

possible. Philosophy is not characterized primarily by the understanding it attains, but by the principle which moves it and by which it exists, and through whose intellectual activity it unfolds and consists. Philosophy as understanding is simply the content of the intellectual life, of a *βίος θεωρητικός*, of an effort to understand the ultimate in things. The Socratic *ἦθος* led to the *βίος* of the intelligence. And in the intelligence took place the acquisition of truth and the realization of the good. This was the achievement of Socrates. Once the intelligence was set on its course and established on the firm basis of the things within its reach, it again encountered the great themes of traditional wisdom. Only then did speculation take on an effective meaning for man; it did not succeed in so doing when it sought to follow the opposite path. At the same time, Plato and Aristotle gave us, along with this, our first major lesson in the History of Philosophy, a truly Socratic lesson. The History of Philosophy is neither culture nor philosophical erudition. To meet all other philosophers on philosophy's own grounds—that is the History of Philosophy.

*Madrid, Spain.*

XAVIER ZUBIRI

## THE SOCIAL CHARACTER OF HEAVENLY BEATITUDE

ACCORDING TO THE THOUGHT OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

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THOMAS AQUINAS has been rightly appraised as one of the most socially-minded Fathers of the Middle Ages. His synthesis of medieval life interprets, comprehensively, the manifold group relations that human beings normally sustain to each other. Thus, his social interests range widely over the field of family life, the state, war and peace, property and trade, and, indeed, the major areas of human association. Throughout, he stresses the unity of life, the theoretical bases and practical expressions of human solidarity, the indispensably social character of human living.<sup>1</sup> And of his contributions in these areas scholars have written extensively.<sup>2</sup>

But when Thomas concerns himself with humanity, he considers the whole man, not some partial aspect of his life. Thus, his anthropology views man not only in his natural environment but more significantly in relation to his supernatural destiny.<sup>3</sup> Man's final happiness, or beatitude, he thinks of as

<sup>1</sup> Typical references are: *Summa Theologiae* (*S. Theol.*), I q. 96 a. 4; Ia IIae q. 81 a. 1, q. 90 a. 2, q. 105 a. 2; IIa IIae q. 40 a. 2, q. 58 a. 5, q. 109 a. 3, q. 114 a. 2, q. 129 a. 6. The edition here utilized, through IIa IIae, is that of the Ottawa Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Ottawa, Canada, 1941-42. See also the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (*Con. Gent.*), III, 117, 151, 128, 85, 129; *In octo Libros Politicorum Aristotelis Expositio*, Lib. I, entire. Part III of the *S. Theol.*, and all other works of Thomas cited or quoted in this article are according to the *Opera Omnia* (*Op.*), edited by S. E. Fretté and P. Maré, Paris, 1871-1880.

<sup>2</sup> Representative of the better studies are: Otto Schilling, *Die Staats- und Soziallehre des hl. Thomas von Aquin* (2nd ed., Munich, 1930); Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, Transl. by Olive Wyon (New York, 1931), I, 257-328; Theodor Steinbüchel, "Der Zweckgedanke in der Philosophie des Thomas von Aquino," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters*, XI. 1 (1913), 102-111; Fr. Mathier Robert, "La Doctrine Sociale de S. Thomas et sa Réalisation dans les Faits," *Revue Thomiste*, XX (1912), 49-65.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Étienne Gilson, *Le Thomisme: Introduction au Système de Saint Thomas d'Aquin* (3rd ed., Paris, 1927), pp. 297-98.

being realized in this ultimate sphere. His final citizenship is to be that of the heavenly Fatherland, the *patria*. Human solidarity is to reach its final development and re-investment in the company of the Trinity and the angels. Thomas never tires of repeating the assertion that God is not only man's creator but also his supreme end. Moreover, as the *summum bonum* He is the *common* end toward which all men are directed.<sup>4</sup> By every law of rational deduction, those who find eternal beatitude in the company of God, their common end, might be thought of as attaining the full and lasting fruition of their own mutuality. This is in accord with early Christian authors. They clearly teach that such sociality as man knows here is sprung from the heavenly community which engenders him and to which he will return. Augustine, whom Thomas so clearly admires, advances this position with eloquent power.<sup>5</sup>

If, then, Thomas treats in such admirable fashion the fraternal association which is so eagerly sought in this life, what may he not be expected to portray of the social joys reserved for the inhabitants of the heavenly country?

