

THE VIRTUE OF PRUDENCE

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## P R O L O G U E

Why does one write on the virtue of prudence? The great philosopher and Saint Thomas Aquinas, who as will be seen, is our teacher, in writing this thesis on prudence, gives us a twofold answer in the Summa Theologiae. There he asks the question whether prudence is a virtue necessary for living well. He answers:

Prudence is a virtue most necessary for human life. For to live well consists in operating well. However for someone to operate well, there is required not only that which he does, but also in what way he does it; namely that he operates according to a right choice, and not only from impetus or passion. But since the choice of those things which are for the end, (i.e. the means) a rectitude of election requires two things: namely the due end; and that which is fittingly ordered to the due end. However man is fittingly disposed to the due end by means of the virtue which perfects the appetitive part of the soul, whose object is the good and the end. But for that which is fittingly ordered toward the due end, it is necessary that man be disposed directly by means of a habit of reason: because to counsel and to choose, which are of the things which are toward the end, are acts of reason. And therefore it is necessary in reason that there be some intellectual virtue by means of which reason is perfected for that which fittingly has reference to those things which are toward the end. And this virtue is prudence. Wherefore prudence is a virtue most necessary for living well.<sup>1</sup>

The reason for choosing prudence as a subject is contained therein, and is stated in St. Thomas' conclusion.

That is, prudence is a most necessary virtue for good living.

So the more one knows concerning this intellectual virtue, which directly disposes man to the proper choice of means

to his end, that much more he will be disposed to living well.

I say this knowledge of the virtue of prudence disposes a man to a better human life. But as was expressed above by St. Thomas, two things are needed; both the virtue of prudence and also the virtues perfecting the appetitive power of the soul. These are the moral virtues. But we are concerned in this thesis with prudence. It might be said to be incomplete, which in a sense is true, since two things are required for good living. So the complement thesis to this one would be one on the moral virtues.

Another reason for writing on prudence is taken from St. Thomas:

That which is ordered to another as to an end, especially in moral things, is taken in the species of that to which it is ordered. But it is manifest that the knowledge of prudence is ordered to the operations of the moral virtues as to an end. Therefore also the ends of the moral virtues are principles of prudence. Thus prudential knowledge, which of itself is ordered to the operations of the moral virtues, directly pertains to the active life.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore since prudence is so basic and necessary for human life and directly pertains to the active life, which is the life most of us follow, I have chosen it to be the subject of this thesis.

### What Prudence Is.

Prudence is primarily and per se an intellectual virtue. St. Thomas, basing his definition on that of Aristotle says that prudence is, "recta ratio agibilium,"<sup>3</sup> that is, right reason in things to be done. In this definition the genus is "Recta Ratio", and the specific difference is "agibilium." To understand this definition we must examine its parts in some detail.

"Recta ratio" is a generic term. Reason is a power of the soul. Right reason or rectitude of reason is an habituation of that power, that is, a directing of that crude, unshaped, unsharpened potency of reasoning. It is what St. Thomas calls a "habitus." We must consider at least briefly, what habitus is in order to understand prudence.

### Habitus

First of all, habitus along with powers are principles of human acts.<sup>4</sup> Placed in the predicaments, habitus is an accident belonging to the first species of quality. Using Aristotle's definition habitus is a disposition according to which the thing disposed is disposed either in itself or to another.<sup>5</sup> There are two basic types of habitus, namely entitative and operative habitus. The human virtues are operative habitus. Let us consider what an operative habitus is. A habitus is a disposition according to which the thing disposed is disposed either well or ill according to itself or to another. The operative habitus has reference to the 'Ad aliud' in the

above definition. That is, operative habitus has reference to the end. St. Thomas says; "Habitus not only implies an order to the nature of the thing, but also consequently to operation, insofar as operation is the end of nature or leading to the end."<sup>6</sup> And that is why the "ad aliud" is in the definition of habitus, that is, the thing or power habituated is disposed well (since we are going to consider virtue and not vice) in reference to the end of the subject. Now there are three different types of operative powers; namely those wholly active in their original state, for the agent intellect. They are wholly perfect. Second are those powers which are wholly passive, and this power is perfected for operation by a quality which is present only during actual operation. An example would be brute sense powers. The third is the kind we are interested in. This kind of operative power is at once active and passive. These are perfected by the ~~trully~~ and technical habitus. An example of these powers is the reasoning power of man, or the possible intellect. Habitus is an increase in the power of the intellect and will, a vital growth in the imperfect potencies. The act or operation which proceeds from an habituated potency as its principle, will be more perfect than that which proceeds from a rude potency.

