especially true when it is again remembered that the sexual organs are inherently ordered to procreation in the context of marriage. The

³⁸⁵ Nolan, "Aristotelian Background," 43-44. "When one moves from the female factor to the female animal, one finds that, once the moment of interaction between the two reproductive substances has passed, the female animal becomes highly active: ...Aristotle describes at length how the embryo derives nourishment and growth from its mother. It will be recalled that all the body of the offspring comes from her alone. If there is anything especially curious about Aristotle's theory, it is his belief that the male parent contributes nothing to the body of the offspring and that the female parent contributes everything. An Aristotelian father, it would seem, cannot take his child into his arms and say 'This is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.'"

³⁸⁶ Nolan, "Aristotelian Background," 44. "Aristotle's use of the concepts 'active' and 'passive' is reflected in modern biology texts. One reads in such texts that in plants 'the pollen tube penetrates the stigma, style, and ovarian tissues on its journey to an ovule,' and that in animals 'the sperm moves into the oviduct,' that it 'reaches the secondary oocyte,' and that 'it penetrates the zona pellucida.' These phrases present the male element as active and the female element as passive. Yet they surely do not imply that the male animal is active and that the female animal is passive. The modern physiologist does not wish to anticipate what is a matter for the student of animal behavior. Nor does Aristotle."

male and female seed naturally only come together by the conjugal act and fertilize in utero—no manipulation of the process of procreation outside of this normal bodily means exists in nature. As this is the natural place of the emitted sperm and the egg, their *natural mutual inclination to each other* is biologically evident in a natural setting.

Therefore, the natural inclinations of the reproductive faculties which characterize male and female are in reference to one another: male body and seed toward the female, female body and seed toward the male. The actual use of this inclination would be the conjugal act between this man and this woman in an inherent order to procreation and naturally requiring the corresponding rearing of any children, which natural inclination is ordered to a permanent society between said man and woman.³⁸⁷ This mutual inclination has an order between a principle of procreation which is primarily active relative to the other sex and another principle of procreation which is primarily passive relative to the other sex. In the union of marriage, the husband acts upon and with his wife in procreation, which is the actualization of the conjugal union with his wife and the active principle of fertilization within his wife. Here, the wife has received her husband in the conjugal act and she is the passive principle of fertilization relative to the final specification of the disposed matter of her ovum by her husband's sperm. This is an objective real relation of action from the husband and passion from the wife.

That this πρὸς τι from husband to wife is real is obvious. Both subject (husband; sperm) and term (wife; ovum) are real and really distinct substances. The reference between them is founded upon real foundations—the *per accidens* beings which make up their reproductive faculties as remote foundation and the actual use of these in the

³⁸⁷ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 41, a. 1, resp.; *ibid*, ad. 1.

physical contact and union of the conjugal act as the proximate foundation. With these conditions being met, the relation of action and passion here is predicamentally real.³⁸⁸ Moreover, it is mutual insofar as the wife has her own relation of proportionate passivity to her husband.³⁸⁹ Therefore, the conjugal act is a mutual real relation of action and passion. Indeed, the mutual real relation of action and passion which pertains to the use of the conjugal union is what perfects the indissolubility of the *coniunctio* of marriage, in the case of a sacramental marriage, and relatively perfects it in the case of natural marriage.³⁹⁰

The case of a relation of action and passion founded upon the primacy of authority in the practical life of the family may now be discussed. This too is not simply the *coniunctio-vinculum* of marriage, but is rather the proper mode of life effected by this joining of marriage.³⁹¹ This common life in which spouses raise the children that they have generated and in which spouses mutually support each other in life is a natural inclination of mankind.³⁹² It is normally called the secondary end of the union of marriage, yet insofar as the mutual support in common life that the spouses has is the foundation of their raising their children to natural perfection in adulthood it is inseparable from the proper carrying out of the primary end of marriage.³⁹³

Second, in relation to the secondary end of matrimony, which is the mutual services which married persons render one another in household matters. For just as natural reason dictates that men should live together, since one is not self-

³⁸⁸ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 202.

³⁸⁹ cf., *ibid*, 206; *ibid*, 208.

³⁹⁰ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 49, a. 2, ad. 7; *ibid*, q. 67, a. 2 ad. 3; Pius XI, “*Casti Connubii*,” §34-35. These words, which largely focus on the indissolubility of consummated Christian marriages with some secondary focuses on the relative indissolubility of consummated natural marriages takes on a fresh light when considering that the permanent bond of marriage in the natural state is still a kind of *res sacra*, see; Scheeben, *The Mystery of Christianity*, 595.

³⁹¹ The position that the spouses’ roles within their family are separate from, but connected to, marriage itself, can be seen in Aquinas’ attempts to parse and extend the term *matrimonium* to the wife’s roles in the family vis-a-vi her children and her husband. He does not show such concern for explaining what of the life of marriage pertains to the husband besides his authoritative role(s), see; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 44, a. 2, resp; *ibid*, ad. 1.

³⁹² cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 41, a. 1, resp.

³⁹³ cf., Ford, “The Validity of Virginal Marriage,” 20; *ibid*, 29-30.

sufficient in all things concerning life, for which reason man is described as being naturally inclined to political society, so too among those works that are necessary for human life some are becoming to men, others to women. Wherefore nature inculcates that society of man and woman which consists in matrimony.³⁹⁴

Yet this human society is itself ordered to ends beyond itself.³⁹⁵ As just said, this mutual society is also in service of the primary end of marriage insofar as it is the natural and most suitable way to raise children to their natural perfection. Moreover, as in all modes of life, it is ordered to the natural ends of human life and society in general.³⁹⁶ Ultimately this is natural beatitude, insofar as this is the natural end to which human nature and natural human institutions are inclined to, or, building upon this, supernatural beatitude amongst the baptized.³⁹⁷

However, whenever there is a multitude directed toward an end or directed toward multiple ends themselves ordered to one last end, there must be an order amongst the members of said multitude.³⁹⁸ Something, or someone, must have a certain relative priority in the multitude relative to its teleological character. This is why Aquinas says of governance in general, “[T]here must exist something which impels towards the common good of the many, over and above that which impels towards the particular good of each individual.”³⁹⁹ Or again,

For men form a group for the purpose of *living well* together, a thing which the individual man living alone cannot attain, and *good life* is virtuous life. Therefore, virtuous life is the end for which men gather together....only such are regarded as

³⁹⁴ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 41, a. 1, resp.

³⁹⁵ cf., Aristotle, *Aristotle XXI: Politics*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 1252a1-7; *ibid.*, 1253a19-25; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Secundae*, 1-70, trans. Laurence Shapcote, vol. 15 (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2018), q. 1, a. 1, resp.

³⁹⁶ cf., Aristotle, *Politics*, 1253a19-25; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Secundae*, q. 1, a. 5, resp.; *ibid.*, q. 1, a. 6, resp.; *ibid.*, q. 5, a. 8, resp.