Of Thomas' teachings on this important point, however, there has been relatively little satisfactory interpretation.<sup>6</sup> Among those who have interested themselves in his conception of the heavenly community are some who have emerged with professedly negative and somewhat startling results. Thus, one

<sup>4</sup> *Con. Gent.*, III, 17: "Praeterea, Bonum particulare ordinatur in bonum commune, sicut in finem; esse enim partis est propter esse totius; unde et bonum gentis est divinius quam bonum unius hominis. Bonum autem summum, quod est Deus, est bonum commune, quum ex eo universorum dependeat; bonum autem quo quaelibet res bona est, est bonum particulare ipsius et aliorum quae ab ipsa dependent. Omnes igitur res ordinantur sicut in finem in unum bonum, quod est Deus." See the whole "Treatise On The Last End," *S. Theol.*, Ia Hae qq. 1-5, and, especially, q. 1 a. 8, q. 2 a. 8 ad 2, q. 3 a. 5 ad 3.

<sup>5</sup> See, among others, *De Civitate Dei*, XII, 22, V, 17, XIV, 28, XIX, 13, XXII, 30; *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, CXLIX, 3, 5; *De Cantico Novo et de Reditu ad Coelestem Patriam ac Viae Periculis—Sermo ad Catechumenos*, cap. 10; *De Genesi ad Litteram*, XI, 15.

<sup>6</sup> The following emphasize the supernatural consummation and imply, though they do not discuss, its social character: Steinbüchel, *op. cit.*, XI, 111-121; Oskar Renz, "Die Synteresis nach dem hl. Thomas von Aquin," *Beiträge*, X, 1-2 (1912), espec. 214-30.

scholar, Dr. Flew, after assessing Thomas' conception of the heavenly perfection concludes with apparent perplexity in this fashion:

Can we say that the social bliss of the redeemed in heaven is dwelt upon and emphasized as though it were congenial to the mind of our Angelic Doctor? It must be regretfully admitted that he seems to contemplate a *solus cum solo* beatitude.<sup>7</sup>

He then quotes the following excerpts from the *Summa Theologica*:

"If we speak of the happiness of this life, a happy man needs friends . . . that he may do good to them; that he may delight in seeing them do good; and again that he may be helped by them in his good work. . . .

"But if we speak of perfect happiness which will be in our heavenly Fatherland, the fellowship of friends is not essential to happiness; since man has the entire fullness of his perfection in God. But the fellowship of friends conduces to the well-being of happiness. . . .

"Perfection of charity is essential to happiness, as to the love of God, but not as to the love of our neighbour. Wherefore if there were but one soul enjoying God, it would be happy, though having no neighbour to love."<sup>8</sup>

This writer goes on to say that so far as he can discover "there is no passage in the *Summa Theologica* which neutralizes the anti-social affirmation of this article." He does quote some passages which, as he says, "imply another and a more Christian doctrine" of heaven.<sup>9</sup> They would, he thinks, "allow for the perpetuation of human friendship and a real *communio sanctorum*." And then he closes with this discouraging comment:

<sup>7</sup> R. Newton Flew, *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology* (Oxford, 1934), chapter XII, espec., pp. 241-243. See, also, Baron Friedrich von Hügel, *Eternal Life* (Edinburgh, 1913), whose discussion of contrasting "Non-Social and Social Currents in Aquinas," p. 106-109, is utilized by Dr. Flew. The Baron documents to Thomas' own writings a *solus cum solo* current together with a more deeply Christian, social tendency.

<sup>8</sup> The excerpts are from Ia Hae q. 4 a. 8 (Flew, *op. cit.*, pp. 242-43).

<sup>9</sup> He cites *Con. Gent.*, III, 21; *S. Theol.*, I q. 19 a. 2, q. 20 a. 1 and 2.

But the consequences of this more Christian idea seem not to have been realized by St. Thomas. We have a curious result. The ideal which he sketches as realizable in the present life is, in this one respect at least, superior to the fuller beatitude in the life beyond.<sup>10</sup>

Taken by itself, Thomas' *Summa* article does seem a devastating pronouncement. But it is only fair to observe that this is more a matter of Thomas' stressing the all-sufficiency of God, than it is a case of his derogating human sociality in heaven. He wishes it made quite clear that man needs no one in addition to God to make him happy. No other conclusion can possibly be satisfactory to Thomas from his premise that God is the *summum bonum*, the last end, and happiness itself by his very essence.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, as if aware of the possibility that unfortunate inferences may be drawn, Thomas hastens to add that, though not necessary to the heavenly beatitude, the "fellowship of friends conduces to the well-being of Happiness."<sup>12</sup> Perhaps in these very words, which Dr. Flew quotes but does not comment upon, Thomas actually begins to neutralize his preceding "anti-social affirmation."