So to sum up the notion of operative habitus necessary as a background to virtue and prudence, it is this: "Habitus has itself as a middle way between potency and pure act."<sup>7</sup>

It is a new quality, a new state of a pure potency, whereby the potency is somewhat in act although not wholly in act. The act referred to here is second act or operation. As a principle of operation habitus is in potency to operation; as a quality of the potency it is in act, i.e. first act. That act which is operation is second act: that which brings the potency to the state in which it can (hence still in potency in reference to operation) perform its specific operation perfectly is called first act, which is virtus or habitus.

#### The Essence of Virtue

Now we must direct this general knowledge of habitus to its relation to virtue in general. St. Thomas actually equates them, or at least shows that one is a species of the other. He asks the question: "Whether human virtue is a habit." So although we have used the terms interchangeably up to now St. Thomas thinks it worthy to show that one is a species of the other. He answers that:

Virtus names a perfection of a potency. But the perfection of anything is especially considered in reference to its end. And the end of potency is act. So a potency is said to be perfect insofar as it is determined toward its act. . . . Rational potencies, which are proper to man, are not determined to one, but have themselves indeterminate to many; but the rational potencies are determined to act through habitus.<sup>8</sup>

So So human virtue is a habit because the very ratio of virtus is perfection of a power, which is determinable to many diverse acts. It is this "indeterminedness" that

constitutes human freedom. But it might seem that habitus and virtue, since they determine a potency, decrease human freedom. But it is not so, because this kind of determination is a perfection of the potency to its end. Freedom is not said to be lessened by increasing power, but rather by decreasing power. But habitus and virtus, as has been said, increase rational powers and directs those powers to their proper operation.

Human virtue is a specific kind of habitus, i.e. operative habitus, or the perfection of that which is in potency to second act, as distinguished from the perfection of that which is in potency to receive esse, i.e. first act. St. Thomas proves this from the fact that that which is the principle of operating is form, whereas the potency to be is from matter. But in man the soul is that which is formal. So the power of human operation comes from the soul of man. And so the perfection of those powers which reside in the soul are the principii agendi, since they are in the form which is the principium agendi.<sup>9</sup>

In another way, it can be said that since there are only two types of habitus, namely entitive and operative, virtus must be operative, since the rational powers of the soul are already in esse, and only in potency to agere. But a thing can't be in potency and in act at the same time in the same respect. Therefore virtus cannot be an entitive

habit, since those powers of which *virtus* is said are already in esse.

Now we have a definite notion of what *virtus* is. Let us look at the classical definition of *virtus* in general. St. Thomas has an absolutely beautiful analysis of this definition, which he gathers from St. Augustine. And also we consider this general definition of *virtus* in order to understand prudence; and as we shall see, prudence includes all that is said in this definition. As given by St. Thomas from St. Augustine: "*Virtus* is the good quality of mind, whereby life is rightly loved, whereby no evil is used, which God, without us, operates within us."<sup>10</sup> As St. Thomas says, it is a most fitting definition since it comprehends all the causes of *virtus*.

Formal cause is from genus and difference. The genus is quality, although as St. Thomas points out, it should more properly be *habitus*. The difference is good. This is so because *virtus* implies a perfection of a potency. If it were not good it would have to be evil since there is no middle between these. But evil is not a perfection but a lack. Therefore the difference of *virtus* is good. *Virtus* does not have a material cause properly so called, because *virtus* is not made out of anything. But it has matter in which, and about which it is. The matter about which it is concerned cannot be given in this definition which is a generic defi-

nition, because the matter about which must always be specific, since it is the object of the virtue. Hence when we come to prudence proper, the matter about which it is concerned can also be given. For prudence it is the agibilium. The matter in which is indicated by mentis, i.e. a good habit of mind. The end of virtus is operation. But there is good operation and evil. Therefore "qua recte v&vitur" is placed in the definition to distinguish it from evil habitus. And that it might be distinguished from the operative habitus which are sometimes good sometimes bad, the "qua nullus utitur" is placed in the definition. The "Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur" does not really apply to all the virtues. And this wouldn't fit in a definition of prudence, since prudence is not an infused virtue. This phrase denotes the efficient causality, and in prudence God alone is not the efficient cause, as He is in the infused virtues.

