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Human society is made for man. Any political doctrine which ignores the rational nature of man, and which consequently denies the freedom and dignity of man, is vitiated at its very roots and subjects man to inhuman conditions. It is therefore with good reason that totalitarian doctrines are rejected in the name of human dignity.

Does this mean that we must agree with all of those who invoke the dignity of man? It must not be forgotten that the philosophers responsible for modern totalitarianism did not deny the dignity of the human person; on the contrary, they exalted this dignity more than ever before. Hence it is evidently necessary to determine what the dignity of man consists of.

The Marxists push the dignity of man even to the point of denying God. "Philosophy makes no secret of it," Marx says. "The profession of Prometheus: 'in a word, I hate all gods. . .,' is the profession of philosophy itself, the discourse which it holds and which it will always hold against every god of heaven and earth which does not recognize human consciousness as the highest divinity. This divinity suffers no rival."¹

Let us not forget that the sin of him who sins since the beginning consisted in the exaltation of his personal dignity and of the proper good of his nature; he preferred his proper good to the common good, to a beatitude which was participated and common to many; he refused this latter because it was participated and common. Even though he possessed his natural happiness and the excellence of his person by no special favor, but rather by a right founded on his creation itself—to God he owed his creation, but all else belonged properly to him—, by this invitation to participate he felt injured in his proper dignity. "Taking hold of their proper dignity (the

¹ Karl Marx, *Morceaux choisis*, ed. N.R.F., p. 37.

fallen angels) desired their 'singularity,' which is most proper to those who are proud."²

The dignity of the created person is not without ties, and the purpose of our liberty is not to overcome these ties, but to free us by strengthening them. These ties are the principal cause of our dignity. Liberty itself is not a guarantee of dignity

² ". . . quia videntes dignitatem suam, appetierunt singularitatem, quae maxime est propria superbiorum . . . (recusat diabolus beatitudinem supernaturalem) habere sine singularitate propria, sed communem cum hominibus; ex quo consecutum est quod voluerit specialem super eos habere praelationem potius quam communicationem, ut etiam Divus Thomas fatetur in hac quaestione I, XIII, n. 3, in calce. Accedit ad hoc auctoritas S. Gregorii papae, . . . 'Angelos perdidisse participatam celsitudinem, quia privatam desideraverunt', id est, recusarunt caelestem beatitudinem, quia participata et communis erat multis et solum voluerunt privatam, scilicet quatenus privatam, et propriam, quia prout sic habebat duas condiciones maxime opportunas superbiae, scilicet singularitatem, seu nihil commune habere cum inferioribus, quod ipsis vulgare videbatur, etiamsi esset gloria supernaturalis, et non habere illam ex speciali beneficio, et gratia et quasi precario: hoc enim maxime recusant superbi, et maxime recusavit Angelus. Et ad hoc pertinet parabola illa Lucae XIV, de homine qui fecit coenam magnam, et vocavit multos, et cum vocasset invitatos coeperunt se excusare: ideo enim fortassis recusaverunt ad illam coenam venire, quia magna erat, et pro multis, dedignantibus consortium habere cum tanto numero, potiusque eligerunt suas privatas commoditates, licet longe inferiores, utpote naturalis ordinis, iste quia villam emit, ille quia juga boum, alius quia uxorem duxerat, unusquisque propriam excusationem praetendens, et privatum bonum, quia proprium, recusans vero coenam, quia magnam, et multis communem. Iste est propriissime spiritus superbiae." John of St. Thomas, *Curs. Theol.* ed. Vives, V. IV, d. 23, n. 3, nn. 34-5 pp. 950-1. ". . . quia suam naturam, et propriam excellentiam iudicabat non haberi ex speciali gratia, et beneficio Dei, sed jure creationis, nec ut multis communem, sed sibi singularem. . ." *ibid.*, n. 40, p. 955.—"Angelus in primo suo peccato inordinate diligens bonum spirituale nempe suum proprium esse, suamque propriam perfectionem, sive beatitudinem naturalem . . . ita voluit, ut simul ex parte modi volendi, quamvis non ex parte rei volitae, per se voluerit aversionem a Deo, et non subjici ejus regulae in prosecutione suae celsitudinis. . ." Salmanticenses, *Curs. Theol.*, ed. Palme, V. IV, d. 10, dub. 1, p. 559b.

and of practical truth. "Even aversion towards God has the character of an end insofar as it is desired under the notion of liberty, as according to the words of Jeremiah (II, 20): For a long time you have broken the yoke, you have broken bonds, and you have said, 'I will not serve.'³

One can affirm personal dignity and at the same time be in very bad company. Does it suffice then to affirm the primacy of the common good? That will not suffice either. Totalitarian regimes recognize the common good as a pretext for subjugating persons in the most ignoble way. Compared with the slavery with which they menace us, the slavery of brute animals is liberty. Shall we be so lax as to allow totalitarianism this perversion of the common good and of its primacy?

Might there not be, between the exaltation of the entirely personal good above any good that is truly common on the one hand, and the negation of the dignity of persons on the other, a very logical connection which could be seen working in the course of history? The sin of the angels was practically a personalist error: they preferred the dignity of their own person to the dignity which they would receive through their subordination to a good which was superior but common in its very superiority. The Pelagian heresy, according to John of St. Thomas, can be considered as somewhat like the sin of the angels. It is only somewhat like it, because whereas the angels committed a purely practical sin, the error of the Pelagians was at the same time speculative.⁴ We believe that modern personalism is but a reflection of the Pelagian heresy, speculatively still more feeble. It raises to the level of a speculative doctrine an error which was at the beginning only practical. The enslavement of the person in the name of the common good is like a diabolical vengeance, both remarkable and cruel, a cunning attack against the community of good to which the devil refused to submit. The denial of the higher

³ S. Thomas, *IIIa Pars*, q. 8, n. 7, c.

⁴ John of S. Thomas, *loc. cit.*, n. 39, p. 954.

dignity which man receives through the subordination of his purely personal good to the common good would ensure the denial of all human dignity.

We do not mean to claim that the error of those who today call themselves personalists is anything more than speculative. Let there be no ambiguity about this. Undoubtedly our insistence could injure those personalists who have identified themselves with what they hold. That is their own very personal responsibility. But we have our responsibility as well—and we judge this doctrine to be pernicious in the extreme.

. . . Although the (fallen) Angel was really abased by this abandonment of superior goods, although he was, as St. Augustine says, fallen to the level of his proper good, nonetheless he elevated himself in his own eyes, and he forced himself, by mighty arguments (*magna negotiatione*) to prove completely to others that he aimed in this only at a greater resemblance with God, because thus he proceeded with less dependence on His grace and His favors, and in a more personal manner (*magis singulariter*), and also by not communicating with inferiors.

John of St. Thomas, *On the Evil of the Angels*

I will never exchange, be sure, my miserable lot to serve you. I would rather be bound to this rock than be the faithful valet, the messenger of Father Zeus.

Prometheus, cited by Karl Marx

I

ON THE PRIMACY OF THE COMMON GOOD
AGAINST THE PERSONALISTS

THE COMMON GOOD AND AGAINST ITS PRIMACY

The good is what all things desire insofar as they desire their perfection. Therefore the good has the notion of a final cause. Hence it is the first of causes, and consequently diffusive of it-

self. But “the higher a cause is, the more numerous the beings to which it extends its causality. For a more elevated cause has a more elevated proper effect, which is more common and present in many things.”⁵ “Whence it follows that the good, which has the notion of a final cause, is so much the more efficacious as it communicates itself to more numerous beings. And therefore, if the same thing is a good for each individual of a city and for the city itself, it is clear that it is much greater and more perfect to have at heart—that is, to secure and defend—that which is the good of the entire city than that which is the good of a single man. Certainly the love that should exist between men has for its end to conserve the good even of the individual. But it is much better and more divine to show this love towards the entire nation and towards cities. Or, if it is certainly desirable sometimes to show this love to a single city, it is much more divine to show it for the entire nation, which contains several cities. We say that it is more ‘divine’ because it is more like God, who is the ultimate cause of all goods.”⁶

⁵ “. . . quanto aliqua causa est altior, tanto ejus causalitas ad plura se extendit. Habet enim causa altior proprium causatum altius quod est communius et in pluribus inventum.” S. Thomas, *In VI Metaph.*, Lect. 3, n. 1205.

⁶ “Manifestum est enim, quod unaquaque causa tanto prior est et potior quanto ad plura se extendit. Unde et bonum, quod habet rationem causae finalis, tanto potius est quanto ad plura se extendit. Et ideo, si idem bonum est uni homini et toti civitati: multo videtur majus et perfectius suscipere, idest procurare et salvare illud quod est bonum totius civitatis, quam id quod est bonum unius hominis. Pertinet quidem ad amorem, qui debet esse inter homines, quod homo conservet bonum etiam uni soli homini. Sed multo melius et divinius est, quod hoc exhibeatur toti genti et civitatibus. Vel aliquando amabile quidem est quod exhibeatur uni soli civitati, sed multo divinius est, quod hoc exhibeatur toti genti, in qua multae civitates continentur. Dicitur hoc autem esse *divinius*, eo quod magis pertinet ad Dei similitudinem, qui est ultima causa omnium bonorum. Hoc autem bonum, scilicet quod est commune uni vel pluribus civitatibus, intendit methodus, idest quaedam ars, quae vocatur civilis. Unde ad ipsam maxime pertinet considerare finem ultimum

The common good differs from the singular good by this very universality. It has the character of superabundance and it is eminently diffusive of itself insofar as it is more communicable: it reaches the singular more than the singular good: it is the greater good of the singular.

The common good is greater not because it includes the singular good of all the singulars; in that case it would not have the unity of the common good which comes from a certain kind of universality in the latter, but would merely be a collection, and only materially better than the singular good. The common good is better for each of the particulars which participate in it, insofar as it is communicable to the other particulars; communicability is the very reason for its perfection. The particular attains to the common good considered precisely as common good only insofar as it attains to it as to something communicable to others. The good of the family is better than the singular good not because all the members of the family find therein their singular good; it is better because, for each of the individual members, it is also the good of the others. That does not mean that the others are the reason for the love which the common good itself

humanae vitae: tamquam ad principalissimam." *In I Ethic.*, Lect. 2, n. 30.

—Compare this text to the following passage from Lorenzo Valla's *De Voluptate*, in which he replies to the question *An moriendum sit pro aliis* (L. II, c. 2): "I have no obligation whatever to die for a citizen, nor for two, nor for three, and so on to infinity. How could I be obliged to die for the fatherland, which is the sum of all of the latter? Will the fact of adding one more change the quality of my obligation?" Apud P. Monnier, *Le Quattrocento*, 8th ed., Paris, 1924, Vol. I, p. 46. "Humanists," Cino Rinuccini says, "understand nothing about domestic economy. They live foolishly without concern for paternal honor or the good of children. They do not know what government is the best, that of one or of many, or that of many or of few. They flee from fatigue, affirm that what serves the common serves no one, do not defend the Republic as a *guarnaca*, and do not defend it with arms. And lastly they forget that the more a good is common, the more it is divine. (Ne si ricordano che quanto il bene e piu comune, tanto a piu del divino.)" *Ibid.*, p. 332.

merits; on the contrary, in this formal relationship it is the others which are lovable insofar as they are able to participate in this common good.

Thus the common good is not a good other than the good of the particulars, a good which is merely the good of the collectivity looked upon as a kind of singular. In that case, it would be common only accidentally; properly speaking it would be singular, or if you wish, it would differ from the singular by being *nullius*. But when we distinguish the common good from the particular good, we do not mean thereby that it is not the good of the particulars; if it were not, then it would not be truly common.

The good is what all things desire insofar as they desire their perfection. This perfection is for each thing its good—*bonum suum*—and in this sense, its good is a proper good. But thus the proper good is not opposed to the common good. For the proper good to which a being tends, the '*bonum suum*', can in fact be understood in different ways, according to the diverse good in which it finds its perfection.⁷ It can be understood first of the proper good of a particular considered as an individual. It is this good which animals pursue when they desire nourishment for conserving their being. Secondly, it can be understood as the good of a particular on account of

⁷ III Contra Gentiles, c. 24:

Bonum suum cujuslibet rei potest accipi multipliciter:

Uno quidem modo, secundum quod est eius proprium ratione individui. Et sic appetit animal suum bonum cum appetit cibum, quo in esse conservatur.

Alio modo, secundum quod est eius ratione speciei. Et sic appetit proprium bonum animal in quantum appetit generationem proles et eius nutritionem, vel quicquid aliud operatur ad conservationem vel defensionem individuorum suae speciei.

Tertio vero modo, ratione generis. Et sic appetit proprium bonum in causando agens aequivocum: sicut caelum.

Quarto autem modo, ratione similitudinis analogiae principiatorum ad suum principium. Et sic Deus, qui est extra genus, propter suum bonum omnibus rebus dat esse.

the species of the particular. This is the good which an animal desires in the generation, the nutrition, and the defense of the individuals of its species. The singular animal 'naturally'—i.e., in virtue of the inclination which is in it by nature (*ratio indita rebus ab arte divina*) prefers the good of its species to its singular good. "Every singular naturally loves the good of its species more than its singular good."⁸ For the good of the species is a greater good for the singular than its singular good. This is not therefore a species prescinded from individuals, which desires its good against the natural desire of the individual; it is the singular itself, which, by nature, desires more the good of the species than its particular good. This desire for the common good is in the singular itself. Hence the common good does not have the character of an alien good—*bonum alienum*—as in the case of the good of another considered as such.⁹ Is it not this which, in the social order, distinguishes our position profoundly from collectivism, which latter errs by abstraction, by demanding an alienation from the proper good as such and consequently from the common good since the latter is the greatest of proper goods? Those who defend the primacy of the singular good of the singular person are themselves supposing this false notion of the common good. In the third place, the good of a particular can be understood of that good which belongs to it according to its

⁸ "(Quodlibet singulare naturaliter diligit plus bonum suae speciei quam bonum suum singulare." *Ia*, q. 60, n. 6, ad 1.