³⁹⁷ cf., Thomas Aquinas and Laurence Shapcote, *Summa Theologiae Prima Secundae*, 71-114, ed. John Mortensen and Enrique Alarcón, vol. 16 (Lander, WY: The Aquinas Institute for the Study of Sacred Doctrine, 2012), q. 94, a. 2, resp.; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Secundae*, q. 2, a. 7, resp.; *ibid.*, a. 8, resp.; *ibid.*, ad. 3.; *ibid.*, q. 5, a. 3, ad. 2; *ibid.*, a. 5, resp.; Aquinas, *On Kingship*, 60.

³⁹⁸ cf., Aquinas, *On Kingship*, 3; *ibid.*, 5-6.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

forming one multitude as are directed by the same laws and the same government to live well.⁴⁰⁰

This singularity of law and governance requires that there be some one person or institutional unit for their promulgation and enforcement. Yet these laws and this governance is relative to the end of the community—the virtuous life of the whole. Therefore, while societies of human persons require some member of the society have this pre-eminence in authority, it is only relative to the proper end of said whole in which this pre-eminent one is a constitutive member. The family unit is an analogous society to any larger self-sufficient community, which Aquinas is focusing on above.⁴⁰¹ It too is a social unit wherein the members of the family give mutual aid to one another so that they have a good life together—both of the spouses together in their mutual aid and society and of the spouses raising their children up to their natural perfection, which includes the ability to live the virtuous life.⁴⁰²

This family unit, insofar as it is directed toward virtue and insofar as it is directed to heavenly beatitude, thus requires one of its members to have a certain pre-eminence of governing authority.⁴⁰³ Traditionally, this pre-eminence has always been assigned to the husband when the marriage has a natural balance. Biologically, the reason for this assignment is because, “in man the discretion of reason predominates.”⁴⁰⁴ This is an enormously controversial claim of Aquinas’. Since the intellect is directed towards the truth of things as objectively real based on a process of sensation and coming-to-know from sense-objects, this means that men would have to tend towards a greater ability or focus on the objectivity of things, compared to

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid, 60. It should be noted that here Aquinas speaks of the natural end of human communities, not the supernatural end. He immediately moves to that over pages 60-61, making it clear that this supernatural end builds upon human nature by the design and actions of God.

⁴⁰¹ cf., *ibid*, 9.

⁴⁰² cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 41, a. 1, resp; Aquinas, *On Kingship*, 60.

⁴⁰³ cf., *ibid*, 60-61.

⁴⁰⁴ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 92, a. 1, ad. 2.

women, for them to have a predominance of reason.⁴⁰⁵ Insofar as this is a predominance in the use of the rational faculty as pertaining to the primary end of the rational process in abstract universal truth, then this traditional assessment would have some merit. Biochemically and genetically men do tend to have a relatively greater inclination to focus on objects, whereas women tend to have a relatively greater ability to focus on the connects formed between subjects.

Greater within-hemispheric supratentorial connectivity combined with greater cross-hemispheric cerebellar connectivity would confer an efficient system for coordinated action in males. Greater interhemispheric connectivity in females would facilitate integration of the analytical and sequential reasoning modes of the left hemisphere with the spatial, intuitive processing of information of the right hemisphere. A behavioral study on the entire sample, of which this imaging study is a subset, demonstrated pronounced sex differences, with the females outperforming males on attention, word and face memory, and social cognition tests and males performing better on spatial processing and motor and sensorimotor speed.⁴⁰⁶

This preponderance of focus on things as differentiated from social interactions and the subjects of such interactions would tend to enable men to focus on the object truth of those things. By doing so, men would tend to know abstract scientific truths of things to a greater degree than women would tend to be inclined to bother with such that men may tend to be more equipped to make over-arching judgment calls for the family unit and its members. These biological inclinations, however, are not absolute

⁴⁰⁵ cf., *ibid.*, q. 84, a. 1, resp.; q. 85, a. 1, ad. 1; Thomae de Aquino, “De Unitate Intellectus Contra Averroistas,” in *Tomus XLIII: De Principiis Naturae, De Aeternitate Mundi, De Motu Cordis, De Mixtione Elementorum, De Operationibus Occultis Naturae, De Iudiciis Astrorum, De Sortibus, De Unitate Intellectus, De Ente Et Essentia. De Fallaciis, De Propositionibus Modalibus* (Roma: Editori di San Tommaso, 1976), pp. 243-314, 308; Aristotle, “On the Soul,” in *Aristotle VIII: On the Soul, Parva Naturalia, On Breath*, trans. W. S. Hett (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 1-203, 417b18-29; Thomae de Aquino, *Tomus XLV, 1: Sententia Libri De Anima* (Roma: Commissio Leonina, 1984), 115 (L. II, cap. XII); Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, 37-39.

⁴⁰⁶ Ingahlalikar et al., “Sex Differences in the Structural Connectome of the Human Brain,” 826. This is not said in prejudice to the wide-ranging possibilities biochemically in the human brain and that this is compatible with a certain mixing of stereotypically-gendered behaviors between men and women, see; Daphna Joel et al., “Sex Beyond the Genitalia: The Human Brain Mosaic,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112, no. 50 (December 15, 2015): pp. 15468-15473, <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1509654112>.

characteristics of all men or women, however, and must be understood within the (great) limits of the modern statistical scientific study.

Moreover, biochemically and genetically, men have fewer bodily reactions within them on the micro level which can interfere with the use of such bodily inclinations to intellectual action. This is because the XY chromosomes of men have fewer genes interacting with each other biochemically than the XX chromosomes of women.⁴⁰⁷ This very literal quantitative difference in biochemistry may tend to create neurochemical differences between men and women, whereby fewer bodily interferences with the spiritual acts of the intellect would arise. In this way, the traditional biological assignment of the preponderance of reason to men may have some truth to it. Insofar as it may be true, Aquinas's judgment is correct. "For good order would have been wanting in the human family if some were not governed by others wiser than themselves. So by such a kind of subjection woman is naturally subject to man, because in man the discretion of reason predominates."⁴⁰⁸ This then would be the natural order of marriage, the husband would have a certain authority over his wife and family relative to the natural end of marital society, instances of marriages where a woman of superior ability has "unnaturally" married a man of lesser ability notwithstanding.⁴⁰⁹ This bodily assessment, however, is an extremely complex question—not the least because of the difficulties in integrating conclusions from the biological and medical sciences with philosophy and theology.

⁴⁰⁷ cf., Penn State, "Men and Women: The Differences Are in the Genes," ScienceDaily, March 23, 2005, <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2005/03/050323124659.htm>. This is not said with prejudice to the differences in brain mass, which is a more macro observation than a biochemical question having neurochemical impact, see; Rhoshel K. Lenroot et al., "Sexual Dimorphism of Brain Developmental Trajectories During Childhood and Adolescence," *Neuroimage* 36, no. 4 (April 6, 2007): pp. 1065-1073, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2007.03.053>.

⁴⁰⁸ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Pars*, q. 92, a. 1, ad. 2.