#### The Subject of Virtue

With this knowledge of what virtue is, it now remains to consider the subject in which this quality or rather habitus inheres. This also is general knowledge, but we are limiting this consideration to the subject of our specific virtue, which is prudence. What is said here is based on what St. Thomas says in this regard. He asks whether the intellect can be the subject of virtue.<sup>11</sup> Since the intellect is a power of the soul, we are almost certain, from what has

been said above that the answer is going to be yes. And we are right, but the Angelic Doctor, in his famous way, distinguishes two things:

There are two ways whereby some habit orders to good operation. One way, insofar as a facility for good act is acquired for a man by a habitus of this kind. The second way, some habitus not only makes (or causes) a facility of acting, but also makes it that someone rightly uses that facility.<sup>12</sup>

Now this distinction is a distinction between virtus simpliciter and virtus secundum quid. Keep in mind that virtus is a habitus whereby someone operates well. The first way is only virtus secundum quid, because for the actual good work this habitus only renders the facility to good work as is said above. But a thing is good simpliciter insofar as it is in act. Therefore the first way habitus is virtus secundum quid. The second way that habitus orders to good act is virtus simpliciter insofar as it not only renders a facility to good work, but also makes it that someone uses that facility rightly: that is, it effects good work in act. And since a thing is good simpliciter insofar as it is in act, this kind of habitus is said to be virtus simpliciter.

But it might be asked, what does this have to do with subject of virtue. St. Thomas answers immediately. And the remainder of this article is so exact and even apt for our particular virtue of prudence that all I do here is translate it.

Therefore the intellect is able to be the subject of the habitus which is said to be *virtus secundum quid*, and not only the practical but also the speculative intellect apart from any reference to the will: for thus the Philosopher in the *Ethics*, Book 6, posits science wisdom and understanding, to be intellectual virtues. -- Indeed the subject of the habitus which is said to be *virtus simpliciter*, can be nothing other than the will or some potency insofar as it is moved by the will. The reason for this is because the will moves all other powers which are in some way rational, to their proper act, as was said (I-II, 9, 1,) and therefore the fact that a man actually acts well, hangs upon the fact that a man has a good will. Wherefore virtue which makes for actual good operation, not only in facility, it is necessary that the *virtus* either be in the will itself or in some power insofar as it is moved by the will.

However it happens that the intellect is moved by the will as also are other powers: for someone actually considers something, from the fact that he wills to consider it. And therefore the intellect, insofar as it has a reference to the will, it can be the subject of *virtus simpliciter*. And from this fact, the speculative intellect, or reason, is the subject of faith: for the intellect is moved to the assenting to those things which are of faith, from the command of the will, for "no one believes unless he wills it. (ST. Augustine) Indeed the practical intellect is the subject of prudence. For, since prudence is *recta ratio agibilium*, it is required for prudence that man is well disposed to the principles of this reason of things to be done, which principles are the ends of man: toward which ends a man is well disposed by a rectitude of will, just as he is disposed to the principles to be speculated on by the natural light of the agent intellect. And therefore just as the subject of inherence of science, which is right reason in things to be speculated on, is the speculative intellect, in reference to the agent intellect, so also the subject of prudence is the practical intellect in reference to a right will.<sup>13</sup>

So the subject of the virtue of prudence is the practical intellect. We must now consider briefly the nature and work of this power, in order to understand how prudence is a

perfection of it.

Man's intellect is his means of knowing, and it is basically one. But we speak of speculative and practical intellect. St. Thomas shows us definitely that these are not of different powers or that there are not two distinct intellects.

That which has itself accidentally to the notion of the object to which some power has reference does not diversify the power. . . . But it happens (accidental) to something apprehended by the intellect, that it is ordered to work, or it is not ordered.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore they are not two different powers, but the speculative only considers the truth, whereas the practical intellect orders that which it apprehends to work.