⁹ "*Nec obstat fundamentum P. Suarez, quia videlicet nutritio ordinatur ad propriam conservationem in se, generatio autem in alieno individuo; magis autem inclinatur unumquodque in bonum proprium quam in alienum, quia amabilia ad alterum oriuntur ex amicabilibus ad se. Respondetur enim, inclinatur aliquid magis in bonum proprium, ut distinguitur contra alienum, non contra bonum commune. Ad hoc enim major est ponderatio quam ad proprium, quia etiam proprium continetur sub communi et ab eo dependet, et sic amabilia ad alterum oriuntur ex amicabilibus ad se, quando est alterum omnino alienum, non quando est alterum quasi bonum commune et superius, respectu cuius haec maxima non currit.*" John of St. Thomas, *Curs. Phil.*, V. III, (Reiser), p. 87a.

genus. This is the good of equivocal agents and of intellectual substances, whose action can by itself attain not only to the good of the species, but also to a greater good, one which is communicable to many species. In the fourth place, the good of a particular can be understood of that good which belongs to it on account of the similitude of analogy which "principled things" (i.e., things which proceed from a principle) bear to their principle. Thus God, a purely and simply universal good, is the proper good which all things naturally desire as their highest and greatest good, the good which gives all things their entire being. In short, "nature turns back to itself not only in that which is singular, but much more in that which is common: for every being tends to conserve not only its individual, but also its species. And much more is every being borne naturally towards that which is the absolute universal good."¹⁰

Thence one sees to what a profound degree nature is a participation in intellect. It is thanks to this participation in intellect that every nature tends principally towards a universal good.

In that desire which follows knowledge, we find a similar order. Beings are more perfect to the degree that their desire extends to a good more distant from their mere singular good. The knowledge of irrational animals is bound to the sensible singular, and hence their desire cannot extend beyond the singular and private good; explicit action for a common good presupposes a knowledge which is universal. Intellectual substance being "*comprehensiva totius entis*"¹¹, being in other words a part of the universe in which the perfection of the

¹⁰ ". . . natura reflectitur in seipsam non solum quantum ad id quod est ei singulare, sed multo magis quantum ad commune: inclinatur enim unumquodque ad conservandum non solum suum individuum, sed etiam suam speciem. Et multo magis habet naturalem inclinationem unumquodque in id quod est bonum universale simpliciter." *Ia*, q. 60, a. 5, ad 3.

¹¹ *III Contra Gentiles*, c. 112.

entire universe can exist according to knowledge¹², the most proper good of it taken as intellectual substance is the good of the universe, an essentially common good. Intellectual substance cannot be said to be this good in the way that it can be said to be the universe according to knowledge. It is indeed worth noting here the radical difference which exists between desire and knowledge: 'the known is in the knower; the good is in things'. If, like that which is known, the good were in the one who loves, we would ourselves be the good of the universe.

Consequently inferior beings differ from superior ones in that the most perfect good which they know is identified with their singular good, and in that the good which they can give is restricted to the good of the individual. "The more the virtue of a being is perfect and against its degree of goodness eminent, the more its desire for the good is universal and the more it seeks and works towards the good in beings which are distant from itself. For imperfect beings tend towards the mere good of the individual as properly understood; perfect beings tend towards the good of the species; and the most perfect beings towards the good of the genus. But God, Who is most perfectly good, tends towards the good of being as a whole. And thus not without reason it is said that the good as such is diffusive; for the more a being is good, the more it spreads forth its goodness to beings which are further from itself. And because that which is most perfect in each genus is the exemplar and measure of all which is contained in the genus, God, Who is most perfect in goodness and Who spreads forth this goodness most universally, must be the exemplar of all beings which give forth any goodness."¹³ It is the created common

¹² Q. D. de Veritate, q. 2, a. 2, c.

¹³ "Quanto aliquid est perfectioris virtutis et eminentius in gradu bonitatis, tanto appetitum boni communiorem habet et magis in distantibus a se bonum quaerit et operatur. Nam imperfecta ad solum bonum proprii individui tendunt; perfecta vero ad bonum speciei; perfectiora vero ad bonum generis; Deus autem, qui est perfectissimus in bonitate, ad

good, of any order, which imitates most properly the absolute common good.

Thus one sees that the more a being is perfect, the more it implies relation to the common good, and the more it acts principally for this good which not only in itself but also for the being which acts for it is the greatest. Rational creatures, persons, distinguish themselves from irrational beings in that they are more ordered to the common good and in that they can act expressly towards it. It is true as well that perversely they can prefer the singular good of their person to the common good, by attaching themselves to the singularity of their person, or as we say today, to their personality, set up as though it were a common measure of every good. Further, if a rational creature cannot limit itself entirely to a subordinate common good, such as the good of the family or the good of public society, this is not because its singular good as such is greater; rather it is because of its order to a superior common good to which it is principally ordered. In this case the common good is not sacrificed for the good of the individual as individual, but rather for the good of the individual considered as ordered to a more universal common good. Singularity alone cannot be the reason *per se*. In every genus the common good is superior. Comparison to cases which go beyond a single genus, far from disproving this principle, will presuppose it and confirm it.

It is in the most perfect created persons, pure spirits, that one sees best this profound ordering towards the common good. For the common good is more theirs in proportion as

bonum totius entis. Unde non immerito dicitur a quibusdam quod bonum, in quantum huiusmodi, est diffusivum: quia quanto aliquid invenitur melius, tanto ad remotiora bonitatem suam diffundit. Et quia in quolibet genere quod est perfectissimum est exemplar et mensura omnium quae sunt illius generis, oportet quod Deus qui est in bonitate perfectissimus et suum bonitatem commissime diffundens, in sua diffusione sit exemplar omnium bonitatem diffundentium." III *Contra Gentiles*, c. 24.

they are more intelligent. "Since desire follows knowledge, the more universal a knowledge is, the more the desire which derives from it tends towards the common good; and the more a knowledge is particular, the more the desire which derives from it is borne towards the private good. Thus it is that in us love of the private good follows sensible knowledge, but the love of the common and absolute good follows intellectual knowledge. Thus, because the angels have a knowledge which is more elevated to the extent that they themselves are more perfect . . . , their love tends more towards the common good."¹⁴ And this love of the common good is so perfect and so great that the angels love their inequality and the very subordination of their singular good, which is always more distant from their common good, more subjected and more conformed thereto in proportion as they are higher in perfection. "Therefore by being different in species, as this pertains more to the perfection of the universe, they love each other more than if they were of one species, which would be fitting to the private good of a single species."¹⁵ And this greater good exists because "their love looks more to the common good."

In sum, according to those authors who put the common good of persons in second place, the more perfect angels would also be the more subject and the least free. By his attachment to the common good, the citizen would be in truth the slave, whereas this latter would be the one who was free. For the slave lived principally on the margin of society,

¹⁴ "Cum affectio sequatur cognitionem, quanto cognitio est universalior, tanto affectio eam sequens magis respicit bonum commune; et quanto cognitio est magis particularis, tanto affectio ipsam sequens magis respicit privatum bonum; unde et in nobis privata dilectio ex cognitione sensitiva exoritur; dilectio vero communis et absoluti boni ex cognitione intellectiva. Quia ergo angeli quanto sunt altiores, tanto habent scientiam magis universalem . . . , ideo eorum dilectio maxime respicit commune bonum. *Q. D. de Spir. creat.*, n. 8, ad 5.

¹⁵ "Magis ergo diligunt se invicem, si specie differunt, quod magis pertinet ad perfectionem universi . . . quam si specie convenirent, quod pertineret ad bonum privatum unius speciei.

and he was free from the order of society, as the stone in a heap is free from the order of a being. "As it is with a house," said Aristotle, "so it is with the world, where free men are not at all subject to doing this or that according to occasional circumstances, but all of their functions, or the greater number of them are ruled; for slaves or beasts of burden, on the contrary, there are but a few things that have any relation to the common good, and most things are left to arbitrary decision."¹⁶ In Marxist personalism, which is accomplished in the last phase of communism, the citizen is nothing other than a slave to whom one gives, while he remains in the condition of a slave, a title of apparent liberty by which even participation in true liberty is taken away.¹⁷

The common good is both in itself and for us more lovable than the private good. But there could still remain a confusion, for one can love the common good in two ways. One can love it to possess it, and one can love it for its conservation and against its diffusion. In effect, one can say: I prefer the common good because its possession is for me a greater good. But this is not a love of the common good as common good. It is a love which identifies the common good with the good of the singular person considered as such. "To love the good of a city in order to appropriate it and possess it for

¹⁶ *XII Metaph.*, c. 10, 1075a5.

¹⁷ "As long as men are in natural society, as long as consequently there is a divergence between the particular and the general interest, as long therefore as activity is not divided voluntarily but rather naturally, the proper task of man becomes for him an alien and hostile force, which subjugates him rather than being dominated by him. As soon as, in particular, the division of labor begins, each person has a definite and exclusive sphere of activity, which is imposed and from which one cannot escape; one is a hunter, a fisher, a pastor or a critic and must remain so, if one does not want to lose the means of existence; whereas in communist society, in which each person does not have an exclusive sphere of activity, but can develop himself in any branch he pleases, society rules general production, and thus permits me to do one thing today and another tomorrow. . . ." Marx, *Morceaux choisis*, N.R.F. edition, p. 203.

oneself is not what the good political man does; for thus it is that the tyrant, too, loves the good of the city, in order to dominate it, which is to love oneself more than the city; in effect it is for himself that the tyrant desires this good, and not for the city. But to love the good of the city in order that it be conserved and defended, this is truly to love the city, and it is what the good political man does, even so that, in order to conserve or augment the good of the city, he exposes himself to the danger of death and neglects his private good." And St. Thomas immediately applies this distinction to supernatural beatitude in which the notion of common good exists most perfectly: "Thus to love the good in which the blessed participate in order to acquire or possess it does not make man well disposed towards it, for the evil envy this good also; but to love it in itself, in order that it be conserved and spread, and so that nothing be done against it, this is what makes man well disposed to this society of the blessed; and this is what charity consists of, to love God for himself, and the neighbor who is capable of beatitude as oneself."¹⁸ Hence one cannot love the common good without loving it in its capacity to be participated in by others. The fallen angels did not refuse the perfection of the good which was offered to them; they refused the fact of its being common, and they despised this

¹⁸ "Amare bonum alicujus civitatis ut habeatur et possideantur, non facit bonum politicum; quia sic etiam aliquis tyrannus amat bonum alicujus civitatis ut ei dominetur; quod est amare seipsum magis quam civitatem; sibi enim ipsi hoc bonum concupiscit, non civitati. Sed amare bonum civitatis ut conservetur et defendatur, hoc est vere amare civitatem; quod bonum politicum facit, in tantum quod aliqui propter bonum civitatis conservandum vel ampliandum, se periculis mortis exponant et negligent privatum bonum. Sic igitur amare bonum quod a beatis participatur ut habeatur vel possideatur, non facit hominem bene se habentem ad beatitudinem, quia etiam mali illud bonum concupiscunt; sed amare illud bonum secundum se, ut permaneat et diffundatur, et ut nihil contra illud bonum agatur, hoc facit hominem bene se habentem ad illam societatem beatorum; et haec est caritas, quae Deum per se diligit, et proximos qui sunt capaces beatitudinis, sicut seipsos." *Q. D. de Carit.*, a. 2, c.

community. If truly the good of their singular person should have been first, how could they have sinned against the common good? And most of all, how could the most naturally worthy rational creature fall away from the most divine good that exists?

A society constituted by persons who love their private good above the common good, or who identify the common good with the private good, is a society not of free men, but of tyrants—"and thus the entire people becomes like one tyrant"¹⁹—who lead each other by force, in which the ultimate head is no one other than the most clever and strong among the tyrants, the subjects being merely frustrated tyrants. This refusal of the common good proceeds, at root, from mistrust and contempt of persons.

There are those who have tried to maintain that the good of the singular person is purely and simply superior to the common good, basing themselves on the absolute transcendence of supernatural beatitude—as though this beatitude were not, in its transcendence and even through its transcendence, the most universal common good which must be loved for itself and for its own spreading. This ultimate good does not distinguish itself from inferior common goods by being a singular good of the individual person. One can, indeed, play upon the words 'particular', 'proper', and 'singular.' "The proper good of man must be understood in diverse ways, according as man is taken in diverse ways. For the proper good of man considered as man is the good of reason, because for man, to be is to be rational. But the good of man considered as a maker is the artistic good; and likewise considered as a political being, his good is the common good of the city."²⁰ But

¹⁹ ". . . sic enim et populus totus erit quasi unus tyrannus. *de Regno*. c. 1.