⁴⁰⁹ cf., Aristotle, *Politics*, 1259b1-3.

What is clearer is St. Paul's *Epistles to the Ephesians* and *Colossians*, assessed above. Whereas the results from the studies cited above are of minimal value, St. Paul's words are absolute. This epistle does focus on Christian Marriage, but has aspects applicable to all marriages.

Be subject (ὑποτασσόμενοι) to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be in subjection (τοῖς ἰδίοις) to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ also is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the church is subject (ὑποτάσσεται) to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands (Eph. 5:21-24 RSV-CE).

Here, Revelation first points out the context of the spouses' roles to each other. They are to mutually serve one another relative to their baptism and orientation to the Lord.⁴¹⁰ This is first. In this way, the family unit is ordered to its final end (here supernatural beatitude or, under nature alone, the virtuous life and natural happiness) wherefor all authority in the family unit only exists relative to this end. St. Paul orientates subjection and authority to Christ as the end of the baptized. Within this unit ordered to such an end, there is still a relative primacy of authority, i.e., of informing how the family unit will act, in the husband. For this reason, von Speyr wrote, "In her role of obedience, the woman is now likened to the Church: she is the body, the man is the head. As the body, she has to follow the judgment of the head."⁴¹¹ This authority given to the husband, however, remains relative to the proper end of a Christian marriage—otherwise it does not bind his wife; "If the man is allotted by the Lord the task of imitating him as head, then he will have to keep strictly to the original, Christ."⁴¹² The husband exercises authority over his wife relative to their family's right end, the wife is informed by this authority and is correspondingly obedient to it.

⁴¹⁰ cf., von Speyr, *Letter to the Ephesians*, 224-225.

⁴¹¹ Ibid, 226.

⁴¹² Loc cit. cf., *ibid*, 227.

This now is the relation of action and passion of the mutual life, whether the understanding of the different roles of men and women may be founded upon biology or if it is founded upon Scripture. Here, the authority that the husband has and his wife's corresponding attitude of obedience are the remote foundations of the relation of action and passion. The exercise of the husband's authority, since it informs how his wife will act, is the proximate foundation of the action. The exercise of the wife's obedience, since it is the reception of her husband's authority, is the proximate foundation of the passion. Therefore, the husband's authority is *πρός* his wife's obedience. He is the real subject truly distinct from his wife, who stands as the real term of the relation. This is a predicamental real relation of action.⁴¹³ His wife, as a real subject truly distinct from her husband who now stands as real term of the relation, by her passive inclination receives this decision from her husband. This is the corresponding predicamental real relation of passion.⁴¹⁴ Therefore, the mutual life of spouses, characterized by their diverse authority and praxis in said life, is a mutual real relation of action and passion.⁴¹⁵

3. Caveat: the mutual real relation of action and passion depend upon the status of the *obligatio* of marriage.

While more aspects of marriage may be relations such as this, it is sufficient to see how the relations of action and passion pertaining to the two proper ends of marriage exist. Since, however, these are ends of marriage—meaning that their concrete existence are effects of the use of the objective institution of marriage—these real relations are different from the “numerical” ones described above. Those pertained to

⁴¹³ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 202.

⁴¹⁴ cf., loc cit.

⁴¹⁵ cf., *ibid*, 206; *ibid*, 208.

the generic essence of marriage and to the specific essence of marriage insofar as the relation of essential sameness focused on the bond of marriage founded upon the personhood of spouses and the relation of qualitative dissimilarity focused on the how marriage is no mere friendship of persons in the way Aristotle describes, but is founded upon persons of the opposite sex.⁴¹⁶ In these cases, the union of marriage in and of itself is the mutual real relation. Since the mutual real relation of action and passion go beyond the *coniunctio-vinculum* of marriage itself, there should be another aspect of the union of marriage. This aspect would be overtly ordered to such concrete actions. The union of marriage is not just a binding tie of husband and wife for the duration of their lives, it is also a union where each is obliged to live and act with the other according to their binding tie. This is the *obligatio* of marriage; “Now this obligation (*obligatio*) which binds the female and her mate to remain together constitutes matrimony.”⁴¹⁷ This aspect of the bond of marriage pertains to marriage as a contract, within which there are rights and duties that the spouses are constituted as owing to each other.⁴¹⁸ “[J]ust as in other contracts, the bond (*obligatio*) is unfitting if a person bind himself to what he cannot give or do, so the marriage contract is unfitting, if it be made by one who cannot pay the marital debt.”⁴¹⁹ Since the *obligatio* pertains to the union of marriage as a contract, or as a nexus of rights and duties

⁴¹⁶ This precision of human relationship, that marriage is not merely friendship of human persons but is that between persons of the opposite sex, is capital for marriage. The institution of marriage is itself ordered to procreation and mutual support in spouses’ lives. For marriage to be procreative, “mere” friendship does not pertain to marriage—this is not only a statement about the end of marriage in children, but the essence of marriage as a *coniunctio* of persons capable of such an end. For examples of how misunderstood marriage can become if this is not born in mind, see; Matthew Rolling, “A More Complete Reading of Saint Thomas’s Claims Regarding Same-Sex Inclinations and Same-Sex Unions,” *Nova Et Vetera* 19, no. 1 (2021): pp. 63-82, 80.

⁴¹⁷ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 65, a. 3, resp. cf., *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, 226.

⁴¹⁸ cf., *ibid.*, q. 45, a. 2, resp.; *ibid.*, ad. 1.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, q. 58, a. 1, resp. cf., *ibid.*, q. 47, a. 5, s.c.

which spouses are bound to in marriage, it pertains to the actual ability to fulfill the ends of marriage which the spouses together have.⁴²⁰

Such actual rights and duties that marriage binds the spouses to, however, are a step beyond the essence of marriage. To be sure, it is natural for the *obligatio* and the relations which are founded upon the use of said obligations (the objective relation of the conjugal act, and the objective relation of authority and praxis in common life) to exist in a marriage. Yet a marriage is not dissolved—there is not a substantial change—if the right to call upon this *obligatio* be nullified according to a legitimate separation of the spouses.⁴²¹ Therefore, the union of marriage as an objective reality—an objective tie of two persons—is not harmed by the suspension of the *obligatio* of marriage and the relations of action and passion consequent upon it.⁴²² This is to say that the *obligatio*, as that which binds spouses to pay the marriage debt and to remain in a common life, need not be actualized and the proximate right to the use of this debt may be suspended as unessential to marriage. The union of marriage which remains when the actual use and the immediate ability to call upon this use is suspended would still have a remote inclination and right to the conjugal act and common life natural to spouses, since marriage is an indissoluble tie of husband and wife to each other for the sake of procreation and mutual society.⁴²³ This *obligatio*, however, in the sense of the bond of marriage “objectively ordered to its essential

⁴²⁰ “Nexus” is not used here in the sense spoken of by the *Roman Catechism* or by Aquinas. It is now used as a common English word.

⁴²¹ cf., *Code of Canon Law*, can. 1151-1155); *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, CCC 1649.