What follows immediately, though Dr. Flew strangely omits it, is even more significant:

Hence Augustine says (*Gen. ad lit. viii.*) that "the spiritual creatures receive no other interior aid to happiness than the eternity, truth, and charity of the Creator. But if they can be said to be helped from without, perhaps it is only by this that they see one another and rejoice in God, at their fellowship."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Flew, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

<sup>11</sup> *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 1 a. 8, Resp.: ". . . Deus est ultimus finis hominis et omnium aliarum rerum." Q. 3 a. 1, Resp.: "Ultimus autem finis vocatur beatitudo." A. 1 ad 1: ". . . Deus est beatitudo per essentiam suam. . . ." A. 8, Resp.: "Et sic perfectionem suam habebit per unionem ad Deum sicut ad obiectum, in quo solo beatitudo hominis consistit. . . ." Cf. q. 2 a. 8; *Con. Gent.*, III, 17.

<sup>12</sup> "Sed ad bene esse beatitudinis facit societas amicorum." *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 4 a. 8, Resp.

<sup>13</sup> The translation is that of the Dominican Fathers. The Latin text reads:

Thomas is here agreeing with Augustine that if anything supplements the saints' happiness in God it is their joy in God-given, human fellowship. Furthermore, Dr. Flew's final quotation breaks off at an unfortunate juncture: "Wherefore if there were but one soul enjoying God, it would be happy, though having no neighbour to love." The lines immediately following proceed once more to guard against anti-social conclusions: "But supposing one neighbour to be there, love of him results from perfect love of God. Consequently, friendship is, as it were, concomitant with perfect Happiness."<sup>14</sup> The implication seems plain: according to logical premises, men will not require friends for heavenly beatitude; but friendship will harmonize with the perfect happiness that is to be. Thomas not only supposes the logical possibility, but focuses the natural expectation, that beatitude in the *patria* will be a social experience. May one not invoke here the stirring reminder offered by Dr. Gilson: namely, that for Thomas there is a continuity between man's natural and supernatural life, between his terrestrial and celestial happiness; that the heavenly is not the rejection but the sublimation, transformation and fulfillment of the earthly?<sup>15</sup> May not Thomas be suggesting here, and perhaps saying boldly elsewhere, that human friendship, far

"Unde Augustinus dicit, VIII *Super Genesim ad Litt.* [cap. 25 (PL XXXIV, 391)], quod 'creatura spiritualis, ad hoc quod sit beata, non nisi intrinsecus adiuatur aeternitate, veritate, caritate Creatoris. Extrinsecus vero, si adiuvari dicenda est, fortasse hoc solo adiuatur, quod se invicem vident, et de sua societate gaudent.'" *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 4 a. 8, Resp.

<sup>14</sup> "Sed supposito proximo, sequitur dilectio eius ex perfecta dilectione Dei. Unde quasi concomitanter se habet amicitia ad perfectam beatitudinem." *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 4 a. 8, ad 3. Following his reassuring interpretation of these lines, as admitting the full possibility of a heavenly society of friends, Canon Lyons closes his synopsis regarding question 4 article 8 with a characteristic prayer: "Mon Dieu! je crois que dans la gloire vous tenez lieu de tout et que l'âme sera bienheureuse en vous voyant. Mais puisque vous daignez permettre à vos élus de jouir encore de la société de leurs parents et de leurs amis, faites, Seigneur, que j'aie le bonheur de vous posséder un jour, et de retrouver en vous tous ceux que j'aime." *La Somme de Saint Thomas d'Aquin: Résumée en Tableaux Synoptiques* (Nice, 1901), p. 174.

<sup>15</sup> Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

from being lost or discarded in heaven, will be continued and fulfilled in keeping with man's all-sufficient happiness in God?<sup>16</sup>

Immediately there come to mind choice passages from works in the *Opera* that seem to carry a convincingly affirmative answer. Among these are such *Opuscula* as *De Beatitudine; De Praeambulis ad Iudicium, et de Ipso Iudicio; De Dilectione Dei et Proximi*; together with the *Expositio I (et II) In Apocalypsim*.<sup>17</sup> The *Expositio*, especially, as befits a work involving the heavenly Jerusalem, provides a thrilling appreciation of the consummate, heavenly society. But these and some others like them suffer from one acutely embarrassing fact: they are, with varying degrees of conclusive evidence, frequently rejected as non-genuine works—at least in their present form. Are we then reduced to the necessity of adopting a conclusion based on the controverted *Summa* passage and the indifferently useful references of Dr. Flew? The answer is, emphatically, no! A reasonably clear picture of Thomas' attitude is available from uncontestedly genuine sources.