²⁰ "Proprium autem bonum hominis oportet diversimode accipi, secundum quod homo diversimode accipitur. Nam, proprium bonum hominis in quantum homo, est bonum rationis eo quod homini esse rationale esse. Bonum autem hominis secundum quod est artifex, est

just as the good of man considered as citizen is not the good of man considered as man simply, so also the good of beatitude is not the good of man only as man, nor the good of man as citizen of civil society, but as citizen of the celestial city. "To be politically good one must love the good of the city. But if man, insofar as he is admitted to participate in the good of some city and is made the citizen thereof, needs certain virtues to accomplish the things which pertain to citizens and to love the good of the city; so also is it for the man who, admitted by grace to the participation in celestial beatitude which consists in the vision and enjoyment of God, becomes as it were a citizen and member of this blessed society which is called the celestial Jerusalem, according to the words of St. Paul to the Ephesians, II, 19: You are citizens of the city of saints, and members of the family of God."²¹ And as the virtues of man considered simply as such do not suffice to rectify us towards the common good of civil society, so also there must be entirely particular virtues, most superior and noble ones, to order us to beatitude, and beatitude considered under the very formal aspect of common good: "Therefore, to the man thus admitted to celestial life, certain free virtues are necessary; the infused virtues namely, whose proper exercise presupposes the love of the common good of the entire society, namely the divine good insofar as it is the object of beatitude."²² And it is here that St. Thomas makes the dis-

bonum artis, et sic etiam secundum quod est politicus, est bonum ejus bonum commune civitatis." *Q. D. de Carit.*, a. 2, c.

²¹ ". . . ad hoc quod aliquis sit bonus politicus, requiritur quod amat bonum civitatis. Si autem homo, in quantum admittitur ad participandum bonum alicujus civitatis, et efficitur civis alicujus civitatis, competunt ei virtutes quaedam ad operandum ea quae sunt civium et ad amandum bonum civitatis, ita cum homo per divinam gratiam admittitur in participationem coelestis beatitudinis, quae in visione et fruitione consistit, fit quasi civis et socius illius beatae societatis, quae vocatur coelestis Jerusalem secundum illud Ephes. II, 19: *Estis cives sanctorum et domestici Dei.*" *Ibid.*

²² "Unde homini sic ad caelestiam adscripto, competunt quaedam vir-

tionction cited above between the love of possession and the love of diffusion. *You are citizens*, especially in this beatitude in which the common good has more than anywhere else the notion of common good.

The elevation to the supernatural order only increases the dependence of the good of the singular person, considered as such, on a higher and more distant good. If a monastic virtue cannot accomplish an act ordered to the common good of civil society except insofar as it is elevated by a superior virtue which looks properly to this common good, it will be still less able to do so when the common good is properly divine: "Since there can be no merit without charity, the act of acquired virtue cannot be meritorious without charity. . . . For a virtue ordered to an inferior end cannot accomplish this act ordered to a superior end, except by means of a superior virtue. For example, the strength which is the virtue of a man considered as man cannot order the action of a man to the political good, except by means of the strength which is the virtue of man considered as citizen."²³ The strength of a man considered as man by which he defends the good of his person

tutes gratuita, quae sunt virtutes infusae, ad quarum debitum operationem praeexigitur amor boni communis toti societati, quod est bonum divinum, prout est beatitudinis objectum. *Ibid.*

²³ ". . . cum nullum meritum sit sine caritate, actus virtutis acquisitae non potest esse meritorius sine caritate. . . . Nam virtus ordinata in finem inferiorem non facit actum ordinatum ad finem superiorem, nisi mediante virtute superiori: sicut fortitudo, quae est virtus hominis qua homo, non ordinat actum suum ad bonum politicum, nisi mediante fortitudine quae est virtus hominis in quantum est civis." *Q. D. de Virtut.*, a. 10, ad 4.—"Dicit ergo primo (Philosophus), quod neque etiam fortitudo est circa mortem quam aliquis sustinet in quocumque casu vel negotio, sicut in mari vel in aegritudine; sed circa mortem quam quis sustinet pro optimis rebus, sicut contingit cum aliquis moritur in bello propter patriae defensionem . . . quia mors quae est in bello est in maximo periculo, quia de facili ibi moritur homo; etiam est in periculo optimo, quia homo pericula sustinet hic propter bonum commune, quod est optimum. . . . Virtus autem est circa maximum et optimum. . . ." *In III Ethic. lect. 14, nn. 537-8.*

does not suffice in order to sufficiently defend the common good. That society is very corrupt which cannot call upon the love of the arduous common good and the superior force of the citizen considered as citizen, but which must present its good under the shape of the good of the singular person.

We must not treat the virtues of the political man as mere accessory complements of the virtues of man considered simply as man. It is imagined that the latter are more profound, while yet on the other hand it is imagined that a man who is evil in his personal or domestic life might still be a good political man. That is a sign of the contempt bestowed upon whatever formally regards the common good. But "those will attain to an eminent degree of celestial beatitude who fulfill in a noble and praiseworthy manner the office of king. For if that happiness which virtue achieves is a recompense, it follows that the greater virtue will lead to the greater happiness which is its due. But the virtue by which a man can not only direct himself but others as well is a superior virtue; and it is so much the more superior as it is able to direct a greater number of men; just as someone is reputed more virtuous according to corporal virtues when he can overcome a greater number of adversaries, or lift a greater weight. Thus, a greater virtue is required to direct a family than to direct oneself, and a still greater virtue to govern a city and a kingdom. . . . But one is more pleasing to God insofar as he imitates God more: hence this admonition of the Apostle to the Ephesians, V, 1: *Be imitators of God, as beloved sons*. But, as the Sage says: 'Every animal likes its like, insofar as effects have a certain likeness to their cause; thence it follows that good kings are very pleasing to God and that they will receive from Him a very great recompense.'"²⁴

²⁴ ". . . eminentem obtinebunt coelestis beatitudinis gradum, qui officium regium digne et laudabiliter exequentur. Si enim beatitudo virtutis est praemium, consequens est ut majori virtuti major gradus beatitudinis debeatur. Est autem praecipua virtus qua homo aliquis non solum seipsum, sed etiam alios dirigere potest; et tanto magis, quanto plurium

The position which holds that the good of the singular person considered as such should be superior to the good of the community becomes abominable when one considers that the person is himself the object of the love of his singular good. ". . . As love has for its object the good, it is also diversified according to the diversity of goods. But there is a good proper to a man as the latter is a singular person; and as for the love which has this good for its object, each person is the principal object of his own love. But there is a common good which belongs to this or that individual insofar as he is a part of some whole, as for example to the soldier insofar as he is a part of the army, and to the citizen insofar as he is a part of the city; and in regard to the love whose object is this good, its principal object is that in which this good principally exists, as the good of the army in the head of the army, and the good of the city in the king; that is why it is the duty of the good soldier to neglect even his proper safety in order to conserve the good of his head, just as a man will naturally expose his arm in order to conserve his head. . . ."²⁵

est regitiva; quia et secundum virtutem corporalem tanto aliquis virtuosior reputatur, quanto plures vincere potest, aut pondera levare. Sic igitur major virtus requiritur ad regendum domesticam familiam quam ad regendum seipsum, multoque major ad regimen civitatis et regni. . . . Tanto autem est aliquid Deo acceptius, quanto magis ad ejus imitationem accedit: unde et Apostolus monet Ephes. V, 1: Estote imitatores Dei, sicut filii charissimi. Sed si secundum Sapientis sententiam: Omne animal diligit simile sibi, secundum quod causae aequaliter similitudinem habent causati, consequens igitur est bonos reges Deo esse acceptissimos, et ab eo maxime praemiandos." *de Regno*, c. 9.

²⁵ ". . . cum amor respiciat bonum, secundum diversitatem boni est diversitas amoris. Est autem quoddam bonum proprium alicujus hominis in quantum est singularis persona; et quantum ad dilectionem respicientem hoc bonum, unusquisque est sibi principale objectum dilectionis. Est autem quoddam bonum commune quod pertinet ad hunc vel ad illum in quantum est pars alicujus totius, sicut ad militem in quantum est pars exercitus, et ad civem, in quantum est pars civitatis; et quantum ad dilectionem respicientem hoc bonum, principale objectum dilectionis est illud in quo principaliter illud bonum consistit, sicut bonum exerci-

In other words, the highest good of a man belongs to him not insofar as he is himself a certain whole in which the self is the principal object of his love, but "insofar as he is part of a whole," a whole which is accessible to him because of the very universality of his knowledge. You say that the notion of part is not appropriate to man considered in his relation to the ultimate end? Here is the text immediately following what was just cited: ". . . and it is in this way that charity has, for its principal object, the divine good, which is the good of each according as each is able to participate in beatitude."²⁶ Thus it is indeed as part that we are ordered to this greatest of all goods which can only be ours most completely through being communicable to others. If the divine good were formally "a proper good of man insofar as he is a singular person", we should ourselves be the measure of this good, which is very properly an abomination.

Even the love of the proper good of the singular person depends on the love of the common good. For indeed we have so perfectly the nature of a part that rectification with regard to the proper good cannot be real unless it is in conformity with, and subordinated to, the common good. ". . . The goodness of every part is in its relation to the whole: that is why Augustine says that 'every part is bad which is not conformed to the whole'. Therefore, since every man is part of the city, it is impossible that a man be good if he is not perfectly proportioned to the common good; and the whole itself cannot well exist except by means of parts which are proportioned to it."²⁷ This ordering is so integral that those

tus in duce, et bonum civitatis in rege; unde ad officium boni militis pertinet ut etiam salutem suam negligat ad conservandum bonum ducis, sicut etiam homo naturaliter ad conservandum caput, brachium exponit; . . ." *Q. D. de Carit.*, a. 4. ad 2.

²⁶ ". . . et hoc modo caritas respicit sicut principale objectum, bonum divinum, quod pertinet ad unumquemque, secundum quod esse potest particeps beatitudinis." *Ibid.*

²⁷ ". . . bonitas cujuslibet partis consideratur in proportione ad suum

who strive towards the common good strive towards their own proper good *ex consequenti*: "because, first, the proper good cannot exist without the common good of the family, of the city, or of the kingdom. For which reason Valerius Maximus says of the ancient Romans that 'they preferred to be poor in a rich empire than to be rich in a poor empire'. And because, in the second place, as man is a part of the household and of the city, it is necessary for him to judge what is good for himself in the light of prudence, whose object is the good of the multitude; for the right disposition of the part is found in its relation with the whole."²⁸ And this appears most strikingly in the common good of beatitude, in which the very universality of the good is the principle whereby it constitutes blessedness for the singular person. For it is indeed by reason of its universality that it can be the source of blessedness for the singular person. And this communication with the common good founds the communication among singular persons *extra verbum*: the common good insofar as it is common is the root of this communication which would not be possible if the Divine good were not already loved in its communicability to others: "praeexigitur amor boni communis toti societati, quod est bonum divinum, prout est beatitudinis objectum."²⁹

totum: unde et Augustinus dicit . . . quod turpis est omnis pars quae suo toti non congruit. Cum igitur quilibet homo sit pars civitatis, impossibile est quod aliquis homo sit bonus, nisi sit bene proportionatus bono communi; nec totum potest bene existere nisi ex partibus sibi proportionatis." *Ia-IIae*, q. 92. a. 1, ad 3.

²⁸ "Primo quidem, quia bonum proprium non potest esse sine bono communi vel familiae vel civitatis aut regni. Unde et Maximus Valerius dicit de antiquis Romanis quod *malebant esse pauperes in divite imperio quam divites in paupere imperio*.—Secundo quia, cum homo sit pars domus et civitatis, oportet quod homo consideret quid sit sibi bonum ex hoc quod est prudens circa bonum multitudinis: bona enim dispositio partis accipitur secundum habitudinem ad totum; quia ut Augustinus dicit . . . *turpis est omnis pars suo toti non congruens*." *Ia-IIae*, q. 47, a. 10, ad 2.

²⁹ *Q. D. de Carit.*, a. 2, c.

If it is conceded that singular persons are ordered to the ultimate separate good insofar as the latter has the notion of common good, one is still not likely to concede very willingly that, in the universe itself, persons are not willed except for the good of the order of the universe, a common intrinsic good which is better than the singular persons which materially constitute it. It is preferred that the order of the universe be thought of as a mere superstructure of persons whom God wills, not as parts, but as radically independent wholes, and as parts only secondarily. For is it not true that rational creatures differ from irrational ones in that they are willed and governed for themselves, not only with regard to their species, but also with regard to the individual? "The acts . . . of the rational creature are directed by Divine providence, not only on account of their pertaining to a species, but also insofar as they are personal acts."³⁰ Therefore, one apparently concludes, individual persons are themselves goods willed first of all for themselves, and in themselves superior to the good of the accidental whole whose constitution out of them is a kind of consequence and complement of their own existence.

But what is the end which God intends in the production of things? "God produced the being of all things, not by natural necessity, but by his intellect and will. His intellect and will can have nothing for an ultimate end other than His own goodness, which He communicates to things. Things participate in Divine goodness through similitude, insofar as they are themselves good. But what is best in created things is the good of the order of the universe, which is the most perfect, as the Philosopher says (*XII Metaphysics*, c. 10); this is also in accordance with Holy Scriptures, where it is said: *And God saw all that He had made, and it was very good.* (*Gen. I, 31*), whereas of the works of creation taken separately He had simply said that they were good. Consequently, the good of the order of

³⁰ "Actus . . . rationalis creaturae a divina providentia diriguntur, non solum ea ratione quo ad speciem pertinent, sed etiam in quantum sunt personales actus." *III Contra Gentiles*, c. 113.

things created by God is also the principal object of the will and intention of God (*praecipue volitum et intentum*). But to govern a being is none other than to impose an order upon it. . . .

