

# THE PRUDENT MAN AS A REFLECTION OF THE PROVIDENT GOD: AN ANALYSIS OF AQUINAS' ACCOUNTS OF PROVIDENCE AND PRUDENCE

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## **Abstract**

*This essay explores and exposes Thomas Aquinas' notions of prudence and providence and interprets these notions in a bid to establish a relationship between human prudence and divine providence. At face value, it would seem that these two concepts are widely divergent and almost mutually exclusive. Nonetheless, the essay uses the phenomenological tool of analysis of relevant works of literature – the Summa Theologiae and the Summa Contra Gentiles – and argues that the ideas of human prudence and divine providence have more in common than what they have apart. Accordingly, the essay avers that man's exercise of prudence is a participation in the works of divine providence or God's providential governance of the world. Likewise, the essay claims that human prudence is a response and compliance to the order initiated and willed by God's benevolent act of knowledge. These conclusions are arrived at through the knotting of prudence and providence as predicated by God. Thus, if prudence in God implies his providence and human prudence implies God's prudence (although an imperfect implication), it follows that human prudence implies divine*

*providence. It is in this way, that the essay proposes and concludes that man's exercise of prudence is a participation in divine providence. The Paper adopts a theological method.*

**Keywords:** Divine Providence, God, good, order, prudence, reason.

### **Introduction**

In this essay, I argue that human prudence is the human person's participation in the works of Divine Providence. It is a person's response to the creative will of the Provident God and their conscious involvement in God's ordering of the universe. On the face value, it might seem that prudence and providence are divergent and even mutually exclusive concepts; for while prudence (from the Greek *Phronesis*), generally speaking, means the habitual conscientious application of reason (or the intellect) in the direction and execution of our voluntary and deliberate actions, providence (from the Latin *providentia*) is the divine foresight in and the benevolent governance of all created things toward the good and the ultimate provision of their needs. Thus, while the former concerns human actions, the latter deals with Divine Sovereignty. For this reason, it seems that prudence and providence have nothing in common.

*Au contraire*, 1) In Aquinas, prudence pertains to the essence of God and concerns his knowledge. In man, prudence belongs to a kind of knowledge according to which man knows the highest cause. Therefore, the prudence which exists in the human intellect as a division (as one among other kinds of knowledge) and thus imperfect, is only an expression of the divine perfection, prudence, which exists in God by "one simple act of knowledge" through which God knows what is to be done and executes such ends, and by which he governs the universe (providence). 2) God's providence is made manifest in the good which exists *per se* in the creation and the very ordering of creation. Human prudence is an attempt to align all that is within human powers to that good order initiated by Divine Providence. Thus, the prudent man is a reflection of the provident God – the God of order, reason, and the good.

### **The Backdrop to the Present Study**

A careful analysis and subsequent interpretation of Aquinas' dyad notions of providence and prudence, both as predicated of God and man, has led me to conclude that human prudence is a participation in divine providence. Accordingly, before I proceed to analyse Aquinas' views on prudence and providence, it is essential to provide a backdrop to help situate this topic within the broader context of the *Summa* (s) – *Summa Theologiae* and *Summa Contra Gentiles*. Aquinas addressed the issue of prudence in questions 47 to 56 of the second part of the *Summa Theologiae* (*ST* II-II).<sup>1</sup> It was, however, in questions 14 (where he was talking about knowledge in God)<sup>2</sup> and 22 of the first part (*ST* I) of the *Summa Theologiae* that he articulated his definition of prudence and made his first attempt to discuss providence. This latter part is also important for this paper because it was here that he knotted providence to prudence. This part deals with the providence of God, where providence is a principal part of prudence.

Whereas Aquinas treats providence as a divine attribute in questions 14 and 22 of the first part of the *Summa Theologiae*, he considers it as a divine operation insofar as it concerns God's governance of the world in questions 103 to 119 of the same first part.<sup>3</sup> Hence, it is in his treatment of providence in these parts of the *Summa* that, one could say elaborates the typical relationship between prudence and providence in God and how these correspond with human prudence. Likewise, in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book 3, Aquinas extensively treats the concept of providence as a Divine attribute and its relation to evil. Although his treatment of providence in the *Summa Theologiae* is my primary concern, I shall nonetheless look at what is contained in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, as it would give a broader view of how, in its operation, providence can be knotted to the operations in the human exercise of prudence.