From the generally accepted portion of the *In Psalmos Davidis Expositio*, a brief but striking unit of evidence is available.<sup>18</sup> Placed by the side of the *Summa* article, this running commentary on Psalm 5: 12-13 becomes not so much a con-

<sup>16</sup> Dr. Gilson replies thus (p. 298): "Peut-être cependant ne nous est-il pas interdit de croire que la joie du ciel n'est pas une joie solitaire et que la béatitude céleste, accomplie par la vision qu'ont les bienheureux de leur joie réciproque, s'embellit encore d'une éternelle amitié." And Dr. Farrell boldly says, "Friends, of course, there must be, in the same way that we must have our bodies. They are our other selves; something of ourselves would be missing without them. And this is true, even though the principal end of friendship—the opportunity to help, to sacrifice, to give to others—will no longer exist; that subtler, infinitely precious joy in the beauty, the triumph, the happiness of friends will give a splendidly human air to the courts of heaven." *A Companion to the Summa* (London, 1938), II, 18.

<sup>17</sup> The first three are found in the *Opera*, XVIII, 404-25; 629-53; 324-94. The *Expositio* is in Vols. XXXI-XXXII. All of these are specifically listed as non-genuine, or omitted from the list of genuine works, by P. Mandonnet, et J. Destrez, *Bibliographie Thomiste* (Le Saulchoir, Kain, 1921), and by Martin Grabmann, "Die echten Schriften des hl. Thomas von Aquin," *Beiträge*, XXII, 1-2 (1930), 241-361.

<sup>18</sup> *Op.*, XVIII, 251-252. On the genuineness of this commentary to Ps. 54, see Grabmann, *op. cit.*, XXII, 243-44; Mandonnet, *op. cit.*, xiv.

tradition of the *Summa* position as a clarification of it. Thomas is commenting on the familiar lines:

But let all them be glad that hope in thee: they shall rejoice for ever, and thou shalt dwell in them. And all they that love thy name shall glory in thee: For thou wilt bless the just.<sup>19</sup>

He declares that those who hope in God have every right to be glad (Ps. 67: 4). For their rejoicing will be forevermore. The joy of the saints in the *patria* will be eternal. Their exuberance is not excessive but quite proper, for their God is to dwell with them. Why should they not glory in such eternal security, such ultimate tabernacling of God with men? Men glory only when they have a thing most excellently. But the saints shall have their God thus, with the fullness of all good, unto the fulfillment of Christ's own joy in them (John 15: 11).

Had Thomas stopped at this point, his readers might well have inferred from his words a belief in the heavenly association of men not only with their God but with each other. After all, it is difficult to see how saved men could rejoice in the same God, simultaneously, with that God dwelling in their common midst, and still not sustain to each other the most fraternal mutuality. But Thomas does not leave the matter to inference. He states flatly that such fullness of all good and all joy involves the society not only of God and man but also of men with each other: "For man by himself is not able to rejoice well in anything unless he has friends as participants with him in that good: and so he says 'All [they that love Thy name].'" And this full rejoicing such as is to be found when the whole heavenly group dwells together in God—the perfect good which is common to them all—is a society of rejoicing friends; all loving his name.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The translation of this and of subsequent Biblical passages is that of the Douay-Rheims version. The Vulgate numbering is 5: 11-12. According to Thomas' commentary this becomes division no. 8.

<sup>20</sup> The text is as follows: "Tertio ex societate: quia solus homo non potest bene gaudere de aliquo, sed quando amicos habet secum participes illius boni: et ideo dicit, *Omnes* Ps. LXXXVI, 7: *Sicut laetantium omnium habitatio est in te.*" "Omnes," refers to Ps. 5: 11—"Et laetentur omnes. . . . Et gloriabuntur in te

The emphasis placed here upon life in *patria* as a company of those mutualized by their love of God is amply sustained elsewhere in Thomas' writings. He thinks of man as being called by God himself to the society of his Son. That fellowship consists of a certain familiar conversation with Deity; it "is begun here, in this life, by grace, but will be perfected in the future life, by glory. . . ." <sup>21</sup> In the Fatherland, that real but imperfect communication that exists now between men, God, and angels, with regard to the life of the mind, will be brought to its fullest expression. <sup>22</sup>