The end of the intellect is knowledge. And scientific knowledge is through the causes of the object of knowledge. Now any thing, which <sup>is</sup> potentially a stick of knowledge, has four causes, namely, material, formal, efficient and final cause. The proper work or object of the speculative intellect is the consideration of the formal cause of the object. It seeks the the root of being and intelligibility in the object it knows.

On the other hand, the practical intellect considers in the <sup>s</sup>ame object its final cause. It is primarily concerned with the purpose or the end of the object. And whereas the speculative intellect completes its activity in the intentional order, the practical intellect posits a judgement,

which is to be executed in the existential and extra-mental order. Its work is to direct operations outside the intellect itself. Hence the virtus or habitus which inhere in this power are operative.

## PRUDENCE IN ITSELF

Having considered the general background, we now come to the virtue whose end is totum bene vivere, that is, which makes man's whole life a good life. It is the virtue of prudence. First we must consider its nature, and then its operation, and finally the uniqueness of the virtue of prudence.

What is the particular nature of prudence? As has been said above prudence is Recta ratio agibilium. We have considered well the generic part of this definition. But what of the agibilium, that is, what is distinctive of prudence; the things to be done. This involves human acts and the knowledge of the end of man. As has been said above, the virtue of prudence presupposes a rectitude of appetite, that is, to the true end of man. But the end of man is determined by his very nature. It is happiness. And prudence has nothing to do with determining the end. That which prudence deals with is the means, and its work is to present to the will, which does the choosing, the direction of what means are to be chosen. The agibilium are always particular and contingent as opposed to the universal and necessary. Therefore prudence must be cognoscitive of both the particular and the universal, since its work is to apply the universal principles ~~to~~ has from the knowledge of the end, to the particular situation, and direct

what is to be done.

Prudence is an intellectual virtue. It perfects the intellect in its operation. But St. Thomas, in determining the exact nature of prudence asks the question whether prudence is a virtue and a special virtue. Answering he shows why, and with our foothold in the general nature of virtus we are now prepared to understand the full scope of his answer. He starts out with the definition of virtus in general.

"Virtue is that which makes the possessor thereof good, and its work is to render good."<sup>15</sup> Then he proceeds to show how prudence fulfills these requirements of virtue.

Good can be taken in two ways: one -- that which is good; two--according to the notion (or essence) of good. But good insofar as it is good, that is, formally is the object of the will and consequently the object of the appetitive virtue. And the habitus perfecting reason, which has no respect to the rectitude of appetite, is less of the notion of virtus.<sup>16</sup>

So, as we learned above, that habitus which perfects reason with no reference to the will, as for example scientia, are virtus secundum quid. But a habitus is virtus simpliciter when it has reference to the appetite, and so respects good formally. But what about prudence? St. Thomas says: "The application of right reason to work, which does not happen without a right appetite, pertains to prudence."<sup>17</sup> The fact that prudence has reference to the existential order or ad opus through the will, is proved from the end of the practical intellect which is application to work. and since prudence is

in the practical intellect as its subject of inherence, it also has reference to work. Therefore as St. Thomas says: "Prudence not only has the ratio of virtus which the other intellectual virtues also have (i.e. secundum quid), but also has the ratio of virtus which the moral virtues have, with which prudence is also enumerated."<sup>18</sup>

#### The Operation of Prudence

Agere sequitur esse. The operation of anything follows upon the being of <sup>that</sup> a thing. But, as has just been said, the being of prudence is that it is an intellectual virtue, which makes the possessor good, and his work good. But now we intend to go into some detail on just how this is done by prudence.

Operation in human beings is through the will, toward man's end. Its principle is the nature of man. So the virtue of prudence, which directs the particular actions of men to the end, must know this end. For that which directs the actions toward an end must know that end. So as it is said, the end of man in practical wisdom serves as the principle of a conclusion of what is to be done to attain this end. The prudent man constantly has the end in view, and with it in view the work of prudence is to inform the will according to right reason, of the proper means to be chosen to that end. In that way the end is the principle. Prudence is a dynamic virtue. It is at work constantly, especially in the active life, and hence

necessary in that life as said in the prologue, since prudence is right reason in things to be done and man is constantly making a choice of means to his end. Since these acts of the will are of particulars, prudence must know the particular as well as the universal principles. It is the work of prudence to apply the universal to the particular. As St. Thomas says:

Not only consideration of reason pertains to prudence, but also application ad opus, which is the end of practical reason. But no one can suitably apply something to another, unless he knows both, that which is to be applied, and that to which is to be applied. But operations are in singulars. Therefore it is necessary that the prudent man both know the universal principles of reason, and that he know the singulars, about which operations are.<sup>19</sup>

The matter about which prudence is concerned is the individual human act. Now what is the process of reasoning prior to a prudent act? First of all there is presupposed that rectitude of will. Let us digress just a moment on this, since it is a pre-requisite of prudence. St. Thomas asks the question, whether the intellectual virtues are able to exist without the moral virtues. And the answer is yes and no. Yes, wisdom, science, understanding, and art can exist without the moral virtues. And no, prudence is not able to exist without the moral virtues. And the reason is because<sup>e</sup> prudence is concerned with particular here and now actions of a particular man, and right reason presupposes principles from which reason proceeds. As regards the universal principles, a man has them from

his very nature. And the most universal in the moral order, which man knows is that good is to be done and evil is to be avoided. The power whereby he knows this is called synderesis. This power could be compared to Intellectus in the speculative order, which understands the universal speculative principles, the most universal of which is that being is not non-being, which principle all men naturally know. But St. Thomas' example is good to show that this universal knowledge is not sufficient for a prudent act. "It happens sometimes that a universal principle of this kind, (viz. good is to be done) known by the intellect or science, is corrupted in the particular by some passion, as concupiscence, when concupiscence conquers, that which is greatly desired seems to be good although it is contrary to the universal judgement of reason."<sup>20</sup> Therefore it is necessary that man be perfected by a habitus whereby it becomes connatural to him that he judge rightly concerning his end. And this is the work of the moral virtues, because any one is such as the end seems to him. Therefore the moral virtues are needed, as a disposer of the will to the end of man, as a prerequisite of prudence.<sup>21</sup>

Now returning to the prudential act itself, and the matter which it informs which is the particular human act, we want to see it operate. The end of prudence is totum bene vivere. So it must operate for this end, and its problem is choosing the means. Therefore any prudent act comes from deliberation,

which is a consideration of the means to an end, with the purpose of choosing the best one. But the matter of prudence, since it is primarily particular, is contingent. We have seen with St. Thomas that the end serves as the principle in the practical order. This is known by synderesis, which simply says: do good; avoid evil. That is the major premise in prudential reasoning. The big difficulty of prudential reasoning is the minor premise, because it must be particular and apply the universal to the particular situation. <sup>B</sup> But this is not always easy. Two things make it difficult: the sound knowledge and appreciation of the minor premise<sup>E</sup> constituted by this singular here and now situation, and <sup>second,</sup> the force of the appetite on the judgement of what is to be done, as St. Thomas brought <sup>out</sup> above in his example of the force of concupiscence in reference to the known universal principle of avoiding evil. As regards the first difficulty St. Thomas says this:

It must be considered that reason according to a double knowledge is directive of human acts, namely according to a universal science and the particular. For in conferring about things to be done reason uses a syllogism, whose conclusion is a judgement either of choice or operation. Actions however are in the singular. Wherefore the conclusion of an operative syllogism is in the singular. However a singular is not concluded from the universal unless mediated by some singular proposition: as a man is prohibited from the act of parricide by the fact that he knows ~~that he knows~~ that a father is not to be killed, and from the fact that he knows that this is his father. Therefore ignorance of either can be the cause of the act of parricide, namely ignorance of universal principle, which is a certain rule of reason, and ignorance of the singular circumstance.<sup>22</sup>

The second difficulty in forming the prudential judgment is the force of the appetite. The appetite is intrinsically concerned in the minor premise and influences the judgment concerning the relationship between the universal and the particular. The appetite may estimate this particular thing to be in harmony with our own particular well being, hence the force of the appetite may prevent us from considering the relation between the universal moral truth and the particular situation now present. St. Thomas says:

He who has science in the universal, is impeded by passion so that he is not able to understand under that universal knowledge and come to a conclusion; but he understands under another universal, which the inclination of the passion suggests and concludes under that one. Wherefore the Philosopher says in the Sixth Book of the Ethics that the syllogism of incontinence has four propositions, two universals: one of which is of reason, for example, no fornication is to be committed; another is of passion, for example, pleasure is to be sought. Passion therefore holds reason in check so that the man does not understand and conclude under the first: wherefore while it lasts, he understands and concludes under the second.<sup>23</sup>

That is why prudence is so dependent on the moral virtues, which give that rectitude of will and appetite. They dispose the appetite so that under the influence of passion, the man can still conclude under the universal of reason, which says that good is to be done.