### **Aquinas' Notion of Prudence**

In Aquinas, there is one word that caps prudence and that is "knowledge," which is considered as an intellectual virtue. Knowledge is the compass to the right way of navigating life. Augustine, who Aquinas owes a great debt, sees prudence as, "the knowledge of what to seek and what to avoid."<sup>4</sup> Therefore, insofar

as it concerns knowledge, prudence belongs to the ‘knowing’ faculty of the soul i.e. the intellect, rather than the appetitive – the will. It is this distinction that would help us narrow how Aquinas understood prudence. Consequently, in this section, I shall briefly consider prudence in God and then, in detail, prudence in man.

### **Prudence in God**

Before Aquinas treated prudence *per se* in *ST* II-II, he hinted in the *ST* I, the sense in which prudence can be predicated on God. It suffices, at this point, nonetheless to submit that, prudence in God still lies in what we have intimated above, that is, knowledge, being the capstone in the Thomistic understanding of prudence. His demonstration follows this way. Firstly, in the first part of the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas averred that prudence (or counsel) is a kind of knowledge alongside three others, viz: *intelligentia*, *scientia*, and *sapientia*.<sup>5</sup> Now, these exist in creatures as divisions and multiples. However, in God, they exist simply and unitedly. Consequently, God has these kinds of knowledge by “one act of knowledge.” So, it can be deduced that God’s prudence is perfect as his knowledge is not discursive. Secondly, prudence can be predicated on God, since it means directing other things towards an end or a particular order for things. In this sense, following Aquinas’ reference to Boethius, prudence is attributed to God, insofar as he “disposes of all things.” Aquinas interpreted this, “disposes,” to mean, “either to the type of the order of things towards an end or to the type of the order of parts in the whole.”<sup>6</sup>

### **Prudence in Man**

Aquinas’ treatment of prudence (providence) is best understood within the context of the *exitus-reditus* schema by which all things proceed from God and are processing back to him as their ultimate end. Within this context, prudence (providence) is conceived as that principal means by which creatures are guided back to God. Accordingly, within this context of understanding providence (prudence?), we shall see clearly how Aquinas, although owing to a great debt to Aristotle, differs from him. He does this by introducing the idea of grace into his concept of prudence (providence?). Thus, a man who has grace has charity with him, which is the principle of all other virtues. Hence, even as prudence

reinforces the moral virtues, it is in itself supported and guided by a higher virtue – the theological virtue of charity.

### **Prudence as the Virtue of the Intellect**

Having treated prudence as can be predicated of God, Aquinas turns his attention to man, the image of God. Being image here means a reasoning being, endowed with free will and self-movement (they are the principles of their own motion).<sup>7</sup> By this, Aquinas indicates the place of prudence in man. Although he does not simply highlight what man's ultimate end is, Aquinas nonetheless outlines those essential features of both our intellect and will which orientate us to perfect happiness. Notably, prudence in man is to be understood as the principal (starting point) of human action; not as something outside of man, but as something that flows from within him – something intrinsic. Sharing Aristotle's thoughts, Aquinas, therefore, asserts that prudence is a habit, in the sense that it is a certain quality of the soul. A *habit* is a disposition by which that which is disposed of is disposed to itself, good or bad, and this either with regards to itself or with regards to another.<sup>8</sup> Habits (of which prudence is one) can reside in all the parts of the soul (intellective, appetitive, and sensitive)<sup>9</sup> and they can either make or mar our actions with regards to their proper ends.