Once more one receives the distinct impression that Thomas is thinking of a consolidation not only of humankind but also of men with the celestial company. He is describing a continuity of experience that will know its full socialization in the final beatitude. As each individual arrives at the end for which he was ordained, he will find himself associated with others who, likewise, attain their final goal of life in God. In joining himself with divinity, the *anima fidelis* becomes the truly happy neighbor of every other such man—and of the angels, too. And where God, Christ, the angels, and redeemed men are—there is the *patria*, there is truest society. <sup>23</sup>

Thomas has been fond of depicting Christ's followers on earth as a close-knit, spiritual *corpus*. He is in no sense suggesting the idea that once they have ended their pilgrimage they will be any less a cohesive unity. His contention is the very opposite. In the celestial Fatherland, those who were once the congregation of faithful humanity will become the

omnes. . . ." The fullness of joy that the saints have together in God is merely illustrated further by Ps. 86 (87): 7: "The dwelling in thee is as it were of all rejoicing." The context leaves no doubt but that Thomas here speaks of the eternal joy: "Laetitia namque sanctorum in patria est sempiterna: et ideo dicit, *In Aeternum: et secunda; unde addit, Et habitabis in eis. . . .*" (*Op.*, XVIII, 252, 251).

<sup>21</sup> *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 65 a. 5, Resp.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, IIa IIae q. 23 a. 1, ad 1.

<sup>23</sup> *S. Theol.*, III q. 8 a. 4, Resp.: "Manifestum est autem, quod ad unum finem, qui est gloria divinae fruitionis, ordinantur et homines et angeli." Cf. I q. 108 a. 8.

congregation of those comprehending their final objective. Each of them, like Christ their head, was once a wayfarer on earth. Now each will be a comprehensor of the goal toward which he once made pilgrimage. What was once a congregation subject to the frustrations of time and circumstance is destined to be a celestial society, eternally triumphant. What was then collective in its potentiality will, at last, become a full-fledged society in its fruition—a society with the Father and the Son. <sup>24</sup> And this conjunction of man with God will result in perfect, face to face vision. <sup>25</sup> Angels and saved men, who are ordained to the same end, constitute one mystical body which will then be truly consummated with Christ their common head, in God their realized, common end. <sup>26</sup>

Throughout his anticipation of the heavenly beatitude, Thomas is at pains to show that the saints will experience a community of life never even imagined on the temporal scene. Into the terms most suggestive of earthly solidarity he pours the thrilling prospect of heavenly fulfillment. Thus, the associative connotations implied by such terms as society, congregation, corpus, and Fatherland are expanded into meanings befitting their celestial realizations. <sup>27</sup> It is almost as if Thomas were saying to his brethren: "The associations which you so fondly cherish here are but feeble anticipations of the beloved community which the blessed shall have, together, in the company of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

But for Thomas, such mutuality among the blessed will con-

<sup>24</sup> ". . . Ecclesia, secundum statum viae, est congregatio fidelium; sed, secundum statum patriae, est congregatio comprehendentium. Christus autem non solum fuit viator, sed etiam comprehensor. Et ideo non solum fidelium, sed etiam comprehendentium est caput, utpote plenissime habens gratiam et gloriam." *S. Theol.*, III q. 8 a. 4, ad 2.

<sup>25</sup> *In Symbolum Apostolorum (In Symb. Apost.)* cap. 15: "Consistit autem haec conjunctio in perfecta visione: I Corinth. XIII, 12: *Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate tunc autem facie ad faciem.*" (*Op.*, XXVII, 227-28). Cf. *Con. Gent.*, III, 51.

<sup>26</sup> *S. Theol.*, III q. 8 a. 4.

<sup>27</sup> For the highly social coloring that Thomas imparts to such terms as *societas*, *congregatio*, *corpus*, *conjunctio*, *patria*, *communio*, *conversatio*, *participatio*, etc., see Ludwig Schütz, *Thomas-Lexicon* (2nd ed., Paderborn, 1895).

stitute participation in the very Kingdom of God and its glory. It is for a part in that royal society that man seeks when he prays: "Thy Kingdom. Come." And for such participation he is willing to surrender himself, wholly.<sup>28</sup>

For God alone has the right of dominion; man's function is that of submission to his sovereignty. Such submission will be complete and final only when all enemies are put under his feet. Then the saints who have long prayed for the coming of his reign will give themselves in full subjection to him. Then participation in his reign will be full, where death is ended and life, everlasting. There the erstwhile body of the saint's humility will be refashioned into conformity with the body of his brightness. Such, truly, is the glory of paradise. This is the regimen of a king whose will is perfectly done by all, together. And to his will, that man be saved, nothing shall be opposed.