#### The Uniqueness of Prudence

Finally we come to that which belongs to prudence and no other moral or intellectual virtue. The main texts of St.

Thomas that we use for showing this uniqueness are Question 58, Articles 4 and 5 of the First Part of the Second Part of the Summa Theologiae. This uniqueness has been aluded to above but now we treat it as a specific attribute of prudence.

Prudence is unique insofar as it stands midway between the moral virtues and the intellectual virtues, and participates in the nature of both. Moral virtues are perfections of the will. They are elective habitus, which cause a good choice. And prudence participates in such a nature because, as has been seen, it is concerned with the choice of means to man's end. Prudence is right reason<sup>5</sup> about things to be done, and therefore must consider, judge, and command concerning those things. Therefore the moral virtues demand the virtue of prudence for their existence, because without right reason moral virtues cannot judge and demand the right means to man's end.<sup>24</sup>

And looking from another point, prudence is unique because it cannot exist without the moral virtues. This we have seen more clearly above. The reason is because of the very ratio of prudence. Right reason in any activity demands principles from which to work. And since actions are of the particular, right reason in this activity needs particular principles. This is the work of the moral virtues which perfects and makes connatural to man the power to judge rightly about the end.<sup>25</sup>

So the uniqueness of prudence lies in the fact that

a man cannot possess prudence without the moral virtues and cannot be a morally upright man without being a prudent man.

#### Conclusion.

There is much yet which could be considered about this cardinal virtue. For instance its parts, which St. Thomas takes in some detail in the Second Part of the Second Part of the Summa Theologiae. To learn more about this I suggest that very tract of the Angelic Doctor. Also we haven't considered prudence here as a cardinal or hinge virtue specifically, although, from what has been said, that fact of being cardinal is implicitly contained. But we do have some basic notions of what prudence is and how it operates. It is primarily a knowledge. The prudent man is in contact with reality, as is the humble man. In fact, I think, prudence could be considered as an outgrowth or application of the knowledge of humility. For humility is recognizing things as they are; prudence would be applying that knowledge to the things to be done as a result of that knowledge. That is why the virtue of prudence is so important in attaining the end of human life. For to reach his end man must do good. That is told him by his very nature. But to do this good, he must know it. Otherwise he only does good per accidens and not habitually.

The last point to be considered here is the supernatural perfection of the virtue of prudence. The supernatural perfection of prudence is the Gift of Counsel, which is one of the

seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost. St. Thomas says:

An inferior motive principle is helped and perfected by the fact that it is moved by a superior motive principle. . . . But it is manifest that the rectitude of human reason is compared to divine reason as an inferior motive principle is to the superior: for divine reason is the supreme rule of all human rectitude. And therefore prudence, which implies a rectitude of reason, is most perfected and helped insofar as it is regulated and moved by the Holy Spirit.<sup>26</sup>

That is concise and exact, as St. Thomas seems always to be. It is not for us to improve on it, but it is now our job to understand it, and practice it.

F O O T N O T E S

<sup>1</sup>Summa Theol., I,II, q. 57, a. 5. "Prudentia est virtus maxime necessaria ad vitam humanam. Bene enim vivere consistit in bene operari. Ad hoc autem quod aliquis bene operetur, non solum requiritur quid faciat, sed etiam quomodo faciat; ut scilicet secundum electionem rectam operetur, non solum ex impetu aut passione. Cum autem electio sit eorum quae sunt ad finem, rectitudo electionis duo requirit: scilicet debitum finem; et id quod convenienter ordinatur ad debitum finem. Ad debitum autem finem homo convenienter disponitur per virtutem quae perficit partem animae appetitivam, cuius obiectum est bonum et finis. Ad id autem quod convenienter in finem debitum ordinatur, oportet quod homo directe disponatur per habitum rationis: quia consiliari et eligere, quae sunt eorum quae sunt ad finem, sunt actus rationis. Et ideo necesse est in ratione esse aliquam virtutem intellectualem, per quam perficiatur ratio ad hoc quod convenienter se habeat ad ea quae sunt ad finem. Et haec virtus est prudentia. Unde prudentia est virtus necessaria ad bene vivendum."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., II,II, q. 181,a. 2. "Id quod ordinatur ad aliud sicut ad finem, praecipue in moralibus, trahitur in speciem eius ad quod ordinatur: . . . Manifestum est autem quod cognitio prudentiae ordinatur ad operationes virtutum moralium sicut ad finem: . . . Unde et fines virtutum moralium sunt 'principia prudentiae.' . . . ita cognitio prudentiae, quae de se ordinatur ad operationes virtutum moralium, directe pertinet ad vitam activam."