Furthermore, prudence, for Aquinas, is not just a habit but a virtue – a good habit. It is a virtue because it directs man towards the good, thus making man good in himself. It resides in the intellective part of the soul; and so, it follows that prudence perfects the intellectual faculty of the soul according to the degree that it considers its end; navigates this end to the good; and determines as an intellectual virtue what may be done.<sup>10</sup> It is for this latter reason that it is distinct from the speculative virtues of intelligence, science (knowledge), or wisdom. Also, it is the virtue required to perfect the appetitive part of the soul (virtue perfects the powers of the soul) towards the good as the end. To be suitably geared towards the due end, man needs to be “rightly disposed by a habit in his reason, because counsel and choice, which are about things ordained to the end, are acts of the reason.”<sup>11</sup> Thus, the intellectual virtue which enables one to make good choices, choices that conduce to man's proper end is prudence.<sup>12</sup>

Consequently, prudence is not only an intellectual virtue as the “right reason about things to be done.” It also perfects the appetitive power. It is the virtue that makes us choose carefully and rightly. It is the habit of making choices.<sup>13</sup>

### **Aquinas on Divine Providence**

Providence is treated in both the *Summa Contra Gentiles* and the *Summa Theologiae*. As the *Summa Theologiae* indicates, providence, though eternal, connotes God’s activity in the world and his care of the temporal universe. Emmanuel Swedenborg articulates this thus: “In all that it does, the Lord’s Divine Providence looks to what is infinite and eternal. [It] looks to what is eternal, and to the temporal only as this accords with the eternal.”<sup>14</sup> This, according to Aquinas, implies that the world is governed by divine reason which orders all that exists towards the good. Thus, the words to be underlined for providence are good, reason, and order. That is why Aquinas captures providence as “the rule of reason.”<sup>15</sup> The provident order in the world is that which fundamentally manifests wisdom and divine reason.

Aquinas states that God governs all things in the world towards the good or because of the good. This is because he knows, loves, and is goodness *per se*.<sup>16</sup> God governs all created things in the world, not in the sense of external governance of an already established world, but that his operation in the world is such that he gives being to all things and preserves them in existence (in being). To take away such intervention (providence) would cause the annihilation of everything. Thus, everything that exists in the universe does so by an act of God, be it in his permitting them or his intending them to be so.<sup>17</sup> Hence, providence implies the idea of creation. All created things are dependent on God for their existence and action. Things cannot act as if they were independent of God’s action or elude him. Nothing can cause another unless it does so by an act of divine power – *quod nihil dat esse nisi in quantum agit in virtute*.<sup>18</sup> This means that God is actively involved in the actions of all that operates and such things are somewhat subsidiary causes. God on his part is not a bystander in the workings of the world; he is ubiquitously present in all things.<sup>19</sup> The presence of the power of God in all things does not make inactive the proper workings of those things. God’s power

does not suppress their ability to operate by themselves. Rather, God's operation in the operations of nature is such that the effects of such operation are caused by both God and the natural agent. This is not the case that the effects are partly wrought by God and partly wrought by nature but that the whole is done by both God and nature.<sup>20</sup> In this way, Aquinas establishes the ability of secondary causes to produce their operations. Hence, God is actively present in these operations by foregrounding natural agents and their causality in the larger structure of his divine government. As a result, nothing escapes divine order, not even human evil.

In all, God's purpose in creating the universe is to establish a world whose order mirrors divine goodness. Thus, the fundamental intention of God in creating the universe is that order that reflects him. To command such an order in created things is in fact to govern them. Ultimately, God's main concern is the order of the whole, so that even the failures of some specific creatures to arrive at their due end is the failures of nature which do not even escape God's providence, rather, they are also encompassed by and into the goodness of the whole.<sup>21</sup>

### **Divine Providence, Contingencies and the Role of Subsidiary Causes**

According to Aquinas, divine providence does not do away with evil, contingencies, or eventualities – “*quod divina providentia non excludit contingentiam a rebus.*”<sup>22</sup> Aquinas understands contingency as the absence of reason, insofar as the contingent has the possibility to be or not be.<sup>23</sup> That which is contingent is characterized by deficiency and weakness. This claim perhaps is made within the context of the dilemma: if God foresees and governs everything according to divine reason and because of the due end, then it means everything happens necessarily. There is no room for anything to happen out of chance. If this is implied, then it begs the further question of contingencies; does evil occur in the somewhat “divine order”? Hence, it is either God is not provident enough to establish a more perfect order such that it would exclude contingencies and evils or he is involved in the operations of natural agents in such a way that they are only passive in the operations of nature. Either way, we would still blame God for the

evils that are observed in nature and that his divine rule is, after all, not reasonable enough.