⁴²² cf., Ford, “The Validity of Virginal Marriage,” 17-21; *ibid*, 26-29.

⁴²³ cf., *ibid*, 25-26. “But since we have seen that the actual realization of these ends is not essential to an individual marriage—so that marriage can still exist when the ends are not and cannot be realized, what meaning is there in saying that these ends are essential in the case of a given individual marriage?—for instance in a marriage which has failed and in which the partners are separated completely and forever. In what sense is such a marriage bond objectively ordered to its essential ends?...We hold therefore, that the bond of marriage is a radical right not only to the sexual act by which the primary end, and the remedy of concupiscence are realized, but it is also a radical right to the acts of mutual help.”

ends”⁴²⁴ of procreation and mutual aid, even when the immediate use and concrete actualization is suspended, remains a mutual real relation.

“[I]n marriage there is an equal obligation (*aequalis obligatio*) on either side to pay the debt, neither party can exact of the other a greater obligation (*obligationem*) than that under which he lies.”⁴²⁵ Marriage in its bond of obligation is a matter of equality between husband and wife. They have equal authority over the other in requiring the other fulfill their marital duties—both of the conjugal act and mutual aid—by the very fact that they are bound together in this obligation. This is why Aquinas says,

[J]ust as in both the marriage act and in the management of the household the husband is bound (*ad id*) to the wife in all things pertaining to the husband, so is the wife bound (*ad id*) to the husband in all things pertaining to the wife. It is in this sense that it is stated in the text that they are equal in paying and demanding the debt.⁴²⁶

This is the mutual real “numerical” relation of proportionate equality that was discussed above in the context of the fundamental *coniunctio* and *vinculum* of marriage. Insofar as this proportionate equality is about the rights and duties of marriage, it pertains to the *obligatio*. Insofar as it is about these are based in the fundamental union of husband and wife such that they then have rights and duties relative to their marriage’s order to the ends of procreation and mutual society, it pertains to the *coniunctio*.⁴²⁷ However, the mutual real relation founded upon the proportionate equality of the spouse’s obligation to each other is the same sort of mutual real relation as described above. Here, the obligation that the husband has, as husband, to render unto his wife her due relative to these ends of marriage is the remote foundation of this relation. That this obligatory duty is of an absolute

⁴²⁴ Ibid, 26.

⁴²⁵ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 52, a. 1, resp.

⁴²⁶ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 64, a. 5, resp.

⁴²⁷ cf., *ibid*, s.c.

character, its nobility (*nobilior*) is quantitatively proportionate to the wife's owed right.⁴²⁸ Here, there is a "countability" or "oneness" insofar as proportionate quantities of any kind requires a comparison of 1:1, 1:2, etc. Thus the nobility as quantitatively proportionate is the proximate foundation of the "numerical" relation of proportional quantitative equality. Since the subjects and terms of this relation, i.e., alternately the husband and wife, are real and really distinct substances, any reference between them founded upon this *obligatio* is a mutual real relation.⁴²⁹ Since "numerical" relations, however, do not themselves have an aspect of actualization or coming-into-being, this mutual real relation of the *obligatio* does not have to be rendered into an actually concrete relation of action and passion pertaining to the conjugal act or relation of action and passion pertaining to the mutual society of the marital life.⁴³⁰ Doing this requires a voluntary act. The place such acts of will have in the context of the relations in marriage is discussed below.

Conclusion

Marriage is a union of persons, male and female, who are free to enter into this indissoluble bond which is inherently ordered to procreation and common life, as the Catechisms and St. Thomas Aquinas explain. This institution is a mutual real relation which is indissoluble and teleologically orientated. This means that the union of free persons, as the generic kind of union pertaining to marriage, is an objective relation of essential identity. Marriage is a bond between human persons, as husband and wife are of one essence, wherein there is no relative order between their humanity. This same union, in its specific kind as between a man and a woman, is a real relation of

⁴²⁸ cf., *ibid*, ad. 1.

⁴²⁹ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 202; *ibid*, 206-207; *ibid*, 208.

⁴³⁰ cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a20-21.

qualitative dissimilarity. Male and female are opposite since the sexes are qualities of the reproductive faculties of humanity which have biological reverberations through the rest of the bodies of both male and female. As such, marriage is a mutual real relation between qualitative opposites.

This bond of objective relations of essential identity and qualitative dissimilarity then makes possible those acts which bring about the proper ends of this union—the mutual real relation of action and passion pertaining to the conjugal act for the sake of children and the same kind of relation pertaining to the common life of the spouses and family wherein there is an order of authority in family life. Here an order between husband and wife is seen. There is a certain priority that the husband has within the marriage itself by which he stands in the principally active role in procreation and in the principally authoritative role in common life. This is a matter of certain manifest aspects of the conjugal act and Revelation’s words about the family unit. Thus the bond of objective relations of essential identity and qualitative dissimilarity places a certain priority of act and authority relative to the actual carrying out of the ends of marriage. The relevant acts pertaining to this conjugal union and authority in mutual society are mutual real relations of action and passion.

The actualization of these ends, however, does not necessarily occur in any given marriage since the bond of marriage as *obligatio* can be suspended. This means that it is possible to have the indissoluble union of a free man and a free woman, which is inherently ordered to procreation and mutual society, but without any acts to make these ends concrete or any proximate rights to such acts. This means that there is an “ontological space” between marriage as a “numerical” relation of man and woman to the relation of action and passion of the same persons concretely bringing about certain natural ends of their marriage. The actions which combine these requires

that the spouses make concrete and free choices, meaning that an account of the will relative to predicamental relations is necessary.

Mixed Relations

The question of the relation founded upon human will is complicated. Since a human person's will is dependent upon the objective good found in things, it pertains to the relations of the measurable and measure.⁴³¹ This is because whatsoever measures another does so because of something other than its own essence, quality, quantity, or actions.⁴³² The only reason that the measure has a relation predicated of it is because things are referred to them. This is because whatsoever is a measure is the object which other things depend upon for their existence or mode. Therefore, dependent things are understood in reference to that upon which they depend, wherefore Aquinas describes this referral; “[B]ecause of the action of other things, although these are not terminated in them.”⁴³³ Dependents are referred back to what they depend upon without actually acting upon it, which would mean that the measure—the thing others depend upon—would be dependent upon something effected by it according to the very mode effected. This is a very abstract and confusing way of speaking. Yet the relation of the sensible object to one who has sensation of it is a good example of this relation of the measure to the measurable. “[T]he sensible and the knowable or intelligible are said to be relative because other things are related to them, for a thing is said to be knowable because knowledge is had of it.”⁴³⁴ That a rose is sensible is only so because people happen to see it—which is a matter of indifference to the rose

⁴³¹ cf., Aquinas, *Truth*, 6; Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 147; *ibid*, 152.

⁴³² cf., Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 487-488 (Bk. 5, L. 17, 1027).

⁴³³ cf., *loc cit*.