"Furthermore, that which tends towards an end is more concerned (*magis curat*) with that which is closer to the ultimate end, because the latter is also the end of all the other intermediate ends. But the ultimate end of the Divine will is its proper goodness, and in created things, it is the good of the order of the universe which is closest to this goodness (*cui propinquissimum*), for every particular good of this thing or that is ordered to the good of the order of the universe as to its end, as the less perfect is ordered to the more perfect. Hence each part is found to exist for the whole. Consequently, it is the order of the universe for which God has the greatest care among created things."³¹

Why does God will the distinction among things, their order and their inequality? "The distinction among things, and their multitude, is from the intention of the first agent, which is God. For God gave being to things in order to communicate His goodness to creatures, and to manifest this goodness through them; and because this goodness cannot be sufficiently manifested by one creature alone, He produced many and diverse creatures, in order that what is lacking in one towards manifesting the Divine goodness might be supplemented in another. For goodness, which exists in God according to a simple and uniform mode, exists in creatures in a multiple and divided way; that is why the whole universe

³¹ "Unumquodque intendens aliquem finem, magis curat de eo quod est propinquius fini ultimo: quia hoc etiam est finis aliorum. Ultimus autem finis divinae voluntatis est bonitas ipsius, cui propinquissimum in rebus creatis est bonum ordinis totius universi: cum ad ipsum ordinetur sicut ad finem, omne particulare bonum hujus vel illius rei, sicut minus perfectum ordinatur ad id quod est perfectius; unde et quaelibet pars invenitur esse propter suum totum. Id igitur quod maxime curat Deus in rebus creatis, est ordo universi." *III Contra Gentiles*, c. 64.

participates more in the Divine goodness, and manifests the latter more perfectly than any other created thing."³²

"... In every effect that which is an ultimate end is properly willed by the principal agent, as the order of the army is willed by the general. But what is most perfect in things is the good of the universal order. . . . Therefore, the order of the universe is properly willed by God, and is not an accidental product of the succession of agents. . . . But, . . . this same universal order is, in itself, created and willed by God. . . ."³³

"The end for which an effect is produced is that in it which is good and best. But what is good and best in the universe consists in the order which its parts have among themselves, which order cannot exist without distinction; for indeed it is this very order which constitutes the universe in its character of being a whole, which latter is what is best in it. Therefore the very order of the parts of the universe and their distinction, is the end for which it was created."³⁴

³² "Distinctio rerum et multitudo est ex intentione primi agentis, quod est Deus. Produxit enim res in esse propter suam bonitatem communicandam creaturis, et per eas repraesentandam; et quia per unam creaturam sufficienter repraesentari non potest, produxit multas creaturas et diversas; ut quod deest uni ad repraesentandam divinam bonitatem, suppleatur ex alia. Nam bonitas quae in Deo est simpliciter et uniformiter, in creaturis est multipliciter et divisim; unde perfectius participant divinum bonitatem, et repraesentat eam totum universum, quam alia quaecumque creatura." *Ia*, q. 47, a. 1, c.

³³ "In quolibet effectu illud quod est ultimus finis, proprie est intentum a principali agente sicut ordo exercitus a duce. Illud autem quod est optimum in rebus existens, est bonum ordinis universi. . . . Ordo igitur universi est proprie a Deo intentus, et non per accidens proveniens secundum successionem agentium . . . Sed . . . ipse ordo universi est per se creatus ab eo, et intentus ab ipso. . . ." *Ia*, q. 15, n. 2, c.

³⁴ "Id quod est bonum et optimum in effectu, est finis productionis ipsius. Sed bonum et optimum universi consistit in ordine partium ipsius ad invicem, qui sine distinctione esse non potest; per hunc enim ordinem universum in sua totalitate constituitur, quae est optimum ipsius. Ipse igitur ordo partium universi et distinctio earum est finis productionis universi." *III Contra Gentiles*, c. 39.

This conception will certainly be rejected if one thinks of the singular person and his singular good as the primary root, as an ultimate intrinsic end, and consequently as the measure of all intrinsic good in the universe. This rejection comes either from a speculative ignorance or from a practical one.

Speculative ignorance of the common good consists in thinking of it as an alien good, a "bonum alienum," opposed to the "bonum suum"; thus one limits the "bonum suum" to the singular good of the singular person. In this position, the subordination of the private good to the common good would imply subordination of the more perfect good of the person to an alien good; the whole and the part will be alien to each other; the part of the whole will not be "its part." This error lowers the person in his most fundamental capacity: that of participating in a greater good than the singular good; it denies the most wonderful perfection of the universe, that perfection indeed which God principally wills and in which persons can find "their" greatest created good. This error rejects the created common good, not because it is a merely created good, but because it is common. And there lies the gravity of this error: it must also reject the most Divine common good which is essentially common.

Even with a correct speculative understanding of the common good, there can still coexist a pernicious practical ignorance. One can refuse the primacy of the common good because it is not primarily the singular good of the singular person and because it requires a subordination of the latter to a good which does not belong to us on account of our singular personality. Through disordered love of singularity, one practically rejects the common good as a foreign good and one judges it to be incompatible with the excellence of our singular condition. One withdraws thus from order and takes refuge in oneself as though one were a universe for oneself, a universe rooted in a free and very personal act. One freely abdicates dignity as a rational creature in order to establish oneself as a radically independent whole. "Hatred itself of

God has the notion of end insofar as it is desired under the notion of liberty, according to the words of Jeremiah (II, 20): You have long been breaking the yoke, breaking bonds, and you have said, I will not serve!"³⁵ One would not refuse the common good if one were oneself the principle of it, or if it drew its excellence from one's own free choice: the primacy is accorded to liberty itself. One wants to be first of all a whole so radically independent that one has no need of God except for that same purpose, and then one would enjoy a right to submit or not submit to order as one pleased. The act of submission itself would be an act which emanates as surplus from a pure "for self" and from the recognition of one's proper generosity as being so great that it does it no harm to spread itself forth; on the contrary, the personality thus would fulfill itself and pour forth the good which it already possesses in itself.³⁶ It fulfills itself—that is, its good comes from within; it will owe to the exterior nothing but the generosity of extra space. It will recognize willingly its dependence on unformed matter, like the sculptor who recognizes his dependence on stone. One will even let oneself be directed by someone else; one will recognize a superior, provided that the latter be the "fruit" of one's own choice and the vicar, not of the community but first and foremost of oneself. Any good other than that which is due to us on account of our singular nature, any good anterior to this one and to which we must freely submit ourselves under pain of doing evil, is abhorred as an insult to our personality.

There is a revolt even against the very idea of order, although a creature is more perfect in the measure in which it participates more in order. The separated substances are more perfect than us, because they are more ordered to, and by nature participate more profoundly in, the perfection of the universe from which they receive splendor on account of this

³⁵ *IIIa*, q. 8, a. 7, c.

³⁶ See Appendix I, p. 103.

same ordination. "*The things which are of God are ordered.* But it is necessary that the superior parts of the universe participate more in the good of the universe, which is order. Things in which order exists *per se* participate more perfectly in order than things in which order is found only accidentally."³⁷ Why is there contempt for the order which is the work of Divine Wisdom? How could the angels love their inequality if the latter were not rooted in the common good, and if this common good were not their greatest good? If, on the contrary, the very being of their person were for them the greatest intrinsic good of the universe, inequality would be a principle of discord, both among the angels and among each individual person, and the common good would be a foreign good; this inequality would proceed, not from Divine Wisdom, but either from free will and the contrariety of good and evil, or from a primacy given to material distinction.³⁸

The fact that the principal parts which materially constitute the universe are ordered and governed for themselves can only make the supereminent perfection of the whole appear the more strikingly, this perfection being the primary intrinsic reason for the perfection of the parts. And, "When we say that Divine Providence orders intellectual substances for themselves, we do not mean that these substances have no further relation with God and with the perfection of the universe. We say for this reason that they are thus ruled for themselves and that the other creatures are ruled for them, because the goods which they receive by Divine Providence are not given to them for the utility of other creatures; on

³⁷ "Manifestum est enim quod duplex est bonum universi: quoddam separatum, scilicet Deus, qui est sicut dux in exercitu; et quoddam in ipsis rebus, et hoc est ordo partium universi, sicut ordo partium exercitus est bonum exercitus. Unde Apostolus dicit Rom. XIII, 1: *Quae a Deo sunt, ordinata sunt.* Oportet autem quod superiores universi partes magis de bono universi participant, quod est ordo. Perfectius autem participant ordinem ea in quibus est ordo per se, quam ea in quibus est ordo per accidens tantum." *Q. D. de Spir. creat.*, n. 8, c.

³⁸ *Ia*, q. 47, n. 2.

the contrary, the goods conferred on the other creatures are ordered by Divine Providence to the use of the intellectual substance."³⁹ Thus it is an entirely different thing to say that rational creatures are governed and ordered for themselves, and to say that they are such by themselves and for their singular good; they are ordered for themselves to the common good. The common good is for them, but it is for them as common good. The rational creatures can themselves attain in an explicit manner to that good to which all creatures are ordered; thus they differ from irrational creatures, which are pure instruments, merely useful, and which do not by themselves attain in an explicit manner to the universal good to which they are ordered. And therein consists the dignity of rational nature.

OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES

First Objection: Liberty and Personal Dignity

It seems that the dignity of the person is opposed to the notion of part and to this ordering to the common good. For "dignity signifies goodness for self; utility goodness for other than self—*dignitas significat bonitatem alicuius propter seipsum, utilitas vero propter aliud.*"⁴⁰ Moreover, "dignity belongs among things which are said absolutely—*dignitas est de absolute dictis.*"⁴¹ Is it not for this reason that persons are ordered and governed for themselves?⁴²

³⁹ "Per hoc autem quod dicimus substantias intellectuales propter se a divina providentia ordinari, non intelligimus quod ipsae ulterius non referantur in Deum et ad perfectionem universi. Sic igitur propter se procurari dicuntur et alia propter ipsas, quia bona quae propter divinam providentiam sortiuntur, non eis sunt data propter alterius utilitatem; quae vero aliis dantur, in earum usum ex divina ordinatione cedunt." *III Contra Gentiles*, c. 112.

⁴⁰ *In III Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1.

⁴¹ *In I Sent.*, d. 7, q. 2, a. 2, q. 3, ad 4.

⁴² *III Contra Gentiles*, c. 113.

To this we reply that the rational creature draws its dignity from the fact that, by its proper operation, by its intelligence and against its love it can attain to the ultimate end of the universe. "Intellectual and rational creatures exceed other creatures both by the perfection of their nature, and by the dignity of their end. By the perfection of their nature, because the rational creature is the only one which is master of its acts and freely determines itself to operate as it does, whereas the other creatures are rather more moved to action than agents themselves. By the dignity of their end, because only the intellectual creature rises as high as the very ultimate end of the universe, namely, by knowing God and loving Him; whereas other creatures cannot attain to this end except by a certain participation in His likeness."⁴³

Hence the rational creature, insofar as it can itself attain to the end of God's manifestation outside Himself, exists for itself. The irrational creatures exist only for the sake of this being which can by itself attain to an end which will belong to irrational creatures only implicitly. Man is the dignity which is their end. But, that does not mean that rational creatures exist for the dignity of their own being and that they are themselves the dignity for which they exist. They draw their dignity from the end to which they can and must attain; their dignity consists in the fact that they can attain to the end of the universe, the end of the universe being, in this regard, for the rational creatures, that is for each of them. Still, the good of the universe is not for rational creatures as if the latter were the end of the former. The good of the universe is the good

⁴³ "Praecellunt enim (intellectuales et rationales naturae) alias creaturas et in perfectione naturae et in dignitate finis. In perfectione quidem naturae, quia sola creatura rationalis habet dominium sui actus, libere se agens ad operandum; dum caeterae vero creaturae ad opera propria magis aguntur quam agant. . . In dignitate autem finis, quia sola creatura intellectualis ad ipsum finem ultimum universi sua operatione pertingit, scilicet cognoscendo et amando Deum: aliae vero creaturae ad finem ultimum pertingere non possunt nisi per aliqualem similitudinis ipsius participationem." *Ibid.*, c. 111.

of each of the rational creatures insofar as it is their good as common good.

But the dignity with which the rational creature is invested on account of its end is so dependent upon this end that the creature can lose it as it can lose the attainment of its end. "By sinning, man sets himself outside the order of reason, and consequently, he loses human dignity, as namely man is naturally free and existing for himself, and he places himself in some way in the servitude of animals. . . . For the bad man is worse than an animal."⁴⁴ Far from excluding the ordination of his private good (or his proper good when this is understood as not already including the common good) to the common good, or from making it indifferent to the common good, as though this ordination were purely a matter of freedom of contradiction, the dignity of the intelligent creature involves, on the contrary, the necessity of this ordination. Man fails in his human dignity when he refuses the very principle of that dignity: the good of the intellect realized in the common good. He subjects himself to the servitude of the animals when he judges the common good to be a foreign good. The perfection of human nature is so little an assurance of dignity that it suffices for man to turn himself inward upon his own dignity as upon a sufficient reason and first foundation, in order to fail to attain his being-for-self.