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 57, a. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 49, Introduction. "Post actus et passiones, considerandum est de principiis humanorum actuum. Et primo, de principiis intrinsecis; . . . Principium autem intrinsecum est potentia et habitus."

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 49, a. 1. ". . . habitus dicitur dispositio secundum quam bene vel male disponitur dispositum, et aut secundum se aut ad aliud, . . ."

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 49, a. 3. "Unde habitus non solum importat ordinem ad ipsam naturam rei, sed etiam consequenter ad operationem, inquantum est finis naturae, vel perducens ad finem. Unde et in V Metaphys. dicitur in definitione habitus, quod est 'dispositio secundum quam bene vel male disponitur dispositum aut secundum se,' idest secundum suam naturam, 'aut ad aliud,' idest in ordine ad finem."

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 71, a. 3. "Habitus medio modo se

habet inter potentiam et actum."

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 55, a. 1. "Virtus nominat quandam potentiae perfectionem. Uniuscuiusque autem perfectio praecipue consideratur in ordine ad suum finem. Finis autem potentia dicitur esse perfecta, secundum quod determinatur ad suum actum. . . . Potentiae autem rationales, quae sunt propriae hominis, non sunt determinatae ad unum, sed se habent indeterminate ad multa: determinantur autem ad actus per habitus."

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 55, a. 2.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 55, a. 4. "Virtus est bona qualitas mentis, qua recte vivitur, qua nullus male utitur, quam Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur."

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 56, a. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 56, a. 3. "Dupliciter autem habitus aliquis ordinatur ad bonum actum. Uno modo, in quantum per huiusmodi habitum acquiritur homini facultas ad bonum actum: . . . Alio modo, aliquis habitus non solum facit facultatem agendi, sed etiam, facit quod aliquis recte facultate utatur:"

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 56, a. 3. "Subiectum igitur habitus qui secundum quid dicitur virtus, potest esse intellectus speculativus, absque omni ordine ad voluntatem: sic enim Philosophus, in VI Ethic., scientiam, sapientiam et intellectum, et etiam artem, ponit esse intellectuales virtutes. -- Subiectum vero habitus qui simpliciter dicitur virtus, non potest esse nisi voluntas; vel aliqua potentia secundum quod est mota a voluntate. Cuius ratio est, quia voluntas movet omnes alias potentias quae aequaliter sunt rationales, ad suos actus, ut supra habitum est (I-II, 9, 1): et ideo quod homo actu bene agat, contingit ex hoc quod homo habet bonam voluntatem. Unde virtus quae facit bene agere in actu, non solum in facultate, oportet quod vel sit in ipsa voluntate; vel in aliqua potentia secundum quod est a voluntate mota.

Contingit autem intellectum a voluntate moveri, sicut et alias potentias: considerat enim aliquis aliquid actu, eo quod vult. Et ideo intellectus, secundum quod habet ordinem ad voluntatem, potest esse subiectum virtutis simpliciter dictae. Et hoc modo intellectus speculativus, vel ratio, est subiectum fidei: movetur enim intellectus ad assentiendum his quae sunt fidei, ex imperio voluntatis; 'nullus enim credit nisi volens.' -- Intellectus vero practicus est subiectum prudentiae. Cum enim prudentia sit recta ratio agibilium, requiritur ad prudentiam quod homo se bene habeat ad principia huius rationis agendorum, quae sunt fines; ad quos bene se habet homo

per rectitudinem voluntatis, sicut ad principia speculabilium per naturale lumen intellectus agentis. Et ideo sicut subiectum scientiae, quae est ratio recta speculabilium, est intellectus speculativus in ordine ad intellectum agentem; ita subiectum prudentiae est intellectus practicus in ordine ad voluntatem rectam."