Against such a stance, Aquinas defended his idea of providence by expounding the power of the secondary or subsidiary causes. Providence does not mean that God initiates and does everything by sidelining the operations of nature. Rather, God's governance of the world manifests by his active presence in the actions of all things and by establishing the subsidiary causes in their own causality. That is to say, God does not only create nature or the human will but foregrounds them in their own causal operations. He makes the ability for them to cause things possible. A distinctive feature of Aquinas' notion of providence includes the operations of the subsidiary causes – God shares his causal powers with them. Hence, divine providence is driven by both the operations of natural and human agents.

Consequently, the involvement of both natural and human agents in acts of divine providence does not completely rule out evil or contingency from nature. Such is as well the case with free will, chance events or fortune because something other than God is involved.<sup>24</sup> The lacks and incompleteness initiated into the whole structure of divine providence are as a result of the natural and human elements involved; thus evil, chance, free will, and contingency which constitute the human and natural world experienced are to be blamed for the inadequacies and the unpredictability of the human world despite providence.

Even with the inadequacies of human involvement in providential government, Aquinas does not permit God's invasive intervention in the operation of the subsidiary causes, not even in the least, to correct their failures. What is left is for Aquinas to defend the existence of the inadequacies or contingency, if God who is perfect were to be involved in this providential government. For one thing, if God foresees eventualities or evil and still allows it, are they still contingent or abnormal in the sense of the supposed good order of providential government?

So far, the best way to explain contingency and evil within the divine providential scheme is that, according to Aquinas, God has willed for things to be done according to some hierarchy such that, he willed some things to occur necessarily and others contingently. This is as a result of God wanting there to be a varied hierarchy,



order, level, or degree of lower and higher perfection in the universe. As a result, some things are necessary causes such that their effects would always be produced in the manner that God has willed and they cannot ever fail to produce those effects. Whereas, some others are meant to be contingent causes with the possibility to be defective and it is from causes such as these that contingent, chance, and evil effects emanate. So, if some effects are contingent, it is because God has willed that they are produced by potentially defective causes.

Ultimately, according to Aquinas, contingency and the inadequacies in the order of nature are part of God's order of goodness, since nothing escapes his providential government. Such inadequacies, evils, and contingencies bring about diversity in nature and varied levels of perfection. Indeed, the world would be less perfect without such diversity and variety. After all, God so intelligent and powerful would always certainly create the best possible world that could be made, and if this is what we get, it is because this is the best that can be. Therefore, the perfection of the world requires there to be a state of affairs in which inadequacy and faults may concurrently occur with their contraries. Accordingly, nothing that happens in the world can be external to the universal order of providence.

### **Highlights of Providence in the *Summa Theologiae***

In the *ST* I, q. 22, Aquinas asserts, that providence is necessarily attributed to God because he not only created the world but also, by his goodness, he directs it towards a good end. Providence, properly speaking, is the type of the order of things towards their end as they pre-exist in the divine intellect and the type of things ordered towards this end. Now, providence is a chief part of prudence and it belongs to it alongside memory and understanding. This is because it belongs to prudence to order things to their due end. As a result, prudence and providence can be used interchangeably when we speak of God.<sup>25</sup>

Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae* says that evil arises because of the “defects in secondary causes.” That God permits evil to occur does not mar his divine goodness. Now, if God were to completely wipe evil away, it would no longer be the case that the world is governed by divine providence because it would not be in tandem

with the nature of created things, especially with those things already established or created to be potentially defective, as pointed out in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. This would even be a greater defect. In the case of man, for instance, to eliminate evil in man, God has to take away our free will. Then we would no longer be any different from robots in God's created universe. Consequently, providence does not seek to eliminate evil nor is it its duty to do so. It does, however, ensure that whatever evil arises from the nature of created things is geared towards a good end – the ultimate end – in the providential order of things. Perhaps that is why Aquinas notes in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, that nothing good or bad in the created universe escapes divine providence.