Because "dignitas est de absolute dictis", dignity cannot be a proper attribute of the person considered as such, but belongs rather to persons according to their nature. For the person is not an absolute as such. The Divine Persons are subsistent relations. "Paternity is the dignity of the Father, as it is the essence of the Father; for dignity is an absolute, and it belongs to the essence. Therefore just as the same essence which in the Father is paternity is in the Son filiation; so also,

⁴⁴ ". . . homo peccando ab ordine rationis recedit; et ideo decedit a dignitate humana, prout scilicet homo est naturaliter liber, et propter seipsum existens, et incidit quodammodo in servitutum bestiarum. . . . Pejor enim est malus homo quam bestia. . . ." *Ia-IIa*, q. 64, a. 2, ad 3.

the same dignity which in the Father is paternity is in the Son filiation."⁴⁵ Likewise in man, dignity is not an attribute of the person considered as such, but rather of the rational nature; and if the created person is an absolute, this is because of its imperfection in its very character as a person. Moreover, in a purely created rational being, nature subordinates personality.⁴⁶ Still further it is important to note that person itself is universally defined by communicability: "rationalis naturae individua substantia—individual substance of a rational nature", where nature is to be understood as a principle of operation. The incommunicability of the person itself is not to be thought of as a term as though the person existed for its incommunicability; on the contrary, far from being a being "for self" in this incommunicability, it is this incommunicability that opens nature to communication—*actiones sunt suppositorum*. The Divine persons are essentially expressive of the fecundity of the Divine nature. In the case of the created person, communication is accomplished through vital participation in the common good.

The being-for-self of each created person is for the person's end which is God. Nothing is anterior to this being-for-self-for-God. Nothing can dissolve it except evil. Since the created person has from God all that it is—*secundum hoc ipsum quod est, alterius est*—the created person must advance towards its end by a direct movement. In this fundamental perspective—and there is no other more fundamental—any deliberately reflexive regard of a created person upon himself is a dark regard and a turning away from God. If the human person were

⁴⁵ "Paternitas igitur est dignitas Patris, sicut et essentia Patris: nam dignitas absolutum est, et ad essentiam pertinet. Sicut igitur eadem essentia quae in Patre est paternitas, in Filio est filiatio; ita eadem dignitas quae in Patre est paternitas, in Filio est filiatio." *Ia*, q. 42, a. 4, ad 2.

⁴⁶ "Sicut etiam subsistentia, quando est modus proprius, subordinatur naturae: subsistentia vero divina, assumens naturam creatam terminando, potius subordinatur illi sibi." John of St. Thomas, *Curs. Theol.*, Solesmes, V. 11, p. 159, n. 12.

really what the personalists say, man should be able to find in himself a loveliness which would be his own in the face of his end; the self would be alone the principle of the person's destiny; it would also be the term; it would not subordinate itself to any other end than itself, except in order to subordinate that end to itself; it would not turn towards things other than self except in view of this same end of making them its own.

Consider now the intelligent creature in its perfection as a free agent. The perfection of nature which is the root of liberty only has the notion of an end in God. God, moreover, is only said to be free in relation to things which are inferior to Him. Liberty is not concerned with the end as such, but with means; when it is concerned with an end, it is because this end is a subordinate one and thus takes upon itself the character of a means. God is necessarily the end of all things He freely makes, and His liberty only pertains to what He makes in view of this end which is the highest good. God's dignity is the only dignity which is identical to his Being, and hence infallible. Because no other agent is its own ultimate end, and because the proper end of all other beings can be ordered to a higher end, the rational creature is fallible and can lose its dignity; its dignity is not assured except insofar as it remains in the order of the whole and acts according to this order. Unlike irrational creatures, the rational creature must keep itself in the order which is established independently of itself; but to remain in this order is to submit oneself to it and allow oneself to be measured by it; dignity is thus connected to order, and to place oneself outside of it is to fail of one's dignity. If dignity belonged absolutely to rational creatures, if it were assured by liberty of contradiction, it would be infallible by reason of our mere ability to submit to order or not to submit. The excellence of the rational creature does not consist in the ability to set oneself outside the order of the whole, but in the ability to will oneself this order in which one must remain; one does not have the right to wander from it.

"Just as there is an order in active causes, so also there is one in final causes, such that the secondary end depends on the principal end, as the secondary agent depends on the principal agent. But a defect occurs in active causes when the secondary agent falls out of the order fixed by the principal agent; thus, when the leg, from being bent, fails to execute the motion that was commanded by the appetitive virtue, this fault causes defective walking. Therefore likewise for final causes, each time the secondary end recedes from the order of the principle end, the will is at fault, even if its object be good and constitute an end. But every will naturally wills the proper good of the one willing, that is, the perfection of the person's own being, and the will cannot will the contrary. Therefore there can be no defect of the will in him whose proper good is the ultimate end, an end which is not contained under the order of a higher end, but under whose order all other ends are contained. Such is the will of God, whose being is the highest good which is the ultimate end. In God therefore there can be no defect of the will. But in any other being who wills, whose proper good necessarily is contained under the order of another good, sin can inhere in the will. . . . For although the natural inclination of the will belongs to each one who wills to will and love his own perfection so that one cannot will the contrary, this inclination is not nonetheless naturally endowed in such a way that it subordinates one's perfection to another end without the possibility of failure, the superior end being not proper to its nature, but rather to a higher nature. Therefore, it depends on its free will to subordinate its proper perfection to the superior end; for beings endowed with will differ from those which are lacking therein in that the former subordinate themselves and what belongs to them to the end, which is why they are said to have free will; whereas other beings do not subordinate themselves to the end, but are subordinated thereto by a superior agent, as it were directed rather than directing themselves to this end."⁴⁷

⁴⁷ ". . . sicut est ordo in causis agentibus, ita etiam in causis finalibus: ut scilicet secundarius finis a principali dependeat sicut secundarium agens a

An angel cannot by itself fail to attain the end of its person or the common good proper to its nature. But the good of the angelic nature is not the highest good which is God as He is in Himself. But God commanded that the angels should order themselves to this highest good. Since the proper end of the angelic nature bears in this respect the character of an end which is to be ordered to a higher end, which ordering is not assured by the nature of the agent, its will can fail to attain to the higher end, and, by way of consequence, it can fail also to attain its proper end.

If the angel is not *per se* fallible except in regard to its supernatural end, man on the contrary is able *per se* to lose even his natural end. "There is this difference between man and

principali dependet. Accidit autem peccatum in causis agentibus quando secundarium agens exit ab ordine principalis agentis: sicut, cum tibia deficit propter suam curvitatē ab executione motus quem virtus appetitiva imperebat, sequitur claudicatio. Sic igitur et in causis finalibus, cum finis secundarius non continetur sub ordine principalis finis, est peccatum voluntatis, cuius objectum est bonum et finis. — Quaelibet autem voluntas naturaliter vult illud quod est proprium volentis bonum, scilicet ipsum esse perfectum, nec potest contrarium hujus velle. In illo igitur volente nullum potest voluntatis peccatum accidere cuius proprium bonum est ultimus finis, quod non continetur sub alterius finis ordine, sed sub ejus ordine omnes alii fines continentur. Huiusmodi autem volens est Deus, cuius esse est summa bonitas, quae est ultimus finis. In Deo igitur peccatum voluntatis esse non potest. — In quocumque autem alio volente, cuius proprium bonum necesse est sub ordine alterius boni contineri, potest peccatum accidere voluntatis, si in sua natura consideratur. Licet enim naturalis inclinatio voluntatis insit unicuique volenti ad volendum et amandum sui ipsius perfectionem, ita quod contrarium hujus velle non possit; non tamen sic est inditum ei naturaliter ut ita ordinet suam perfectionem in alium finem quod ab eo deficere non possit: cum finis superior non sit suae naturae proprius, sed superioris naturae. Relinquitur igitur suo arbitrio quod propriam perfectionem in superiorem ordinet finem. In hoc enim differunt voluntatem habentia ab his quae voluntate carent, quod habentia voluntatem ordinant se et sua in finem, unde et liberi arbitrii esse dicuntur: quae autem voluntate carent, non ordinant se in finem, sed ordinantur a superiori agente, quasi ab alio acta in finem, non autem a seipsis. *III Contra Gentes.*, c. 109.

the separated substances, that the same individual has several appetitive powers, of which some are subordinated to others; this does not occur at all in the separated substances, although the separated substances are subordinated one to another. But sin occurs in the will whenever the inferior appetite deviates in any way. Therefore just as sin in separated substances would occur if one deviated from the Divine order, or if an inferior deviated from the order of a superior while the latter remained in the Divine order; thus also in one man there are two ways in which sin may occur. First man may sin when the human will does not order its proper good to God; this way man has in common with the separated substances. In another way man may sin if the good of the inferior appetite is not ruled according to the superior; as when the pleasures of the flesh, which are the object of the concupiscible appetite, are not sought observing the order of reason. This latter kind of sin does not occur in separated substances."⁴⁸ Even within man, there is a superiority of the good of the intellect over the good of the senses. The union of intellectual nature and sensible nature makes man subject to a certain contrariety. Sensible nature carries us towards the sensible and private good; intellectual nature has for its object the universal and the good

⁴⁸ "Hoc autem differt inter hominem et substantiam separatam, quod in uno homine sunt plures appetitivae virtutes, quarum una sub altera ordinatur. Quod quidem in substantiis separatis non contingit: una tamen earum est sub altera. Peccatum autem in voluntate contingit qualitercumque appetitus inferior deflectatur. Sicut igitur peccatum in substantiis separatis esset vel per hoc quod deflecteretur ab ordine divino, vel per hoc quod aliqua earum inferior deflecteretur ab ordine alicujus superioris sub ordine divino manentis, ita in homine uno contingit peccatum dupliciter. Uno modo, per hoc quod voluntas humana bonum proprium non ordinat in Deum: quod quidem peccatum est commune et sibi et substantiae separatae. Alio modo, per hoc quod bonum inferioris appetitus non regulatur secundum superiorem: puta quando delectabilia carnis, in quae concupiscibilis tendit, volumus non secundum ordinem rationis. Huiusmodi autem peccatum non contingit in substantiis separatis esse." *Ibid.*

understood according to its very character of goodness, which character is found principally in the common good. The good of the intellect, from which man receives his dignity as man, is not assured by man's own nature. The sensitive life is first in us; we cannot attain to acts of reason except by passing through the senses which, considered in this way, are a principle. As long as man is not rectified by the cardinal virtues which must be acquired, he is drawn principally towards the private good against the good of the intellect. For man there exists, even in the purely natural order, a liberty of contrariety which makes him fallible *per se* in relation to the attainment of his end. To achieve his dignity, he must submit his private good to the common good.

One could still object that if the dignity of the rational creature is bound up with subordination to God from Whom the person receives all that it is, its dignity is not tied to any subordination to other ends, no matter how high they be. Hence this dignity is anterior to any subordination other than the subordination to God, and independent of order in created things. For "when the proper good of a being is subordinated to several superior goods, the agent endowed with will is free to withdraw from the order connected with one of these superior beings and to remain in another, whether this other be higher or lower."⁴⁹—To this we reply that when an agent endowed with will must subordinate his proper good to a higher created good, this can only be insofar as the latter is itself conformed to the Divine order. Hence the inferior may be obliged to withdraw from the order of a superior if the superior himself deviates from the order he ought to follow. But as long as the superior remains in the order prescribed, he is a superior good to which the inferior must submit. "For example, the soldier who is subject to the king and to the

⁴⁹ "Considerandum est etiam quod, cum proprium alicujus bonum habet ordinem ad plura superiora, liberum est volenti ut ab ordine alicuius superiorum recedat et alterius ordinem non derelinquat, sive sit superior sive inferior." *Ibid.*

general of the army can subordinate his will to the good of the general and not to that of the king, and inversely; but if the general transgresses the order given by the king, the will of the soldier will be good if he detaches himself from the will of the general and directs his will according to the will of the king; he will do wrong however if he follows the will of the general against the will of the king; for the order of an inferior principle depends on the order of the superior principle."⁵⁰ Still, "there would be sin in the separated substances if one of an inferior level withdrew from the order of a superior substance, which latter remained subject to the Divine order." Thus the revolt of the inferior against the unsubmitting superior is a revolt against disorder.

Second Objection: Order and Liberty

Considered as such, free acts are above and outside of the order of the universe, because only the cause of being as a whole can act in our will. Therefore persons are not, according to the whole which each one constitutes, contained in the order of the universe. Moreover, to be free is to be self-caused. Hence the person must hold its perfection from itself and not from the universe of which it is alleged to be a part.

In reply to these difficulties, note first that free action is not a term in itself. The free agent differs from the purely natural agent in this, that it moves itself to judge and to advance towards an end in virtue of this very judgement. It is lord over its own action for the sake of the end; it does not dominate the end as such. Its judgement must be just; the truth of this judgement will depend on the conformity of the

⁵⁰ "Sicut miles, qui ordinatur sub rege et sub duce exercitus, potest voluntatem suam ordinare in bonum ducis et non regis aut e converso. Sed si dux ab ordine regis recedat, bona erit voluntas militis recedentis a voluntate ducis et dirigentis voluntatem suam in regem, mala autem voluntas militis sequentis voluntatem ducis contra voluntatem regis: ordo enim inferioris principii dependet ab ordine superioris. *Ibid.*

appetite with the good which the end constitutes. But the good for which the intelligent creature must principally act and by which its judgement must be ruled is that good which is naturally better for the creature, i.e., the common good. But the common good is essentially one which is able to be participated in by many. Therefore, before this good every rational creature stands as a part. Free action must be ordered by the agent himself, towards a participated good.