In this Kingdom righteousness will prevail. On earth, the evil and the good are co-mingled, but here, no evil and no sinner will ever be. The constituency of the *patria* will be made up solely of God's own people; and they will be righteous, every one. They will exemplify the corporateness of those having voluntarily placed themselves under the divine authority.<sup>29</sup>

But Thomas now delineates a further characteristic of the glorified community. Here, for the first time, the righteous shall know perfect liberty. Wholly delivered from earthly corruption, they will be loosed from all servitude and made truly free (Rom. 8: 21). In their release from all that has perverted and enslaved the children of God until now, they will become veritable rulers with God. Thomas strikingly depicts them as being not only free men but royalty as well (Apoc. 5: 10). For, at last, they shall have conformed their wills to God's; so that what is his will is theirs, and theirs, his. And, ruling with a will

<sup>28</sup> *Expositio Orationis Dominicae (Orat. Dom.)*, Petitiō ii (*Op.*, XXVII, 188): "Cum ergo petimus: *Adveniat regnum tuum*, oramus ut simus participes regni coelestis et gloriae paradisi." As regards man's participation in eternal life and glory see, also, *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 5 a. 4; *Con. Gent.*, III, 61, 63.

<sup>29</sup> *Orat. Dom.*, Pet. ii (*Op.*, XXVII, 188); Cf. *Compendium Theologiae ad Fratrem Reginaldum (Comp. Theol.)*, Pars Sec., cap. 9 (*Op.*, XXVII, 126).

which they have made their own, he invites them to reign with him, who is the crown of them all.<sup>30</sup>

Thus in subordinating themselves to his reign, they share in his kingdom. The kingdom for whose coming they once prayed is now also theirs. The age-old desire to rule—whether of the laity to be kings or of the clergy to be bishops—is at last to be realized by the sons of God (Apoc. 5: 10, Wisd. 5: 5).<sup>31</sup> And this perfect coordination of wills, where all shall be ruled by God and all shall be reigning with him, spells solidarity supreme. Such is the glorification that awaits the most excellent possession of the divine kingdom. Together with all their co-citizens in the heavenly city, the blessed shall walk in the supernal beauty and light which is theirs by participation in the plentitude of the divine life. This reign of God in the saints, and of the saints with God, is the Kingdom of Heaven, indeed (Matt. 3: 2).<sup>32</sup>

What more, then, can Thomas say of the regal glories of the heavenly community? With what further elaboration of cosmic solidarity can the *patria* be envisaged? Thomas has a ready answer. The final beatitude is to consist of individual sharing in the society of God's perfect good. For this, too, the saints have long been in preparation during their earthly sojourn. It is natural for each to seek his own good—that by which he is perfected. But that this is no mere solicitation of bodily goods or ends must soon be apparent to every rational being. That which he strives for—that by which he is led—is an ultimate good, an ultimate perfection. True felicity or beatitude cannot consist in corporal good, for the body is to the soul what matter is to form. Thus, just as matter finds its end in form, so the body of man is ordained to the soul as its end.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> *Orat. Dom.*, Pet. ii (*Op.*, XXVII, 188); Cf. *Con. Gent.*, III, 63.

<sup>31</sup> *In Symb. Apost.*, cap. 15 (*Op.*, XXVII, 228).

<sup>32</sup> "Dicitur enim hoc regnum quo Deus regnat in sanctis et sancti cum Deo, regnum coelorum. . . ." *Comp. Theol.*, Pars Sec., cap. 9 (*Op.*, XXVII, 124).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, cap. 9; Cf. *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 2 a. 5; *Con. Gent.*, III, 32. Of course Thomas believes that there will be glorified, spiritual bodies in heaven. His treatment of the impassability, subtlety, agility, and clarity of the bodies of the blessed according to *Scriptum super Libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi (Lib. Sent.)*, Lib. IV, Dist. 44, q. 2 (*Op.*, XI, 311-336), is reconstructed by Reginald of

Thomas reiterates his assertion that neither in riches, nor honors, nor in health, nor in beauty, nor in any such thing, does the ultimate felicity of man consist. It is amply clear that corporal goods cannot suffice him. Beyond the circumscriptions of time, the mutability and corruptibility of corporal things, lies perpetual stability—the ultimate felicity of his desire. Transcending the realm of sense, and surpassing the desires and goods of one and all, is the truly ultimate good. This universal good, apprehensible by the intellect, is God, who, by his very essence, is good and the veritable principle of goodness. Hence man's ultimate perfection and his final good consist in his intimate cleaving to God.<sup>34</sup>