⁴³⁴ Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 487 (Bk. 5, L. 17, 1026). cf., Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a26-1021b4.

in and of itself. That it is seen by a man does not alter the substance of the rose or its mode of existence and the action of a man's sight does not existentially terminate in the rose's being.⁴³⁵ It is true that the man's sensation of the rose is caused by his sense faculty's being informed by the rose's sensible form, by which the man's sensation of the rose is dependent upon this rose's being. In this way, the man's sight is really related to the rose as the measurable is related to what measures it. The existential dependency of sensation to the rose is itself the real relation. That there is a relation predicated of the rose as a subject, however, is due to the human mind's reflexive application of correlates—the mind considers the rose as related to that which is dependent upon the rose, i.e., the man's sight. Yet the rose in itself is independent of its being seen.⁴³⁶ It is a logical relation.⁴³⁷ These correlates, one real and the other logical, are not of the same order—meaning that one is a matter of existential dependency and the other is indifferent to such matters—so they are not mutual.⁴³⁸ The correlation is mixed; it must be remembered that mixed correlations are not unreal. One relation is objectively real and its correlate has reality according to its being in the human mind.⁴³⁹ To claim that mixed correlations are unreal or that their being (either real or mental) is under human power to manipulate insofar as mixed correlations are not simply objective is to misunderstand what it is “to be” according to these two modes.⁴⁴⁰

⁴³⁵ cf., Aquinas, *Commentary on Metaphysics*, 487.

⁴³⁶ cf., loc cit.

⁴³⁷ cf., Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 200.

⁴³⁸ cf., *ibid*, 206-207.

⁴³⁹ cf., Aquinas, *In Quattuor Libros Sententiarum*, 80 (Bk. 1, d. 30, q. 1, a. 3, ad3); Svoboda, “Aquinas on Real Relation,” 152.

⁴⁴⁰ cf., Mikail Whitfield, “Aquinas on Relations,” 30-32.

The human will founds a mixed correlation similar to this.⁴⁴¹ Insofar as the human will is a faculty of the soul, like the intellect and senses, this is unsurprising.⁴⁴²

But *true* and *good*, being predicated positively [to being], cannot add anything except a relation which is merely conceptual. A relation is merely conceptual, according to the Philosopher, when by it something is said to be related which is not dependent upon that to which it is referred, but vice versa; for a relation is a sort of dependence.⁴⁴³

That a thing is good requires a mind-dependent relation since its goodness is that which the rational appetite of man depends upon for its being inclined toward said thing. That a man's rational appetite, in apprehending the goodness of something, then inclines to that thing both volitionally and through his sensitive appetite is a real relation insofar as the appetite is dependent upon the goodness of the object loved.⁴⁴⁴ This would be the natural and right way for a human person's will to operate towards something good.⁴⁴⁵ That something's goodness so informs a person's appetite such that he inclines to this good, however, does not mean that this thing's goodness is dependent upon the lover's appetite.⁴⁴⁶ When something or—in the context of this thesis—someone is good and loveable, this goodness and lovability does not depend upon anyone recognizing it. In the Scriptures, Ruth was loveable before Boaz met her

⁴⁴¹ cf., Svoboda, "Aquinas on Real Relation," 147; *ibid*, 152.

⁴⁴² cf., Aquinas, *In Quattuor Libros Sententiarum*, 80 (Bk. 1, d. 30, q. 1, a. 3, ad3); Svoboda, "Aquinas on Real Relation," 147; *ibid*, 152.

⁴⁴³ Aquinas, *Truth*, 6.

⁴⁴⁴ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Secundae*, q. 8, a. 1, resp.; *ibid*, q. 10, a. 3, resp.; *ibid*, ad. 2. It must be recalled that "love" is a very general term encapsulating *amor*, *dilectio*, and *caritas*. Moreover, *amor* goes beyond the love amongst rational persons but can apply to all kinds of inclinations of any natural appetite. For this reason, romantic love, erotic love, marital love, etc. are not the focus of these words in the text until that is made clear by context that marital love is being discussed. cf., Peter A. Kwasniewski, "On Love and Charity: Readings from the Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard," in *On Love and Charity: Readings from the Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of American Press, 2008), p. xv-xxx, xxi-xxii; Thomas Aquinas, *On Love and Charity: Readings from the Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, trans. Peter A. Kwasniewski, Thomas Bolin, and Joseph Bolin (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 129-131; James F. O'Brien, "Gravity and Love as Unifying Principles," *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review* XXI, no. 2 (April 1958): pp. 184-193.

⁴⁴⁵ cf., *ibid*, ad. 2.

⁴⁴⁶ cf., Aquinas, *Truth*, 6.

and would have retained this goodness regardless of whether or not Boaz would have apprehended her goodness and was then inclined to her in love. This is a logical relation, just like the logical relation of the sensible rose above.

Moreover, this correlation of goodness and love for the good is a mixed correlation as well. With the example of Ruth and Boaz; for both to be inclined in love to the goodness of the other would require two mixed correlations founded upon the good and human will. This would be another nexus of relations; from Ruth to Boaz a real relation of inclination dependent upon his goodness and a correlate logical relation of his goodness independent of her appetite and from Boaz to Ruth a real relation of inclination dependent upon her goodness and a correlate logical relation of her goodness independent of his appetite. Moreover, since the will depends upon apprehension, this means that a similar nexus of two mixed correlations founded upon the known and knower would be a prerequisite here.⁴⁴⁷ Therefore, for Ruth and Boaz to be inclined to each other in a mutual love would require these four mixed correlations! This is before even inquiring into the intricacies of the further internal acts of the will whereby truly human consent is given—though insofar as all these build upon the fundamental inclination of the will to the beloved there need not be a further relation building upon what has been said.⁴⁴⁸ Instead, the mixed correlation founded upon the rationally informed will and the goodness of the beloved will ultimately be united together as a mixed correlation of consent to external acts of love (though here the focus is still on the consent as a matter of the will, not a focus on the externality of the actions) for the sake of the beloved. This is because consent is ultimately the proper act of the will as informed by the reason, whereby such a will

⁴⁴⁷ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Secundae*, q. 8, a. 1, resp.; Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1021a29-33.

⁴⁴⁸ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Secundae*, qs. 12-15.

when inclined to the beloved will holistically include consent as the end of its inclination to the beloved.⁴⁴⁹ This is very similar to what was said above in the context of the mixed relations in friendship, according to Aristotle’s account. Friends have to know one another as good, have goodwill for each other, and know that they had goodwill for each other—they must both holistically apprehend the other and be inclined to the other with goodwill.⁴⁵⁰ Of course this would further imply that both friends consent to act for their friend and his good.