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., I, q. 79, a. 11. ". . . id quod accidentaliter se habet ad obiecti rationem quam respicit aliqua potentia, non diversificat potentiam: . . . Accidit autem alicui apprehenso per intellectum, quod ordinetur ad opus, vel non ordinetur."

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., II, II, q. 47, a. 4. ". . . 'virtus est quae bonum facit habentem et opus eius bonum reddit.'"

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., II, II, q. 47, a. 4. "Bonum autem potest dici dupliciter: uno modo, materialiter, pro eo quod est bonum; alio modo, formaliter, secundum rationem boni. Bonum autem, inquantum huiusmodi, est obiectum appetitivae virtutis. Et ideo si qui habitus sunt qui faciant rectam considerationem rationis non habito respectu ad rectitudinem appetitus, minus habent de ratione virtutis, . . ."

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., II, II, q. 47, a. 4. "Ad prudentiam autem pertinet, sicut dictum est, applicatio rectae rationis ad opus, quod non fit sine appetitu recto."

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., II, II, q. 47, a. 4. "Et ideo prudentia non solum habet rationem virtutis quam habent aliae virtutes intellectuales; sed etiam habet rationem virtutis quam habent virtutes morales, quibus etiam connumeratur."

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., II, II, q. 47, a. 3. "Ad prudentiam pertinet non solum consideratio rationis, sed etiam applicatio ad opus, quae est finis practicae rationis. Nullus autem potest convenienter aliquid alteri applicare nisi utrumque cognoscat, scilicet et id quod applicandum est et id cui applicandum est. Operationes autem sunt in singularibus. Et ideo necesse est quod prudens et cognoscat universalialia principia rationis, et cognoscat singularia, circa quae sunt operationes."

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 58, a. 5. "Contingit enim quandoque quod huius modi universale principium cognitum per intellectum vel scientiam, corrumpitur in particulari per aliquam passionem: sicut concupiscenti, quando concupiscentia vincit, videtur hoc esse bonum quod concupiscit, licet sit contra universale iudicium rationis."

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 58, a. 5.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 76, a. 1. "Considerandum est autem ratio secundum duplicem scientiam est humanorum actuum directiva: scilicet secundum scientiam universalem, et particularem. Conferens enim de agendis, utitur quodam syllogismo, cuius conclusio est iudicium seu electio vel operatio. Actiones autem in singularibus sunt. Unde conclusio syllogismi operativi est singularis. Singularis autem propositio non concluditur ex universali nisi mediante aliqua propositione singulari: sicut homo prohibetur ab actu parricidii per hoc quod scit patrem non esse occidendum, et per hoc quod scit hunc esse patrem. Utriusque ergo ignorantia potest causare parricidii actum: scilicet et universalis principii, quod est quaedam regula rationis; et singularis circumstantiae."

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 77 a. 2, ad. 4. "Ille qui habet scientiam in universali, propter passionem impeditur ne possit sub illa universali sumere, et ad conclusionem pervenire: sed assumit sub alia universali, quam suggerit inclinatio passionis, et sub ea concludit. Unde Philosophus dicit, in VII Ethic., quod syllogismus incontinentis habet quatuor propositiones, duas universales: quarum una est rationis, puta 'nullam fornicationem esse committendam;' alia est passionis, puta 'delectationem esse sectandam.' Passio igitur ligat rationem ne assumat et concludat sub prima: unde, ea durante, assumit et concludit sub secunda."

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 58, a. 4.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., I, II, q. 58, a. 5.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., II, II, q. 52, a. 2. "Principium motivum inferius praecipue adiuvatur et perficitur per hoc quod movetur a superiori motivo principio: sicut corpus in hoc quod movetur a spiritu. Manifestum est autem quod rectitudo rationis humanae comparatur ad rationem divinam sicut principium motivum inferius ad superius: ratio enim aeterna est suprema regula omnis humanae rectitudinis. Et ideo prudentia, quae importat rectitudinem rationis, maxime perficitur et iuvatur secundum quod regulatur et movetur a Spiritu Sancto."

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