### **The Prudent Man as a Reflection of the Provident God**

In this section, I shall attempt to tie together all that has been said about prudence and providence by showing the relationship between them which by now is almost obvious. When that is done, I shall again show that prudence, as exercised by man, reflects providence which is one of the acts of divine operations where the said providence is a principal part of prudence. What I intend to aver here is that man's prudence mirrors God's providence which is, in a sense, also his prudence or, at least, a part of it.

### **Relationship between Prudence and Providence in God**

Now man has different kinds of knowledge, according to the different objects of His knowledge. He has *intelligence* as regards the knowledge of principles; he has *science* as regards knowledge of conclusions; he has *wisdom*, according to as he knows the highest cause; he has *counsel* or *prudence*, according to how he knows what is to be done.<sup>26</sup>

In this excerpt taken from the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas talks about the divisions of knowledge in the human intellect only to show that these four divisions of human knowledge exist in man only in an imperfect manner. They however exist in God perfectly as one, in a single act of knowledge. The point here is that prudence exists in God as a simple act of knowledge, as long as by that he knows what is to be done and in knowing that, his divine will executes such end. So, divine prudence remains within the context of the divine operations through God's knowledge as

pertaining to his will and intellect; providence is considered within this context as well. After all, prudence and providence are almost indistinguishable within the purview of the divine ordering of the universe. They are both borne in the divine mind or, at least, incepted from there, both at the same time – God knowing what is to be done (prudence) and simultaneously goes ahead to do them (providence).

Accordingly, as regards what fittingly belongs to prudence within the context of knowing and willing in the divine providential order of things, Aquinas conceded that providence belongs to prudence. This is evidenced in the *exitus* and *reditus* (came out from and returning to) structure in Aquinas with particular regards to the good which exists necessarily in nature and the good which is in its specific ordering. In this structure, God, by one act of his mind, brought about everything that exists from nothing, and because these things that come to originate from God's act of knowledge, which runs from his essence, it is granted that they are necessarily good despite their finiteness, because they exist.

Human beings (most especially) and all creatures are led towards a due end, their ultimate end, which is the divine goodness – whence they came. This directedness towards divine goodness – God – is a created ordering so long as creatures are concerned; after all, they cannot create such an order. Aquinas however stated that as far as the ratio (or type) of created things exist beforehand in God's intellect, this particular ratio (also understood as plan, reckoning, account, method, etc.<sup>27</sup>), properly speaking, his providence. Although the ratio in man is divided into parts, separate from one another due to man's composite nature, they are nonetheless in God's intellect simply and interact with one another as one. Thus, although ratio is considered providence in God, it can also be that rule, plan, reason, method, prudence which directs and orders creatures to their due end – divine goodness.<sup>28</sup>

Furthermore, God's omniscience gives him the memory of the past and adequate comprehension of the present; these two elements, memory and understanding, are parts of his prudence alongside providence which is the principal part. Now, it is according to this knowledge that God's prudence orders all things

to their proper end. From this interaction and relatedness of prudence and providence in divine operation as demonstrated in God's will and intellect, we can now have a better comprehension of how they can be associated with human action and those things treated in the human intellect and will as both an imitation of and a response to God.

### **Human Prudence Mirrors God's Providence<sup>29</sup>**

In what way then, does the prudent man reflect the provident God? It is simple. From the conceptual clarifications made above, an inference could be drawn that God's prudence may also be considered as his providence. If so, then man's prudence, which is a participation in God's prudence, is also an extension of divine prudence. Represented syllogistically we have:<sup>30</sup>

**1st Premise:** God's Prudence implies God's Providence  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Premise:** Man's Prudence Implies God's Prudence  
**Conclusion:** Therefore, Man's Prudence implies God's Providence.