Going beyond the comparison with friendship, marriage is not only a relation of human persons or only a relation of persons of the opposite sex. It is an indissoluble mutual real relation of male and female for the sake of children and mutual society which must be consented to by all who bind themselves to a specific spouse in marriage. This requires that the will, informed by the intellect, be accounted for in marriage.⁴⁵¹ Since marriage requires that spouses consent to their union—whether this consent be located in the making of their marriage (*matrimonium in fieri*) or in actualizing their rights and duties relative to each other (as in *matrimonium in factum esse* where the *obligatio* of marriage is actually used)—marriage will also objectively be a nexus of these mixed correlations. The actual contracting of

⁴⁴⁹ cf., *ibid.*, q. 15, a. 4, ad. 2. “Since actions are called voluntary from the fact that we consent to them, it does not follow that consent is an act of each power, but of the will which is in the reason, as stated above, and from which the voluntary act is named.” Care must be exercise when viewing consent to the union of marriage with a specific individual directed toward procreation, with the corresponding common life, as self-gift. The *donatio* of persons is important; “Constitutio Pastoralis De Ecclesia in Mundo Huius Temporis,” 1101. However, it more pertains to considering marriage according to the subjects of the marriage who totally give themselves to each other. This thesis focuses on the object of marriage as an institution wherein individuals consent to the union of marriage itself; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 45, a. 1, resp.; *ibid.*, ad. 2; q. 48, a. 1, resp. When the union of love effected by such a self-gift is misunderstood as separate from man’s use of his own reason, then great error can result, see; Rolling, “Saint Thomas’s Claims Regarding Same-Sex Inclinations and Same-Sex Unions,” 73. That this thesis does not speak of the *donatio* found in marriage is not a prejudice against it or to avoid the difficulties of correcting the misunderstandings which have warped the Church’s right understanding of self-gift and love—it is rather to respect that a different starting point than that chosen here in this thesis better suits the emphases of such a subject or person based topic.

⁴⁵⁰ cf., Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 456-457.

⁴⁵¹ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 45, a. 1, resp.; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Prima Secundae*, q. 15, a. 1, resp.

marriage, therefore, objectively is the two mixed correlations of consent. In other words, the acts of consent of husband and of wife in both of these instances are real relations of the will informed by the intellect inclining toward and consenting to the beloved.⁴⁵² The correlates of each of these individual real relations, however, remains logical just as explained above. These mixed correlations of consent to marriage with this spouse under the aspect of said spouse's lovability are then put into external action by mutual real relations of action and passion. In other words, after consenting to marry, spouses make use of their mutual obligations to the conjugal act in consummating their marriage and make use of their mutual obligations to live together. These are mutual real relations of action and passion, in this instance obviously focusing on the original contracting of marriage (*matrimonium in fieri*).

Considering the voluntary actualization of the mutual real relation of the *obligatio* of marriage in the marriage itself (*in factum esse*), the mixed correlations are repeated. Here, the precise formality of the real relations of one spouse's rational consent to the other is different than in the case of the marriage as being made—there the term was the spouses' goodness relative to bringing a new objective relation of marriage into existence. Now it is the spouses' fundamental goodness as permanent

⁴⁵² In the context of spousal love, when focusing on the subjects of husband and wife and not the objective marriage itself, some authors have chosen to speak of the union of husband and wife as a "paradox" and as something in "tension." This is because the focus on the subjectivity of persons requires the recognition that individuals can never be given over to another and retain their individuality. This kind of focus ignores, or is susceptible of ignoring, the objective reality of non-sensible accidental beings—like marriage in and of itself. Marriage is the *coniunctio-vinculum* which spouses enter into. Marriage is the union, which is a relation. It has being, *per accidens*, as something of the spouses. This does not require tension between members of a natural or supernatural institution, nor is such an institution a paradox. This, however, is to view marriage as an objective reality itself—as differentiated from a view of marriage in and through its subjects. These are different theological and methodological viewpoints. For viewing union in marriage as a paradox, see; Karol Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility*, trans. Grzegorz Ignatik (Boston, MA: Pauline Books & Media, 2013), 79-80. For seeing marriage—or family—and reality in general as a matter of polar tensions, see; Martín Carbajo Núñez, "Family Relationships and Polar Opposition: Being Equal While Remaining Different," *Forum Teologiczne* 22 (2021): pp. 61-80, <https://doi.org/10.31648/ft.6922>; Romano Guardini, *The World and the Person*, trans. Stella Lange (Chicago, IL: Henry Regnery Company, 1965), 64.

partners in an objective marriage for the sake of children and mutual society.⁴⁵³

Before the formal aspect of the term in consent was to produce a marriage which would then be permanent, now the formality already includes such permanence. This is, of course, repeated across the various mixed correlations necessary for mutual consent of persons. It is further good that these correlates within the consent pertaining to the marriage insofar as it is being made themselves come into existence simultaneously in the exchange of consent to marriage. Thus the mutual real relations of marriage insofar as it is already made, i.e., that objective relation which is the union of marriage, originally come into existence as a simultaneously whole correlation. In these ways marriage depends upon mixed correlations of intellect and will for its existence and for its use towards its proper ends. For this reason, the *coniunctio-vinculum* of marriage is a spiritual union of objective reality.⁴⁵⁴

Conclusion

These mixed correlations are not only mentioned to show the relations of marriage which bridge the “numerical” relations of the *coniunctio-vinculum* to the relations of action and passion of the conjugal act and common life; either insofar as these mixed correlations and mutual real relations of action and passion are required for the very making of the union of marriage or in the institution of marriage in and of itself (*matrimonium in factum esse*). These mixed correlations in these aspects of marriage are only partially of objective reality.⁴⁵⁵ Because marriage in its act of being made,

⁴⁵³ As to formal terms of real relations in mixed relations, see; Grenier, *Metaphysics*, 205-206.

⁴⁵⁴ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 45, a. 1, resp.; *ibid.*, q. 44, a. 1, ad. 1; *ibid.*, ad. 2. The spiritual union is not a material thing, but is rather a formal reality. That it is not sensible in itself does not mean that this formal being *per accidens* is not real.

⁴⁵⁵ The relative non-reality that these mixed relations has is likely a contributor to why so many modern theologians, once they mis-identify the bond of marriage with the bond of love alone or primarily, think that the bond of marriage is dissoluble. Since the union of the will pertaining to marriage is relatively non-real, insofar as it is a nexus of mixed correlation of real and logical relations, then a further error in mis-considering what the institution of marriage is a slippery slope to considering

with the addition of the use of the *obligatio* of marriage once already made, depends upon the consent of the human will, the institution of marriage as a whole is a reality of the moral order.⁴⁵⁶ However, once the marriage has been instituted the *coniunctio* between the spouses is an objective reality (*per accidens*) which is independent of any acts or inclinations of the will.⁴⁵⁷ This concrete reality is the objective mutual real relations of the “numerical” real relation of essential sameness, qualitative dissimilarity, quantitative inequality, and proportionate equality. This is the *coniunctio-vinculum* of the institution of marriage.⁴⁵⁸

The actual use of the *obligatio* of marriage, though this obligation adds the notion of contract to the *vinculum* of marriage, is also objectively real. This is the place of the mutual real relations of action and passion founded upon the conjugal act and the use of authority and obedience within the spouses’ mutual life. The consent to use these rights and duties is the aspect of marriage which is strictly of the moral

marriage as less than an objective reality susceptible of indissolubility. cf., Kenneth R. Himes and James A. Coriden, “The Indissolubility of Marriage: Reasons to Reconsider,” *Theological Studies* 65, no. 3 (September 2004): pp. 453-499, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/004056390406500301>, 484-490; Levering, *The Indissolubility of Marriage*, 82-90. An overfocus on the union of love, i.e., a mixed correlation of the will, has even been erroneously used to justify the morality of same-sex “marriages.” That the union of love is so easily mis-appropriated to such erroneous positions may have something to do with its relative non-being and lack of true quiddity. cf., Rolling, “Saint Thomas's Claims Regarding Same-Sex Inclinations and Same-Sex Unions,” 63.