Further, the perfection of the universe requires that there be intelligent creatures, and consequently creatures which are master over their own acts, which will move themselves towards their good. The perfection of the good which they must follow is such that they must bear themselves towards it. If free action cannot, considered in itself, be thought of as a part of the universe, it must nonetheless finally be ordered to an end in relation to which the intelligent creature has the character of a part. But the end is the first of causes.

Moreover, the order of the universe can be understood in two ways. Either it is the order which is the form of the universe: this form is the intrinsic good of the universe; or it is the order of the universe to its very first principle—the separated good which is God. The order of the universe is for its order to the separated principle. And, as this latter order is purely and simply universal, it comprehends even free acts; God governs free agents and their acts just as He governs indeed fortuitous and chance events which have no determinate cause inherent in the order of the universe.⁵¹

Both the intrinsic good of the universe and the separated good have the character of a common good. Thus the rational creature is to be considered as a part by relation to either of them; he cannot be considered as a whole except by relation

⁵¹ “Quamvis igitur multa, quae videntur esse per accidens reducendo ipsa ad causas particulares, inveniuntur non esse per accidens reducendo ipsa ad causam communem universalem scilicet virtutem caelestem, tamen etiam hac reductione facta inveniuntur aliqua esse per accidens. . . .” *In VI Metaph.*, Lect. 3. n. 1212.

to the singular good of the singular person. But to fully exist the person must participate. It is true that to attain to fullness depends on my liberty; but fullness is not full on account of my liberty; my free act must be ordered to a fullness which is common. My free act is my own singular act; but it is not insofar as it is mine that my end is an end.

To the second part of the objection we reply that the proposition “*liberum est quod causa sui est*” must be understood not as meaning that the free agent is the cause of himself, or that he is, as such, the perfection for which he acts, but as meaning rather that he is himself, by his intellect and will, the cause of his act for the end to which he is ordered. One could also say that he is cause of himself in the line of final cause, insofar as he bears himself towards the end to which he is called as an intelligent and free agent, that is according to the principles themselves of his nature. But this end consists principally in the common good. The agent will be so much the more free and noble as he orders himself more perfectly to the common good. Hence one sees how the latter is the first principle of our free condition. The free agent would place himself in the condition of a slave if by himself he could not or would not act except for the singular good of his person. Man retains no less his free state when, by his own reason and will he submits himself to a reason and will which are superior. Thus it is that citizen subjects can act as free men, for the common good.

One could push further the first part of the objection: not only is the free act outside the universe, but any intelligent creature can keep for himself, and hide from all others, the very term of his free thought: God alone knows the secrets of the heart. Thus any created person can make for his own self a universe of objects which is radically independent, and can withdraw himself freely from the order of the universe. Does not this show most strikingly the sovereign perfection of the person? Here is something which concerns the person alone, and the universe not in the least.

We reply that neither the faculty of retaining an object outside of an order, nor indeed the object thus retained and taken as such, can be considered as an end. Even the secrets of the heart must be conformed and ordered to the common good; they are purely means; they must always be conformed to the order established by God. Even in our secret thoughts we are not ourselves the supreme rule; otherwise those secret thoughts would be good simply because they are our singular possession, and because they concern only us. If the fool says in his heart: There is no God, or if he says: my own singular good is better than any common good; if he withdraws thus from all order, he is in no way protected by his singularity: he will be subject to the disorder in which he has placed himself.

Further the object considered as such holds no perfection from the mere fact that it is kept secret. If one should make it known to another, it will not for all that be illuminating; not every locution is illuminating. "The manifestation of things which depend on the will of the one who knows them cannot be called illumination, but only locution, as for example, when a person says to another, 'I want to learn this,' or 'I want to do this or that'. This is because the created will is neither light nor rule of truth, but it participates in light; hence to communicate things which depend on the created will is not, as such, to illuminate. For it does not belong to the perfection of my intellect to know what you want, or what you understand, but only to know what is the truth of a thing."⁵² Because only the Divine will is a rule of truth, only Divine locution is always illumination.

⁵² ". . . manifestatio eorum quae dependent ex voluntate intelligentis, non potest dici illuminatio, sed locutio tantum; puta si aliquis alteri dicat, Volo hoc addiscere, Volo hoc vel illud facere. Cujus ratio est, quia voluntas creata non est lux, nec regula veritatis, sed participans lucem: unde communicare ea quae sunt a voluntate creata, in quantum huiusmodi, non est illuminare. Non enim pertinet ad perfectionem intellectus mei, quid tu velis, vel quid tu intelligas, cognoscere: sed solum quid rei veritas se habeat." *Ia*, q. 107, a. 2, c.

Again, to rejoice in secret thoughts insofar as they owe their secrecy to us is to act in a perverted way. In this way one becomes complacent in one's originality for its own sake, rather than ordering it to its greater good; this is to enjoy singularity in a disordered manner.

Still further, if the secrets of the heart escape from the order inherent in the universe, they remain within the universal order considered in relation to the separated principle. Just as He orders chance and fortune, so God can order secret thoughts to the intrinsic good of the universe.

Third Objection: Common Good and the Commonness of the Genus

The primacy of the common good would lead precisely to that egalitarian levelling for which personalists are reproached: the common character of this good would involve a sort of confusion of persons in the face of their ultimate end. Attainment of the end would be the accomplishment of a body of persons, and not of persons as such.

We reply that the common character of the good must not be understood as a commonness of predication, but rather as a commonness of causality. The common good is not common in the way that "animal" is in relation to "man" and "beast", but rather in the manner of a universal means of knowing, which in its very unity attains to the things known even in what is most proper to them. It reaches many, not by confusion but because of its very high determination which principally reaches that which is highest in the inferiors: "a higher cause has a higher proper effect." It reaches Peter, not first of all insofar as Peter is an animal, nor even insofar as he is a merely rational nature, but insofar as he is "this" rational nature; it is the good of Peter considered in his most proper personality. That is why the common good is also the most intimate connection between persons, and also the most noble one.

Fourth Objection: Common Good and Beatitude

The beatitude of the singular person does not depend on the communication of this beatitude to many. Further, one must love God first and neighbor *ex consequenti*. Therefore the common character of beatitude is secondary; for beatitude is first and foremost the good of the singular person.

We reply that if beatitude in itself does not depend on its actually being communicated to many, it does nonetheless depend on its essential communicability to many. And the reason for this is the superabundance of this good in which beatitude consists, and against its incommensurability with the singular good of the person. The sin of the angels consisted in wanting to make every good commensurable with their proper good. Man sins when he wants the good of the intellect to be commensurable with his private good. And so if even only one single person enjoys beatitude, that person still must always have the aspect of a part vis-à-vis this superabundant good; for even if in fact the person were the only one to enjoy it, the single person could not consider this good as his singular good.

Fifth Objection: Society is an Accidental Whole

It is claimed that the good of an accidental whole is inferior to the good of a substantial whole. But society is an accidental being and it is one merely *per accidens*. Therefore the common good must be subordinate to the good of the person.

This difficulty presupposes a false notion of the common good. The common good does not formally look to the society insofar as the latter is an accidental whole; it is the good of the substantial wholes which are the members of the society. But it is the good of these substantial wholes only insofar as the latter are members of the society. And, if one considers the intrinsic common good constituted by society as an accidental form, it does not at all follow that it is inferior to what is substantial. We are speaking of the good, and the division

of the good is not that of being. "It is because of its substantial being that each thing is said to be absolutely (*simpliciter*); whereas it is because of acts added over and above the substance that a thing is said to be in a certain respect (*secundum quid*). . . . But the good has the notion of perfection, which is desirable, and consequently it has the notion of end. That is why the being which possesses its ultimate perfection is said to be good absolutely speaking; but the being which does not possess the ultimate perfection which belongs to it, even though it has a certain perfection from the fact that it is in act, is not nonetheless said to be perfect absolutely speaking, nor good absolutely, but rather in a certain respect."⁵³

Moreover, if, in order to determine the superiority of a good, one were to base oneself on its union with us according to our substance considered absolutely, it would be necessary to conclude that each thing loves itself above all things, and that love of the singular good is the measure of the common good. That would presuppose moreover that created persons are first of all wholes, absolutes, and that for them "to be a part" is secondary. But that is not the case. We are first of all and principally parts of the universe. It is for this reason that we love naturally, and to a greater degree, the good of the whole. "In natural things, each being which is according to nature and in its very being of another (*quod secundum naturam hoc ipsum quod est alterius est*), is principally and more inclined towards that from which it has its being (*id in cuius est*) than towards itself. And this natural inclination is made manifest by things which naturally occur; because, as is said

⁵³ "Per suum esse substantiale dicitur unumquodque ens simpliciter, per actus autem superadditos dicitur aliquid esse secundum quid. . . . Sed bonum dicitur rationem perfecti, quod est appetibile; et per consequens dicitur rationem ultimi; unde id quod est ultimo perfectum, dicitur bonum simpliciter, quod autem non habet ultimam perfectionem quam debet habere, quamvis habent aliquam perfectionem, in quantum est actu non tamen dicitur perfectum simpliciter, nec bonum simpliciter sed secundum quid." *Ia*, q. 5, a. 1, ad 1.

in the *Second Book of the Physics*, every being is born with the inclination or aptitude to act in the manner in which it does act naturally. For we see that the part exposes itself naturally for the conservation of the whole, as for example the hand which exposes itself to being struck, without deliberation, for the conservation of the body as a whole.” One may object that this is what happens in things and actions insofar as they are natural, but that it is otherwise for actions which are accomplished freely and not by nature. But let us read what immediately follows the text just quoted: “And because reason imitates nature, we find a similar inclination in political virtues: it is the act of a virtuous citizen to expose himself to the peril of death in order to conserve the republic; and if man were a natural part of the city, this tendency would be natural to him.”⁵⁴ Because the human person is of another in his very being, he is radically dependent, radically a part *primo et per se*. And consequently he is principally and to a greater degree inclined towards that in which he participates in his very being.

It is this principle, observed first in nature and in political virtues which imitate nature, which serves as a basis for concluding that we love God more than ourselves according to natural love. “. . . The nature and the substance of the part, precisely because of what it is, is first of all and essentially for the whole and the being of the whole. It is evident that this is true of every creature considered in relation to

⁵⁴ “Unumquodque autem in rebus naturalibus, quod secundum naturam hoc ipsum quod est, alterius est, principalius et magis inclinatur in id cuius est, quam in seipsum. Et haec inclinatio naturalis demonstratur ex his quae naturaliter aguntur: quia unumquodque, sicut agitur naturaliter, sic aptum natum est agi, ut dicitur in *II Physic*. Videmus enim quod naturaliter pars se exponit ad conservationem totius: sicut manus exponitur ictui, absque deliberatione, ad conservationem totius corporis. Et quia ratio imitatur naturam, huiusmodi inclinationem invenimus in virtutibus politicis: est enim virtuosus civis, ut se exponat mortis periculo pro totius reipublicae conservatione; et si homo esset naturalis pars huius civitatis, haec inclinatio esset ei naturalis.” *Ia*, q. 60, a. 5, c.

God. For every creature is, by its nature, a natural part of the universe, and on account of this naturally loves the universe more than itself. . . . Therefore, *a fortiori*, it will love still more the universal good itself, because it is greater than the universe as a whole; or because it is entirely good; or because the universal good, which is God in His glory, is the end and the good of the universe itself, and consequently whoever loves the universe more will also love God more. We see this in the case of the army and against its leader, according to the doctrine of Book XII of the *Metaphysics* (c. 10).”⁵⁵

If it were otherwise, natural love would be perverse. And in the political domain, for example, the sacrifice of the individual person for the common good would have its principle and against its term in the love of the proper good of the singular person.⁵⁶ All love would be confined to the particular. Having identified the common good as an alien good, and considering that one must love oneself more than one’s neighbor, one would have to conclude it necessary to love one’s own particular good more than any common good, and this latter would be worthy of love only insofar as it could be reduced to one’s particular good. It is very true that “the part loves the good of the whole according as this good is appropriate to it [i.e., to the part]; but not in such a way that the part orders the good of the whole to

⁵⁵ “. . . Natura et substantia partis, hoc ipsum quod est, essentialiter et primo propter totum et totius esse est. Quod convenire cuilibet creaturae respectu Dei, patet. Quia quaelibet creatura, secundum suam naturam, est naturalis pars universi: ac per hoc naturaliter diligit plus universum quam seipsam, juxta primum fundamentum. Ergo, a fortiori, magis diligit ipsum bonum universale: tum quia est eminentius totum universum: tum quia est omne bonum; tum quia bonum ipse universale quod est Deus gloriosus, est finis et bonum ipsius universi, et consequenter a quocumque magis amatur universum, ab eo magis amabitur ipse, ut patet de exercitu et duce juxta doctrinam *XII Metaph.* (c. 10).” Cajetan, *ibid.*, n. 5.—Also, *In III Sent.*, d. 29, q. 1, a. 3, c.