This human association of good, initiated on earth with imperfect realization, is fulfilled in heaven with perfect good. Angels and men constitute not two hierarchies, or societies, but one; because, as Augustine said, the beatitude of all consists in adhering to God alone.<sup>35</sup> God, the supreme, common good, is the whole to which the parts are directed: "Therefore all things are directed to one good, God to wit, as their end."<sup>36</sup> Naturally, the common is to be preferred to the private good, and that of the parts is ordained to the welfare of the whole. So, in the eternal community, as in the associations of earth, each man is as a part; but the common good of the whole is God himself, in whom the final beatitude of all consists.<sup>37</sup>

Piperno in *S. Theol.*, III, Supplementum, qq. 82-89. See, likewise, *Con. Gent.*, IV, 81, 86, 88, etc. Consult Dr. Farrell, *op. cit.*, IV, 428-33, on the spiritualization of bodies after the resurrection. Cf. Dr. Flew, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

<sup>34</sup> *Comp. Theol.*, Pars. Sec., cap. 9 (*Op.*, XXVII, 123): "... quia si in hoc quod mens humana Deo inhaereat, ejus beatitudo consistat, consequens est ut perfecta beatitudo perfectam inhaesionem ad Deum requirat."

<sup>35</sup> *S. Theol.*, I q. 108 a. 8. Thomas here insists with Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, XII, 9, that: "non erunt duae societates hominum et angelorum, sed una; quia omnium beatitudo est adhaerere uni Deo." Such adherence becomes possible to men through the created intellect which is raised by a supernatural light to the vision of God in his essence. Consult *Con. Gent.*, III, 25, 51, 57-63. In *Lib. Sent.*, Lib. II, Dist. 9, q. 1 a. 8 (*Op.*, VIII, 131 f.) Thomas declares: "... unde in patria non erit alia hierarchia hominum et angelorum, sed una et eadem, et homines in ordines angelorum distribuentur." Cf., *De cael. hier.*, I, 3, and *De eccles. hier.*, V, 2.

<sup>36</sup> *Con. Gent.*, III, 17; *S. Theol.*, IIa IIae q. 184 a. 2.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. *De Perfectione Vitae Spiritualis (De Perf. Vit. Spin.)*, cap. 13 (*Op.*, XXIX, 133), and *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 2 a. 8.

Seeing God thus, and sharing with each other in his life, the company of heaven will have a sufficiency of all good. Here, then, can be no defects. In this opulent city of the everlasting God all things will be perfect with the fruition of divine eternity. God is perfect good; the angels are by nature incorruptible; and men, once corruptible, will now have put on incorruption (I Cor. 15: 53). With bodies glorified, and with intellects made ready by supernatural light to receive the heavenly vision, the saints will be deficient in nothing.<sup>38</sup>

Nor will any lack exist by virtue of man's proud will. For the more that God, the essence of goodness, is seen and his presence enjoyed, the more he will be loved and the consummation of his plans desired. Having made God's will their own, the saints will abide in his fullness. Once within the fold of his protection, no one can be torn from his hand by evil forces without or sin within. For into this haven neither the devil nor wicked men shall enter; and within, no sin shall be. Evil, which is in direct opposition to good, will be excluded. As Paul realized, there can be no participation of justice with iniquity, no fellowship of light with darkness (II Cor. 6: 14).

This repletion of good insures immunity from evil. Here is the guarantee of full quiet and security. Here peace will prevail. In this mortal life, the more responsibilities one has, the more one lacks and fears. But in life eternal there will be no sorrow, no labor, and no fear. With the passing of evil will go the fear, of which it was the cause.<sup>39</sup>

In this fullness of all good, the restlessness of desire will lose itself; for the just will no longer seek a better good. Their status in this society beyond will not be one to be amended or perfected; it will be one of final perfection. All of their desires will be perfectly fulfilled. Each of the blessed will know a satiety beyond all his hopes.<sup>40</sup> None in this life is able to satisfy his desires—nor is any other creature able to still this human craving. God alone, who has made man for himself and without whom man's heart is restless, is able to satisfy it.

<sup>38</sup> See notes 33 and 35 of this article.

<sup>39</sup> For the matter of the foregoing paragraphs see the conclusion of cap. 9, Pars Sec., *Comp. Theol.* (*Op.*, XXVII, 126). Cf. *Con. Gent.*, III, 63.