⁴⁵⁶ cf. Ford, “The Validity of Virginal Marriage,” 44-45; *ibid*, 48-51; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 45, a. 1, resp.; *ibid*, ad. 1.

⁴⁵⁷ cf., *ibid*, ad. 3.

⁴⁵⁸ For a very good expression of the objective relation of the union of marriage, but approached by overcoming deficiencies in a more personalistic focus in the theology of marriage, see; Stephan Kampowski, *Embracing Our Finitude: Exercises in a Christian Anthropology Between Dependence and Gratitude* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018), 107-108. cf., Levering, *The Indissolubility of Marriage*, 20-21. “The marital promise is by its very terms an unconditional pledge of fidelity. As such it turns a conditional relationship of friendship into an unconditional relationship of kinship: two friends become family. Without being something abstract floating in a Platonic heaven of ideas, the bond is still more than the personal love of the spouses understood in terms of their subjective feelings and affections. It is a particular kind of relationship that needs to be understood in a way that is analogous to other family relationships like fatherhood and motherhood. Whatever a man may feel for his son, whether he loves him or disowns him, he is still the father. Fatherhood is unconditional and independent of the personal love a father feels for his son. The same holds for all family relationships. The bond between two people is their relationship, and the relationship is more than the personal affection that two people feel for each other; it is indeed an objective reality. There is a bond that is created by descent, and there is a bond created by promises.”

order—and therefore not simply objective in its reality. Yet it is also the very agent whereby a concrete instance of the objective reality of marriage is created when the spouses choose to enter into the union of marriage.⁴⁵⁹ This is because marriage itself is an institution of nature, and amongst the baptized an institution of grace by the will of Christ Jesus, into which men and women may choose to enter (under a certain ratification by God).⁴⁶⁰ This institution, as the objective reality of marriage, essentially is the mutual real relation of the *coniunctio-vinculum*, which exists regardless of whether spouses wish to defect from their earlier choices in the moral order or fail to live up to moral standards of that order.⁴⁶¹ The mutual real relations of marriage (*in factum esse*) are independent of their own subject's choices of later change.⁴⁶²

Overall Conclusion

This thesis has been on the real objectivity of marriage; *Quid est matrimonium?* In the theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas there is always a strong use of the categorical metaphysics of Aristotle. The essences of things, existing in concrete individuals and abstractly recognizable in themselves, truly are different kinds of beings. These differing species, only recognizable as such in abstraction, are themselves

⁴⁵⁹ cf., Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Supplementum*, q. 45, a. 1, ad. 2; *ibid.*, ad. 3; *ibid.*, q. 48, a. 1, resp.

⁴⁶⁰ For God's involvement in ratifying spouses' consent to the contracting of marriage, see; *ibid.*, q. 45, a. 1, resp.; Scheeben, *The Mystery of Christianity*, 595-598. Scheeben speaks variously of both sacramental and natural marriage, where God involves Himself in the contracting of marriage in corresponding ways.

⁴⁶¹ cf., Ford, "The Validity of Virginal Marriage," 15; Gerke, "Christian Marriage," 16-17.

⁴⁶² This is true even in the cases of the Petrine and Pauline privileges since these exceptions to the indissolubility of natural marriage depends upon God's dissolution of the natural marriage bond through the ministry of His Church and not on the power of human persons in the marriage. *Code of Canon Law*, can. 1143; *ibid.*, cans. 1148-1150; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Norms on the Preparation of the Process for the Dissolution of the Marriage Bond in Favour of the Faith," The Holy See, accessed April 16, 2022, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20010430_favor-fidei_en.html; Scheeben, *The Mysteries of Christianity*, 596.

recognizably contained by more abstract genera. In other words, species themselves have prior kinds of essences (genera) which can be recognized as genuinely true and objectively real when they exist in concrete individuals. At the furthest reach of generic essence there are ten categories of irreducible kinds of being, knowable by an inductive process of abstraction. These categories are substance—which denotes the sort of beings which exist by their own act of created existence—and nine distinct kinds of beings which exist by adhering to concrete substances. But what kind of being is marriage? It manifestly does not exist in itself as a substance does since there is no concretely individual “Marriage” in the world. Therefore, the objective institution of marriage must be a being *per accidens*.

Amongst the categories of beings, only one category pertains to the existential connection between two concrete substances. This is the category of *πρός τι*; *ad aliud*, being towardness, reference, relation. A substance can, *per accidens*, be objectively towards another substance wherein this objective towardness is itself a kind of being possessing its own essence—though it would only ever exist in and through a substance. The union of marriage, which is essentially one in both the natural institution of marriage and in Christian marriage, is such a being. Marriage is defined as the contractual or covenantal union of legitimate spouses for the sake of procreation and mutual society. The generic essence of this contractual or covenantal union is a kind of *coniunctio*; marriage is a kind of accidental union or being-joined-together of persons. The specific essence of marriage pertaining to the legitimacy of spouses expresses that those who are joined in this union are free persons of the opposite sex capable of entering into the institution of marriage. Thus, marriage is an accidental union of reproductively opposed free persons. This kind of *coniunctio* has certain ends—procreation and mutual support. For such a joining to exist, however, it

must exist in and through the individual persons who are joined. The union of marriage only ever exists insofar as it is in a certain man and a certain woman. Therefore, the *coniunctio* of marriage is an accidental being characterized as a mutual *πρός τι*; the towardness of husband to wife and the corresponding towardness of wife to husband. The essence of marriage is an objective relation which is ordered to the generation of children and mutual society through and in those subjects who enter into this objective relation.

In this thesis several aspects of marriage were focused on to show how traditional terms pertaining to marriage also belonged to this objective relation of marriage and to show some of the different objective relations which could be found in marriage. Thus, the *vinculum*, or bond, of marriage is formally identical to the *coniunctio* and shares in its essential description. The *nexus* of marriage seems to denote something similar, indeed it manifestly denotes the same ultimate binding which the *vinculum* of marriage does. The *obligatio* of marriage builds upon the marriage bond as union by adding the aspect of contractual obligation. In this way the *obligatio* is differentiated from the *coniunctio* of marriage, however this aspect of contractual obligation is of the essence of marriage because it expresses the teleological orientation of the union which the subjects of said union are bound to.