⁵⁶ See Appendix II, p. 106.

itself, but rather because it orders itself to the good of the whole."⁵⁷

One could, basing oneself on the Philosopher (*IX Ethic.*, ch. 4 and 8) push this objection further: "The witness of friendship that one shows to others is but a witness of friendship shown to oneself.—To this objection St. Thomas replies "that the Philosopher is speaking here of witness of friendship given to another in whom the good which is an object of friendship is found in some particular mode: he is not speaking of witness of friendship given to another in whom the good in question is by reason of the good of the whole."⁵⁸ That is why, in the political order, any civic friendship which is anterior to the common good is a principle of corruption; it is a conspiracy against the common good, as one sees in politicians who favor their private friends under pretext of civic friendship.

Moreover, if, according to natural love, every being loved his proper good the most, and the common good for his singular good, charity could not perfect natural love; it would be contrary thereto and would destroy it.⁵⁹

Sixth Objection: Solitude and the Speculative Life

The practical order is entirely ordered to the speculative order. But perfect happiness consists in the speculative life. Speculative life however is solitary. Therefore the practical happiness of society is ordered to the speculative happiness of the singular person.

⁵⁷ ". . . bonum totius diligit quidem pars secundum quod est sibi conueniens: non autem ita quod bonum totius ad se referat, sed potius ita quod seipsam refert in bonum totius." *Ila Ilae*, q. 26, a. 3. ad 2.

⁵⁸ "Dicendum quod Philosophus loquitur de amicabilibus quae sunt ad alterum in quo bonum quod est objectum amicitiae invenitur secundum aliquem particularem modum: non autem de amicabilibus quae sunt ad alterum in quo bonum praedictum invenitur secundum rationem totius." *Ibid.*, ad 1. See also the commentary of Cajetan.

⁵⁹ *Ia*, q. 60, a. 5, c.

We reply that the practical happiness of the community is not, *per se*, ordered to the speculative happiness of the singular person, but to the speculative happiness of the person considered as a member of the community.⁶⁰ For it would be contradictory for a common good to be, *per se*, ordered to the singular person as such. It is very true that the speculative life is solitary, but it remains true also that even the highest beatitude, which consists in the vision of God, is essentially a

⁶⁰ ". . . felicitas est operatio hominis secundum intellectum. In intellectu autem est considerare speculativum cuius finis est cognitio veritatis, et practicum cuius finis est operatio. Et secundum hoc duplex felicitas assignatur hominis. Una speculativa quae est operatio hominis secundum virtutem perfectam contemplativam quae est sapientia. Alia autem practica quae est perfectio hominis secundum perfectam virtutem hominis practicum quae est prudentia. Est autem quaedam operationem secundum prudentiam et speculatio secundum sapientiam hominis secundum seipsum solum. Et est quaedam operatio prudentiae et speculatio totius civitatis; et ideo est quaedam felicitas practica et speculativa quaedam hominis secundum seipsum, et est quaedam felicitas practica totius civitatis et quaedam contemplativa totius civitatis. Felicitas autem speculativa secundum unum hominem melior est practica quae est secundum unum hominem, sicut evidenter docet Aristoteles in *X Ethicorum*; quoniam illa perfectio intellectus eligibilior est quae est respectu objecti magis intelligibilis, quia ratio perfectionis sumitur ex objecto; talis autem est speculativa. Felicitas enim est perfectio intellectus respectu primi et maxime intelligibilis. Felicitas autem practica est perfectio intellectus respectu agibilis ab homine quod multo deficit a ratione intelligibilis primi, ergo felicitas contemplativa unius eligibilior est quam felicitas practica; et iterum magis est continua et sufficiens et delectabilis haec quam illa. Et eadem ratione contemplativa totius civitatis eligibilior est quam politica seu civilis, et contemplativa totius civitatis simpliciter eligibilior est contemplativa quae est secundum unum; similiter civilis practica quae est secundum unum. Et hoc est quod intendebat dicere Aristoteles *I Ethicorum*: si idem est uni et civitati, majusque et perfectius quod civitati videtur et suscipere et salvare. Amabile enim et uni: melius vero et divinius genti et civitati. Et ratio hujus potest esse, quia contemplativa et civilis civitatis comparantur ad contemplativam secundum unum, sicut totum ad partem: totum autem rationem magis perfecti et majoris boni habet quam pars, et ideo ista quam illa." *In VII Politic.*, lect. 2. (P. de Alvernia complevit.)

common good. This apparent opposition between the solitary life and the common good which is the object of this good is explained by the fact that this happiness can be considered either from the part of those who enjoy it, or from the part of the object of enjoyment itself. The object is, of itself, communicable to many. Under this aspect, it is the speculative good of the community. The practical common good must be ordered to this speculative good which reaches persons as a common good. The independence of persons from each other in the vision itself does not prevent the object from having that universality which means, for any created intellect, essential communicability to many. Independence, far from excluding or abstracting from communicability, presupposes the latter.

Seventh Objection: The Good of Grace and the Good of the Universe

One could also object that "the good of grace of one single individual is greater than the good of nature of the entire universe"⁶¹, in order to conclude that the intrinsic common good of the universe considered according to its nature is subordinate to the good of the singular person.

This objection is based on a transgression of genera, which only permits an accidental comparison. It must be noted that St. Thomas does not oppose the good of grace of a singular person to the good of grace of the community, but to the good of nature of the universe. And if the spiritual good of the person is superior to any created common good, and if, according to this spiritual good, the person must love himself more, it does not at all follow that the created common good is, as such, subordinated to the singular person. Again, the spiritual good of man implies an essential relation to the separated common good, and in this order, man has more the

⁶¹ ". . . bonum gratiae unius majus est quam bonum naturae totius universi." *Ia IIae*, q. 113, a. 9, ad 2.

character of a part than anywhere else. The supernatural good of the singular person is essentially ordered to the supernatural common good, even to the point that one cannot distinguish between man's supernatural virtue and the supernatural virtue which belongs to man insofar as he is a part of the celestial city.

Eighth Objection: The Image of God and Society

The singular person is in the image of God. But no society is properly in the image of God.⁶² Therefore the singular person is purely and simply superior to any society.

Like the preceding ones, this objection presupposes a collectivist interpretation of our conception of society. But in truth society is not an entity separable from its members; it is constituted of persons who are in the image of God. And it is this society constituted of persons, and not some abstract entity, which is the principal intention of God. That its members are in the image of God is a sign of the perfection of the whole which they constitute. Why did He make an ordered multitude of persons, rather than one person only? Is the Divine goodness not more striking in a multitude and an order of rational creatures than in one single person as such? Is the truth not more fully communicated in the contemplative life of a community than in the contemplative life of a single person? Does beatitude not have the character of a common

⁶² M. H. Doms, the author of a very well distributed work, *Du sens et de la fin du mariage* (Desclee de Brouwer), in which he maintains with regard to this great sacrament a personalist conception and a profoundly perverse one, wishes to hold the contrary, and bases himself on Scheeben (pp. 28-32; 69). St. Augustine and St. Thomas explicitly reject this doctrine. *De Trinitate*, Book XII, Ch. 5; *Ia*, q. 93, a. 6. Read also, concerning marriage and against its mystical meaning, Cornelius Lapidus, *In Epistolam ad Ephesios*, ch. 5, verse 32; Dennis the Carthusian, *Enarratio in Canticum Canticorum*, a. 2. It has become most urgent to spread the writings of St. Augustine against the Pelagian exaltation of man and of liberty, as well as his writings on marriage.

principle? Does the incommunicability of persons in the act of vision prevent the object from being universal? And does the love which this object arouses concern the universal good as such, or the good insofar as it might be appropriated to a single person? And is this good like an inferior common good whose distribution results in a division of itself and a particularization wherein it belongs to the part as such and loses its character of commonness?

Let us recall once more that the common good is said to be common in its superabundance and in its incommensurability with the singular good. The properly Divine good is so great that it cannot be the proper good even of the whole of creation; the latter will always have in some way the character of a part. It is very true that in the face of the common good the singular person can say that it is "mine", but that does not mean that it is appropriated to the person as a singular good. The good which the person calls "mine" is not an end for the person. If it were, the good which the person himself constitutes would be its own end. "When one says that the angel loves God insofar as God is a good for him, if 'in so far as' signifies end, the proposition is false; for the angel does not love God naturally for its own good, but for God Himself. But if 'in so far as' signifies the reason for the love on the side of the one who loves, then the proposition is true; for it could not be someone's nature to love God, unless it were because that person depends on the good which is God."⁶³

⁶³ "Cum dicitur quod Deus diligitur ab Angelo in quantum est ei bonus, si ly in quantum dicat finem, sic falsum est: non enim diligit naturaliter Deum propter bonum suum, sed propter ipsum Deum. Si vero dicat rationem amoris ex parte amantis, sic verum est: non enim esset in natura alicujus quod amaret Deum, nisi ex eo quod unumquodque dependet a bono quod est Deus. *Ia IIa*, q. 60. a. 5. ad 2.

Ninth Objection: Society and the Whole of Man

"... Man is not ordered to political society according to all of himself and all of that which is his."⁶⁴

This isolated text has been made the ground for concluding that political society is ultimately subordinated to the singular person considered as such. And whoever dares to contradict this crude inference on behalf of personalism is thought to be totalitarian. But, as we have seen, it is contrary to the very nature of the common good to be, as such, subordinated to a singular, unless this singular itself has the character of a common good. St. Thomas only means that man is not ordered to political society alone. It is not according to all of himself that man is a part of political society, since the common good of the latter is only a subordinate common good. Man is ordered to this society as a citizen only. Though man, the individual, the family member, the civil citizen, the celestial citizen, etc., are the same subject, they are different formally. Totalitarianism identifies the formality "man" with the formality "citizen". For us, on the contrary, not only are these formalities distinct, but they are subordinated one to another according to the order of goods itself. And it is the order among goods, final and first causes, and not man simply as such, which is the principle of the order among these formalities of a single subject. Personalism reverses this order of goods; it makes the most inferior formality of man to be the greatest good. What personalists understand by person is in truth what we understand by a pure individual, completely material and substantial, closed in upon self; and they reduce rational nature to sensible nature which has the private good as its object.

Man cannot order himself to the good of political society alone; he must order himself to the good of that whole which is perfectly universal, to which every inferior common good must be expressly ordered. The common good of political

⁶⁴ "... homo non ordinatur ad societatem politicam secundum se totum, et secundum omnia sua . . ." *Ia IIae*, q. 21, a. 4, ad 3.

society must be expressly ordered to God, as much by the head citizen as by the citizen who is a part, each according to his proper manner. The common good itself requires this ordination. Without this explicit and public ordination, society degenerates into a state which is frozen and closed in upon itself.

Tenth Objection: The City is for Man

“The city exists for man, not man for the city.”⁶⁵ To make this text into a true objection against our position, one would have to translate it thus: “The common good of the city exists for the private good of man.” Thereto we might cite in reply the immediate continuation of this very same text: “This however is not to be understood to mean, as individualist liberalism claims, that society is subordinate to the selfish utility of the individual.”

The city exists for man. This must be understood in two ways. First, the city considered as an organization in view of the common good, must be entirely subject to this good insofar as it is common. Considered in this way, it has no other reason for being than the common good. But this common good itself is for the members of the society; not for their private good as such; it is for the members as a common good. And, since it is a common good of rational natures, it must be conformed to reason; it must look to rational natures in so far as they are rational. The city is not, it cannot be, a “for self” congealed and closed upon itself, opposed as a singular

⁶⁵ “At Deus pari modo hominem ad civilem consortionem natum conformatumque voluit, quam profecto sua ipsius natura postulat. Societas enim ex divini Creatoris consilio naturale praesidium est, quo quilibet civis possit ac debeat ad propositam sibi metam assequendam uti; quandoquidem Civitas homini non homo Civitati existit. Id tamen non ita intelligendum est, quemadmodum ob suam *individualismi* doctrinam *Liberales*, quos vocant, asseverant; qui quidem communitatem immoderatis singulorum commodis inservire jubent: . . .” *Divini Redemptoris, Acta Apost. Sedis*, 31 martii 1937, p. 79.

to other singulars; its good must be none other than the good of its members. If the common good were the good of the city as the latter is accidentally a sort of individual, it would be by the very fact a particular good and properly foreign to the members of the society. In fact one would have to attribute intellect and will to such an organization stolen from its members. The city would then be an anonymous tyrant which enslaves man. Man would be for the city. This good would be neither common nor the good of rational natures. Man would be subject to a foreign good.—Secondly, the city, like the common good of the city, is for man in the sense that man has formalities which order him to superior common goods, formalities which are in man superior to that which orders him to the common good of the city. This identity of a subject having diverse formalities can lead to confusion. The private good and the common good are both goods of man. Yet not every good of man is a good of man considered simply as man. The good of man considered simply as such, according to the meaning given by St. Thomas in the texts already cited⁶⁶, is not other than the good which belongs to him as considered as an individual. The common good can never be subordinated to this man considered merely as such. The formality “man considered simply as man” cannot be identified with the formality “citizen”, as neither can it be identified with the subject “man.” And so when we speak of a common good subordinated to man, it can only be on account of a formality which looks to a superior common good. In this sense, only the most perfect common good is unable to be subordinated to man.