Consequently, everything that is said about God's prudence and man's prudence implicitly touches on God's providence. Now, this is made evident from this excerpt of the *Summa Theologiae*:

For it [providence] is the chief part of prudence, to which two other parts are directed – namely, remembrance of the past, and understanding of the present; inasmuch as from the remembrance of what is past and the understanding of what is present, we gather how to provide for the future. Now it belongs to prudence, according to the philosopher (*Ethics*. IV), to direct other things towards an end whether in regard to oneself –for instance, a man is said to be prudent, who orders well his acts towards the end of life – or in regard to others subject to him, in family, city, or kingdom.<sup>31</sup>

Here, what is given to us by our prudence through our memory and understanding to discharge our affairs according to the due and ultimate end, is what God has by one singular act of his omniscience in disposing of things in his providential government because of divine goodness. Two essential features of

prudence, specifically as it concerns its subsistence in the human intellect according to Aquinas – a remembering of the past and an understanding of the present – are essential to discern the direction of future events or things. Consequently, it is in the retention of these features of prudence in their particular order, alongside the movement of the moral virtues through a process by which the appetitive faculty (will) is channeled to the direction of the good, that we can say prudence and providence exist in reality within the intellect.

In this scheme of things, we can see how the prudent man demonstrates what God does in his providence. The only difference is that what happens in God's providence is by far greater and, as a result, a more universal operation than that which occurs in man's exercise of prudence. This is because a prudent man sees things beforehand and orders his action cautiously according to what has been foreseen in the right direction. The provident God likewise rules the world by divine reason according to which every creature is ordered because of the good. Thus, the watchwords: reason, foresight, and good, which exist in God's providence also exist in human prudence.

Furthermore, that the prudent man reflects the provident God is evidenced in the logic of the relationship between God and creatures in the providential government which presupposes the principle of participation. In this structure, the prudent man is a subsidiary and proximate cause who labours to align his affairs according to the order set apart by the ultimate/first cause. Accordingly, it is as though he assists God in ordering the universe (that is indeed what the prudent man does according to Aquinas); he furthers God's plan for his creatures through the ordering of his affairs because of their proper end. This he does by God's providential will to make him a subsidiary cause. Hence, God's providence makes human prudence possible and if this is so, it follows that the prudent man is an ensign pointing towards the prudent God.

Moreover, what political prudence implies is like a miniature of God's benevolent ordering of the world towards a good end. For in political prudence, which Aquinas considered as a species of prudence, the subject is not only concerned about his good but the good of all. That is why the subject who commands this act of

prudence has charge of others; such a person weighs everything to see what is good for all of whom he has charge and not just a particular portion of his subjects. This is likened to what God does in his providential government where he foresees everything and knows what is good for each creature and he provides them the means to attain their own good.

Another way by which we might knot human prudence together with God's providence based on what has been shown so far is that prudence disposes the man to know that he is in the world established by a benevolent God and that this world is set according to benign laws to order the world. For this reason, the world is not what he (the prudent man) can reshape and retune at will or according to his wants and caprices. Consequently, the prudent man is that man who consciously identifies with the provident God through his participation in and continuation of the works begun by divine providence. Hence, the goal of human prudence is to comply with divine providence. In this way, human prudence and divine providence are related, one to the other.

Ultimately, another sense in which the relationship between human prudence and divine providence may be shown is that they both give order to a chaotic world. In Aristotle's treatment of prudence, he claimed that we all begin by a single basic desire to seek above all else our selfish good. This perverted self-love does not afford us genuine flourishing.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, all created corporeal beings have such debased desires; that is why lions unapologetically hunt other animals for food. If all creatures seek this perverted self-love, it would certainly breed chaos. Now, Aquinas seems to concur with this line of reason, with his idea of contingencies in the less perfect causes opening the door for evil and other ill-eventualities. Within this purview, providence sets in to ameliorate the effects of such self-love, chaos, evils, etc., to ensure that even the worst does not escape it and it is thus so that nothing happens without God turning them around for the ultimate end. In the same way, human prudence attempts to bring order in this chaotic scheme through its own peculiar way. Thus, human prudence in the face of perverted self-love becomes the fundamental virtue that sets our concupiscible and irascible passions aright. This is because it is the proper application of practical reason that sets the parameters that are free from the said

perverted passions and malice of the will. In the end, both human prudence and God's providence have a common goal – ensuring order.