These various terms, insofar as they directly express the joining of marriage, pertain to one species of objective relations and, insofar as they express the use or actualization of the bond, pertain to another species of objective relations. St. Thomas Aquinas and his theological disciples focus on the former: the *coniunctio-vinculum* of marriage is a “numerical” mutual real relation founded upon the proportionate equality which husband and wife quantifiably have relative to their having utterly given themselves over to their spouse in being joined to each other. Husbands give

everything of themselves relative to mutual support and family life to their wives and vice versa; husbands give everything of their ability to have and raise children to their wives and vice versa. In this way the *nobilitas* of both spouses relative to their co-operations, insofar as these are quantifiable through a proportionate comparison, are proportionally equal.

This thesis took a step back from this “numerical” mutual real relation of proportionate equality to speak of the basic essential equality of the human persons joined in marriage. As a *coniunctio*, marriage is always the mutual relation of individuals who are essentially the same. This requires an account of “numerical” real relation for less controversial than the one given in Aquinas’ own theology. Moreover, insofar as the persons who are so united together in this proportionate equality are male and female—meaning they have an accidental opposition rooted in their reproductive faculties which opposition also impacts the general way they have use of the rest of their different bodily functions—there is a “numerical” mutual real relation founded upon the qualitative dissimilarity of husband and wife. This very opposition is the ground from which the spouses can act as co-principles relative to the ends of marriage. These two different “numerical” mutual real relations describe the fundamental towardness which recognizable comparable and countable aspects of individual persons have. Therefore, if a man and a woman choose to enter into a *coniunctio* for the sake of procreation and mutual support, then they actually choose to enter into the objective “numerical” relation of marriage which belongs to their equality and differences. After this, then they could together co-operate with each other in having children and supporting each other for the rest of their natural lives.

These co-operations (in using and actualizing the union of marriage) themselves are objective relations. The conjugal act builds upon the “numerical”

relations which are the essence of marriage insofar as it is a concrete instance of the spouses' teleological union. Since the conjugal act is ordered to procreation as its end, there must be an order between the principles of said procreation; there must be a reproductive order between husband and wife in the conjugal act. This is not a unique statement about marriage or about human beings. Whenever two co-operate in fulfilling one end, this basic kind of order will be found. One spouse must have the primacy of actualization and the other be relatively passive in their both being true principles of the end. This is the mutual real relation of action and passion; one subject actualizes the other in some way and the other receives actuality from the other in some way. The conjugal act manifestly requires the husband to have a primacy of act and the wife to have a relative receptivity in the act of insemination. Moreover, this relative ordered found between the spouses is extended to the sperm and egg from husband and wife in the act of fertilization.

A similar order, but founded upon very different co-operative actions of husband and wife, is found in family life, i.e., in marital mutual society. St. Paul taught the Ephesians and Colossians that within the mutual loving support and submission that (Christian) spouses are to have to each other, relative to their mutual end in the Beatific Vision, there is a certain order of authority and obedience. Since husband and wife are ordered to a common life, wherein they support each other and their children in growing as virtuous persons and as baptized members of Christ, there must be a primacy of authority relative to this end in one of the members of the family. St. Paul assigns this to the husband, building upon the Book of Genesis and the priority Adam has in God's design of humanity. Therefore, in pursuing these ends of the mutual support pertaining to marriage, the husband exercises his authority in directing overall how his wife and family will live and the wife receives this in relative obedience in

the practical life of the family. How this concretely develops in individual families, relative to differences in society, means, children, etc. is a matter of individual prudential judgments and does not affect St. Paul's basic point—there is an macro-level order between the spouses where the husband has the primacy of authority within and for the sake of his family. Since the husband informs how the family unit will live and support each other and the wife relatively receives this, there is another mutual real relation of action and passion in the mutual society and life proper to marriage. These relations of action and passion pertain to the proper actions and uses of marriage as an objective institution.

These objective relations pertaining to the ends of marriage, which build upon the “numerical” relations which are the essence of marriage, require that the spouses mutually consent to marital co-operation. Such consent requires the spouses to apprehend the good of the other relative to these ends of marriage which pertain to their mutual *obligations*. Then they must make the appropriate act (or acts) of the will which culminate in the consent to the concrete conjugal act or concrete exercise and reception of authority in their common life. Unlike the mutual real relation pertaining to “numerical” relations or relations of action and passion, this apprehension and these acts of the will culminating in consent are not simply real. Correlations founded upon knowledge and will are mixed correlations; one relation is founded upon a real existential dependency of knowledge to what is known or lover to the good of the beloved and the correlate is founded upon a non-real, but mind-dependent, reference of what can be known to a person's knowledge or good in a person to a lover's inclination to that good. In this last case of mind-dependent relations, what can be known and the good in a person are existentially independent of the reference that another who knows or loves them has to them. Therefore, the correlation between

knower and the known or the lover and beloved is mixed between an objectively real relation and a mind-dependent relation. Such a correlation does not share in the objectivity of the mutual real relations which are the essence of marriage itself (or the actions pertaining to the ends of marriage) but this is proper since the choices to actualize the rights and duties of marriage are occasional and rooted in the subjects who are married.

This relative non-objectivity is why marriage remains a properly human institution without natural determinacy. Indeed, the proximate right to make use of these rights and duties are even susceptible of permanent suspension—which would be impossible if the consent to make use of these proximate rights had a stable objective reality in nature. Moreover, the mixed correlations pertaining to apprehension and consent also pertain to the original making of marriage in the contracting of marriage and in the consummation of marriage. This shows that these relatively non-objective mixed correlations are still of great dignity, but it also shows the sense in which marriage is of the moral order. The making of and the continued use of marriage are dependent upon human will—wherein marriage is more dependent upon human morality than natural beings and processes like bodily gravitation—but the essence of marriage is an objective being *per accidens*. As such, its existence is stable once generated (contracted and consummated). Therefore, the existence of the objective mutual relation of marriage as an institution is outside of the control of any human person—regardless of its position within the moral order and irrespective of its being a natural or Christian marriage.

That marriage is a relation of spouses is not surprising. Indeed, it is manifest—this is why marriage is still called a “relationship.” That such a manifest truth actually corresponds to a deeper philosophical understanding of being *per accidens*, however,

is not an every-day way of understanding marriage but belongs to a properly theological and philosophical mode of thinking. It is for this reason that a deep explanation of categorical relations was necessary for this thesis. Moreover, the level of detail that was described in this thesis serves the theology of marriage insofar as it shows that the truth of the conclusion “marriage is an objective relation” is not metaphorical, merely descriptive, or an analogous *secundum quid* sense of “relation.” Rather it is a proper predication of the category of relation and a proper essential truth of marriage. As such, this investigation into the objectivity of marriage serves as a reminder of the essential content of marriage as an institution in itself created by God. Modern theology has rightly emphasized the importance of considering marriage through the subjects of husband and wife, however, the objective being of marriage itself has been de-emphasized. To recall its objectivity has been the happy purpose of this thesis.

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