Further, when we say that the common good can never be considered as a pure extension of the good of man considered in his singularity, such that the common good would be but a detour to return to the singular good, we do not mean that the singular good is contemptible, that it is nothing, that it

⁶⁶ See above p. 27, n. 23.

must not be respected, or that it is not in itself respectable. Still, a greater respect is due to the person when we consider the latter in its ordination to the common good. Even the singular good of the person is greater when we consider it as ordered to the person's common good. It is also true that a city which does not respect the private good or the good of families acts against the common good. Just as the intellect depends on the senses being well disposed, so the good of the city depends on the integrity of the family and of its members. And just as a sensible nature which is well subject to reason is more perfect even in the line of sensible nature itself, so also in a well ordered city the singular good of the individual and the common good of the family must inevitably be more perfectly realized and assured. It remains however that if the common good of the city were subordinated to these latter goods, it would not be their common good and man would be deprived of his greatest temporal good: the city would no longer be a city. It would be like an intellect which is subordinated to the senses, and thus reduced to the condition of an instrument of the private good.⁶⁷

* * *

Most of these objections play upon a transgression of genera, and exploit the *per accidens*. From the fact that that some private good is better than some common good, as for instance is true in the case of virginity being better than marriage, it is concluded that some private good, considered as private good, is better than some common good, considered as common

⁶⁷ It is true that in the lower animals knowledge is subordinated to something inferior to knowledge, namely to nutrition and generation. In this special case, the knowledge of animals is purely instrumental, and is a sort of anomaly. This anomaly disappears when one considers the animals as ordered to man in whom knowledge has the aspect of a term and in which the senses of knowledge (as opposed to the senses of nature) are no longer merely useful. Knowledge cannot be of itself ordered to something inferior to knowledge. Its condition is a sort of anomaly as long as "to be another" is subordinated to the obscure "to be self".

good; that the private good as such can have a pre-eminence which exceeds the common good as such; that hence one can prefer a private good to a common good, because it is private. What would be easier than to use this method to deny all first principles?

Thus one tries to dismiss a proposition which is, simply through the notification of the common good itself, *per se nota*.

PERSONALISM AND TOTALITARIANISM

Jacques de Monleon made this remark about personalism: "Note that the so-called personalists who place the person above the common good can no longer find in the latter the bond among persons. And so they replace this bond with another, a sordid fraternity which is supposed to immediately unite persons among themselves; as if each person were a common good for all the others. This amounts to making each citizen into a tyrant, *amans seipsum magis quam civitatem*." Yet that was Marx's ideal. In the last phase of communism, each individual person puts himself in place of the common good, appropriates for himself "his essence of many and varied aspects, as a complete man"; the individual man "will have become a generic man"; each individual will become for himself the good of his species. ". . . It will be the real end of the quarrel . . . between the individual and the species." The common good will no longer be distinct from the singular good, and the individual will become, himself, the first principle of the social order and of all political power; as a generic being, "he will recognize his own powers as social powers and will organize them himself as such. . . . he will no longer make social strength in the forum of political power separate from himself."⁶⁸ But this "integral development of the individual" cannot be accomplished without the complicity

⁶⁸ *Morceaux choisis*, pp. 232, 229, 217.

of the confused masses; the I cannot all alone establish the totalitarianism of itself; there must be a fraternity of men, a fraternity born of self love and of a need for anonymous power, blind and violent, in order to realise this *I* which is its own proper end. A very logical fraternity in its cynicism: the obstacle constituted by the other person who likewise acts for nothing but self is overcome by the confusion of the latter in the indistinct masses. In this cauldron each person can make all others subject to himself without anyone being servant.

By their false notion of the common good, the personalists are fundamentally in accord with those whose errors they suppose they are fighting. To individualism they oppose and recommend the generosity of the person and a fraternity exterior to any common good, as if the common good had its principle in the generosity of persons; as if the common good were not the very first principle for which persons must act. To totalitarianism they oppose the superiority of the person-whole and a common good reduced to the state of a particular good of persons. Their protestation is made not in the name of the person as a citizen, but in the name of the citizen as a person, as if the person were not greater in the order of the common good than in the order of the personal good.

In fact, personalism adopts as its own the totalitarian notion of the State. In totalitarian regimes, the common good is singularised, and it is opposed as a more powerful singular to singulars which are purely and simply subjected. The common good loses its distinctive character; it becomes alien. It becomes subordinate to this monster of modern invention which is called the State, not the state taken as synonym of civil society or of city, but the State which signifies a city set up as a sort of physical person. For note that the person, "individual substance of a rational nature" can be said of civil society by a metaphor only, not by analogy.⁶⁹ In this reduc-

⁶⁹ Since the moral person is not properly an individual substance, one cannot apply to it the definition "rationalis naturae substantia individua".

tion of the moral person to a physical personality, the city loses its reason for being called a community. That which is owed to the common good becomes something owed to the singular good, to a singular which orders everything to self. Legal justice is destroyed. For having turned away from the community of the common good, the State acquires the status of the personalist's person. It loses any ordination to a superior common good, "so that one considers the common reason of being a state as the end, which is the ruin of a well ordered republic."⁷⁰

This kind of State is born either when its leader, in the guise of a member-person of the society, appropriates the common good as his own, or when the moral personality of the society is erected into a physical person. In both cases, the State is a power foreign to the individuals, a power of alienation against which the subjects must unceasingly defend themselves. This totalitarian conception establishes a tension between the person and society, inevitable conflict, and a competition which some sociologists imagine to be a principle of fecundity. Society is thus openly totalitarian when the State acquires liberty through victory over individuals; it is openly individualist,

The moral person is essentially common, as for instance the person of the leader as leader, or the common personality which a society constitutes. (Salmanticenses, *Curs. Theol.*, [Palme] Vol. VIII, d. 14, dub. 1, p. 23b.) The term "person" which we find in each case—moral person, physical person—is neither univocal nor analogous, but properly equivocal. The jurist who is not formally concerned with natures can place them together in a quasi-genus, "subject of rights" and "foundation of rights" which the moderns tend to confuse. Right is defined by law and law by the common good.

⁷⁰ ". . . ut pro fine habeatur ratio status communis, quae est perniciosa reipublicae bene ordinatae." J. of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theol.*, V. VII, d. 19, a. 6, n. 12, p. 694.—"Aliud habet justitia legalis ex parte boni communis, quatenus illi debet princeps bonam gubernationem, et sic oportet, quod respiciat altiore finem quam ipsum bonum commune, scilicet Deum quod nisi respiciat gubernatio boni communis, declinat in ratione status." *Ibid.*, n. 16, p. 696.

when the individuals dominate the State. But in either case, the conception of the city is personalist and totalitarian.

In short, the state understood in this sense, that is as a city congealed and closed in upon itself, is by nature tyrannical. It singularizes the common good; it denies its community. In the condition of liberty of this State, obedience is made the substitute for the legal justice which belongs to the citizen-subjects.⁷¹ The state absorbs the citizens and substitutes in their place an abstract citizen, along with an abstract liberty.⁷²

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, n. 13, p. 695.

⁷² Marx very clearly saw this tyrannical and alienating power of the State. But he sought the solution for it in the very logical application of Kantian personalism. According to Kant, man is an end unto himself. The ultimate end for which God creates rational creatures is the persons themselves in their proper dignity. This dignity does not come from the person by himself being able to attain to the ultimate end of the universe, that is to an end other than the person; the person receives his dignity from himself because he is his own end and accomplishes in himself the liberty of autonomy. (*Fondements de la métaphysique des mœurs* [second edition, trans. V. Delbos, Paris, 1929, pp. 149 et seq.]). According to Marx, every ordination to other than self damages the dignity of man, since the latter demands that man be his own source. "To be radical is to take things by the root. And the root of man is man himself." ". . . man is the supreme essence of man." (*Morceaux choisis*, p. 186-87). "Philosophy makes no secret of it: the profession of Prometheus: 'in a word, I hate all gods. . . ' is philosophy's own profession, the discourse which it holds and will always hold against all of the gods of heaven and earth, which do not recognize the human consciousness as the highest divinity. This divinity suffers no rival." (p. 37) "Human emancipation will not be realised until the individual real man absorbs the abstract citizen, when as individual man in his empirical life, in his individual work and relations, he becomes a generic being and thus recognizes his own forces as social forces and organises them himself as such, and thus consequently he will no longer separate from himself social force in the form of political power." (p. 217) "Communism as the positive abolition of private property considered as the separation of man from himself, therefore communism as the real appropriation of the human essence by man and for man, therefore as the return of man to himself as social man, that is as human man, a complete, conscious return which maintains all the richness of anterior development. This communism, being

The totalitarian State, founded on the negation of the common good and raised up as a person for itself, cannot be ordered to a superior common good, cannot be referred to God. The negation of the very notion of the common good and of its primacy is a negation of God. In denying the universality of the end to which man is ordered, one denies the dignity which man receives from this ordination, and one leaves him with nothing but his inalienable personality to take with him to hell, *ubi nullus ordo*. Even the Marxists can sing to the glory of this invincible soul.

When those in whose charge the common good lies do not order it explicitly to God, is society not corrupted at its very root? Why does one not require, as a matter of principle and as an essential condition, that the leaders of society be men who are good purely and simply? How can one admit that a bad man might make a good politician? To be sure, it is not new to see subjects governed by bad men, men to whom one does nonetheless owe obedience in those things which pertain to their authority.⁷³ What is new however is the manner of accepting and defending them. If, in truth, the politician must possess all the moral virtues and prudence, is this not because he is at the head and must judge and order all things towards the common good of political society, and the latter to God? Political prudence rules the common good insofar as

an accomplished naturalism, coincides with humanism; it is the true end of the quarrel between existence and essence, between objectivization and affirmation of self, between liberty and necessity, between the individual and the species." (p. 229) "It is beyond this rule of necessity that the development of the powers of man begins, which development is its own end, which is the true reign of liberty, but which cannot fulfill itself except by supporting itself on this reign of necessity." (p. 234) The immortality which would make man dependent on something besides himself, which would consequently be contrary to his dignity, is itself to be "courageously" denied. And that indeed is very much in harmony with Marxist dialectic, as it is, this time, in harmony with the truth also: this dignity implies its proper negation.

⁷³ See Appendix III, p. 108.

the latter is Divine. For that reason Cajetan and John of St. Thomas held that the legal justice of the prince is more perfect than the virtue of religion.⁷⁴ Undoubtedly the reasons why we are ignorant of the common good are the very same ones on account of which we are ignorant of political prudence. "We have too long been in error concerning the role of the intellect. We have neglected the substance of man. We have believed that the virtuosity of low souls could assist in the triumph of noble causes, that clever selfishness could lift up the spirit of sacrifice, that aridity of heart could, through the wind of discourse, found fraternity or love."⁷⁵

The intellect has succumbed to the senses, to the senses riveted to the singular good. The conflict which exists between man and society does not come from the perfection of the person, nor from a supposed common good which is contrary to the person; it comes properly from the sensible part of man, from the revolt of this inferior part of man against the good of the intellect. As for the intellect as such, the ordering to the common good is so natural that a pure intellect cannot deviate from it in the pure state of nature. In fact the fallen angels, elevated to the supernatural order, did turn aside from the common good but from that common good which is the most Divine, namely supernatural beatitude, and it is only by way of consequence that they lost their natural common good. The fallen angels ignored by a practical ignorance (*ignorantia electionis*) the common good of grace; we, on the other hand, have come to the point of being ignorant of every common good even speculatively.⁷⁶ The common good, and

⁷⁴ Cajetan, *In IIam Ilae*, q. 81, a. 6; John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, V. VII, d. 19, a. 6, nn. 9-18.

⁷⁵ Antoine de Saint Exupery, *Pilote de Guerre*, Editions de la Maison Française, N.Y., p. 212.

⁷⁶ Even the sin of Adam was without speculative ignorance. "Adam non est seductus, sed mulier. Seductio autem duplex est, sc. in universali, et in particulari eligibili, quae est ignorantia electionis. Quicumque ergo peccat, seducitur ignorantia electionis in particulari eligibili. Mulier autem

not the person and liberty, being the very principle of all law, of all rights, of all justice and of all liberty, a speculative error concerning it leads fatally to the most execrable practical consequences.

II

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE NEW ORDER⁷⁷

Non est enim ista sapientia desursum descendens; sed terrena, animalis, diabolica. Jac. III, 15.

Angeli autem boni, cognoscentes creaturam, non in ea figuntur, quod esset tenebrescere et noctem fieri; sed hoc ipsum referunt ad laudem Dei, in quo sicut in principio omnia cognoscunt. Ia pars, q. 58, a. 6, ad 2.

Et (angelo) se cognito, non in seipso permansit, quasi seipso fruens et in se finem ponens—sic enim nox factus esset, ut angeli qui peccaverunt—sed cognitionem suam in Dei laudem retulit. Q. D. de Verit., q. 8, a. 16, ad 6.

According to your program I am supposed to speak to you about "Philosophy and Order in International Relations." Actually I was asked to submit to you, as matter for discussion, the following problem: "Metaphysics and International Order". I must bring this to your attention, because the subject that I am in fact going to deal with is as distant from the sec-

*fuit seducta ignorantia in universali, quando sc. credit quod serpens dixit; sed vir non credit hoc, sed deceptus fuit in particulari, sc. quod gerendus esset mos uxori, et cum ea comedere deberet, et inexpertus divinae severitatis credit quod facile ei remitteretur." S. Thomas, In I ad Tim., c. II Lect. 3. See also In II ad Tim., ch. III. Lect. 2, on the *semper discentes et numquam veritatem invenientes*.*

⁷⁷ This work was presented to the congress of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, held in Philadelphia in 1940. It appeared, in its major substance, in the Proceedings of the Association under the title, *Metaphysics and International Order*. I am told that among other faults the text in the *Proceedings* suffers from being "enigmatically brief". This is a worthy criticism and I shall try to do better in this new version.