But the saints in the *patria* will have God perfectly, and with him, therefore, the satisfaction of their every longing—and more. Whatever is truly delectable will be here in superabundance. Perhaps one has desired honors. Here will be all honor. If it is knowledge of the truth that is desired, here it will be in perfection. All truth, and whatsoever we shall wish, we shall know; and whatever we shall wish to have we shall have in life eternal.<sup>41</sup>

Inner turmoil and outer molestation having ceased, concord and utter tranquillity will reign. This will be the perfect, heavenly peace of which Isaiah spoke (32: 18). It is in such full contentment that those will rest who know the affluence of all good. And the perfection of this final good will endure forever.<sup>42</sup>

All of this felicity, and other things ineffable, the saints shall know. Obviously, too, each will love the other as himself. Here he will rejoice in the other's good as in his own. Mansions, or degrees, of happiness there will be in accordance with the individual's capacity to enjoy God.<sup>43</sup> But what comes to one is his full part, appropriate to him, of that which comes to all. God, who is their common end and good, makes joyously social the life of them all.

For when a man seeks his individual, final good, he seeks a boon as common as it is final to all others of the blessed. The

<sup>40</sup> *In Symb. Apost.*, cap. 15: “. . . plena et perfecta satiety desiderii.” On this satiety as involving “complete satisfaction, . . . not dozing incapacity for further activity,” see Farrell, *op. cit.*, IV, 443.

<sup>41</sup> *In Symb. Apost.*, cap. 15 (*Op.*, XXVII, 228); *Con. Gent.*, III, 63; *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 3 a. 8.

<sup>42</sup> *Comp. Theol.*, Pars Sec., cap. 9 (*Op.*, XXVII, 126).

<sup>43</sup> *Con. Gent.*, III, 58: “Oportet igitur quod in visione divina sit diversitas, qua quidam perfectius et quidam minus perfecte divinam substantiam videant. Hinc est quod, ad hanc felicitatis differentiam designandam, Dominus dicit: *In domo Patris mei mansiones multae sunt*, Joan. XIV, 2.” Cf. *S. Theol.*, Ia IIae q. 5 a. 2, Resp.: “Contingit autem aliquem perfectius frui Deo quam alium, ex eo quod est melius dispositus vel ordinatus ad eius fruitionem. Et secundum hoc potest aliquis alio beator esse.” Ad. 3: “. . . nulli beato deest aliquod bonum desiderandum, cum habeat ipsum bonum infinitum. . . . Sed dicitur aliquis alio beator, ex diversa eiusdem boni participatione.” Cf. Farrell, *op. cit.*, IV, 444-45.

very realization of the long-promised fellowship with his God is also his inevitable incorporation with all others who likewise communicate, eternally, in the divine life. Thomas may dilate, theoretically, on the complete happiness which a soul would have in God “though having no neighbor to love.” But he entertains no serious thought of such being the case. The anticipation of a *solus cum solo* beatitude is absurdly out of character in a man who talks of one lasting society of men and angels; of God as the final whole to which all the parts are directed; about the beatitude of all consisting in their common adherence to one God; of a congregation of the faithful now become a congregation of comprehensors in the *patria*.

Thus for such a humble soul as Thomas, informed by the thrilling revelations of Scripture, there is only one future prospect which he may hold out to those on pilgrimage to the *patria*. That is the triumphant participation with the Trinity, the angels, and all the blessed in the consummate society of all good. And such fellowship, characterized by complete mutuality, Thomas knows with unerring insight to be the best in delectable goods. This alone will be appropriate to the joys that the saints shall have in the celestial Fatherland.<sup>44</sup>

R. C. PETRY

Duke University,  
Durham, North Carolina

<sup>44</sup> Speaking of the fourth and last, but by no means least, consideration of the goods that will be in eternal life, he says: “Quarto<sup>a</sup> commoda omnium bonorum societas, quae societas<sup>b</sup> est maxime delectabilis<sup>c</sup> bonis; sic ergo sancti habebunt omnia bona haec et alia ineffabilia, et quilibet diligit alium sicut seipsum; et ideo gaudebit de bono alterius sicut de suo. Quo fit ut tantum augeatur laetitia et gaudium unius, quantum est gaudium omnium. . . . Ita ergo<sup>d</sup> habebunt perfecti qui erunt in vita aeterna.” *In Symb. Apost.*, cap. 15 (*Op.*, XXVII, 228 and notes).

Interesting variations according to the Parma edition are:

<sup>a</sup> “consistit in omnium beatorum jucunda societate.”

<sup>b</sup> “erit.”

<sup>c</sup> “delectabilis, quia quilibet habebit omnia bona cum omnibus beatis; nam quilibet, etc.”

<sup>d</sup> “Haec autem quae dicta sunt, et multa ineffabilia habebunt sancti qui erunt in patria.”



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