## Conclusion

We set out at the beginning with exposing Aquinas' thoughts on prudence and providence to bear any connection between the idea of human prudence and God's providence. So far, the essay has been able to show the following:

- 1 That there is more that connects human prudence and divine providence than those that divide them and that the prudent man is after all a reflection of the provident God.
- 2 God's providence is an act of the divine intellect and will and so is human prudence an operation of the human intellect and will.
- 3 Providence in God is initiated by one single act of knowledge whereas, in man, prudence is only a principal part of other kinds of science in the human structure of knowledge.
- 4 The human exercise of prudence is a participation in God's providence.
- 5 Both God's providence and human prudence are reasons applied towards a good or due end of things.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, transl. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1911-1925), IIa-IIae)

<sup>2</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 14, a. 1, ad. 2.: Here Aquinas considers prudence as kind of knowledge. As the paper unfolds, we shall see how this plays out.

<sup>3</sup> Here while Aquinas attempts to make a connection between God's providence and his divine governance he was subtle enough as to link them together while at the same time carefully highlighting their distinctiveness.

<sup>4</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, IIa-IIae, q. 47, a. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 14, a. 1. Ad. 2.: Here, Aquinas was replying to the second objection that presupposes that knowledge is caused and if so, since nothing is caused in God, it therefore means that knowledge is not in God.

<sup>6</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 22, a. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia-IIae, prologue.

<sup>8</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia-IIae, q. 49, a. 1.

- <sup>9</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia – IIae, q. 50, arts. 3-5.
- <sup>10</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia – Iiae, q. 55, arts. 3 and 1.
- <sup>11</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia – IIae, q. 57, a. 5.
- <sup>12</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia – IIae, q. 57, a. 5.
- <sup>13</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia – IIae, q. 58, a. 4.
- <sup>14</sup> Emmanuel Swedenborg, *Angelic Wisdom Concerning the Divine Providence*, trans. William F. Wunsch (Pennsylvania: Swedenborg Foundation, 2012), 30, 186.
- <sup>15</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia – Iiae, q. 55, arts. 3 and 1.
- <sup>16</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, trans. Vernon J. Bourke (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), bk. 3. Pt. 1, c. 64.
- <sup>17</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 3, pt. 1, c. 65.
- <sup>18</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 3, pt. 1, c. 66.
- <sup>19</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 3, pt. 1, c. 67.
- <sup>20</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 3. Pt. 1. c. 70, no. 2466: "sed 'totus ab utroque' secundum alium modum..." Emphasis is mine.
- <sup>21</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 3, pt. 1, c. 68-69.
- <sup>22</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 3, pt. 1, c. 72.
- <sup>23</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 86, a. 3.
- <sup>24</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 3, pt. 1, chs. 71, 72, 73.
- <sup>25</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 22, a. 1.
- <sup>26</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 14,
- <sup>27</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 22. a. 1.; Cf. Andrew Michael Steele, "On Prudence According to St Aquinas," Academia.Com, 2.; Also: "Ratio," *Whitaker's Latin Dictionary* (2006).
- <sup>28</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 22. a. 1.
- <sup>29</sup> This is the main thesis of the paper. And I arrived at this after establishing the relationship between prudence and providence in God and how that relationship is implicated in human exercise of prudence.
- <sup>30</sup> Prudence can be knotted to providence (as discussed in the previous section). If that is established, then prudence in man mirrors (even though imperfectly) divine providence. This is because like providence, human prudence is concerned with reason-ordered-good.
- <sup>31</sup> Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 22. a. 1.
- <sup>32</sup> Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Ross and Lesley Brown Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, bk. ix, 1168a30, b15.